

Puppy Socialization: Places to go, people to see

Exposing your puppy to as many new and different positive experiences as possible.

Developmental Stages:

- **0-7 Weeks** - - "*All In The Family*" This is a time for the puppy to be with its mother and siblings. A lot of training is obtained with this family dynamic and the pup will learn to moderate its aggression and behavior by correction from mom and sibs.
- **7-9 Weeks** - "*Welcome Home*" Puppies are mentally mature enough to go to their new homes at this age. Expect your breeder to have given the pup one or two rounds of vaccinations and dewormed if the fecal showed any types of internal parasites.
- **8-16 Weeks** - "*Places To Go, People To See*" Socialization can begin at this time. Take the puppy out and around to see new sights and sounds. Try to take the puppy with you to a new place at least once a week. Let him play with other dogs. Beware of a fearful stage at around 8 to 10 weeks of age and try to avoid anything that might be traumatic for the dog. If the puppy acts scared of something, avoid this something until after 11 weeks of age. A pup can be thoughtful about a new experience but you don't want it to be frightened. After 11 weeks of age, try to be around the "scary thing" as much as possible. DON'T baby your dog and pet him, try to comfort him when he acts scared though. This will reinforce his reaction to the "scary thing". Also, don't hold tight on the leash when he gets frightened, this tells the dog that you, too, are scared.
- **4-6 Months** - "*Installing Controls While Still Out and About*" Keep working on socialization - obedience classes can begin and keep taking the dog out and about to see as much as possible. Teething will be an issue during this phase. Encourage Housebreaking during this age and look forward to less accidents as the pup approaches six months of age.
- **6-12 Months** - "*Those Wacky Teens*" This is the beginning of adolescence and at around 6 months of age, the pup can be neutered/spayed. By the end of 12 months, housebreaking should be mostly successful.