



“SO YOU WANT TO BE A PUPPY RAISER!”

Puppy Raising Reference Manual

PUPPY FACTS:

PUPPY NAME:	BIRTHDATE:
MOTHER’S NAME:	FATHER’S NAME:
GENDER:	BREED/COLOR:

PUPPY PROGRAM CONTACT LIST:

For general health or training concerns email Garry. For emergencies call Garry’s Cell and if he doesn’t get back to you call Dani’s cell.

In cases of emergency you must have approval before NSD will cover the cost.

GARRY STEPHENSON
PUPPY AND BREEDING PROGRAM MANAGER
GARRY@NSD.ON.CA
gjstephenson@gmail.com
Cell: 519-504-0502

DANIELLE FORBES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
dani@nsd.on.ca
Office: 519-623-4188 ext. 12
Cell: 519-239-9808

Veterinary Contact List:

Dr Jackie Bowcott- Special Advisor to NSD’s Board of Directors
Oxford County Veterinary Clinic
570 Ingersoll Ave
Woodstock
info@oxfordcountyvet.com



Oxford County Veterinary Clinic 570 Ingersoll Ave Woodstock info@oxfordcountyvet.com	<u>St. Marys Veterinary Clinic</u> 500 Water St St Mary's On 519-284-3501	

In cases of emergency, you MUST have approval from Garry before NSD will cover the cost.

Emergency Vet

Animal Hospital of Cambridge 600 Hespeler Rd Cambridge, ON N1R 8H2 519 624 9760 Open Saturday and Sundays	Ontario Veterinarian College University of Guelph, 50 Stone Road, Guelph, ON (519) 824-4120 Ext 54401	<u>St. Marys Veterinary Clinic</u> 500 Water St St Mary's On 519-284-3501
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National Service Dogs Key Contact List 2016:

Kennel:

National Service Dogs
 1286 Cedar Creek Rd.
 Cambridge, On
 N1R 5S5
 519-623-4188

Puppy Class:

Cedar Creek Community Church
 2042 Dumfries Rd.
 Cambridge, On
 N1R 5S5



<u>Executive Director</u> Danielle Forbes (519) 623-4188 ext 12 Cell: 519-239-9808	<u>Manager of Breeding & Puppy Program</u> Garry Stephenson garry@nsd.on.ca Cell (519) 504-0502
<u>Fundraising Coordinator</u> Judy Frank judy@nsd.on.ca ext. 10	<u>Client Services Coordinator</u> Annie Bankes annie@nsd.on.ca ext 15
<u>Program Manager</u> Tamara Leniew tamara@nsd.on.ca ext 18	<u>Puppy Program Assistant</u> Cathy Klein CathyKleinNSD@gmail.com 905 630 2029 cell
<u>Puppy Program/Companion Dog Coordinator</u> Chris McArthur chris@nsd.on.ca (519) 623-4188 ext 18	<u>Senior Trainer/Instructor</u> Vicki Zettler Vicki@nsd.on.ca (519) 623-4188 ext 19 Cell: 519-504-0097
<u>Trainer</u> Carol Matthews Carol@nsd.on.ca (519) 623-4188 ext 19	<u>Volunteer Coordinator , Apprentice Dog Trainer</u> Jill Finlayson volunteer@nsd.on.ca (519) 623-4188 ext 20



National Service Dogs - Veterinary Health Checklist Form				
*Please note that this form must be kept up to date and handed in to the Puppy Program Coordinator at the time of the puppy's return to the NSD kennel.				
Puppy's Name:		Birthdate:		
Puppy Raiser:		Breed/Color		
Microchip:				
Sentinal Schedule				
Date	Veterinary Appointment Description	Location Completed	Date Completed	Dosage
June 1st	First Trifexis Pill	Home		
July 1st	Second Trifexis Pill	Home		
August 1st	Third Trifexis Pill	Home		
September 1st	Fourth Trifexis Pill	Home		
October 1st	Fifth Trifexis Pill	Home		
November 1st	Sixth Trifexis Pill	Home		
Standard Veterinary Visits				
Age	Veterinary Appointment Description	Location Completed	Date to Complete	Weight
7 Weeks	First Vaccines & Second Deworm	NSD		
12 Weeks	Second Vaccines, Bordetella	At Class		
16 weeks	Third Vaccine (+ Rabies, Lepto in K-W)	At Class		
6 months	spay/neuter (confirm with Garry)			
May	Blood Test for Heartworm	At Class		
Annual Vaccines				



Top 10 Things to Remember

1. Consistent puppy class attendance is mandatory and the Puppy may be rehomed if class attendance is poor, or appropriate developmental progress (as measured by the benchmarks) does not occur.
2. Call/Text Garry for all pet emergencies and questions about medical issues for the puppy.
3. Each NSD puppy needs a 20-30 minute free run play sessions per day, plus 2-3 training walks
4. The dog should NOT be fed for 2 hours prior to free running. Meal times should NOT immediately FOLLOW heavy exercise. The dog will need at least thirty minutes to cool down and feeding should not take place until the dog has stopped panting and has cooled off
5. No human foods are permitted except for high value treat rewarding
6. No chasing balls or sticks is permitted
7. Review the NSD Exercises and Skills Resources found in your manual for the timeline for program expectations.
8. Do not allow the NSD puppy on your bed or furniture at any time
9. Send 4-5 digital pictures to CathyKleinNSD@gmail.com or link to Cathy Klein - NSD Facebook to post digital pictures once per month or more. Please send all your favourite photos at any time!
10. Please complete your Puppy Biographical Information sheets as requested and submit them to CathyKleinNSD@gmail.com

Here are some examples of what IS and what is NOT an emergency. The cell phones numbers listed are for emergency use.

Emergencies are listed below and not conclusive

1. Losing your NSD puppy. Please call immediately to Garry's cell . Report your loss. We can give advice on what to do next. (Please ensure your dog always wears his ID and Rabies tag). Finders may not have a scanner to read his microchip. Place posters up in your home area. Call the local vets in your area. Call our NSD vets. Call and Email Chris McArthur and Garry. Losing your puppy requires urgent and immediate action. If you do not get a response within 20 minutes then call Danielle Forbes. All contact numbers are in the binder.

2. Your puppy has been involved in an accident. If your puppy has been involved in a road accident or any other accident that you feel is it's appropriate for your puppy to see a vet then call to report this ASAP. Vet visits are not approved until you confirm with a call to either Garry or Dani. The vet's numbers are in your binder.

3. Your puppy has ingested something toxic such as Rat poison or Antifreeze or even if you're not sure then do call. This applies to items that are swallowed too. The first few hours after you discover or suspect a problem are very important. Three hours is the magic number but not conclusive. Immediate examination and treatment can save your puppy's life, so act sooner rather than later.

4. Puppies that have vomited and have loose stool, particularly ones that have been recently placed with you. Puppies can easily get sick and regurgitate their last meal. If this problem persists for more than 12 hours then report to Garry. Email Cathy Klein at CathyKleinNSD@gmail.com if you haven't heard from Garry in 12 hours. (Things to watch out for are high or low temperatures, watery diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy, lack of interest in food). See binder on how to keep your puppy comfortable and hydrated until a diagnosis is done.

Non urgent problems that can be addressed by email or in Puppy class.

- 1. Crying at night or when left alone.** Housebreaking issues or any behavioural problem.
- 2. Kennel cough.** Puppies may sound like they are trying to cough something up. This can be a harsh throaty gagging sound or a deep hollow cough that comes from the lungs. This should be reported but is not normally urgent. Email is usually sufficient in most cases. (Dogs usually eat and act normally throughout this ten day virus.)
- 3. Unable to make the puppy class.** Email notice is fine. We will advise you how to join in another class to help keep your puppy up to date with training.
- 4. Ordering of food for puppy.** Food is normally available at the kennel. Only raisers with dogs that are on special diets should call ahead. London/Stratford raisers please email Garry prior to Monday morning.
- 5. Puppy sitting inquiries.** There is a "potential puppy sitter list" that can be emailed to you. Book ahead of time so you don't get caught out! It is your responsibility to find an NSD approved puppy sitter.
- 6. Non urgent health issues** such as ear and skin problems, lameness. If you notify us by email we can address these issues and bring medications and treatments to class or leave them at the kennel for you to collect.

During the daytime, any non internet users, may call Chris and leave a message on her extensionor call Garry on his cell phone. Please leave a **detailed message** so we can prioritize your call. **Asking us to call you back without saying why isn't sufficient!**

BONDING WITH YOUR PUPPY:

The first week you have your puppy is a great time to get to know them. During the puppy's first week with you, include it in your daily routine and allow it the opportunity to build some self-confidence. Have it with you while you perform activities around the house:

- Have it at your feet while you watch TV or read the newspaper
- Have it outside while you are working in the garden
- Have it with you while you are in the garage or workshop

Establish a routine of meals and relieving them and housetraining will be a breeze. Spend time handling your puppy and introducing them to their new environment. Your puppy must be on leash at all times unless in a fenced area where they must be supervised. Do not chain your puppy in the house or yard. Please **no leash free parks until after they have had all their vaccines**. All it takes is one incident with an aggressive dog and your puppy may be aggressive with other dogs

Give your puppy lots of exercise. A tired puppy is a good puppy. At 8 weeks old they may only be able to do frequent short walks instead of long walks. As they grow older they can take longer walks. You can play fetch in a fenced area with kongs or rope toys but do not use balls.

They will be nippy/mouthy from the start. If you have ever watched puppies play, you will have noticed that they mouth or bite each other. You must teach the puppy that this behaviour is not appropriate with people and this must be taught early on. **Do not roughhouse or play tug of war with the puppy, as this could also lead to dominance problems.** If the puppy nips at

you or your clothing, give it a toy to chew on instead. It is best to always have toys available and ready for the puppy to chew.

For giving treats, we suggest the following technique; keep a treat closed in a tight gripped palm, wait until the puppy licks at your hand and is gentle - then give the treat.

Use the "NO" command when they nip (hold their mouth shut at the same time). If this isn't working place your thumb under their tongue and press down holding their lower jaw while saying "NO" till they back off. Give them praise when they stop nipping you or take a toy instead. When they bring you a toy (even if you're busy take a minute to give lots of praise). If they bring something that isn't theirs, tell them "NO" while taking it away and give them their toy right away with lots of praise. Before you know it they'll understand what puppy belongings are and what people belongings are. This will save you the frustration of damaged property in the long run.

Don't plan any outings for the first week except for puppy classes. We want the puppy to look to you and your family for leadership and for this he needs to get to know you first. It will also give you a chance to learn your puppy's behaviour (such as the signs he needs to relieve himself). The puppies are not allowed on furniture or beds. It is a lot easier to teach a dog to go on the bed then make them stop if they've already been allowed.

Manners

The puppy is cute and cuddly now, but will grow quickly up to 60-90 lbs. Do not allow the puppy to jump while greeting people. Constantly picking up your puppy encourages this behaviour. Teach him manners right from day one.

Have an area away from the door where the puppy must sit and wait when guests arrive (use a baby gate or some other kind of barrier as a tool to help). Allow visitors to come greet the puppy as long as the puppy remains sitting and calm. Ask puppy to sit and stay to greet all strangers (consistency is really important when developing this important skill).

If the puppy jumps up on you or a stranger, it should never be petted, picked up or spoken to in a pleasant tone of voice. You should only pet it when it greets you properly in the sit position. Ignore the puppy if it jumps and turn your back to the puppy. Give the puppy a lot of praise and pets when it sits nicely. If you are consistent, he will be consistent. Your friends and neighbours, and people you encounter on your outings should be told the proper way to greet the puppy as well.

If the puppy is having a lot of difficulty with jumping, you may need to set up a practice setting to help the puppy understand what is expected. An effective practice session might look like this; attach the leash and have a "jumping victim" approach you. When the puppy jumps up, give it a stiff correction and tell it "NO". Ask the puppy to sit. Praise the puppy when it sits calmly and quietly in front of you.

Don't allow the puppy to rush ahead of you through doorways or thresholds. When on leash ask the puppy to "sit" before moving ahead through the door. This skill needs to be practiced at home without distractions a lot before we can expect the puppy to act the same way in public. Remember, making time to practice in quiet settings will help the puppy development skills for more challenging settings.

When leaving the puppy or arriving home to greet the puppy, remain calm and try not to make leaving and returning a big event. Simply confine the puppy to its crate and calmly leave. Upon

returning remain calm and when the pup is sitting, release him from his crate. If you remain calm the puppy remains calm.

Feeding:

All NSD puppies are fed "Puppy" Food until they are about 12 weeks old. This works out to one bag of Puppy Food and then you will pick up adult food. Food is available in the bin on the front porch of the kennel at 1286 Cedar Creek Rd. or from Garry in London. Feed your puppy 3 times daily - 1 cup wetted down at approximately 8a.m., 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Ask your puppy trainer to assess the puppy's weight to see if he needs more food. At 6 months you will move to 2 feedings per day rather than feeding 3 times per day.

When feeding place the food down in front of your puppy. Position your puppy in the "sit" position and hold onto his collar and ask him to "stay". Once puppy remain calm and attentive, release the collar and say "okay", giving the puppy permission to feed. If your puppy is not interested in the food, remove it after 10 minutes. Try again at the next feeding. The puppy will begin to learn to eat when you put the food down for him. Please don't add any extra treats to their food like gravy or people food. They will then expect that all the time and that's not what they will get when they enter the kennel. If they miss a feeding, they'll make it up at the next one. We have yet to have a lab or retriever starve to death. But we have had health issues with dogs where the raiser added treats to the puppy's meal (which then upset the dog's empty stomach).

Feeding Guide: NOTE: below is a weight measurement

Measuring cups vary so much that an accurate weigh scale should be used. Alternatively, the measure provided is accurate for Purina Pro Plan Large breed quantities.

4 ounces per meal. 08-12 weeks = 3 meals daily.

5 ounces per meal. 12-16 weeks = 3 meals daily.

6 ounces per meal. 16-20 weeks = 3 meals daily. Change to Adult food after using one 18k sack of puppy food which is usually around 12 weeks old.

6 ounces per meal. 20-25 weeks = 3 meals daily.

8 ounces per meal. 25 weeks = 2 meals daily.

These amounts may be altered as your NSD contact recommends.

Changing to Adult food! Mix 33% adult food for three days then 66% for three days. Puppy should then be ready for complete quantities of adult food.

Do not increase the food amount without checking with Cathy or Garry or NSD staff contact.

Loose stool and watery diarrhea is the most common problem you may encounter. Very rarely is this a life and death situation. It is usually bacterial or a parasitical infection. This includes Giardia and Coccidiosis.

Please follow these instructions if you encounter the problem:

You can notify NSD by email; if you first spot the problem and if it persists then call or text Garry on the cell # in the binder. He will give you the advice below.

After noticing watery/loose stool withhold normal kibble meals. Puppy needs to be starved for 24 hours. You will need to get Pedialytes from the infants section of Shoppers Drugmart. Just get the plain water formula. You will need to replace the water in his bowl with this. He may also need 10-20 mls of the liquid syringing into his cheek pouches every 2 hours or so to help keep him rehydrated if he is not drinking from the bowl. Check the binder to test how hydrated your puppy is: Pedialytes should be given from the moment you diagnose loose stool since it helps regulate the puppy's blood sugar.

Day 1 First meal after 24 hours should be plain boiled rice and a little boiled chicken or boil the rice in Chicken broth. Puppy should have this for the rest of the day. If the stool looks like it is firming up the the following day, add 25% kibble to 75% boiled rice. Do not give any other treats at this point.

Day 2 The rice may be reduced and the kibble increased to a 50% rice and 50% kibble mix.

Day 3 Now give 75% kibble and 25% rice mix.

Day 4 Full kibble (soaked in water).

If at anytime during the weaning process the puppy reverts to having loose stool then return to the previous day's mix and remain on that for a couple of days before moving on.

We may ask you to bring a stool sample to the kennel so we can test and in some cases you may need to take a stool sample into our NSD vet. If things do not improve, notify Garry, Cathy or Chris at NSD. Check also for missing garments like socks or underwear & watch for vomiting.

Crate Training:

The puppy **MUST** be crate trained, and confined to the crate when left unsupervised. It will prevent the puppy from chewing, soiling in your home, and any other unwanted behaviour. To you this keeps the puppy in, to him it keeps all the scary things out. The puppy needs to be comfortable in the crate, because upon returning to NSD the puppy will be living in a kennel. The puppy will need to be in the crate at night, and when you are not able to supervise. It is not only to protect your belongings but to protect the puppy from getting into something that could potentially cause serious injury or death. Just as you would never leave a child alone running about the house, it's the same for a puppy. If introduced in a positive manner this will be their "Den".

Introducing the crate:

- leave the crate door open when you arrive home
- throw some kibble into the crate
- allow the puppy to explore the crate at his leisure
- feed your puppy in the crate until he is comfortable in the crate
- the crate should be comfy for the pup- blanket or towel (as long as he does not chew),
- eventually close the door on the pup and when he settles and is quiet open the door
- do not make a fuss when the pup goes into the crate or comes out of it
- Place the crate far away from your bedroom at night- a whining puppy should never be "babied", he will eventually quiet after 10-15 mins.
- Never, never, never let a whining, howling puppy out of the crate! You have just taught them if they make enough noise they can get out.
- consider covering a wire crate with a blanket, turning on a radio close by the crate

*Remember to make sure the crate is introduced in a positive manner! Make the crate available to your puppy at all times, he will eventually view it as his safe comfortable den.

House Training:

- Relieve your puppy in your yard in the same area for the first week.
- As you see your puppy starting to relieve himself ask your puppy to **“HURRY UP”** then give the puppy lots of praise (verbal and treat) when he is finished with his business and starts to walk away.
- After a few days you can start giving the command as soon as you get to the relieve area. Allow your puppy lots of time to do his/her thing and then take the puppy for a walk or let her play off leash in a **FENCED IN** area.
- Puppies generally need to go out after they awake from sleep, finish a play session, and immediately after they eat or leave the crate. Also if they’ve been outside playing for sometime they may forget to go and then need to go as soon as you get in the house. If they know the command you will want to do a “hurry up” before going back inside.

Getting a Dog License:

Most cities and townships do not charge for a license for a service dog in training but you are still required to have one. In Kitchener and Cambridge you may get them at your local Humane Society. Other cities go to either to City Hall or the Township offices. If you encounter any problems please contact Garry.

Puppy Sitters:

From time to time you may find it necessary to have a puppy sitter take your dog for a short period of time. This includes week-ends or holidays.

Please contact Puppy Program staff for an updated list of “approved puppy sitters”. It is the puppy raiser’s responsibility to arrange organize an approved puppy sitter. Whether you choose a sitter from the list or a family member, you must contact staff via email or phone to provide dates that puppy will be with sitter and name and contact information of sitter. ***Note: This information must be provided before puppy is left with sitter.**

Puppy Sponsor Program:

For \$1000 individuals or companies can sponsor a puppy. This covers cost of the puppy till they enter Advanced Training. They are allowed to name the puppy within our guidelines. As a result you must send photos at least once per month (preferably more often). These photos are used to update sponsors and for a variety of other purposes. We are 100% a charitable organization and it is programs such as this that pay the bills. We appreciate your help in keeping this program successful. If your puppy is not fully sponsored, he will have a sponsor page on the NSD website. Feel free to encourage friends, coworkers and family to sponsor your puppy.

Keys to a Health Puppy

Who and Where is the Veterinarian?

Before the puppy arrives, you should be prepared for veterinary care in an emergency. By following the guidelines listed below, you will ensure that the puppy will quickly be delivered to a veterinarian should it become sick or injured.

- Refer to the key contact list and veterinary checklist on the front page
- Post the telephone number of the veterinarian with your other emergency numbers on your fridge or other commonly used area of your home.
- The contact for Emergency Vets in Waterloo Region, Guelph and London are listed, if you are in a different region have the contact information available in case it's ever needed.

Vaccinations and Neutering:

The vet will vaccinate the puppy to protect it from various canine diseases. Please refer to the key contact list and vet checklist in your puppy reference binder.

- Heartworm prevention medication is donated to National Service Dogs and will be available from the puppy program coordinator. Dogs are on Sentinel from June 1st to November 1st.

Health Problems and Prevention:

The best time to examine the puppy is during your weekly handling exercises or while you are grooming the puppy to ensure that no potential health problems are developing.

Signs of Illness:

Knowing how much the puppy eats and its activity level is important because the most common signs of illness are loss of appetite and lethargy. Watch for any of the following symptoms in the puppy:

- Excessive sleeping
- Increased water consumption
- Loss of appetite
- Shaking the head, smelly ears, discharge from the ears
- Discharge from the eyes
- Whining or crying out
- Red eyes with excessive discharge
- Limping or other physical injury

If you are concerned about any potential problems, contact your Garry, Cathy or Chris before going to vet. See contact list for numbers.

Common Health Problems:

Nails: If you can hear the puppy's nails clicking on the floor, they need to be trimmed. To get the puppy used to having its nails trimmed, handle its feet and toes everyday. Once a week, check its nails to determine if they are sharp and ask that they be done at puppy class. Do not take them to the vet for nail trimming.

Eyes: Eye problems producing green discharge are sometimes seen because of the windy weather or puppy may have contracted conjunctivitis from a person or dog. The 2 types of eye problems are viral or bacterial. If your dog has a viral issue, it just needs to run its course. Gently wiping the eye with warm water and paper towel to remove discharge is appropriate. You can also get Polysporin drops to help ease the eye's irritation. Please administer these drops

3-4 times daily for 7 days or even more if the puppy is slow to respond. Contact Garry if you have questions or concerns.

Ears: Check the puppy's ears every couple of days. If the ears appear dirty, gently wipe out with an ear cleaner. Walmart has ear wipes in a large container with a yellow top. They are large cloths that allow you to really give the ear a good cleaning. Be sure to wipe out the folds of the ear and do not dig deeply into the ear canal. Remove any excess earwax. If there is a foul odor coming from the ear or any redness contact please contact Garry Stephenson. Infections are common and we have medication to deal with them. The canal is very deep so once the visible signs of an infection appear, there is a well established infection. Treatment of the ear should continue at least 5 days after the visible discharge is gone.

Mouth and Teeth: A dog's mouth should not smell bad. With proper care the puppy's foul mouth odour can be eliminated. Puppies salivate more when they are teething and chewing more vigorously, this may cause an unpleasant smell. If the smell does not cease, as the puppy grows older, consult the Puppy Program Manager. Check the puppy's mouth for sores or foreign objects on the roof of the mouth, under the tongue and between the teeth. These objects can cause an abscess and lead to serious problems if left unattended.

Fleas: Fleas are the most common cause of skin problems among dogs. A single bite from a flea can cause some dogs to tear at their skin. National Service Dogs has Sentinel donated for all its dogs. This is a monthly tablet that sterilizes the eggs laid by fleas. In effect it kills the next generation of fleas but does not kill the adult fleas on your dog. Powders and shampoos will kill just the fleas they reach. If your dog is infected, talk to the Puppy Program Manager about a dose of Advantage which will kill the fleas that come in contact with your dog for up to one month.

Heartworm: Canine Heartworms are spaghetti-like worms, approximately 12 inches long, which infest the chambers of the dog's heart and interfere with the blood flow. Symptoms of this infestation are lack of energy, lack of stamina and persistent coughing. The worms are transferred through mosquito larva. The larvae mature in the mosquito and are passed on to the unprotected dog. It takes approximately 8 months for the larva to mature into adult worms. They then migrate to the heart of the dog and the cycle repeats. Prevention is the key to beating Heartworm. During the summer you will be giving your Puppy Sentinel to prevent heartworms.

Intestinal Parasites: Dogs live in an environment where they are constantly ingesting various parasites. They drink out of puddles, rivers, ponds and toilets. They sniff each others bums and eat feces from various animal species. Their system is usually quite capable of dealing with these but occasionally it may get overwhelmed resulting in a bout of vomiting or diarrhea. If your dog is displaying these ill effects, avoid giving them food for a few hours but make sure there is plenty of clean water available. When they seem better, try feeding plain white rice till they have solid stools. Then slowly add their regular food back into their diet over the next couple feedings. If the dog appears lethargic or is not drinking, contact the Puppy Program Manager.

Kennel Cough: Just like us humans, the dogs can catch their own versions of coughs and colds. Usually these are 10 day wonders and the symptoms to watch out for are a hacking throaty cough, just like there's something lodged in the throat or they're trying to throw up. They cough most after sleeping for a bit so you often get the 4am hacking for a couple nights. Sometimes they get stuffed up noses too so the puppy may snort as if he's trying to clear the nasal passages. Most dogs don't need treatment but if you feel you need to help them you can give warm water with honey or a dose of Robitussin (regular formula not the Cough formula). If the cough persists for more than 7 days contact the Puppy Program Manager. It is highly contagious so avoid contact with other dogs and **do not attend puppy class.**

Allergic Reactions: Often with insect stings and eating pine nuts/cones or chewing the live Christmas tree your puppy may have a reaction and show heavy wrinkling about his face, making him look like a Shar Pie dog. Extreme salivation/drooling may be noticed. Rubbing his face along the rug to help alleviate the irritation is sometimes seen too. A quick fix is to give a dose of Benadryl caplets and observe carefully. If the Benadryl works, any symptoms should start to diminish within an hour.

Dogs can also have pollen and dust allergies just like people but instead of sneezing they will get itchy dry skin, often between the pads of their feet. Check your environment. It is typically airborne so are you using a new air freshener or candle, is it ragweed season, are you walking in a new area with lots of vegetation, are you washing the bedding in a new detergent..... Often the problem can be removed but if it persists a couple doses of Benadryl to bring down their histamine levels will help. Also boosting their immune system with Omega's like flax seed oil or Salmon food can help. Please check with the Puppy Program staff if you have questions or concerns.

Skin Problems: In the winter central heating is being used we find that it soon dries some dog's skin and causes itching. Now that the heating is on any resident flea larvae will hatch and become active. Check your puppy for fleas if you see him scratching more than usual. If you see dry or scurfy skin then the addition of **Flax seed oil** capsules from the local drug store can help enormously.

Winter is also a time of salt on sidewalks and parking lots. Be sure to clean your puppy's paws of salt to prevent cracking. Should your puppy develop hot spots where he has bald and/or sticky patches of hair loss, trim the hair away from the sticky mess and bath twice daily with a strong saline solution. Use cotton balls or gauze to clean the affected area. The common cause for hot spots is not towel drying the puppy if he's gotten wet, either swimming or in the snow. If the hot spots are near the ears, check the ears for infections. Often scratching near the ears causes hot spots. In the spring, summer and fall dogs can develop rashes from allergic reactions or high bacteria levels in the water. Avoid letting them swim in slow moving waterways or ponds. Bacteria levels are also much higher after a heavy rainfall. Even if your dog is swimming on a regular basis an occasional bath with an oatmeal shampoo will keep the coat nice.

Heat Exhaustion: Heat exhaustion is common in dogs. It can happen in your own yard, or on a walk. Dogs cool themselves by panting. If panting does not reduce the body temperature, the dog will develop heat stroke. Early signs of heat exhaustion include rapid breathing, heavy panting, and salivation. Other signs are fatigue, muscle tremors, and staggering. If you see a dog that is experiencing heat exhaustion, take the dog to a cool, shady place, and apply wet towels or cloths to help cool the dog's body down. Try to give the dog small amounts of water, and immediately call Garry or Dani Forbes.

In the summer, walk your puppy in the early morning or evening. That's because not only is the temperature high, but the sidewalks will be too hot for the pads of the dog's paws so they subsequently burn your puppy's pads! As a general rule, if the sidewalk is too hot for you to walk barefoot, it is too hot for your dog. If you choose to walk your dog in the summer, hopefully early or late, bring along water and make frequent water stops for the dog. **Never, ever exercise the puppy by having him run along beside you on roller blades or a bike.**

You will need to take your puppy in the car on hot summer days for outings but plan ahead so you do not have to leave him in the car.

Extreme Cold (below – 10 Celsius): Potty breaks and walks in extreme cold temperatures should last no more than twenty minutes. Dogs that stay outdoors longer risk frostbite, skin

abrasions due to balled ice between paw pads, and respiratory illness. If your dog is very high energy without outdoor play sessions, trying playing games with your dog indoors to use up energy and focus his attention on an activity directed by you.

The Heat Cycle

Females vary as to how often they come into estrus. Often it's every six months which makes it easy to plan. Labrador Retrievers are usually very regular. The Golden Retriever is often spasmodic and may come in every six months to ten months. The Golden Retriever is often more mature before she has her first heat cycle. Compared to the Labrador Retriever, the Golden Retriever may not begin cycling until she's ten months or older. The typical heat cycle will last for 21 days. For a couple of weeks before she comes into season you may have experienced changes in her behaviour. Often the bold females become withdrawn and shy or the shy ones often perk up and are really forward. Fear periods to things or situations that normally do not bother her, can now upset her. The most common symptom is when she frequently stops to pee while she's out on a walk or playing in the yard. This means she's definitely very close. Experienced males and even neutered males can show interest at this point. It is not unknown for females housed together to do some practice humping on each other. This is purely hormonal and has little bearing on dominance. Two females that usually get along may show distaste for each other. Once out of heat every thing will go back to normal.

The positive indicators that your female is in season are when you see her vulva swell and she has some bloody discharge. Often you'll find spots of blood on the kitchen floor or light coloured carpets. She'll also be cleaning herself and doing a lot of licking to keep clean. She is now officially in season. The first day you notice the swelling or see blood should be counted as day one. If you notice changes before this let the breeding manager (Garry) know.

From day one to day nine the female should be taken care of just as normal. If you are in a good neighborhood with no stray dogs, then she may be leash walked. She should never be off leash unless it's in a high fenced secure area. Her wild instincts may kick in and she may elope with the first eligible bachelor that she can find. Be aware that un-neutered male dogs will jump fences, dig under fences, chew through and do any thing possible to get to your girl! Both will happily mate with each other despite being different breeds and size is not an issue! Despite being different sizes, where it seems mating should be impossible, nature has a way of helping the two lovers to be successful. Day nine to the end of the heat can be a challenge. Often the experienced females know why they feel the way they do and will do everything in their power to advertise that they are "ready". Days nine to seventeen are considered the best times for successful mating. However, mating can happen before or after this too. To ensure unwanted pregnancies do not occur, the caretaker must be sure that the female does not have access to intact males. Surprisingly, coupling has occurred through chain linked fencing or similar wire fencing so the boundaries must be solid. They must be high enough to prevent either dog jumping the fence and solid enough for them not to dig under. By day twenty one your female should be out of season. She may now be bathed to help eradicate any lingering odours which will encourage males.

NSD does supply surgical panties for breeders. There are also inexpensive panties with patterns available at most pet stores. You can use a standard feminine hygiene pad in them, if your female is not keeping herself clean. Dogs have a habit of licking children and their hands without a thought to what they were doing a few minutes ago. Un-neutered males may show interest and can indeed mate successfully despite the fact they are sterile. Although the breeding will be unproductive, it is better not to let it happen.

Maintaining a Healthy Weight

Watching the puppy's weight is important because maintaining an acceptable weight can help prevent health problems such as hip dysplasia and knee joint stress. Obesity early in the puppy's life can lead to long-term weight problems that will be hard to remedy later. Overeating can also give your puppy diarrhea and digestive problems. When handling the puppy you should be able to feel its ribs. If you cannot, the puppy is overweight and you should discuss this with the Puppy Program Manager.

Dog Body Condition Chart

Thin Dog



- Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible
- No palpable fat
- Obvious waist and abdominal tuck
- Prominent pelvic bones

Underweight Dog



- Ribs easily palpable
- Minimal fat covering
- Waist is easily noted when viewed from above
- Abdominal tuck evident

Ideal Dog



- Ribs palpable, but not visible
- Slight waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above
- Abdomen tucked up, flank fold present

Overweight Dog



- Slight increase in fat over ribs, but still easily palpable
- Abdomen slightly rounded, flanks concave
- Flank folds hang down with moderate amount of fat—jiggle noted when walking

Obese Dog



- Ribs and backbone not easily palpable under a heavy fat covering
- Abdomen rounded; waist barely visible to absent
- Prominent flank folds which sway from side to side when walking

Making Your Own Puppy First Aid Kit

It's always handy to have a first aid kit ready for your puppy. Find a suitable container like a fishing tackle box. Clearly label it as the "Puppy First Aid Kit". Inside the top, tape your pup's name on any medications he takes and emergency contact numbers. Also tape inside your box the following chart with common medications and dosages:

Medication	Symptom	Dosage	25lb dog	50lb dog	80lb dog
Benadryl (tablet only)	Allergic reaction	1 to 2 mg/lb every 8 hrs	1 to 2-25mg tablet	2 to 4-25mg tablet	4-25mg tablet
Aspirin	Strain	5mg/lb every 12 hrs	1-80mg low dose	1-325mg tablet	1-325mg tablet
Hydrogen Peroxide	Induce vomiting	1-3 tsp every 10 min until dog vomits			
Pepto Bismol	Vomiting/diarrhea	1tsp/5lbs every 6hrs	2TBSP	3TBSP	4TBSP
Kaopectate	Vomiting/diarrhea	1ml/1lb every 2 hrs	2TBSP	3TBSP	4TBSP
Imodium	diarrhea	1mg/15lbs every 8 hrs	1-2mg caplet	1 1/2-2mg caplet	2-2mg caplet
Polysporin eye drops	red enflamed eyes	check label			
Robitussin	Kennel Cough		5ml	10ml	20ml
<p>Check the label to make sure the medicine does not contain ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) since these can cause liver damage.</p>					

You'll want to make sure your kit has material to clean and dress wounds, remove imbedded material, check temperature and protect you while administering first aid. Tweezers

Handy websites:

How to remove a tick: <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-remove-a-tick/>

General Health:

<http://www.purina.ca/mypuppy/>

<http://pethealth.petwellbeing.com/wiki/Category:Dogs>

Lastly, something to have handy is the recipe for getting rid of Skunk Odor. Mix 1 qt. of 3% hydrogen peroxide, ¼ to ½ cups baking soda and 1 – 2 tsp. lemon dish soap. (It's important not to store this in a closed container since the mixture of these ingredients creates pressure and could burst.)

Items to Avoid	Reasons to Avoid
Alcoholic Beverages	Can cause intoxication, coma and death
Baby Food	Can contain Onion powder, toxic to dogs
Bones from fish or Poultry	can cause obstruction or laceration of digestive system
Large marrow bones	dog can get bone stuck on jaw
Cooked bones	indigestible, can cause blockage or laceration of digestive system
Cat Food	Too high in protein and fats
Chocolate, coffee, tea, cocoa shell mulch	contain caffeine, theobromine or theophylline, toxic to heart
Citrus Oil Extracts	Can cause vomiting
Fat trimmings	can cause pancreatitis
Grapes and Raisins	Contain an unknown toxin which can damage kidneys
Hops	Contains unknown compound which causes panting increased heard rate, seizures and death
Human vitamin supplements w/iron	can damage lining of digestive system, toxic to liver/kidney
large amounts of liver	can cause vitamin A toxicity, affects muscles and bones
Macadamia nuts	Contain unknown toxin which can affect digestive and nervous systems
Milk and other dairy products	Some dogs are lactose intolerant and it will cause diarrhea
Moldy or spoiled food/garbage	Can contain multiple toxins causing vomiting and diarrhea
Mushrooms	Can contain toxins causing shock and death
Onions and garlic (raw, cooked, powdered)	Can contain sulfoxides and disulfides which can damage red blood cells causing anemia
Persimmons	seeds can cause intestinal obstruction
Peaches and Plums	Pits can cause obstruction of the digestive tract
Potato, rhubarb and tomato plants, nightshades	contain oxalates which can affect the digestive, nervous and urinary systems
Raw eggs	Contains enzyme avidin which decreases absorption of biotin(a 'B' vitamin) causing skin and coat problems
Raw fish	Can result in a thiamine deficiency leading to loss of appetite, seizures
sugary foods	can lead to obesity, dental problems and diabetes
tobacco, yews, hemlock, belladonna	causing rapid heart beat, collapse, coma and death

jimson weed, chinaberry, morning glory	
Yeast dough	can expand causing painful gas and possible stomach rupture
antifreeze	can cause kidney failure
ant, slug or snail bait	can cause organ failure
Rat or mouse bait	can cause organ failure
Sugar free gum	xylitol is toxic to dogs
Dieffenbachia, philodendron & caladium	irritation to upper gastrointestinal tract
Amaryllis, daffodil, mistletoe, tulip, wisteria English ivy, alfalfa, beech, iris, honeysuckle bird of paradise, crown of thorns, castor bean	Irritation to lower gastrointestinal tract can lead to death
Foxglove, lily of the valley, oleander, monkshood	severe depressant effect on the heart

Play and Exercise

Free play and exercise is a valuable part of your NSD puppy's life. Before considering allowing your dog to free run, have playtime or exercise, **be certain your puppy/dog has not been fed** or consumed large volumes of water before he/she begins play.

Dogs by design of their bodies, can run into major health difficulties if they are allowed to run off leash after they have eaten a main meal. The types of exercise that mainly cause problems are heavy competitive ball chasing, chasing other dogs and rough play. Other activities that can cause problems would be running beside a bicycle, skateboard or jogging etc. (NSD puppies are not allowed to chase balls or play with balls, jog or chase skateboards or run alongside bikes).

Dogs that are allowed to have those forms of exercise after a meal can bloat up or even end up with intestines and stomach twisted so badly that they can die. A sensible adult human would not go jogging after eating dinner for similar reasons. At the least such exercise would be very uncomfortable and could cause vomiting.

Leash walking after a meal is relatively harmless in the good weather but extreme heat can cause the dog to over drink and then end up with stomach problems.

Rules to follow:

- The dog should NOT be fed for 2 hours prior to free running for the reasons mentioned above.
- Meal times should NOT immediately FOLLOW heavy exercise. The dog will need at least thirty minutes to cool down and feeding should not take place until the dog has stopped panting and has cooled off.
- Conversely, the dog should not be fed prior to free running for the reasons mentioned above.

- The venue for free running-off leash playtime is very important. It should be in a fenced in area, Ball diamond or tennis court or back yard is great. Not in the front yard unless it's fenced and some one can supervise the gate.
- Avoid fast flowing rivers, stagnant ponds, ravines, cliffs, lakes or roads.
- Check that other livestock or wildlife are not present. Duck, Goose and rabbit stool cause health problems in dogs.
- Dog should always be wearing his collar and ID.
- Jacket....NSD dogs should not be allowed to play or go to the bathroom while wearing their NSD jacket.
- Obedience protocol. Spend two minutes getting the dog to focus and do a stay exercise while you hold the leash. Better to establish your persona before you let the dog loose. Do leash recall and food reward prior to allowing the dog to run free.
- The routine of free running/off-leash exercise at the same venue may cause excitement and unmanageable behaviours due to anticipation. Barking, whining and restlessness while you are driving towards the play area can be expected. See NSD staff for advice on this.
- Allowing playtime in the house can promote bad behaviours. Dogs quickly forget their house obedience if they are constantly allowed rough housing with another dog. Interspecies play should be discouraged. The NSD dog should have respect for other pets/animals in the household. While cat and dog play seems cute, it can lead to major distraction and prey drive in later life. Dogs should be supervised while pet birds and small animals are free in the room. You can never be too careful. NSD staff will be happy to advise you on this matter.
- Swimming in Pools. Dogs and puppies should never be allowed to swim in pools. Once the dog is fully trained and has graduated, the recipient can decide if that's something that is safe for their dog. Dogs often become obsessed with swimming and could jump in a pool even if the child/graduate is attached. This could be a potentially serious accident.
- Kiddie pools filled with water are sufficient to allow the dog to cool off and enjoy the water.

Playing with Your Puppy

Firstly it must be said that working dogs and puppies being puppy raised can have just as much fun as any other dog. The types of play that we do not promote are mentioned for a reason. These same taboo "games" can **detract** from the personal relationship between dog and handler.

Taboo games initiate excitement either around the house or outside. Excitement can lead to challenging behaviours from the puppy. This is because he/she is usually off the leash and the handler has little control if the dog becomes over stimulated. Some games if incorrectly practiced can elevate the dogs status therefore confusing him.

It should be stressed that the best form of play is when two similar sized dogs that are height and weight proportionate can run, play and wrestle in a safe outdoor environment. It's fun for them and is unlikely to spoil the human/dog relationship. Ensure that both dogs are actually enjoying the play since if one is being bullied then it ceases to be fun and can even affect the future work of the dog.

Good Games

If you have time on your hands then the best way to interact with your dog is to do some training. This can be a renewal or reinforcement of his existing behaviours or teaching him new ones. This can be fun and also helps to engage him into learning and also helps keep him respectful of his handler. Even small children can work with a dog that's already trained. It just takes a little effort on the adult part to become more involved.

Retrieve can be fun: Choose an object/article that he will not see when he's out on the street working, so no footballs, no tennis balls or Frisbee's etc.

Permissible toys: The rubber Kong toy, a heavy rope toy, a nylon retrieve dumbbell and the Kong rope toy are all great. It's rare that you'll see any of those articles on the streets. **Keep clear rules of where play is appropriate:** No running or wrestling games inside and no rough housing dog play inside. Beware that rope toys in the house can pose a hazard if swallowed. Like many human toys some are more appropriate for indoor use and vice versa.

Hide and seek: This game is most effective with two people, one to hold the dog and one to hide. It's best not to tell the dog to **stay** and wait alone until he's called since this helps break down any future "out of sight stay exercises". If he/she thinks it's OK to come and find the handler when the handler goes out of sight then he can decide to choose how long he should wait before going to find. If the handler can't see the dog then how does he know if the dog stayed or not? It simply breaks down the consistency of training. With two people playing the dog should be held until given the command to "find her/him". A treat can be given by the person hiding when the dog is successful.

Plant pot hide and seek: Get half a dozen small plant pots or similar sized Tupperware bowls. Place them on the ground and place a treat under three of the bowls. Try to get the dog to find the treats and be discriminate which bowls he turns over. As he understands the game more then reduce the amount of treats. For advanced working, teach him to sit or place a paw on the bowl before you give him the treat. This is called passive indication and used when training bomb detector dogs. Some exuberant dogs may need to be on the leash at first so the handler can control the situation. Have the bowls in a line spaced about one foot apart and commence working from one end to the other, stopping only when the dog indicates a treat is there and practicing the passive sit when the treat is found.

Find the toy: Just like the hide and seek for a human. This only takes one person and the dog can go find the toy or treat. Always make sure the handler returns to the dog to release him from the stay position before he's allowed to go hunt for the object. Tips, always make sure no other food is available so don't use the kitchen to hide his treat and always make sure there are no other food sources in the in the area used for hiding the treat; i.e. Plates of snacks in the TV room etc.

Treat dispensing balls: These are commonly found on the market and great for entertaining a dog. Deduct the weight of any food used in the treat dispenser so the dog remains in top condition. Treat and food reward used during training should always be deducted from his daily allowance.

Plastic soda bottles: These are great for young puppies since they provide lots of stimulation plus at the same time they provide loud noise which will help in the future. Remove the plastic top so it's not swallowed and placing a few pieces of kibble inside will help puppy stay interested.....especially if a reward falls out very now and again. Plastic bottles should not be used after the age of 16 weeks since it may encourage the puppy to be indiscriminate when he sees bottles on the floor as he grows older. Puppies that may be used in wheelchair assistance dog programs will be more effected than most but best to be safe than sorry.

Soup bones: First buy the large thick beef bones. Choose the bones with the marrow still in them. Choose anything from 3" to 6" long and about 3" across. Ensure the opening is small enough that the dog cannot fit its lower jaw through. Their lower canines hook back and the dogs can easily get the bone stuck on their jaw resulting in an expensive trip to the vet to have it cut off. Firstly scoop out the marrow and throw it away. It can give dog loose stool. **Most importantly do not cook the bones.** My store sells about 3-4 bones for \$5 and its well worth the effort. Next prepare some instant brown rice and a can of cheap sardines or a can of wet dog food. Mix the boiled rice and canned dog food/sardines in equal parts. Then stuff the bones with the mixture and place in a zip lock bag and then into the freezer. When ever you're sitting watching TV or can't fully supervise your dog then give him one of these treats. They last for hours and are low in calories too. My dogs each get one every day when I'm relaxing or busy. The same bone can be washed and reused. Do not allow the dog to gnaw on an empty bone as they can chip or break teeth.

Undesirable Games

Undesirable games can be anything that elevates the dog's status and therefore leads to confusion of any kind. Undesirable games mentioned below are games often used by the police and military to boost the dog's confidence for future training as chase and attack dogs. This is quite the opposite of the way we would like our assistance dogs to behave.

Body contact games: Games such as child or adult wrestling and having body contact. Often dogs/puppies treat their human counterpart as another dog by using the same behaviours such as nipping, jumping on the human and vocalizing. If the dog believes he's human then he'll be more inclined to assert his dominant side during the play or at a later date.

Tug of war games: While it's fun to have a tug of war, the humans usually tire first. As we tire we allow the dog to take his prize and walk away. In the dog's eyes he seems to have won the game and now has possession of the trophy. Once he's done this a few times it will not belong before he chooses to guard his prize from the human, the same way as he would guard it against a predator or another dog. This is called resource guarding.

Chase games such as "keep away" and "tag": All taboo since they initiate prey drive. The last thing you need is for puppy or adult dog to begin chasing joggers or children playing. Playing the keep away game hones the dog/puppy's skills at **not** being caught when you most need him. Many dogs are very good at being recalled but if they by chance slip out of the front door they suddenly smell freedom and their attitude changes. They remember how easy it is to dodge a slow moving human and will only be caught when they feel like it.

Biking and skateboarding: For the reasons mentioned above your working dog/puppy should not be encouraged to follow people on a bike, scooter or skate board. Encouraging those behaviours can make the dog far more aware of these vehicles that we need.

Top Things to Remember:

Health, Safety and Behavioural issues.

1. **No off leash walking when out in public.** Puppies should always be wearing an ID collar and be on leash. No leash required for a fenced in yard or other secure area if free-play is the object of the exercise. Our dogs have no road sense and are just as liable to be hit by a car as any other dog.
2. **No riding escalators.** Owing to the coordination it requires to get a dog used to riding an escalator we request you avoid this activity. Toes and toe nails can be trapped and severely cut plus we wish to build the puppy's confidence and not make him fearful.
3. **No Jogging,** no running alongside a bike or a horse and do not allow puppy to follow kids on skates or skate boards and certainly no treadmills. The skeletal frame of a puppy under 12 months old is not designed for long bouts of exercise on hard ground. The bones do not calcify until around 7 months so joints are easily stretched which can be a major problem, especially in later life (carrying too much weight can cause the same effect).
4. **No excessive playtime.** The average free outside playtime for a puppy of any age is around 30 minutes. This is great exercise when playing with another puppy of a similar age and size. It is dangerous and not fun a younger/smaller puppy to be rough housing with a dog much bigger and heavier than himself. Do not allow puppies to play until they become exhausted! Once they begin to tire then allow just a few more minutes before playtime ends.
5. **No Competitive and repetitive game playing.** Chasing balls or Frisbee, heavy running with older dogs is physically too demanding plus can encourage the puppy to chase and be distracted by moving things (see section on toys and games you can play).

6. **No Swimming in Pools.** Dogs and puppies should never be allowed to swim in pools. Once the dog is fully trained and has graduated the recipient can decide if that's something that is safe for their dog and child.. Dogs often become obsessed with swimming and could jump in a pool even if the child/graduate is attached. This could be a potential serious accident.
 - a. Kiddie pools filled with water are sufficient to allow the dog to cool off and enjoy the water.
7. **No rivers, lakes, ponds and dirty water** should be avoided since it can cause illness. Stagnant water usually carries parasites and also can lead to bacterial eye or ear infections. Critters that inhabit wet areas also defecate and urinate in those same areas. Certain critter stool can be very dangerous to younger dogs.
8. **No human foods.** By giving your puppy human food you will encourage scavenging. The act of scavenging occurs simply when the dog looks at you begging for food or sniffs and searched the ground for dropped or discarded food. Giving human food will also encourage the act of counter surfing. Don't allow puppy to be in a position where he can have access to human food. Keep the dishwasher closed. Don't allow him to lick dishes that are stacked in there. When having a BBQ, put puppy safely in his crate so visitors who don't understand our program can't feed him tidbits. Keep garbage buckets tightly secure. If a puppy is successful at getting food in it once, he'll then be programmed for life.
 - a. Human food recommended for higher value training rewards are cooked chicken and hot dogs/wieners sliced very thinly. These to be used only on the advise of an NSD staff member. Most dogs work very well for kibble or freeze dried liver or chicken treats.
 - b. Mouthing. When rewarding the puppy with food please be careful how you present it. Puppies develop into being hard mouthed when the reward is given incorrectly. See your puppy class instructor about the correct method for food reward. If given incorrectly the puppy will soon be mugging you for food. This is painful and can lead to the dog being released from the program. Any form of snatching, grabbing or chewing on your hands is taboo but can be rectified if caught early enough. Any food reward that falls to the floor should be picked up by the handler since if puppy is allowed to gather it for himself he'll think that it's OK to do so anytime.
9. **No rough housing.** Please read the safe games to play with puppy. Dogs, adults or children should never rough house with a dog of any size or any age.
 - a. Dogs mainly use their mouths to play so quickly learn how to use their teeth to an advantage. It worked as a puppy in the nest and if encouraged it will work with people too! By encouraging game of rough housing you'll find it difficult to teach the more serious exercise of "Lay over". Most of the children who are matched with a service dog enjoy cuddling and resting with their dog. Often the dog will be encouraged to rest on the child too. Since this usually happens when the child is laying on the floor it is important that puppy raisers understand how important the no rough housing rule is. Some of our children are not able to defend themselves against a dog that's equal to their weight and able to chew their hands. It just doesn't help the bond between child and dog. Rough housing also elevates the dog's position in the family pack. Your children will find it harder to control him when he gets bigger.
10. **Public etiquette and NSD jacket.** Do not allow the puppy to go to the bathroom while wearing a jacket. When possible, the jacket should be removed while you request the dog goes to the bathroom. If you feel he needs to go, then find a suitable spot and remove the jacket before asking him to "Hurry Up" If you are an apartment dweller then there is no need for the dog to wear his jacket while you take him outside to the bathroom. If you intend to do a walk after he has been to the bathroom then put his jacket on after he was successful with the "Hurry Up" command.

If your puppy is on the leash, then you should expect good behaviour. Regardless of whether he's wearing the NSD jacket or not, he should be well behaved when meeting and greeting people (no Jumping up or chewing hands). His good behaviour should be expected at all times he is out in public, on leash and in or out of jacket. No meeting/greeting other dogs while he is on leash or wearing jacket. There will be times when a fully fledged service dog is in a public situation where the jacket is removed for comfort. **The dog should not associate the removal of the jacket with playtime or being allowed to do as he pleases.**

Practise leash walking in your home area while he is not wearing his jacket. This should help him understand his behaviour should be good, regardless of him wearing a jacket. On outings to malls, libraries and large shops he should wear his NSD jacket so members of the public understand why he's there.

Remember, you have no set right of access. The future of access to puppies in training is dependant on our own good manners when access is refused. Be polite, courteous and simply walk away. Feel free to pass on your experience to an NSD staff member so we can try to assist you for future problems with access.

Socializing Your Puppy

Socializing the National Service Dog puppy is extremely important, as the puppy must become accustomed to the sights, sounds and smells of our human world. The first two weeks that you have the puppy will require a substantial time commitment on your part. Spending the time to properly socialize the puppy at this tender age will get its life as an assistance dog off on the right paw ☺.

Public Etiquette:

National Service Dogs is a non-profit organization and relies solely on public donations to operate. It is vital that when socializing the puppy that the impression you leave with the public is a favourable one. Therefore, please be aware of these guidelines when in public:

Your Puppy Should NEVER:

- Sniff people, store shelves, restaurant tables or the personal belongings of others.
- Initiate contact with someone without permission
- Bark, whine, growl, or make any other noise which could be disruptive to those around you
- Groom itself in public. You should discourage the puppy from licking itself and excessive scratching
- Toilet in an area where people walk or sit. All droppings should be cleaned up and immediately disposed of in an odour tight bag. If the puppy has an accident in a public place, dispose of it in a trash can outside the public venue
- Rub against people at any time
- Be allowed to roam freely off leash in public, other than a designated fenced in off leash area
- **Puppy should never relieve themselves in jacket**

You Should ALWAYS:

- Ensure that the puppy is clean and wearing a National Service Dogs jacket for identification when working in public. This not only identifies the puppy, but also increases public awareness about National Service Dogs.
- When in public, have the appropriate identification indicating that the puppy is an assistance dog in training.
- Be polite to the people you meet

Watching for Stress:

There will be times when the intensity level of a particular situation will be too much for the puppy.

Signs of Insecurity:

- tucking the tail between legs
- pinning the ears back and excessive panting
- crouching down or trying to bolt away by straining on the leash
- toileting in public

If the puppy shows these signs, do not make a fuss over it. Show confident leadership and calmly back away from the situation and reintroduce the situation after it has built up a little more confidence.

In most cases, you will receive the puppy when it is about eight weeks of age. However, if it is older when it arrives, follow through with the same procedure for the first two weeks as you would follow for an eight week old puppy.

Socializing During the First Week: The first week of socialization should be done in your home and yard only. Praise the puppy and help it build as much self-confidence in its new surroundings as possible. The important thing is to “have the puppy with you”. It is not desirable to pet it continuously during this time, but do talk to it. Let it know it is wonderful if it is displaying appropriate behaviour and verbally correct it for inappropriate behaviour. Always be aware of the time since the puppy’s last trip outside. Remember, an accident in the house is a step backwards, so set yourself up for success.

Socialization during the Second Week: As well as continuing the first week socialization exercises, the second week of the puppy’s stay with you should consist of exploration beyond the confines of your house and yard. Begin to venture out into the immediate neighbourhood. The puppy will need to be on leash when out of your yard.

Socialization after two weeks of age: You will need to socialize the puppy in environments that have more distractions. Take it slow and do not overwhelm your puppy. Allow it to build confidence in itself and in your leadership. Follow the socialization table below to get some ideas of appropriate exposure. **Do not take your puppy on escalators or to fireworks.** If the opportunity presents itself introduce your puppy to people in uniform; mailman, police officer, security guards, transit personnel.

Mouthing and Nipping

Your puppy is at a very important stage of his growth, both physically and mentally. He will be interested in anything he sees and the only way to find out what something is could be to taste, chew or pounce on it. He could do all three at the same time!

Moving objects or people and animals are very attractive so they incite the most interest. Moving objects and living things are very interesting as they bear scent and are animated, or they taste good. Some even interact and show eye contact so they engage the puppy even if they don’t mean to. It’s hard for a cat or another dog not to look at the puppy when he’s acting up and trying to engage them in play. The more they look, the more the engagement lasts.

If it’s a living thing then the puppy is more likely to want to taste it and tasting leads to chewing. If a puppy doesn’t get a reaction then it will be more like to try harder to get a reaction by chewing harder, pouncing on and really trying to provoke a reaction. Of course not all reactions result in pleasure for the puppy and the best example I can think of would be a dog savvy cat, who immediately lets the puppy know who’s in charge. The puppy learns the lesson and steers clear of the “Boss cat”. He will of course test all cats in the house and pick on any weaker ones. Let’s apply the same scenario to people. Everyone knows puppies are cute and they lick and chew and they accept that fact. They move hands and fingers out of the way as they are chewed and then bring them back when they think its safe to do so. Meanwhile they teach a vital lesson to the puppy. If he chews hard enough he can enjoy this back and forth play of chewing. (Watch two puppies playing and they use this same action with each other’s mouths) Why can’t people be like the “Boss cat” and instantly let the puppy know that his chewing is not appropriate? One swift correction and the puppy will have learned his lesson. He may take a chance with the cat at a later date and get the same negative result so now we at least have consistency. For people it’s not as simple since there are some many different folks who handle the puppy and each with their own pain threshold so what will be a small nip or chew to an adult will be very painful to a small child or older and more frail person.

Let’s get this straight. Nipping and chewing is a common problem with puppies. It is also very inappropriate for them to chew and nip people. Allowing this teaches the wrong thing! Chewing and nipping should only be permitted when the puppy is biting and nipping his own toys and chews.....not people! Playing with another puppy of similar age and stature and one that has a

similar temperament is fine. They mouth and chew on each other and they will let each other know what the limit is. Remember, you are his leader not his equal!

Things that puppies think are appropriate are; chewing hands and fingers, toes etc. Chewing furniture, rugs, items on the floor, clothing when it is being worn or not, other animals, cats and dogs not equally matched in size, stature or temperament. Chewing leashes is very popular too. If they chew the leash as they walk along it will invariably turn into a tug of war with the leash. Normally just taking the leash out of the puppy's mouth only works for a second or two before he decides it's time to try again.

Let's sort out the mouthing and chewing problem out now before he's reached 6 months old and has permanent teeth and can hurt more than he does now.

Some of you will already know you have a problem with nipping and hard mouthing. Before you begin to address the problem let's check to see if the puppy is getting enough exercise and playtime to help him feel more relaxed. Many puppies chew and nip out of frustration since their exercise needs are not being met. If you are a part time worker then having the puppy cooped up in a crate while you're gone will give lots of time to sleep and store up energy. This energy needs to be relieved somehow or your puppy will always be hyperactive when he is finally allowed out and has some freedom. He needs time and exercise to alleviate the stored energy. Leash walking alone doesn't compensate for the "downtime" that he's had. He needs to romp, run and play unrestrictedly in order to feel relaxed.

As a 8-12 week old puppy he needs several 20-30 minute sessions per day "off the leash" in your yard or a large secure area. Sessions must be age appropriate and you should see a diminishment of energy as your session elapses. If he's still raring to go then he's not had enough free play. If you take him inside too soon then he's still going to be in the play mode and ready to terrorize the cat or any living thing that comes his way.....this includes, children hands, and other pets.

In addition to his free off leash play time a 10 week old puppy needs a 20 minute walk three times per day. You can plan to walk 10 minutes in any one direction and then 10 minutes more as you head back home. For puppies that are reluctant to leave the immediate home area then pick them up and carrying them away from the house before you set them down.....taking them to a different location by car then trying a walk usually works too. It can be hard work in the beginning but perseverance wins through!

Often a puppy may like to carry his own leash as a "comforter". You may allow this while he is behaving but if he turns it into a Tug of War then this behaviour must be stopped. You are in an ideal position to take control since he's on the leash. Simply tug the leash out of his mouth firmly and give a good strong command of "NO". Use a tone that indicates your authority....it's not a request, it's an order! If the puppy still thinks this is a game you are playing then your physical tug and vocal command were not strong enough and both should be repeated with just enough force to let him know you are not pleased. If you get a positive reaction then be sure to let your puppy know that you are please by giving him some vocal praise in a friendly calm voice. If you over correct then do not make apologies to the puppy.....let him think about his misdemeanour and make it up to him when he does something good such as walking well and focussing on you.

For inappropriate chewing and excessive animal play around your house then attached a cheap dollar store leash to his collar and let it drag around after him. If he begins his acting up with chewing hands or clothing or even other pets then give a hearty leash correction which is enough to quell his behaviour. Using the leash to correct him will save your hands and fingers from being chewed. Use a good firm "No" command at the same time as the tug so that he can associate the command and action. An efficient tug will get the result you desire. A weak or

inefficient tug will only cause the puppy to think you are playing games with him. He should be left knowing that you are displeased with his unwanted behaviour.

Remember, a tired puppy is a happy puppy.

Socialization Table

Age	Location	Crowd level	Duration	Potential Distractions
8 weeks old	Home	Family only		Vacuum
		Family only		Hair dryer
		Family only		music
	Yard	Family only		
9 weeks old	Immediate Neighborhood	One on One	20 min	Neighbors
		One on One	20 min	neighbor's pets
	Car		20 min	
10 weeks	Park	Low traffic	20 min	ducks, dogs
to 12 weeks	Museums	Low traffic	20 min	people
	Liquor Store	Low traffic	10 min	shelves
	Drug Store	Low traffic	10 min	shelves
	Streets	Low traffic	20 min	Low level traffic
	Coffee Shops	Low traffic	10 min	food on floor
	Post Office	Low traffic	10 min	people
	3 months	Ice rink/rec center	League game	1 hr
to 6 months	Library	Moderate traffic	30 min	Kids sections
	Streets	Main routes	10 min	heavy trucks, motorcycles
	Movies	Matinee	2 hours	popcorn on floor
	Mall	Moderate traffic	30 min	crowds, slippery floor
	Restaurants	Low traffic	30 min	food on floor
	Public transit	Moderate traffic	30 min	Vehicle noise
	Grocery stores	Moderate traffic	30 min	shopping cart
	Park	Moderate traffic	30 min	animals, kids
	Sporting events	Moderate traffic	30 min	sitting under seat
	Work	Quiet area	30 min	coworkers
6months	Movies	high traffic	2 hours	popcorn on floor
	Exhibitions or Carnivals	high traffic	1 hour	loud noises
	Shows/Plays	high traffic	2 hours	applause
	Park	Peak times	1hr or more	dogs, kids screaming

Grooming Equipment

Daily brushing will help puppy get used to being handled without a fuss. The grooming equipment is specific to various coat lengths.



Long Coated Breeds such as Golden Retrievers: Steel Comb to comb all over the body and through the feathering behind the ears and on the back of all four legs. Next use the slicker brush across the entire body.

The Slicker Brush. For shorter coated breeds such as the Labrador and Lab x Golden Retriever a steel comb to comb the entire body then a Zoom Groom will drag out loose hair loose hair and put a shine on the coat,





Never ever use a De Furminator or any other grooming tool that will strip out the coat. Dogs have a top coat and an undercoat. Stripping out the coat can leave the skin exposed to the sun and to the cold weather.

The Following toys are **Prohibited** as they can be ingested, destroyed, cause internal injury or become impacted or cause problems with distraction during training.

Stuffed toys.

Deer Antlers.

Shoes or clothing.

Balls of any size.

Baked or Smoked Bones.

Squeaky toys.

Laser point torches.

Rope Toys.

Pull Toys.

The following toys are **Approved**. Even approved toys can be detrimental if their use is not supervised or the size is too small for the dog playing with them. (IE: small breed or cat toys being used to entertain a large breed dog). Puppies may outgrow the size of the toy offered.

Approved toys are;

The LARGE Black Rubber Kong. Stuff with treats.



The Kong Stuff-A-Ball. Stuff with treats and will self dispense. Not a round toy....has external ridges to place treats.



Nyla Bones. Fat bone shaped large size only.

Busterball treat dispenser. Will keep puppy entertained but needs supervision.



The Jolly Ball. No throwing this toy!



Training Your Puppy

Early Developmental Period: The first three months of a dog's life are very important and this is the time period when the puppy's basic behaviour patterns are developed and the seeds of his adult personality are planted. Since dogs are unable to understand our language and intellect, it is up to us to communicate with them on their level. For a National Service Dogs' puppy to learn the appropriate relationships with people and other dogs, as well as confidence in new situations, it is imperative that the puppy be properly socialized during the early development period (with other animals i.e. other puppies, dogs, cats, and be exposed to wildlife- squirrels, ducks, etc.). The puppy should be discouraged from looking, chasing or attacking other animals.

Pack Leadership: By instinct puppies are pack animals and therefore abide by the laws of pack hierarchy or "pecking order". A puppy does not understand the concept of equality, but only the clearly defined leadership structure, which a pack environment offers. When the puppy is first brought into your home, it is joining your family's "pack". From the beginning, it is important that you do not allow the puppy to assume that it is dominant over you. It must be made to realize that you and your family are above it in hierarchy of your pack and that it is a subordinate. Attempting to live with and train a puppy who believes it is dominant over you is at best difficult and will ultimately lead to failure. Displaying good leadership will make training the dog easier, and also offer it a sense of security.

The puppy is at the socialization phase of its development and therefore it is considerably easier to project yourself as its leader than it would be later on in the puppy's life. By demonstrating the following leadership characteristics and practicing the exercises given in the manual, you will establish yourself as someone the puppy will respect and look to for guidance:

- Demonstrate good posture, stand straight and tall, by bending forward you are mimicking a puppy's play bow and sending mixed signals
- Be confident with your voice and body language
- Praise and reward the puppy for following the house rules and for paying attention to you
- Be consistent with your expectations and in your use of praise and corrections
- Never become angry at the puppy

Remain objective and don't lose your temper. It is normal puppy behaviour to chew, nip, jump up; but it is up to you to teach the puppy to refrain from doing these things with people. If you show too much negative emotion, the puppy may become afraid of you. It is important that you retain this leadership posture throughout your puppy raising experience, and not just for the first few weeks. The puppy's responsiveness towards you will continue to increase, if you continue to develop and demonstrate your leadership skills. Remember, strong leadership commands respect.

Praising Appropriate Behaviour: Praising appropriate behaviour is an excellent form of positive communication with the puppy. Not only does it increase the likelihood that it will repeat the behaviour, but also your leadership status will increase and the puppy will enjoy listening to you and your commands. The following are the many types of praise, which the puppy will respond to:

- A soft, gentle, encouraging voice
- An enthusiastic, encouraging voice
- A bright smile
- An expression of approval
- A light physical touch
- An enthusiastic petting
- A game or reward with toys and treats

Appropriate Treats to Give the Puppy:

- Store bought treats
- Liver treats
- Kibble

*It is important that while using treats to train the puppy that the treat be very small and soft so the puppy can remain focused. A treat that is too big or hard to chew will distract the puppy from the task. A treat that is too small will be hard for you to manipulate and wind up on the floor as a huge distraction for the puppy. See the recipes at the back of the manual for some great treats.

Correcting Inappropriate Behaviour: Barking, whining, nipping, jumping up and chewing are all examples of inappropriate behaviour which puppies of that age will display. Correction is a way of communicating to the puppy that what it is doing is not acceptable behaviour and that it must stop it. It is very important that when using correction that you remain objective and not show negative emotions, such as anger or frustration. This will only frighten and confuse the puppy and it will not enjoy working with you.

- **NOTE:** In the first few weeks of training, do not use correction as a method of getting the puppy to respond to specific commands. Showing and praising are much more effective training methods during this period.

Consistency in your use of correction will make it clear to the puppy what is expected and it will be able to make the association between what is and what is not an appropriate behaviour. Also, timing of the corrections is very important because even after a few seconds delay, the puppy may not understand what you are correcting it for. As soon as the puppy has stopped the undesirable behaviour, praise it. The puppy may not respond to a verbal correction on occasion. If you ever have difficulties, please speak to an NSD trainer immediately. ***NEVER RESORT TO HITTING OR SPANKING THE PUPPY!***

Formula for Success!

Congratulations, you have your puppy and you are now a volunteer. Please try to adhere to our methods of training and our rules on etiquette. The training regime and lesson plan will help you and your puppy progress through the levels of obedience skills and experiences that are age related. This formula will only work if you are consistent in your teaching methods. The methods we adopt during the puppy's formative months are linked to the methods used by our trainers, so it's important to stick with the program.

It is crucial that the puppy be introduced to new experiences, the concept of change, adaptability and exposure before the age of 25 weeks. Many studies indicate the cut off point as being much earlier but providing you start gently and early you should be successful. It's rather like toddlers who enter kindergarten earlier are proven to do better in later life than those who stay at home until they enter grade 1.

Tip: In any one week period your puppy should at a minimum experience **age appropriate**, a 30-45 minute daily leash walk, 3 x 30 minute mall walks, car rides, restaurant/cafe visits (see socialization schedule for appropriate outings). Excursions to hockey/soccer games, libraries, pet shops etc. Please provide as many different positive experiences for your puppy. If you can fit in train and bus travel too that will help enormously since many of our clients will use the school bus and may use other forms of public transport. Walking in different weather is also important. Wet weather heightens the sound of noise at the dog's level so he must get used to walking along roads during all weather conditions. Gentle introduction is required!

Tip: Free playtime is good for the puppy. It helps him relax and shake off the stresses of the day and helps prevent boredom. It's better to set up a weekly play date with an NSD puppy of similar age and temperament than to visit dog parks. Choose a safe and secure, fenced in environment where the puppies can come to no harm. At dog parks you could encounter dogs of uncertain character that may harm or bully your dog, thus leaving him scarred mentally for life (see also the section in feeding related to playtime/exercise and time of meals). Your puppy does not need to play with another dog to have a good time, so there is no need for a daily doggy playtime. An enclosed schoolyard or suchlike is equally as good. If you live in an apartment then free playtime in a secure area is essential to your puppy's well being and your sanity! The exercise level and endurance for each puppy varies. Puppies should be allowed a 20 minute to 45 minute playtime daily or several times per week. Avoid competitive exercise where your pet dog and puppy compete in ball chasing since this encourages unwanted behaviours in later training. Jogging is not allowed since it encourages strong tension on the leash which counteracts the loose leash manners that we need. The puppy's bone structure does not calcify until around 6-8 months so untold damage may be caused if the puppy is over exercised during this important period.

Generalizing Commands

With all the commands that we expect the puppy to learn, there is also an expectation that he will give positive responses at any time and in any location, no matter what distraction is present. Very often we hear how beautifully the puppy behaves and responds at home but when he's out in public he "seems to forget" his responses. It's not really that he forgets the responses but more commonly that he has not been educated enough to know that he's expected to perform WHEN EVER or WHERE EVER you require him to do so (despite if he is wearing his jacket or not). This all comes with practice.

Getting Started

Just like children, puppies learn better in the classroom environment. Your class room may be your yard, your basement, garage or your kitchen. It doesn't really matter but make sure there are few distractions that will prevent him from learning. **Once he has learned a command and is responding 100% of the time in the classroom then choose another location of your property and practice those same commands/exercises.** If all goes well then move yet again. Don't move venues until his responses are 100% in the latest venue. Daily or twice daily sessions will help puppy learn more quickly.

Moving On

When your puppy is reliable and responsive to the commands then consider taking him out in public. Again, choose a quiet location and one that's as free from major distractions as possible i.e. don't try to practice leash walking in schoolyard full of children on the first occasion. That may be possible when he's older but he's not ready for that now. Ideal venues for changing the location and trying out his skills are; schoolyards on a weekend, Home Depot/Rona early on during the weekday, a church hall when no-one is around and eventually the mall at 10am on Sunday mornings. When entering a new venue allow a minute or so for the puppy to absorb the atmosphere before starting the lesson. Always start with the focus exercise as your first lesson since it will help him understand that he's working. If you can remember the format of the NSD training classes then this is a good regime to follow since it progresses naturally from focusing through to the more sedentary exercises as the puppy settles down.

As he gains experience at behaving in various quiet locations then begin to increase to busier times and locations.

Controlling the Environment

Where ever possible try to control the environment that you are working in. When you are starting to progress to busier conditions then it is wise to have a plan. For instance you may be working in Home Dept/Rona teaching focusing in a quieter area. If you are successful then try some leash walking through the busier areas. If you keep on the move you'll keep your puppy's attention and give the public less time to become involved with him. This will help him from learning that other people can easily be attracted. If he learns that petting and praise can be given by passers by then he'll want that each time he sees someone new and it will make life more difficult for you.

Socialization without Contact

While we wish the puppy to be socialized in public environments it's not a good thing for him to be adored by everyone who sees him. As a small puppy he will draw crowds who will want to know more about him and be interested in why he's wearing a jacket. It will not take long for the puppy to realize that he's special. Try to discriminate what is a healthy balance for you and the puppy. If you stop and chat to everyone then the flow of the lesson will be spoiled and he will learn to be distracted by people. Learning to acknowledge people without being rude is an art in itself. Tip! If you don't wish to stop and chat then don't make eye contact with the puppy's admirers. If you are caught out then smile sweetly and chat to the puppy as you keep moving. Staying engaged with the puppy will make it difficult for the public to break into your lesson, just as you'd wait for a conversation to end before you'd ask for directions from two strangers. The public will admire you more for doing a good job at training your puppy than they would if they see you struggling to keep control of him while you stopped to chat. See Meet and Greet in the training section. Level 2.

Be prepared

Last, but not least, always be prepared. Before embarking on a trip out with your puppy ask yourself if its age appropriate for the puppy to go on the trip. Does your puppy have the level of socialization and obedience skills to give a good impression to other members of the public? Will he be comfortable or overwhelmed with the experience you wish to expose him to? Some experiences can leave a lasting permanently damaging effect on the puppy. Please consult the training staff before taking your puppy to public processions where big bands and drums or where fireworks may be present. Always carry clean up materials, wet wipes, poop bags with you on your walks and trip to malls etc. Please use them if your puppy makes a mistake. Most complaints that service dogs schools receive are in connection raisers failing to clean up the dog's mess. **If the accident occurs in a mall, be certain to wipe the floor with a wet wipe and take the contents to an outside refuse bin** and under no circumstances leave them in an indoor bin. Mall cleaning staff should not have to deal with that kind of litter!

The Positions

From all of the exercises we expect to teach the puppy during his formative months, there are two basic positions that all other exercises will grow from. These exercises are the sit position and the down position. The stand position will be covered in level 3 of the training course.

Homework

Take the time to review the Level 1 Exercises for Puppy Class. Learning the focus, sit and down command before coming to your first class is very helpful. If you make it a part of your daily routine then you are more likely to get the practice in you need. For example have him sit before going outside or eating, down when you sit in front of the TV or computer.

PUPPY CLASS MATERIAL

LEVEL 1 EXERCISES FOR PUPPY CLASS

See glossary for instructions for each exercise. Following the lesson plan will improve each puppy's concentration and help raisers become comfortable in the format of the exercises. Upon entering class position yourselves as far away as possible from other puppies in the class. Concentrate on your own puppy and educate them about why there should be no play or interaction with other puppies in the class. Weeks 1-6 should follow the same format each week to help establish a good grounding in basic manners and levels of obedience. By following the same weekly format, handlers and puppies gain confidence.

All of these exercises are the foundation for all of the training the NSD puppy receives. We replicate this information in the puppy classes in Cambridge and/or London.

- (1) **Focus.** 2-3 mins.
- (2) **Follow.** 2-3 mins. individual.
- (3) **Focus.** 2-3mins.
- (4) **Sit.** 2-3mins.
- (5) **Focus.** 2-3mins.
- (6) **Down.** 2-3mins.
- (7) **Puppy recall.** (on leash) individual.
- (8) Grooming, including physical examination, on and off a table. Exercise may be repeated.
- (9) Round Robin. To include health and general issues.

In week 3 of level 1, some exercises and titles will change as handler and puppy gain experience so the "follow" should become a leash walking exercise with the dog on the left. The sit and down exercises will become sit stay and down stay exercises. The titles of these exercises should change to reflect the same so the title Sit and Down should be changed to Sit Stay and Down Stay. The "follow" exercise title will change to leash walking.

LESSON. FOCUS ON THE HANDLER

Age group. 8 weeks until return for training.

The objective is to have puppy focus on the handler in all situations. Checking in and offering eye contact to the handler lets the handler know that the puppy is engaged and interested in him/her. Being focused will help the puppy filter out unneeded information when he is working. Since the puppy will eventually become a service dog, it is important that he is socialized in public venues/environments. If the puppy was to notice each and every item of every situation then his brain would become overloaded. Because of the amount of visual and auditory stimuli he could easily become distracted or concerned with things that he need not be aware of. Therefore, we look to having the puppy socialized without interaction.

Example to help describe the focus and filtering.

While driving along a country road the driver sees a car in the distance. He notes which side of the road it is on. His brain takes note and registers the vehicle and makes a decision whether or not he should take any further action. If the vehicle was on his side of the road his brain would inform him to react and avoid the oncoming vehicle. If the vehicle was on the correct side of the road the driver's brain would inform him that no action was required. The entire thought process and reaction time for both situations was a split second. It took only the merest glance to register what should or should not be done. The driver did not need to analyze the situation further. He did not need to check the colour of the car, how many passengers, how many wheels, large or small, rusty or clean etc. This is irrelevant information.

In the same manner we expect the puppy to walk through situations and filter out the un-required information and exclusively listen to the requests/commands/praise that the handler issues. If this process occurs then we have a wonderful situation where the handler and puppy are working in unison, impervious to the hustle and bustle of everyday life and the people around them. Since we are dealing with puppies that will be inclined to look and become distracted it is the handlers purpose to engage the puppy and condition him to filter out the distractions of life. If the handler is doing a good job the puppy will only have eyes for him. Handlers must be more interesting than the outside world that can be so appealing to a puppy. I always mention about the party theme. If I am having a party as I walk along with my puppy and we are both having a great time engaging in each others reactions then we have no need to look elsewhere for fun. If I am boring my puppy or ignoring him then he will look for an alternative recreation. If he sees a party that he would be rather be going to then he will try to engage with the members of the other party.....UNLESS I decide to have a bigger and better party. If I am more interesting than those around me then my puppy will want to stay with me!

In order to engage the puppy into the world of the handler it is important to show him the rewards for his attention. Rewards may be food, tactile petting/stroking, verbal or tangible (toys and play)! The advantage to food reward, if given correctly, is that it is quick and interesting to the puppy. Also, since it is quick, it gives more opportunities to repeat the exercise and it holds more of an interest than toys or physical praise. Since we can control the puppies food intake, we can always with-hold his meal prior to the training period, hence gearing towards the handler being more interesting and the puppy more attentive.

Physical and verbal praise should always be included in the lessons since we also need to condition the puppy that touching and being spoken to should not over stimulate him. He should accept all praise and reward with out becoming over enthusiastic, yet he should understand fully that he is being rewarded. If the puppy is not aware that he is being rewarded for doing the correct action or showing the desired behaviour then the learning process will be slower.

The actual exercise

Handlers and their puppy are spaced as far apart as possible so that the puppies do not engage in play/barking behaviour. Place the leash under one foot approximately 18" from the collar end. Wait for the puppy to settle and if it looks at your face or in that general direction be quick to say "YES" and follow up quickly with a food reward. Spend 5-8 minutes with this exercise constantly repeating the reward for eye contact. If eye contact occurs then put the words "Watch me" to the action as it occurs. So, "Yes...watch me" would be the appropriate phrase. Remember we are marking the behaviour as it happens and not asking the puppy to "watch me". Avoid requesting the puppy to watch since we are using positive reinforcement methods for behaviour that is offered by the puppy. We can of course gear the puppy into watching us by tapping him on the head, blowing in his ear, pulling his tail or anything that engages him with the handler. Food in a clenched fist may also be used for puppies that show little interest in the handler. Be careful not to allow food to be seen, such as the offer of a treat between the fingers. If this method is used then the puppy that does not see the food will often choose to ignore the handler. Food should be the reward for showing the desired behaviour and not the cause of it. I.E. He will only obey and be interested in the handler if he sees the food. A leash prompt may be required to capture your puppy's attention.

In extreme cases of very distracted/barking puppies then it may be necessary to work with the puppy and handler in solo. **Once the exercise has been executed with good result in a quiet environment** then the puppy and handler will return to the small group of classmates keeping him well away from the nearest puppy in an effort to maintain focus.

Food reward! See this explanation about hiding food as apposed to showing the food reward between the fingers. Your employer does not stand in front of your desk all day long waving \$ notes to keep you interested in your work. You work all week long with the knowledge that your pay cheque will be there on Friday. Having \$'s in front of you would distract you from the task that you were meant to be doing and the same co-relation of food and the puppy applies.

When it appears that the puppy is offering eye contact consistently, move forward to requesting the puppy to give you eye contact by saying "Watch me". If the puppy complies, then consider the exercise successfully taught and keep up with the reinforcement.

This exercise should be covered regularly in order to keep it hot!

Since dogs learn more quickly when they are rewarded, some dogs find self rewarding systems that may block the progress of the behaviours you are teaching. If a dog engages another dog in eye contact and play or barking then both animals may gain reward from the situation. If allowed to continue then one or neither of the dogs will progress to engaging eye contact with or even acknowledgement of the handler unless the chain of events occurs or the spell is broken. The level of control needed will be determined by the sensitivity of the dog in question. Even sensitive dogs may present extreme behaviours.

Considerations when administering control should include the environment, the people in the environment, leash or training equipment and the power of the food reward. **Being quietly firm** and in control is better than having a loud public display of dominance. While many undesirable behaviours seem cute when the puppy is small, those same behaviours are objectionable or even painful when he weighs in at 70 lbs. Its always easier to address issues earlier rather than later.

The Perfect Focusing Puppy

The perfect puppy is sitting or is in the down position while on a loose leash, close to the handler and repeatedly offering eye contact to its handler. The perfect puppy ignores other dogs and people in the class and has eyes only for his handler. He never lunges, nor barks or pays any attention to anything else that's going on in the class. When dogs pass by, he may look, but he

will check in with the handler to see what he should be doing or he may be looking for an acknowledgement that he is doing the right thing. The perfect puppy is easy to love!

The Perfect Focusing Handler

The perfect handler engages the puppy into his world. He acknowledges the fact that his puppy looked up at him for guidance and reassurance that he is doing the right thing. He rewards on time, each and every time the good behaviours are offered. He never misses an opportunity to praise and reward and he is always aware that there is "another party" happening somewhere nearby and he should create a diversion and offer a "better party" if the puppy stays with him. He is quietly firm at those moments when he needs to be and he is quick to react when his puppy responds. Most of all he is consistent in how he deals and responds to situations therefore making it easy for the puppy to understand the rules and games that his master plays. The perfect handler is a joy to work with.

LEVEL 1: TEACHING THE PUPPY TO SIT:

Since you are starting with a new puppy then the lure of food may be used. Luring is when the puppy actually sees the food in your hand. Often within minutes of learning the game of following the lure, the visual lure may be dropped and the food hidden in the palm of your hand. Each puppy is different and some take longer than others to grasp the concept. If extra smelly food treats are used, they often learn the game quicker. I use the word "game" on purpose, since we really want the puppy to enjoy learning and if he thinks of it as a game then all the better. Lessons should be fun for all parties. He's more likely to become engaged in learning if it's fun too.

Have the puppy on a collar and leash to prevent him from walking away. Show him the food treat and as he reaches forward to get it, raise your hand slowly and move it backwards above his head. Keep your hand at a level where he can sniff the food and continue moving it upwards and backwards slowly. If you are doing this correctly, the puppy should sit! Bingo! Open your hand quickly and reward the puppy as you utter the word "yes" in a quiet but friendly tone. The morsel of food should be quickly eaten. No doubt he'll get up and move around so when he does try to repeat the exercise. Try to get around 10 repetitions of him sitting before ending the exercise. Try to have 3-4 more lessons such as this over the course of the day. Short and sweet is the key! If puppy loses interest after 5 or so repetitions then end the lesson but next time make sure he's hungrier. For the first two days of lessons there's no need to use the command sit. You're simply programming the puppy to follow your hand and then go into the sit position. By the third day you can start to add the word sit as he performs the action. As his body moves backwards into the sit position say "Sit" which should now teach the puppy what he is doing. Refrain from asking him to sit at this point. He needs more confirmation from you as he performs the action. Within a couple of days of you adding the word sit, he may be bright enough to work out that sitting gets him treats. If this is the case then you may start to use the command sit in order to get the position. If the puppy regresses, then go back to the stage when he performed it well and move forward more slowly the next time.

LEVEL 1: TEACHING THE PUPPY DOWN:

Once the puppy responds well to the sit command, then try working on the down. Same principles apply. Don't ask him to go down, just try to get the position down repeatedly before adding the word down. Firstly, get the puppy into the sit position (by luring him and before rewarding him for the sit) move your food hand down between his front legs almost under his chest and he should shuffle backwards a little to get to the food. Keep your hand down on the ground if he is slow to follow it down. Be patient until he goes down or you could try to lure him down again. If he didn't follow your hand down then he probably isn't focused so try to recapture his attention with the food hand. Push your hand further towards the floor will help him go down further. When and only when both elbows are flat on the floor does your reward hand open.

Often he'll sit up again after he's finished eating and that's OK for now. Simply use this method to get him back into the down. 10 or so repetitions (from sit to down) 2-3 times per day should be enough for him to grasp the game.

HAND SIGNALS OR VISUAL CUES:

In both the sit and the down position your hand movements become visual cues to the puppy. He is of course keen to watch them since one of them contains his reward. **Visual cues and food** should be given throughout level 1 puppy classes. Once your puppy knows the commands for sit and down and performs these positions 100% of the time, then we can move on to more complex exercises. Inability to perform the sit and down will impede his progress. Tip. Raising your hand in front of the puppy should invite him to sit. Lowering your clenched fist to the floor should invite your puppy to go down.

Tip: Buy a food reward pouch that attaches to your belt. You can have your food already broken up and ready to give as a reward without taking the time to break it up while he waits. If you're working around the house you can wear your pouch and use the reward system to help with good behaviour.

COMPULSION TRAINING:

Working with a puppy can become frustrating, especially if you feel he is not getting the idea quickly enough. While teaching these early lessons, never ever **push** the puppy into a sit or down position using your hands. This will encourage the puppy to avoid your hands and is aptly called "avoidance behaviour". The puppy may learn to sit or lay down on command but will do so grudgingly simply to avoid the unpleasantness of you pushing him around. We are seeking to teach the puppy to offer good behaviours in return for food reward. At a later stage we may need to introduce compulsion handling but it's usually as a last resort or to control a dangerous situation. Your early lessons are neither of those things!

LEVEL 1 PUPPY RECALL

The recall itself is the act of the puppy returning to the handler on command and taking the most direct route to that handler. The object of the exercise is to have the puppy respond to his name and the command come. Teaching basic recall responses at an early age will help in the level 2 stage. **Equipment required;** Collar, leash, food reward.

The handler should hold the leash at all times. Allow the puppy to range to the end of the leash and call his name to get his attention. If the puppy looks toward the handler then the handler should back away slowly encouraging the puppy to follow. Physical cues such as patting the leg or the ground may be used too. If the puppy moves toward the handler then use the command come as the handler backs away. The puppy should continue to head in the direction of the handler on a loose leash. While the puppy is en route to the handler several positive commands of Come, come, come, come may be given. Have an out stretched hand with puppy chow in it visible to the puppy. As the puppy gets closer to the handler then the handler should slow down and present the closed hand to the puppy's nose and lure him in closer. The command come may continue while the puppy is traveling towards the handler. If the puppy successfully reaches the handler then the food hand should open quickly to reward the puppy at the same time taking hold of his collar. Once the puppy understands the reward system then try to lure the puppy into a sit position in front of the handler prior to giving the food reward.

- The puppy should be coming toward the handler while on a loose leash. The leash should never be taught like a fishing line with a fish on it!
- If the puppy becomes distracted or ceases to be traveling en route to the handler then the command come should be discontinued. A re-directional command or sound should

be used to regain the puppy's attention. Once the puppy responds to the re directional command then the use of the command come may be resumed.

If the command come is used as a way of trying to gain the puppy's attention then it will quickly cease to be of any value. Similarly, using his name to regain his attention will lead to him eventually ignoring his name (See Re-directional words)

Since positive reinforcement is our aim, it is important that the command come is only used while the puppy is performing the request. If this rule is not adhered to then the learning process will break down.

***Re-directional command/words would be “hey”, “no”, “leave it”, spoken in a sharp tone.**

Since often the puppy becomes so engrossed in his distraction, a leash prompt may be required to regain his attention. If any leash prompt is administered, a verbal re- directional command should be given at the exact same time so that the puppy associates the physical prompt with the verbal cue.

A leash prompt, if given, should be at a level that is sufficient on its first attempt to be successful in regaining the attention of the puppy. If too weak a prompt is given then the puppy will become immune to it and if it is too strong then the puppy may become afraid or fearful. The handler must quickly learn to adjust the level of prompt required to capture the attention of the puppy. Our staff and training assistants will demonstrate leash prompts.

Once a leash prompt has been successful, the puppy should receive lots of good incentives such as food reward and verbal praise.

In week 3-4 the trainers/training assistants may lead your puppy away from you to help increase the distance of the journey back to you. The leash should remain on. As the puppy returns the handler should pick up the leash as they give the food reward. Keeping the puppy's attention with food while the handler picks the leash is imperative.

LEVEL 1 THE FOLLOW EXERCISE

The purpose of the "Follow" is to teach the puppy basic leash respect, concentration, focus, the laws of pack leadership and the reward system.

This exercise will help the new handler learn what behaviours are and are not acceptable.

Ultimately the command Heel will be the cue for the puppy to assume a position on the handler's left hand side. This exercise is a preliminary leash walking exercise.

In the early days you spent time allowing the puppy to lead you around while he got used to the new collar and the strangeness of the tension of the leash. He learned quickly how he now has restrictions and maybe even rebelled against them. You sympathized with him and made allowances while he sat and whimpered or chewed the leash, stopped to sniff etc. While it was an important learning curve for the puppy, it also provided him with opportunities to see what he could and could not do. For instance, he learned that if he sat still long enough lots of attention came his way. Maybe he got to walk in the direction he wanted to go in instead of following you. Other people felt sorry for him so they stopped to pet him so he may already be a puppy who knows how to draw a crowd.

Equipment required: Collar, leash, food for reward.

Time for change! As a good foster parent it's time to take a leadership role. This exercise is very similar to the Level 1 recall. The main difference is that the handler will be walking backwards for a minute or so with out a break. Unlike the recall there will be many changes of direction to help

the puppy maintain focus. The puppy should follow closely on a loose leash. The handler and puppy will work closer to distractions such as other puppies but not close enough for them to engage in play or even strong eye contact. The handler should also maintain a more constant walking speed for a longer period of time to help maintain the puppy's attention. If puppy becomes distracted then re directional commands and leash prompts may be administered as required.

Loose Leash Walking - The beginning "Loose Leash Following"

- The handler should hold the leash at all times. Allow the puppy to range to the end of the leash and call his name to get his attention. If the puppy looks toward the handler then the handler should back away slowly encouraging the puppy to follow.
 - Physical cues such as patting the leg may be used too.
- If the puppy moves toward the handler then use the command come as the handler backs away. The puppy should continue to head in the direction of the handler on a loose leash. While the puppy is enroute to the handler, several positive commands of Come, come, come, come may be given.
 - Have an out stretched hand with puppy chow in it visible to the puppy.
 - As the puppy gets closer to the handler then the handler should slow down and present the closed hand to the puppy's nose and lure him in closer.
 - The command come may continue while the puppy is traveling towards the handler.
- If the puppy successfully reaches the handler, then the food hand should open quickly to reward the puppy.
 - Once the puppy understands the reward system then try to lure the puppy into a walking position on the left hand side of the handler (Handler walking forwards) prior to giving the food reward. If the puppy will walk for a few paces next to the handler then food reward should be given. N.B. the puppy should be coming toward the handler while on a loose leash. The leash should never be taught like a fishing line with a fish on it!

The advantages of practicing loose leash following are that the handler can see when the puppy is distracted and can work on regaining his attention. He is in a good position to see what the puppy is doing and act accordingly. In turn the puppy should learn that the handler is in control and that it is the handler who should be followed and not the other way around. With the dog following the handler as he walks backwards the dogs sees the reward and learns the principles quicker. It also helps encourage eye contact since being in front makes it much easier for the puppy to look directly at the handler.

Once the loose leash following has been perfected the handler may soon begin walking normally. It's often advisable to begin with walking backwards for just a few paces until puppy knows the lesson is in progress at which point normal walking may be commenced. It takes only a simple right turn to have the handler start walking correctly and the puppy should immediately join him on the handler's left hand side. If the puppy is rewarded frequently for being in that left hand position he will always prefer to be there.

Normal forward walking with the puppy on the left should be expected **by lesson 3 of level 1**. Once normal forward walking is the norm, the come command should be replaced with the command "Heel". Come will then be reserved for the recall exercise.

Eye contact! If your puppy constantly looks up into your eyes then consider this perfection and reward accordingly.

The perfect handler when loose leash walking can always manage to maintain a loose leash and will always give leash prompts and verbal encouragement when required. The perfect handler always rewards eye contact and will reward the puppy for being in the correct position. He anticipates distraction and changes his walking pattern to help maintain the puppy's focus.

The perfect puppy when loose leash walking follows well and intently shows eye contact and ignores distraction. Of course he will never pull when on the leash and respects the handler's decision to change direction.

LEVEL 1 GROOMING AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION:

The purpose for this exercise is many fold. It will help puppy to gain confidence with being examined and help prepare him for visits to the veterinarian. It will help the the handler gain confidence in dealing with the puppy in public situations. It will help with the handler bond and also establish a structure of social dominance from handler over puppy. Daily grooming will help establish this and keep puppy looking well cared for. Daily/weekly examination will help prevent and monitor the health of the puppy and will help for future times when treatment or medications need to be administered. Nail trimming can be done at puppy class but please pre-warn staff that your puppy needs his nails trimmed.

Grooming:

Equipment: Be guided by the puppy staff at NSD as to which type of grooming tool is required. Many grooming tools can strip coat out very efficiently but may do harm to the skin and also remove much needed undercoat. Generally a brush and comb are all that is required. Your dollar store has some cheap but adequate brushes. Choose a tool with a hard bristle brush on one side and long silvery pins on the other. Choose a metal dog comb that has both large and small gaps. The comb may be used for grooming and also for cleaning dead hair out of the brush. A slicker brush may be required for long coated breeds such as the Golden retriever. The slicker is usually square or oblong shaped and has fine pins. It can be used on both Labrador and Golden Retriever breeds safely.

Practical demonstrations will be covered in puppy class so it's wise to bring your grooming equipment along with you. It is advisable to have the puppy wear his collar and leash during early grooming sessions.

Health check and examination:

Place the puppy on a sturdy surface on a rubber mat. A low bench or unused table will be fine for this exercise. He should always be wearing his collar and a leash to help control him as you examine him. I always advise lifting the puppy so he understands that he is not required to jump on or off the table at will. Have a few treats available to help comfort him and also to help maintain his attention. Keeping the leash short will help prevent accidental falls which could ruin his confidence. At all times keep two fingers hooked under his collar while you work over him.

- Start by lifting his lips and checking his teeth. In the early days stick with a gently kind yet firm approach. Lift both sides to see that they are nice and white or not broken.
- Move on to checking into his eyes and wipe away any excess discharge. Clear discharge is normal. Thick yellow discharge sometimes indicates an infection.
- Progress to lifting his ear flaps and note any smell or dark brown waxy substance down in the ear canal. A healthy ear should be a normal skin pink color. Unhealthy ears often show patchy redness in the ear or on the inner ear flap. Next place a few drops of ear cleanser on a cotton ball and wipe out the inner flap. Do not poke the cotton ball down into the ear and do not squirt liquid cleaners into the ear canal. This can damage the natural flora of the ear.
- Next take one of his front paws and gently massage it. This sometimes provokes play mouthing reaction and should be gently stopped ASAP. Puppy has to know who is in charge. Try the other paw once he's settled. Note the length of his nails and if required arrange for a member of puppy staff to trim for you. Long nails can damage the foot and also be painful to humans. There should be no sharp hook on the end of a manicured nail.
- Run your hands over his body from front to back and feel for lumps and bumps.

- Rake your fingers from tail to shoulders checking his skin for a natural color and fleas or other parasites.
- Feel down the back legs and work your way down to his back feet and massage his toes.
- Lastly lift is tail and then gently feel it all the way to the tip.
- Practice sitting him and laying him on one side and then the other so he becomes used to manipulation.

During these exercises handlers should expect to be able to examine the puppy without being chewed or having to wrestle with him. Be kind to those puppies that are hesitant and be kind and firm with those who may challenge your authority. A calm approach is needed for all puppies regardless of their demeanour. Food treat rewards may be used during this exercise but if they incite excitable behaviour then reduce to prevent undesirable behaviour.

Once you can perform this process then try out with someone else while you hold the collar and leash simulating an examination by a veterinarian.

Once finished the calmly lift the dog to the floor.

Practical demonstrations will be covered at puppy class so they'll be lots of time to learn the technique.

The "Leave it" Exercise/Command.

Stage 1

The leave it exercise falls into two main categories. Very often we don't use the command until we actually have some small crisis that requires a human response or intervention. It is more beneficial for the command "Leave it" to be taught in advance of it ever being needed. It is also important that when teaching the puppy the command that the handler can successfully gear the exercise, so that the level of distraction is within the puppy's attainability. If the power of the distraction is greater than the rewards offered by the handler then the puppy may choose the distraction over the reward. When staging a distraction exercise take into account the age of the puppy and the type of distraction being used. Most importantly ensure the puppy is good at the focus exercise before embarking on adding distraction or the team may fail on both exercises. The puppy should be capable showing good eye contact and should be attentive in a quieter environment before moving to a busier one. Remember you are gearing for success! When reward is mentioned it's easy to assume that we mean food reward. Rewards come in various disguises. Eye contact from another dog or someone talking to him as they pass by, is a distraction but can become a reward if the dogs are allowed to interact or the person stops to pet the puppy. Once our puppy in training, gets these external rewards it makes keeping him focused much harder. In short, what ever reward the handler gives, MUST be above the level of reward that the distraction has to offer. Often a level of control needs to be administered to regain the focus and attention of the puppy. This is called a leash prompt. Leash prompts vary in strength from a mere twitch on the leash to a strong tug depending on the age and size of the puppy and the severity of the distraction. In all circumstances the handler should remain calm and in control, not allowing frustration or anger be part of the scenario. Advice and demonstrations of leash prompts is best sought from the instructor at the NSD puppy classes. Rewards from the handler should be vocal, physical, toy or food based. When using physical reward ensure that the physical reward does not over stimulate the puppy to become excited. Vocal and physical rewards should simply confirm he's on the right track and not encourage him to veer from the task in hand. Same goes for toy reward.

Teaching for stage 1

The initial segments of the focus exercise should begin the same as always. Once a good span of focus and eye contact has been achieved, then the mild distraction should be added. An instructor standing 6 feet away and gradually moving closer to the team is a good way to

start. The instructor will not make eye contact or encourage the puppy in any way since this act in itself can be a reward. It is most important that all rewards come from the handler. If the dog becomes distracted the instructor should remain still until the handler gets the puppy refocused. In the event of the puppy becoming unresponsive to the handler the instructor should take a pace back to allow the opportunity of refocus. Where the dog still fails to respond, the handler should give a leash prompt. It is best to assess how responsive the puppy is to the leash prompt, before using the "leave it" command. When the handler becomes familiar with the level of control required to refocus and control the puppy the command "leave it" should be given. The reason for this is to ensure that lots of commands are NOT given before there is a response, thus wasting commands and allowing the puppy to disobey the command "leave it." It's highly important that when the command is given that the puppy responds quickly. It is equally important that a reward should follow the response as quickly as possible so that the puppy understands he did well. The tone of the voice should be firm and spoken at a volume you'd expect to use when in a conversation with a friend. Shouting and yelling does not help the puppy to understand any better and also draws attention to yourself and the situation.

In short, use a firm, strong tone coupled with a leash prompt until you see a positive response from the puppy. As soon as a good response is seen, then change to a sweet and positive tone and use food reward if possible which will help to refocus the dog.

Over the weeks in level 2, the power of the distraction level will increase to a point of someone being able to stand right next to the puppy without him showing interest. It is important the puppy receives no reward whatsoever from the person who is the distraction.

Stage 2

Very often the "leave it" command is required once the puppy has something in its mouth and we require him to drop it. This is quite different to using the command as a deterrent to prevent an action, as opposed to the puppy actually needing to perform a physical action of spitting the article out.

Teaching for stage 2

- Place the puppy on a leash in a quiet environment. Have your food reward pouch close by.
- Offer the puppy one of his toys and allow him to take it. Don't allow puppy to range too far away. Call puppy to you and show him a treat. As he reaches to take the treat, the toy should automatically fall from his mouth. As he releases the toy, give the command "leave it".
- Repeat this ten times twice per day until the puppy connects the command with the treat. It shouldn't take long before this happens. The same result can be found if you try to take the object from his mouth. Offer the treat in one hand as you take the toy with the other at the same time saying "leave it". Puppy should soon automatically release the toy in order to get the treat. Tip! Never embark on tug of war with the toy. If the puppy shows little interest in the food then increase the value of the reward to something he really wants, such as tiny pieces of dried hot wieners etc.

Test the theory once he's grasped the idea and try standing up straight while he's holding a toy. Give the command and see if he understands how to drop the toy. Be ready to give an immediate vocal "YES" followed by food reward. The positive word for use as a reward is "YES" once he's grasped the meaning of the command and "Leave it" to request him to drop an article

Nothing in Life is Free

The NILIF program is remarkable because it's effective for such a wide variety of problems. A shy, timid dog becomes more relaxed knowing that he has nothing to worry about, his owner is in charge of all things. A dog that's pushing too hard to become "top dog" learns that the position is not available and that his life is far more enjoyable without the title.

It is equally successful with dogs that fall anywhere between those two extremes. The program is not difficult to put into effect and it's not time consuming if the dog already knows a few basic obedience commands. I've never seen this technique fail to bring about a positive change in behaviour; however, the change can be more profound in some dogs than others. Most owners use this program in conjunction with other behaviour modification techniques such as coping with fear or treatment for aggression. It is a perfectly suitable technique for the dog with no major behaviour problems that just needs some fine tuning.

ATTENTION ON DEMAND

The program begins by eliminating attention on demand. When your dog comes to you and nudges your hand, saying "pet me! pet me!" ignore him. Don't tell him "no", don't push him away. Simply pretend you don't notice him. This has worked for him before, so don't be surprised if he tries harder to get your attention. When he figures out that this no longer works, he'll stop. In a pack situation, the top ranking dogs can demand attention from the lower ranking ones, not the other way around. When you give your dog attention on demand you're telling him that he has more status in the pack than you do. Timid dogs become stressed by having this power and may become clingy. They're never sure when you'll be in charge so they can't relax. What if something scary happens, like a stranger coming in the house? Who will handle that? The timid dog that is demanding of attention can be on edge a lot of the time because he has more responsibility than he can handle.

Some dogs see their ability to demand attention as confirmation that they are the "alpha", then become difficult to handle when told to "sit" or "down" or some other demand is placed on them. It is not their leadership status that stresses them out, it's the lack of consistency. They may or may not actually be alpha material, but having no one in the pack that is clearly the leader is a bigger problem than having the dog assume that role full time. Dogs are happiest when the pack order is stable. Tension is created by a constant fluctuation of pack leadership.

EXTINCTION BURSTS

Your dog already knows that he can demand your attention and he knows what works to get that to happen. As of today it no longer works, he just doesn't know that yet. We all try harder at something we know works when it stops working. If I gave you a twenty dollar bill every time you clapped your hands together, you'd clap a lot. But, if I suddenly stopped handing you money, even though you were still clapping, you'd clap more and clap louder. You might even get closer to me to make sure I was noticing that you were clapping. You might even shout at me "Hey! I'm clapping like crazy over here, where's the money?" If I didn't respond at all, in any way, you'd stop. It wasn't working anymore. That last try -- that loud, frequent clapping is an extinction burst. If, however, during that extinction burst, I gave you another twenty dollar bill you'd be right back in it. It would take a lot longer to get you to stop clapping because you just learned that if you try hard enough, it will work.

When your dog learns that the behaviours that used to get him your attention don't work any more he's going to try harder and he's going to have an extinction burst. If you give him attention during that time you will have to work that much harder to get him turned around again. Telling him "no" or pushing him away is not the kind of attention he's after, but it's still attention. Completely ignoring him will work faster and better.

YOU HAVE THE POWER

As the human and as his owner you have control of all things that are wonderful in his life. This is the backbone of the NILIF program. You control all of the resources. Playing, attention, food, walks, going in and out of the door, going for a ride in the car, going to the dog park. Anything and everything that your dog wants comes from you. If he's been getting most of these things for free there is no real reason for him to respect your leadership or your ownership of these things. Again, a timid dog is going to be stressed by this situation, a pushy dog is going to be difficult to handle. Both of them would prefer to have you in charge.

To implement the NILIF program you simply have to have your dog earn his use of your resources. He's hungry? No problem, he simply has to sit before his bowl is put down. He wants to play fetch? Great! He has to "down" before you throw the ball. Want to go for a walk or a ride? He has to sit to get his lead snapped on and has to sit while the front door is opened. He has to sit and wait while the car door is opened and listen for the word (I use "OK") that means "get into the car". When you return he has to wait for the word that means "get out of the car" even if the door is wide open. Don't be too hard on him. He's already learned that he can make all of these decisions on his own. He has a strong history of being in control of when he gets these resources. Enforce the new rules, but keep in mind that he's only doing what he's been taught to do and he's going to need some time to get the hang of it all.

You're going to have to pay attention to things that you probably haven't noticed before. You don't have to use standard obedience commands, any kind of action will do. If your dog knows "shake" or "spin around" or "speak" use those commands. Teach him to go to his bed, or other designated spot, on command. When he goes to his spot and lays down tell him "stay" and then release him with a treat reward. Having a particular spot where he stays is very helpful for when you have guests or otherwise need him out of the way for a while. It also teaches him that free run of the house is a resource that you control. There are probably many things that your dog sees as valuable resources that I haven't mentioned here.

The NILIF program should not be a long, drawn out process. All you need to do is enforce a simple command before allowing him access to what he wants. Dinner, for example, should be a two or three second encounter that consists of nothing more than saying "sit", then "stay", then putting the bowl down and "OK" to release him to eat.

ATTENTION AND PLAY

Now that your dog is no longer calling the shots you will have to make an extra effort to provide him with attention and play time. Call him to you, have him "sit" and then lavish him with as much attention as you want. Have him go get his favourite toy and play as long as you both have the energy. The difference is that now you will be the one initiating the attention and beginning the play time. He's going to depend on you now, a lot more than before, to see that he gets what he needs. What he needs most is quality time with you.

NILIF DOES *NOT* MEAN THAT YOU HAVE TO RESTRICT THE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION YOU GIVE TO YOUR DOG. The NILIF concept speaks to **who** initiates the attention (you!), not the amount of attention. Go ahead and **call your dog to you** 100 times a day for hugs and kisses!! **You can demand his attention, he can no longer demand yours!**

Within a day or two your dog will see you in a whole new light and will be eager to learn more. Use this time to teach new things, such as 'roll over' or learn the specific names of different toys.

If you have a shy dog, you'll see a more relaxed dog. There is no longer any reason to worry about much of anything. He now has complete faith in you as his protector and guide. If you have a pushy dog he'll be glad that the fight for leadership is over and his new role is that of devoted and adored pet.



Skills for NSD Puppies (8 weeks-12 weeks)

Please focus on these skills during the first 12 weeks of your NSD puppy's life.

Focus/“watch me”. Dogs must pay eye contact when asked. Dogs that freely offer eye contact should be rewarded with a treat and a “yes” or “nice” affirmation.

“Sit”. Puppy must know both the hand signal (palm up, hand open) as well as the verbal command. Place treat above puppy's head and move back towards puppy's tail until puppy sits. Capture the moment with “Yes” and treat.

“Down”. Puppy Raiser uses hand signal (palm down, hand open) with treat in between fingers to lure puppy down (bring treat down slowly between puppy's paws to lure down).

“Settle”. Puppy Raiser holds puppy in their lap with all four paws facing outwards. Position the puppy's spine against your chest. Speak quietly and softly to the puppy & rub its belly. Once the puppy has settled & calmed down, give the puppy a small treat. Continue to hold it like this for 30 seconds to a minute while it remains calm. If puppy struggles and whines, stop everything and wait (while holding the puppy and looking away). Once puppy submits, begin soothing and affirming the puppy again. Do this often as it will help teach the pup to trust you and abandon all control.

Gentle “Take it”. Puppy must learn to inhibit the use of their teeth when taking treats from handler. Food given from the palm of the hand will slow down the take and eat it process, but not enough to detract from the connection of the reward.

“Leave it”. Using kibble in palm of closed hand, tell puppy to “leave it”. Once puppy moves head back/away from hand (leaving treat alone), handler treats from the left hand (not the floor). Please note: Puppy must not be permitted to scavenge anything from ground at any time

Follow. Starting at 9 weeks while holding leash, handler steps in front of puppy while puppy sits and “watches” handler. While holding treat between knees, handler moves backwards while using the command “come” “come” “come” or “puppy” “puppy” “puppy”. Puppy should follow handler (without jumping). Once handler stops, puppy should sit calmly in front of handler. Be certain to capture the moment with an enthusiastic “YES”.

“Stay”. Handler commands puppy to sit/down. Once settled, the handler signals stay (palm and hand open showing “stop” and takes one step backwards and then quickly returns to puppy

and acknowledges with a “good stay”. Repeat. Dog should remain planted until handler returns. Duration Goal for skill is 30 seconds.

■ **“Stand”**. Handler places hand (with treat between thumb and 2 fingers) in front of dog’s nose and pulls treat slowly back away from puppy’s nose. When puppy’s bum is off floor, handler affirms action with “yes”. Puppy must not take steps forward but rather “stay” still.

■ **“Down + stay” and sit + stay**. Dog should go into sit/down position because handler uses hand signal. Handler then shows “stay” hand signal (palm forward, fingers spread indicating stop). As puppy learns skills handler can begin to move to the right and left (as a distraction) and puppy must remain in a down stay. Duration Goal for skill is 30 seconds.

■ **Vocalization**. Starting at 9 weeks, the puppy should be discouraged from barking/whining to demand attention. See instructor during class if dog consistently exhibits this barking behaviour.

■ **Handling during Feed**. Starting at 9 weeks, ask the puppy to sit and wait prior to eating of their food. Upon release word of “Ok”, puppy can begin to eat but should also be handled freely by puppy raiser so that they become comfortable with physical touch (touch face, ears, tail, paws)

Foundational BenchMark Skills for NSD Puppies 3-6 months old

The following are the benchmark skills that all NSD puppies need to master during the first 6 months of life with their NSD Puppy Raiser. There is also a video entitled Foundational BenchMark Skills for NSD Puppies 3-6 months old.

■ **Focus/“watch me”**. Dogs must pay eye contact when asked. Dogs that freely offer eye contact should be rewarded for each attempt to engage the handler. As mastery occurs, reduce the giving of food as treats and offer physical touch or verbal affirmation more and more often.

■ **Sit + Stay**. Dog should be able to “sit” on vocal command only (without luring). Handler begins teaching the concept of sit + stay while standing 1 foot away. Once dog can remain sitting in the same position (without moving or getting up), handler can begin moving to the left and right (which functions as a distraction). Duration Goal for skill is 2 minutes. Add in more people and more dogs as distractions as skill improves. Handler should eventually train the same skill in an outside environment once dog meets duration goal inside..

■ **Down + Stay**. Dog should be able to go into down position on vocal command only (without luring). Handler begins teaching the concept of down + stay while standing 1 foot away. Once dog can remain in the same position (without moving or getting up), handler can begin moving to the left and right (which functions as a distraction). Duration Goal for skill is 2 minutes. Add in more people and more dogs as distractions as skill improves. Handler should eventually train the same skill in an outside environment once dog meets duration goal inside. (Remember to ask dog to remain in a “down stay” when handler is preparing food in Kitchen. We especially do not want dog to be permitted to remain under foot as meals and snacks are prepared).

■ **Stand + Stay**. This skill is developed just like the sit + stay and the down + stay (see above more details).

■ **Recall**. Using a long leash as a tool, handler finds a safe space to practice the recall command. Handler walks back 6 feet and says “come” (once). Handler should first teach dog to recall back to sitting in front of handler and then ask dog to move to a heel position. As they become more proficient, dogs are permitted to go directly to heel position from the recall (no sit in front). Once they have mastered recall in a quiet inside setting, progress to recalling with distractions outside in a controlled environment. Mastery Goal for skill occurs when puppy can be recalled (command is given once) during playtime with other dogs present.

■ **Leave it.** Begin by using kibble in palm of closed hand, (handler says “leave it”) and waits for puppy to move head/nose away. Once puppy moves head back from hand, leaving treat alone, handler treats from the left hand. Once dog understands “leave it” with a closed hand, handler puts kibble in palm of open hand (and directly under dog’s nose), and says “leave it”. When dogs moves nose away, mark the action with “Yes” and treat dog (from other hand) in a timely fashion.

■ **Generalized “Leave it”.** Once puppy has mastered the “leave it” command detailed previously, the “Leave it” command should be applied in almost any setting (usually around 5 months). “Leave it” should be applied for example to cats, other dogs, children, strangers, trying to get on the couch, food on the floor, trash cans etc.

■ **Meet and Greet.** Dog to remain calm and in the sit or down position while being greeted by one stranger (with varying levels of greeting excitement from greeter). Continue to encourage the puppy to focus on the handler and not the stranger. Add in more people and more excitement when puppy can remain calm while being greeted.

■ **Door etiquette.** It is expected that the dog should learn to sit at doors before going through. The dog should not proceed until handler gives the “forward” command.

■ **Pick up leash.** The handler should be able to pick up and drop the leash while the dog is in the stay position without the dog getting up or becoming excited or moving until commanded.

■ **Leash walking.** Puppies to walk on left hand side with a loose leash, showing regular eye contact with handler. Handler to reward each offer of eye contact. Be certain to add in distraction(s) once puppy can remain in the heel position in a quiet setting.

■ **Time Alone (in Crate as necessary).** While all NSD puppies should be crated during the evening while they sleep, each should also learn to enjoy their crate during the day. Please make a special effort to leave puppy at home for longer periods of time. 1 hr - 3 hours alone in their crate is certainly acceptable). Each puppy needs to be learn how to be confident so that they enjoy being alone while Puppy Raiser is not home.

Intermediate BenchMark Skills for NSD Puppies (6-12 months old)

The following are the Intermediate BenchMark Skills that are developed with all NSD Puppies ages 6-12 months. There is also a video entitled Foundational BenchMark Skills for NSD Puppies 6-12 months old.

Under. With handler seated, the dog is requested to lay under chair quietly. The dog should also be taught to go under a table confidently. Duration Goal for this skill is 2 minutes. Dog should be comfortable laying in a variety of tight settings (airplane, buses, trains all have uniquely small spaces so please practice in as many different settings as possible).

Lay Over. With handler sitting on the floor/ground, the dog should lay over the handler's thighs for as long as possible. Progress from a few seconds to longer periods. Duration Goal for this skill is 2 minutes (without dog getting up).

Visit. With handler seated on a chair, the dog rests his chin on handler's lap. Visit can also occur while handler sits on ground. Duration Goal for this skill is 2 minutes (without lifting head up). Handler should also be able to raise both hands in the air and wave while dog remains with head down.

Go to Mat. Handler asks dog to "sit". Once dog is in a "sit" position, handler assumes a position that is half way between dog and mat. Handler, using a broad sweeping motion with their hand and arm, instructs dog to "go to mat". Dog should go directly to mat and lay down (handler may initially have to give the down command once dog is positioned on mat). Dog should "go to mat" when handler is preparing meals so that dog is not under foot in the kitchen.

Go visit. Handler asks dog to "sit". Once dog is in a "sit" position, handler assumes a position that is half way between dog and chair. Handler, using a broad sweeping motion with their hand and arm, instructs dog to "go visit". Dog should go directly to chair and put chin on empty chair. Once dog can hold position on empty chair for 2 minutes, trying asking a stranger to sit in the chair. Dog must walk 6 or more paces unaccompanied to a stranger and perform the "go visit" exercise as described above. Duration Goal for this skill on a stranger is 2 minutes.

Food refusal. Dog is asked to ignore a high value food item placed on the floor in front of them. Dog is never allowed to take the item off the floor. Duration Goal for this skill is 1 minute.

Meet and Greet. Dog to remain calm and in the sit (or down) position while being greeted by a stranger. We encourage the puppy to remain focused on the handler and not the stranger. As puppy matures, we expect the puppy to show less and less excitement toward the stranger. With steady exposure and positive affirmation, puppy is expected to remain calm when greeted in public settings by 12 months.

Recall. While outside (in a safe setting and while using a long leash as a tool) handler walks back 12 feet and says “come” once. Puppies should recall back to handler and then go immediately to a heel position. Mastery for skill occurs when dog responds promptly to first command outside with multiple distractions present.

Leash walking. Dogs must learn to walk on left hand side with a loose leash and without a halti, showing regular eye contact to handler. Handler rewards offers of eye contact, with treat, positive encouragement or physical affirmation. With consistent effort and positive affirmation, dog is expected to develop self control and be able to hold the heel position despite distractions. Dog should NOT sniff ground while leash walking (handler should use “leave it” command).

Down/Sit/Stand at a distance. Handler leaves the dog in the sit position and walks four - eight steps away. Using verbal and hand signals dog, is asked to sit/down/stand from a distance. Be certain to add in distractions once puppy can sustain each position for 2 minutes. (while handler remains at a distance)

Head Halter Mastery. NSD puppies should learn how to wear a head halter comfortably. These are not usually issued until the puppy raiser has taught the puppy leash manners (loose leash walking) and the puppy is not pulling on the leash. Make sure puppy can remain in a heel position with and without the head halter. Handler should help the puppy learn to feel comfortable while wearing halti by introducing it for short durations of time at first (30 seconds, then followed by a high value treat). Handler could also feed the dog while he wears halti.

Vest Mastery. NSD puppies should learn appropriate behaviour while in vest/jacket. While in vest, puppy should be calm, walk on a loose leash and remain as obedient as possible for their age. Puppy should never be toileted while in vest.

Time Alone (in Crate as necessary). While all NSD puppies should be crated during the evening while they sleep, each should also learn to enjoy their crate during the day (and entertain themselves quietly). Please make a special effort to leave puppy at home for longer periods of time (3 hr - 6 hours alone in their crate is certainly acceptable). Each puppy needs to be learn how to be trustworthy out of their crate for longer periods of time as they mature too. Puppy should enjoy being alone while Puppy Raiser is not home.

The Visit

Definition of Visit. The dog must rest his chin on the lap of a seated person and hold that position until told otherwise <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-1RKaQ23oc>.

Procedure

- The handler sits in a chair and has the dog on a loose leash sitting directly in front or directly beside the handler
- Hold the food reward hidden in clenched palm
- Holding the treat low and to the outside of your leg, encourage the dog to drape his neck over your knee to take the food reward (it doesn't matter which direction he chooses to approach)
- Follow the verbal reward "YES" with a timely food reward.
 - As you give the reward, add the word "Visit" to that the puppy learns the term for this behaviour
 - For this exercise, more than any other, your timing is crucial.
- Try to increase the duration of his chin on your lap but providing timely food rewards. The longer the puppy keep his chin pressing onto your leg the better!

Under (Table/Chair)

OBJECT: The object of the exercise is to teach the dog how to lay quietly under the table or chair when in a Restaurant or Cafe. The command will always be “**under**”. The spot the dog has to lay down is dependant on the style of table and the space available. A hand signal should direct the dog to go under either the table or the chair simultaneous to the command “**under**”!

Four Legged Table

With this type of table, there should be ample space to lay the dog at the handler’s feet so he is under the table.

Procedure

- Begin with the dog sitting on the left side of the handler
- Using a food lure, lead the dog to the front of the handler’s legs and lure dog into down position (the lure for getting the dog down can be quickly dropped once the dog is comfortable and eventually the lure that leads him to the front can be intermittent). Frequent rewards throughout the time under the table should be given to reinforce the **down position**.
 - If a dog is fidgety, the handler may choose to keep the leash under his foot at a length that will prevent the dog from popping up. Frequent food rewards may help or sometimes detract from the ideal behaviour, so handler should monitor and make the decision to reward or not.

Round Table

When a table is round and has a central stem with a broad base there will be less floor space available. The handler may choose to have the dog lay under the seat with his head and shoulders protruding between his legs and his body under the chair.

- Have the dog lay “down” on the left of the seated handler.
- Handler then lures from side leading the dog beneath the chair and subsequently towards the front (food in the left hand will help this happen more easily than rewarding with the right hand).
- With the handler’s guidance, the dog should crawl easily under the chair. Handler should stop dog from moving when head and shoulders are suitably positioned. Handlers should use the command “under” as dog is lured into the correct position.
 - When exiting the table, the dog should remain in a “down stay” so he remains in place. Once the handler is ready, the dog may be recalled to the heel position and asked to sit. The handler may then direct the dog to follow as desired.

Tip;

If the dog is under the chair be sure to have the dog crawl forward before he stands up as the handler exits.

Tip;

Having a dog with good restaurant behaviour will help keep the restaurant owner and his patrons happy.

Tip;

If there is a choice of seating, choose one that has no fallen/uneaten food on the floor as this will distract the dog and teach him to scavenge.

Tip;

Avoid booths. A booth may have a central stem table leaving no way to work with the dog under the seat so avoid these during training. Once the dog is proficient, the handler may choose to practice in a booth.

Lean Over. *Handler over dog!*

The object of the exercise is to have the dog lay down as the handler is leaning sideways over the dog and resting one hand on the floor.

The purpose is to condition the dog to accept close body contact as a pleasurable experience. Light weight pressure may be applied when dog is comfortable but certainly not full body weight. This behaviour will help the dog become used to a child resting on it while relaxing. The only command needed will be “Down” with the addition of “Stay” if required.

Procedure

- Have the dog lay down and relax with one rump directly on the floor.
- The handler should sit next to the dog and lean their body gently next to the dog while resting the hand on the floor.
- Gradually through time, the handler’s body may get closer to the dog until the dog is accepting the lightest pressure of the handler’s arm as it drapes over the dog.
- The duration the handler should aim for is approximately 5 minutes or more.

Faults

The dog must not get overly excited or present it’s belly for rubs. The dog should not lay on its back and pedal in excitement as it could scratch someone. Any mouthing or playfulness should be discouraged gently.

The “Lay Over” exercise. “Dog laying on handler”

The object of the exercise is to teach the dog to lay across the lap/ thighs of the handler. This will help the dog to lay on a child’s lap later life. The children often enjoy the feeling of pressure.

Procedure

- Begin with the handler seated on the floor with back to a sofa. Have the dog lay next to the handler and using a food lure encourage the dog to crawl across the handler’s lap and lay still.
- Use the command “ **Over**” as the luring begins. It may be a gradual process until the dog becomes used to it.
- Try a left to right lure until the dog is in the down position on the handler’s lap. Once the required position is achieved keep the food lure hand still to hold the dog in position. Use frequent rewards to increase the duration of the layover.
- Aim for and build up to a time of 5 minutes. Frequent rewards may be needed to keep the dog in position. Food rewards can be replaced by gentle stroking.

Tip; When the exercise is over, try to end the exercise quietly so he exits from the lap in a slow and careful manner.

Stay at a Distance.... Down at a Distance..... Go to crate/to visit

- **The “Go” behaviour is useful in many aspects of the dog’s future work.** Each program has behaviours that require the action of the dog to leave the handler to do a task. The command “GO” is integral to that work.
- **The objective is that the dog, when commanded “Go” will leave the handler and perform a task while at a distance from the handler. The command “Go” should be accompanied by the word that describes the behaviour required. Go to mat, Go visit etc.**
- The puppy must have mastered the commands “Stay” and “Down” from a distance in order to most successful with the development of the skill “Go”... See **Stage 1** for a reminder of how to develop the skills of “Stay at a Distance” and **Stage 2** for “Down at a Distance”. Once the puppy has mastered these two commands at a distance, they may learn the command “Go”
 - A high value food reward will help speed up the process and food rewards should be kept large enough for the dog to see at a distance yet small enough to be consumed quickly (the size of treat may be reduced fairly quickly as the dog understands the concept that a treat will be on the mat or in the crate).
 - The treat should always be large enough that the dog does not have to sniff and search since this delays the behaviour of responding to the command “down”.
 - **A hand signal** will help direct the dog to go in the direction required. The hand signal should be used simultaneously to the verbal command “Go”.
 - Use the extended arm and hand to point in the general direction that the dog should go. Once he has the concept it is easy to add directional hand signals for right and left thus increasing control.

Stage One

“Stay at a Distance”

- Place the dog in a sit position directly in front of the handler
- Command the dog to “stay” by using a verbal command “stay” along with a hand signal. The hand signal should be a flat hand held up palm facing the dog in a “stop” signal.
- Repeat the exercise and move backwards away from the dog one foot at a time until you can get the dog to “stay” on the first command at a distance of 6 feet. The distance may be increased as time passes to 12 feet or more.

Stage Two

“Down at a Distance”

- Place the dog in a sit position directly in front of the handler and allow enough space for the dog to lay down comfortably in front of the handler.
- Command the dog to lay down by using a verbal command “down” along with a hand signal. The hand signal should be a flat hand waved downwards towards the ground with palm facing down.
 - Sometimes the dog may want to creep forward so you may use two hands...one to use the hand signal for “Stay” and the other to direct him to lay “down”.
- Repeat the exercise and move backwards away from the dog one foot at a time until you can get the dog to lay down on the first command at a distance of 6 feet. The distance may be increased as time passes to 12 feet or more.

Stage Three

Teaching the “Go to Crate” closely followed with “Go to mat”.

- Begin teaching by sending the puppy to a familiar space (so his crate is a good one to start).
 - Place a **MAT** or cushion in the crate (this is for the second part of the development).
- Sit the puppy approximately three feet from the entrance and stand with the puppy in the heel position
- Hold the puppy’s collar while you toss a food reward onto the mat.
 - While he is looking at the treat, let go of the collar and at the same time point to the crate/food reward use the command “Go”. Be certain to use a pleasant, non threatening voice yet one that shows authority
 - Once he finds the food reward, use the command “down” along with any other signals that he needs to get him to lay down immediately.
 - Once he has gone into the down position, another treat should be placed on the mat and tell him “**Good Mat**”.
- Once he has eaten this reward, take hold of his collar and command him to come while you go back to your starting point. Repeat.
- After a couple of repetitions, move another couple of feet back away from the crate /mat. Practice 6-8 repetitions 2 x times daily until he understands the concept and performs consistently. The expectation is that he will travel 10-12 feet to go and lay down on his Mat/Cushion in the crate.

Important! Never call the puppy to you from the mat. ALWAYS go and get him and bring him back to the starting point.

Please refer to the” Visit” lesson plan before attempting the “Go visit” . Only when the dog is proficient at the “Visit” should you attempt teach the “Go visit”.

Go Visit

The “Visit” exercise is designed to teach the dog to meet and greet people in a calm and docile manner.

It will help small children and people who are unfamiliar with dogs to pet the dog without fear of being licked or mouthed.

The objective of “Go Visit” is to have the dog leave the handler when directed and travel a short distance to a seated person. Upon reaching them, the dog should rest his chin on the lap of the person and holds that position until directed otherwise.

The dog must understand the “go” command. If the dog is not able to perform the “ **Go to Mat**” exercise then he is not ready to try the “go visit” exercise.

Tip #1

Food reward should only come from the handler so the dog does not anticipate treats from the person being visited. This will help cut down unwanted mouthing and excitability.

Tip #2

If the dog is over reactive to visiting a seated person, then the exercise can be taught using an unused chair. Teach the dog to visit a chair and keep his chin down then as time progresses increase the distance that he has to be sent.

Tip #3

A dining chair has the desired height for initial training but eventually practice using a an assistant in an armchair, sofa, even a bed. Teach the dog to visit a vacant bed just as he would a vacant chair since he should not jump onto a bed during a meet and greet/visit.

Tip #4

When dog is consistent with one assistant then change assistants (varying the gender, age and size). He should be able to meet anyone with grace and decorum. Practice with wheelchair users too since the dog needs to learn how to position himself differently.

Go Visit (1)

Procedure

Stage 1: To teach the “go visit” exercise the handler should coach the person/assistant who is to be visited. They should be advised not to do anything but sit still with hands folded. Please choose a friend or relative whom is understanding of what you will be doing since there maybe times when the handler needs to touch the assistant’s knees or lap.

- The handler should begin by leading the dog to the seated assistant and point to the lap (one can also lure the dog over the lap using treats just as they lured when they were teaching the dog in the early days).
- Holding the treat below the level of the knees on one side of the seated person while the dog is on the other side should encourage the dog to lean over and get used to ignoring the assistant.
- Once the dog makes the connection that it’s the same exercise he should soon learn to rest his chin peacefully. The handler may try allowing the assistant to gently pet the dog on the top of the head while he uses the verbal command “visit”. It’s best not to use their voice at this point as it will cause the dog to raise his head from the lap.
- The assistant may also be coached on how to point to their own lap but the food reward should still come from the handler. The handler may position themselves by the opposite side to the dog. It may take a few repetitions over a few days before the dog understands and is calm with the new concept.

Go Visit (2)

Stage two. With the assistant seated, place the dog on one side of the chair and the handler should be on the other side. The dog should be positioned a couple of feet away so he has to get up and walk to the assistant.

- The handler should give the command go visit and point to the lap of the assistant. When successful, the dog should be rewarded with high value treats while he keeps his chin down on the assistant's lap. Try for several repetitions 2-3 times daily to help progress the behaviour. Short and frequent training sessions are best for this exercise.
- Increase the distance that the dog has to walk to six feet or so. Try also to decrease hand signals or at least minimize them to make them more subtle. Use vocal commands often to reinforce and praise the good behaviours.
- Request the assistant to use gentle quiet voice "good dog etc". If dog becomes overactive then go back to the previous stage.

Go Visit (3)

Stage three. When the dog is consistently traveling to the assistant and resting his head with minimal direction from the handler (except for verbal commands) try this variation.

- Send the dog (3-4 feet) from different directions. The aim is to get the dog to approach from anywhere and any distance when directed. Use the same directional hand signal that was used to send the dog to his mat.
- Use verbal command and hand signal simultaneously. Gradually increase the distance from any direction. Increase to 12 feet as time elapses.

Advanced BenchMark Skills for NSD Puppies (12-18 months)

The following are the Advanced BenchMark Skills that could be developed with NSD Puppies ages 12-18 months.

Controlled unload/load in and out of vehicle

- Dog waited outside vehicle calmly until released
- Dog waited inside vehicle calmly under released

Approaching/exiting the building

- Dog stayed in relative heel position
- Dog stopped when handler came to halt
- Dog remains calm around traffic

Controlled entry through a doorway

- Dog offered sit when handler stopped at door's entrance
- Dog waited quietly at door until commanded to enter
- Dog waited on inside until able to return to heel position

Heeling through building

- Weaving
- Drop leash
- Demo "Halt"
- Dog maintains a distance within 2 ft. of individual while weaving and walking normally
- Dog readily maneuvered through tight quarters
- Dog readily turned corners
- Readily adjusted to speed changes
- Dog ignored distractions and focused on handler

Recall (6 ft. on lead)

- Dog responds readily to "come" command
- Dog remains under control and focused on individual during recall
- During recall dog comes within 1 ft of individual either in front or in heel position
- During recall dog comes directly to individual
- Dog responds promptly to first "recall" command

Sits on Command

- Dog remains composed with potential greeting (stranger solicits dog's attention)
- Dog remains composed while the shopping cart passed (3 ft. from dog)
- Dog remains under control around food (put plate of food beside dog)

Downs on Command

- Dog responded to command on first request
- Dog remained down and under control around food (dropped food on floor)
- Dog maintained down-stay while being stepped over by a stranger
- Dog remains composed with greeting from stranger

Leash Taken By Another Person

- Another person can take the leash and handler can move away (no aggression or undue stress on part of dog)

Noise and Dog Distractions

- Dog remained composed during exposure to various noise distractions
- Dog remained calm and under control while other dog walks past (6 ft. distance)

Food Distraction (in addition to sit and down)

- Dog is unobtrusive and out of the way of patrons/employees as much as possible while sitting in a restaurant atmosphere
- Dog maintained proper behaviour while in a restaurant type atmosphere (ignoring food)

Food refusal. Dog is asked to ignore a high value food item placed on the floor in front of them. Dog is never allowed to take the item off the floor. Duration Goal for this skill is 1 minute.

GREAT TREAT RECIPES

Hot Dog Slices:

1lb hot dogs (preferably low salt)

Cut all the hot dogs into 1/2" to 1/8" thick slices. Spread paper towels on a microwavable dish and lay out the slices so they do not overlap. Microwave on medium for 3 minutes. Repeat till they are small and fairly dry. Pat dry and store in Ziplocs in your freezer.

Stuffed Kongs:

Fill Kong partially with kibble, diced rollover or treats. Ensure the pieces are small enough to fall out of the Kong. Fill the top portion with a spoonful of smooth canned dog food. Freeze.

Stuffed Marrow bones:

Fill the bone with smooth canned dog food and freeze. Be sure to take the bone away from the dog when the food is gone as they may chip their teeth just gnawing on the bone. (Outdoor Treat)

Puppy Popsicle:

Fill a Tupperware or empty margarine container bowl size with water. Add beef or chicken bullion and treats. Freeze. (Outdoor Treat)

Salmon Biscuits:

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup oatmeal
- ¼ tsp baking powder
- 1 small can salmon in oil undrained
- 1/3 cup water

Grind oatmeal in processor to make coarse flour. Set aside in small bowl. In food processor blend salmon, oil and water. Add in remaining ingredients and pulse till mixture forms a ball. Pulse to knead for 2-3 minutes. Knead on floured surface till it forms a soft ball of dough. Roll out to a 1/8" to ¼" thickness. Cut into shapes. Bake on lightly greased cookie sheet, at 350 for 20 to 25 min. Cool completely. Store in airtight container in fridge for 2 weeks.

Liver Treats:

- 1 lb beef liver
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 2 eggs

Puree liver in food processor. Add remaining ingredients and blend. Grease cookie sheet and pour mixture onto sheet. Bake at 350 for 20 minutes flipping half way through. Cut to desired size squares and refrigerate or freeze till needed.

Concern/Complaint Form

(Anonymous)

Please state your concern/ complaint. Be as accurate as you can be. Dates, times, names etc will be very helpful.

If applicable, how have you tried to resolve the problem yourself?

What would you like to see happen next?

Today's Date: _____

Please send this form back to the attention of Danielle Forbes, Executive Director
National Service Dogs
1286 Cedar Creek Road,
Cambridge ON N1R 5S5
dani@nsd.on.ca
Fax: (519) 623-9997

If this concern/complaint is regarding the Executive Director, please contact:
Gina McDonnell, President
81071 Cherrydale Rd RR #4
Goderich, ON N7A 3Y1
(519) 524-9394
cherrydale@xplonet.com

OPTIONAL:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone (day): _____ Phone (evening): _____

Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Best time to call (please circle): Mornings Afternoons Evenings _____

Date Rec'd: _____

Response Date: _____

Further Action Needed: Yes No

Office Use Only
Rec'd by: _____

Results/Response Attached: Yes No

By: _____