



## Socializing Your New Puppy to the World

So you have a new puppy! And there is so much to do in so little time! What is most important? Surely housetraining and curbing that chewing, and also stopping puppy from jumping up. You definitely want to get started on all that now, because good habits instilled from the start are much easier than breaking bad habits later.

Birth to 18 weeks is the most critical time to **socialize** your pup if you want the best chance of having a well-adjusted, friendly adult dog. Puppies are extremely receptive to everyone and everything at this time in their life. But they will not stay that way unless *you* make sure they are introduced in a very positive manner to all kinds of people, places, sounds, surfaces, smells, noises.....in other words, everything the world will be throwing their way.

"But," you say, "my puppy hasn't had all it's shots!" So what are you to do? Rest assured, there are plenty of low-risk ways to socialize your pup. Below are some terrific ideas to get you started:

- Sit outside on your front porch. Feed your puppy breakfast and/or a lovely treat when the big trash trucks pull up. When a bike, skateboard, strangers, stroller (in other words, anything) goes by, give your pup a morsel of food. If puppy appears worried at all, use unbelievably delicious treats instead.
- Have a party at your house and invite all your friends, particularly the louder, outrageous ones. Include all sizes and colors of people. Ask them to wear masks or funny hats, glasses, gloves, or come in on crutches or to use their imagination. Be sure your puppy is really hungry when the guests start to arrive! Give each guest some kibble or treats to feed your puppy. Let your puppy go from person to person and collect a couple bits of his dinner. Reward your guests with drinks and snacks!
- Hang around outside a mall, grocery store or car wash. Take a chair to "camp out" for a while, holding the pup in your lap. It is virtually guaranteed that all kinds of people will greet your puppy. Feed bits of chicken. YUM!
- Take your puppy to friends' houses to visit. Take your pup to play with your friend's dogs if you know their dog is kind to puppies and that dog has had all shots and is healthy.
- Your puppy should enter a puppy class between 10 and 18 weeks of age. Puppy socials for pups that age are an excellent option also. Find a clean and safe class run by responsible trainers who use modern, scientific methods. Then register your pup for a class that starts about 10 days to 2 weeks after his or her second set of shots.

What will your puppy come across in it's lifetime? More things than you can possibly imagine. This small window of time will make the biggest impact on your puppy's future, so don't waste a moment of it.



Pawsitively Fabulous!

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