

In bringing home a puppy, you are also opening up a new world to that puppy. Getting it socialized with a wide variety of people, places, sounds and things will be huge in their development. It will help the puppy to be confident and unafraid as it approaches new and strange things throughout their life. The most critical socialization window occurs before the age of 12 weeks, and that window is considered to be closing by 5 months. The puppy will gain confidence quicker and easier if it is socialized during this time frame.

Keep in mind that socializing your puppy to these things will assist but not cure the animal of fear issues. However, most aggression issues are simply a result of inefficient socialization.

Couple things to keep in mind:

1. Make sure it's fun for your puppy – Don't force the puppy to interact. Let them go at their own pace. Let the puppy make the choice.
2. Socialization includes generalization – Just because the puppy is comfortable with the children in your house doesn't mean that it'll be comfortable with all children. Make sure to expose them to new places, things and contexts.
3. Treats, Treats, Treats – Everyone likes to be rewarded right? Especially if you are doing something that you aren't the most confident in. The same goes for puppies. Pair touching his paws briefly with a lick of peanut butter from a spoon. Pair meeting new people with getting treats. It'll help to make the new things less scary if something fun and yummy appears with them. If the puppy won't take the food though that could mean that he is feeling overwhelmed with the situation and a step back may be needed.

Use the attached checklist to keep track and give your puppy the exposure and socialization he needs!

Enrolling your puppy in Puppy Pre-School at HSHV is another great way to help him get socialized. Visit hshv.org/dogtraining for class and registration information.

PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECK LIST

VISUAL & NOISES

- SIRENS
- FIREWORKS
- CAR HORNS
- GARBAGE TRUCKS
- TRAFFIC
- THUNDERSTORMS
- FAIRS & FESTIVALS
- CROWDS OF PEOPLE
- AIRPLANES
- WHEELCHAIRS
- CRUTCHES,CANES
- BICYCLES
- SKATEBOARDS
- RADIOS
- MOTORBIKES
- PARKING LOTS
- DOOR BELLS
- KNOCKING ON DOOR
- TRAINS

MEETING MEN

- BEARDS
- HATS
- SUNGLASSES
- HELMETS

PLACES

- VETERINARIANS
- KENNELS
- DAYCARE
- PET STORE
- CRATE
- HOUSES

TOUCH

- STAIRS
- TILE
- ASPHALT
- CONCRETE
- GRASS
- SAND
- CARPET
- WOOD

MEETING WOMEN

- HATS
- SUNGLASSES
- SCARVES
- HELMETS

HANDLING

- HOLDING
- TOUCHING PAWS
- TOUCHING MUZZLE
- TOUCHING EARS
- TOUCHING TAIL
- HUGGING
- TOUCHING COLLAR
- CHECKING TEETH
- CLIPPING NAILS
- BRUSHING TEETH
- CHECKING PADS
- CLEANING EARS
- BRUSHING,GROOMING

MEETING CHILDREN

- 0-2 YEARS
- 0-2 YEARS IN STROLLER
- 2-4 YEARS
- 4-12 YEARS OLD
- 13-19 YEARS OLD

MEETING ANIMALS

- PUPPIES
- MALE ADULT DOG
- FEMALE ADULT DOG
- KITTENS
- CATS
- HORSES
- COWS
- SHEEP
- CHICKENS
- DUCKS

PEOPLE SOUNDS

- TALKING LOUDLY
- LAUGHING
- CRYING
- SHOUTING
- CHEERING
- CHILDREN PLAYING

ADULTS WITH

- CRUTCHES
- CANES
- WHEEL CHAIRS