

# DOGS FOR BETTER LIVES PUPPY PROGRAM CURRICULUM



# Table of Contents

Puppy Class Structure .....	3
Practice Sessions .....	3
<b>Setting Sessions Up for Success</b> .....	3
<b>Strengthening Behaviors</b> .....	4
Command List .....	5
Puppy Placement .....	6
Cues.....	6
Feeding.....	6
Discussions .....	6
Level 1 .....	6
Week 1 .....	6
Week 2 .....	7
Week 3 .....	7
Week 4 .....	7
Week 5 .....	8
Week 6 - SAFETY WEEK!.....	8
- <b>2 Week Break</b> - .....	8
Week 7 .....	8
Week 8 .....	8
Week 9 .....	9
Week 10 .....	9
Week 11 .....	9
Week 12 .....	9
- <b>2 Week Break</b> - .....	10
Week 13 .....	10
Week 14 .....	10
Week 15 .....	10
Week 16 .....	10
- <b>2 Week Break</b> - .....	11
Level 2 .....	11
Week 17 .....	11
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	11
Week 18 .....	11
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	11
Week 19 .....	11
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	12

Week 20 .....	12
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	13
Week 21 .....	13
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	14
Week 22 .....	14
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	14
Week 23 .....	14
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	14
Week 24 .....	14
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	14
Week 25 .....	14
- <b>2 Week Break</b> - .....	14
Level 3 .....	14
Week 26 .....	14
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	14
Week 27 .....	14
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	15
Week 28 .....	15
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	15
Week 29 .....	15
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	15
Week 30 .....	15
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	15
Week 31 .....	15
- <b>Week Off</b> - .....	15
Week 32 .....	15
Public Outings- What to Bring.....	16
Age-Appropriate Exposure/Public Outings .....	16
<b>8-12 Weeks of Age</b> .....	16
<b>3-8 Months of Age</b> .....	16
<b>8-16 Months of Age</b> .....	17
Non-Appropriate Exposure/Public Outings .....	17
Approval Needed by DBL Staff .....	17
Novel Objects, Under footings, and Other Various Stimuli .....	17
<b>Examples of Under Footings</b> .....	17
<b>Examples of Novel Objects</b> .....	17
<b>Examples of Other Various Stimuli</b> .....	17

## Puppy Class Structure

Our puppy classes will be broken down into three levels: Introduction to Cues, Canine Good Citizen's Test, and Polish. Level 1 will occur once a week, with a few breaks in between. While Levels 2 and 3 will occur bi-weekly. Class lengths will vary depending on the age of the program puppy. Raisers are expected to bring the program puppy, their gear (vest, gentle leader, bait bag with treats), and clean up kits to each class.

Raisers attending non-DBL classes will need to sign up for two sets of classes, Beginner and Intermediate. These classes will need to be taught by a trainer who uses positive reinforcement techniques (using food as a reward). Raisers will also be able to utilize this curriculum and training videos found in the Puppy and Breeding Portal to help supplement any cues required by DBL that are not taught in outside classes.

## Practice Sessions

As a puppy raiser, you are responsible for applying and maintaining what you learn in puppy class to your everyday life. This will help build a strong foundation for the program puppy to build upon once they return for formal training.

## Setting Sessions Up for Success

When getting ready to start a training session, check in with yourself! Are you relaxed, calm and focused? Great, then you are ready to start a practice session with the program puppy. Have you had a rough day, are in a bad mood, or are you distracted? Then maybe it would be best to set up a training session at another time when you don't have so much going on. Puppies will pick up on your mood and emotions and this may lead to an unsuccessful training session. Same goes for confidence, if you are confident that the program puppy will easily pick up a cue, then the puppy will pick up on your confidence and in return, feel confident. However, if you feel unsure about what you are teaching the program puppy, the puppy may feel unsure about what they are being asked and may choose to disengage with you or offer a different behavior. So, before you start any training session ask yourself; am I calm and relaxed, am I feeling confident in what I am teaching the program puppy, what is my body language saying?

Pick the right environment for the training session. Are you introducing a new cue/behavior to the program puppy? Don't pick a busy space where maybe the whole family is gathering, eating, watching an exciting TV show, or has music blasting. This type of environment could not only be distracting to the program puppy but to you as well. Instead, pick a quiet room away from any commotion. As the program puppy becomes more consistent and can continuously preform the cue, you can slowly increase the level of distraction in your training space.

Time sessions appropriately. An 8-week-old puppy does not have the same attention span as a 10-month-old puppy. In the beginning, sessions should be short, about 5 to 10 minutes. Watch the program puppy's body language throughout the session, are they staying engaged with you and maintaining eye contact? Or are they starting to lose interest, disengaging with you, finding other items in your environment more interesting than focusing on you? Utilize treats as positive reinforcement/reward to keep the program puppy's attention on you during sessions. If you feel the program puppy is becoming frustrated or losing interest, end the session. Try to end every session on a positive note!

Find opportunities to practice in everyday life! Do you have friends or family coming over while the program puppy is younger? Play the round robin name game which would be great for name recognition and introducing the program puppy to new people. Cooking dinner? That may be a great time to practice place and down stays. Sitting at a desk? Practice the under cue while you play/work.

## Strengthening Behaviors

As you continue to practice cues, you will need to gradually increase the level of difficulty to strengthen their behaviors. You will also need to help them generalize the cues in new environments. We can strengthen and generalize behaviors by practicing the 3 D's: duration, distance, and distraction.

**Duration** – the amount of time a behavior is performed.

Example: The program puppy remains in sitting position for three seconds

**Distance** – the distance a behavior is performed.

Example: The program puppy remains in a down stay while you walk 10 feet away.

**Distraction** – environmental stimuli that may cause the program puppy to become distracted when practicing a behavior.

Example: The program puppy remains in a heel while other dogs and people pass them.

To set the program puppy up for success, you only want to gradually increase the difficulty of one category at a time. Once the program puppy can consistently perform a behavior, then you can increase the expectation. For example, the program puppy can remain in a sitting position consistently in the home for three seconds, so we increase the duration further to seven seconds. However, if we are practicing the behavior in a new environment, we start from the beginning. For example, we choose to have the program puppy practice the sitting position in the backyard, so we would go back to a 3 second sit. Again, we are only choosing one category to increase the level of difficulty, in this example we chose to increase the distraction level by practicing in the backyard instead of inside the home. Even though the program puppy can consistently perform a 7 second sitting position in the home, it does not mean they will be able to hold that position for 7 seconds in the new and more distracting environment.

Examples of increased levels of difficulty:

### Duration

- Level 1: Releasing the program puppy immediately after performing the sit cue.
- Level 2: Releasing the program puppy after holding the sitting position for 3 seconds.
- Level 3: Releasing the program puppy after holding the sitting position for 10 seconds.
- Level 4: Varying the length of time you are asking the program puppy to hold a sitting position between 3, 7, and 10 seconds.

### Distance

- Level 1: Releasing the program puppy from a sitting position while you are next to them.
- Level 2: Releasing the program puppy from a sitting position after stepping in place for 5 steps.
- Level 3: Releasing the program puppy from a sitting position after turning your back and taking three steps away, then returning to the program puppy.
- Level 4: Varying the distances when practicing the stay cue.

### Distraction

- Level 1- Introducing sit- practice in a quiet room in the house that is familiar (not new) to the program puppy.
- Level 2- Once the program puppy is consistently performing the sit cue successfully, move to a busier/more exciting room. For example, a common room with the tv and/or radio going on in the background.
- Level 3- If the program puppy can successfully sit in a busy/exciting common room, practice in the backyard.
- Level 4- When the program puppy becomes more successful in the backyard, move to the front yard.
- Level 5- Start practicing sit in public areas like parks, malls, stores etc.

## Command List

- **Name Recognition**- handler calls name, program puppy stops what they are doing and makes eye contact.
- **Go Potty**- allows program puppy to relieve themselves.
- **Kennel**- program puppy enters their kennel.
- **Dress**- program puppy steps into their vest.
- **Off**- means all four paws are on the ground, used when program puppy is jumping up on an item or person.  
*Helpful hint: Keep your tone calm and relaxed as this is just a way to tell the puppy what behavior you want. There should be no negative connotation when using this cue.*
- **Sit**- program puppy's rear end touches ground.
- **Down**- program puppy's laying down.
- **Stay**- program puppy remains in their placed position until released.
- **Come**- program puppy seeks out/returns to handler.
- **Heel**- program puppy walks on left side and maintains pace with handler- head lined up with handler's thigh.
- **Car**- program puppy enters vehicle.
- **Leave-it**- program puppy disengages with object and gives eye contact to handler.
- **Drop**- program puppy drops object from mouth.
- **Place**- program puppy goes to blanket or bed and lays down then stays until released.
- **Under**- program puppy goes under an item (table, bench, etc) and lays down then stays until released.
- **Side**- program puppy moves to left side of handler and sits.
- **Yes**- marker word.
- **Nope**- disrupter word.
- **Free**- release program puppy from cue/position.

# Puppy Placement

Program puppies are placed at 8 weeks of age into their puppy raiser homes. Raisers will be expected to practice the following with the program puppies before their first class:

## Cues

- Introduce:
  - Go Potty
  - Kennel
  - Name recognition
  - Yes
  - Off

## Feeding

- Cover Feeding Schedule:
  - One meal in crate
  - One meal in gentle leader
  - One meal in vest

## Discussions

- House breaking- Creating a schedule and setting program puppy up for success. Utilizing the puppy manual, watching body language, and consistency.
- Training Methods- Positive Reinforcement- utilizing treats, verbal praise and touch to reinforce good manners and behaviors.

# Level 1

Introducing Cues & Outings- Weekly Classes

## Week 1

9 weeks old

30 minute class

Review:

- Potty Training- Go Potty
- Crate Training- Kennel
- Name Recognition
- Any issues in the raiser home

Introduce:

- Body Mechanics- holding leash, what side dog goes on, treating etc.
- Dog Body Language
- Eye Contact
- Free- explain using a release cue
- Zen Cookie
- Dress- lure
- Sit- lure
- Handling- after training or play sessions

## Week 2

10 weeks old

30 minute class

Review:

- Potty Training “Go Potty”
- Zen Cookie
- Dress
- Sit
- Handling

Introduce:

- Sit- add verbal cue & hand signal
- Down- lure
- Drop- toy/Nylabone

## Week 3

11 weeks old

30 minute class

Public outing-

All raisers- please review pages 20-24 of this curriculum for references on what to bring on an outing, age-appropriate locations, and what to look for when out in the public.

For raisers taking classes outside of DBL- public outings will need to be done outside of your beginner and intermediate classes.

After this first outing, raisers are expected to start taking the program puppies into a public setting 2-3 times a week.

## Week 4

12 weeks old (3 months)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Sit- with verbal cue & hand signal
- Down- lure
- Drop- toy/Nylabone

Introduce:

- Sit- fade lure completely, use only verbal cue and hand signal
- Down- add verbal and hand signal
- Loose leash walking- capturing a natural urge to follow at this age
- Polite Greetings- sitting for pets- calm stranger



## Week 5

13 weeks old (3 months)

30 minute class

Public Outing

## Week 6 - SAFETY WEEK!

14 weeks old (3 months)

45- 60 minute class

Safety week focuses on building behaviors geared towards keeping the program puppy safe. Having a strong recall with the cue “come” could help keep a puppy on the loose from running into a dangerous situation. “Stay” could prevent a program puppy from bolting out of a door or kennel. Puppies learn about the world around them by using their mouths, so having a strong “leave-it” cue will help prevent the puppy from picking up toxic substances such as antifreeze or medications. All these behaviors are designed to help teach the program puppy to refocus on their handler in any environment, or around distractions, to prevent potentially dangerous situations.

Review:

- Sit- verbal & hand signal
- Down- verbal & hand signal
- Loose leash walking
- Polite Greetings- sitting for pets- calm stranger

Introduce:

- Puppy Push-ups- Sit-Down-Sit
- Stay- verbal and hand signal- varying 3-5 second count
- Come- catches puppy’s attention, runs away excitedly, uses verbal cue “Name, Come!”
- Leave-it- closed fists using verbal cue “Leave it!”
- Polite Greetings- slightly excited stranger

- 2 Week Break -

## Week 7

17 weeks old (4 months)

45 minute class

Public outing

Drop to twice a day feedings

## Week 8

18 weeks old (4 months)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Puppy Push-ups
- Stay- Verbal cue and hand signal 3-5 second count
- Come- luring and verbal cue

- Leave-it's- closed fist
- Polite Greetings- slightly excited stranger

Introduce:

- Heel- verbal and hand signal
- Stay Pt.2- add motion- marching in place
- Come Pt. 2- drop excited run, walk away calmly- remain in sight
- Leave-its Pt. 2- open hand
- Polite Greetings- exuberant stranger

## Week 9

19 weeks old (4 months)

45 minute class

Public Outing

## Week 10

20 weeks old (5 months)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Heel- verbal & hand signal
- Stay Pt. 2- adding motion- marching in place
- Come Pt. 2- walk away calmly- remain in sight
- Leave-its Pt. 2- open hand
- Polite Greetings- exuberant stranger

Introduce:

- Stay Pt. 3- add distance, starting with 3-5 feet
- Come Pt. 3- no luring (walking or running away)- remain in sight
- Leave-its Pt.3- dropping item out of immediate reach
- Side- luring to handler's left side and sitting
- Polite Greetings- Rude stranger- doesn't ask for permission to pet

## Week 11

21 weeks old (5 months)

45-60 minute class

Public outing

## Week 12

22 weeks old (5 months)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Stay Pt. 3- adding distance- 3-5 feet
- Come Pt. 3- no luring- remain in sight

- Leave-its Pt. 3- dropping item out of immediate reach
- Side- luring to handler's left side and sitting

Introduce:

- Stay Pt. 4- increasing distance- out-of-sight
- Come Pt. 4- out-of-sight recalls
- Leave-its Pt. 4- dropping treats within reach
- Side- add verbal cue
- Car- riding in car freely

- 2 Week Break -

## Week 13

25 weeks old (6 months)

45 minute class

Public Outing

Discussion: hormones- heat cycles and behavior changes

## Week 14

26 weeks old (6 months)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Stay Pt. 4- increasing distance- out-of-sight
- Come Pt.4- out-of-sight recalls
- Leave-its Pt.4- Dropping treats within reach

Introduce:

- Stay- handler circles around puppy
- Come- add people distractions
- Leave-its- person offering treat
- Place- walk up to blanket/towel, luring into a down position once fully on the item
- Under- walks up to table, lures under the table and into a down position

## Week 15

27 weeks old (6 months)

45 minute class

Public outing

## Week 16

28 weeks old (7 months old)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Stay- handler circles around puppy

- Come- people distractions
- Leave-its- person offering treat
- Place- luring
- Under- luring

Introduce:

- Stay- handler steps over puppy
- Come- add toy distractions
- Leave-its- person offering toy
- Place- add verbal cue and hand signal
- Under- add verbal cue and hand signal

- 2 Week Break -

## Level 2

CGC Prep & Test- Bi-weekly classes

### Week 17

31 weeks old (7 months old)

45 minute class

Public outing

- Week Off -

### Week 18

33 weeks old (8 months old)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Stay- handler steps over puppy
- Place- verbal and hand signal
- Under- verbal and hand signal

Introduce:

- Place- drop lure, increase distance to 3'
- Under- drop lure, increase distance to 3'
- Explain CGC Test and what the next few weeks look like

- Week Off -

### Week 19

35 weeks old (8 months)

Public Outing

## Week 20

37 weeks old (9 months old)

45-60 minute class

Review:

- Place- 3' distance send to
- Under- 3' distance send to

Introduce:

Cover the following CGC items (parts 1-5 of the test)

- Accepting a friendly stranger (Polite Greetings)
  - This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation.
  - Evaluator approaches the dog and handler and greets the handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog. The evaluator and handler do a pretend handshake (hands not touching) and exchange pleasantries. The dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness.
- Sitting politely for petting
  - This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler.
  - Handler has the dog in a sit position by their side, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body. The handler may talk to his or her dog throughout the exercise. The dog may stand in place as it is petted. The dog must not show shyness or resentment.
- Appearance and Grooming
  - This test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit someone, such as a veterinarian, groomer, or friend of the owner, to do so. It also demonstrates the owner's care, concern, and sense of responsibility.
  - Evaluator examines the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in healthy condition (i.e. proper weight, clean, healthy, and alert). The handler should supply the comb or brush commonly used on the dog. The evaluator then softly combs or brushes the dog, and in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot. It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog, praise it, and give encouragement throughout.
- Out for a walk
  - This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog when the dog is walking on leash.
  - The dog may be on either side of the handler. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops. The evaluator may use pre-plotted course or may direct the handler/dog team by issuing instructions or commands. In either case, there should be a right turn, left turn and an about turn with at least one stop in between and another at the end. The handler may talk to the dog along the way, praise the dog, or give commands in a normal tone of voice. The handler may sit the dog at the halts if desired.
- Walking through a crowd
  - This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control when on leash in public.
  - The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three). The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the handler, without evidence of over-

exuberance, shyness or resentment. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the test. The dog should not jump on people in the crowd or strain on the leash.

## - Week Off -

### Week 21

39 weeks old (9 months old)

45-60 minute class

Review:

Parts 1-5 of the CGC test

Introduce:

Parts 6-10 of the CGC test

- Sit and down on cue and stay in place
  - This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's cues to sit and down and will remain in place (sit or down position, whichever the handler prefers).
  - The dog must do sit AND down when cued by the handler, then the owner chooses the position for leaving the dog in the stay. Prior to this test, the dog's leash is replaced with a line 20' long. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one cue to get the dog to sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's cues. The handler may not force the dog into position but may touch the dog to offer gentle guidance. When instructed by the evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay and walks forward the length of the line, turns, and returns to the dog at a natural pace. The dog must remain in the place in which it was left (it may change position) until the evaluator instructs the handler to release the dog. The dog may be released from the front or the side.
- Coming when called
  - This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler.
  - With the dog still on the 20' line from test #6, the handler will walk 10' from the dog, turn to face the dog, and call the dog. The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to come. Handlers may choose to tell dogs to "stay" or "wait" or they may simply walk away, giving no instructions to the dog.
- Reaction to another dog
  - This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs.
  - Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about 20', stop, pretend to shake hands (hands do not touch) and exchange pleasantries, and continue on for about 10'. The dogs should show no more than casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other dog or its handler.
- Reaction to distraction
  - This test demonstrates that the dog is always confident when faced with common distraction situations.
  - The evaluator will select and present two distractions. Examples of distractions include dropping a chair, rolling a crate dolly past the dog, having a jogger run in front of the dog, or dropping a crutch or cane. The dog may express natural interest and curiosity and/or may appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run away, show aggressiveness, or bark. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the exercise.
- Supervised separation
  - This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain training and good manners.
  - Evaluators are encouraged to say something like "Would you like me to watch your dog?" and then take hold of the dog's leash. The owner will go out of sight for three minutes. The dog does not have to stay

in position but should not continually bark, whine, or pace unnecessarily, or show anything stronger than mild agitation or nervousness. Evaluators may talk to the dog but should not engage in excessive talking, petting, or management attempts (e.g., “there, there, it’s alright”)

- Week Off -

## Week 22

41 weeks old (10 months)

Public outing

- Week Off -

## Week 23

43 weeks old (10 months old)

Review

- All CGC items

- Week Off -

## Week 24

45 weeks old (11 months old)

Public Outing

- Week Off -

## Week 25

47 weeks old (11 months old)

CGC Test

- 2 Week Break -

# Level 3

Proofing- Bi-weekly Classes

## Week 26

50 weeks old (12 months old)

Public Outing

- Week Off -

## Week 27

52 weeks old (12 months old)

Review

- Place- verbal and hand signal, send to 3’
- Under- verbal and hand signal, send to 3’
- Side- verbal cue

- Leave-its- stranger offering
- Polite Greetings

Proof

- Place- increase distraction- toys on ground
- Under- increase duration
- Leave-its- increase distraction- overly excited stranger offering
- Polite greetings- increase distraction- overly excited stranger
- Puppy push-ups- sit-down-sit

- Week Off -

## Week 28

54 weeks old (13 months old)

Public Outing

- Week Off -

## Week 29

56 weeks old (13 months old)

Rally course-

- Puppy push-ups- sit-down-sit-stand
- Stay- step overs
- Leave-its- toys or treats
- Under
- Place

- Week Off -

## Week 30

58 weeks old (14 months old)

Public Outing

- Week Off -

## Week 31

60 weeks old (14 months old)

Last Class- Fun training games

- Simon Says
- Musical Sits
- Red light/Green light

- Week Off -

## Week 32

Graduation!



## Public Outings- What to Bring

All puppy raisers should be prepared when taking the program puppy on a public outing. To set both the raiser and the program puppy up for success, make sure they bring the following items with them on every outing:

- Appropriate Gear:
  - Collar
  - Leash
  - Vest
  - Gentle Leader
- Clean up Kit in case of accidents:
  - Poop bags
  - Paper towels
  - Wet wipes
  - Hand sanitizer
- DBL Treat Pouch
- Training treats
- DBL T-shirt if applicable

## Age-Appropriate Exposure/Public Outings

Public outings are an essential part of the program puppy's learning experience. As a future assistance dog, program puppies will need to learn how to be calm and focused on their handler in a multitude of different environments. This means practicing in as many places as possible when they are young to create a strong foundation. However, to do so successfully, we need to ensure that program puppies practicing in places that are age appropriate. You do not want to take an 8-week-old puppy to a boisterous sporting event as their first introduction to the public, this can be loud and overwhelming to the program puppy and may cause the puppy to react negatively or become fearful.

### 8-12 Weeks of Age

Ideal locations at this age will have:

- Tile/cement floorings (for easy clean up if there is an accident)
- Not heavily trafficked by other dogs
- Quieter settings

Examples:

- Mall- during slow/quiet hours
- Outdoor shopping centers

### 3-8 Months of Age

Ideal locations at this age will have:

- Light/moderate traffic- people, dogs, kids, cars
- Feed & Hardware stores
- Parks
- Outdoor stores

## 8-16 Months of Age

Ideal locations at this age will have:

- Heavily trafficked- people, dogs, kids, cars
- Pet Stores
- Grocery stores
- Busy shopping centers
- Restaurants
- Local sporting events

## Non-Appropriate Exposure/Public Outings

- |             |                     |                |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------|
| • Dog parks | • Dog Daycare       | • Racetracks & |
| • Zoos      | • Escalators/moving | Speedways      |
| • Gun Range | walkways            | • Dog Show     |

## Approval Needed by DBL Staff

- Air Travel- We do not recommend air travel for program puppies prior to 10 months of age. All air travel will need to be approved by your designated area coordinator. Should you feel the program puppy is able to handle air travel at a younger age, please contact your designated area coordinator. Our goal is to ensure the program puppy has a positive experience flying. If a program puppy has a negative experience, it could negatively impact their ability to handle air travel in the future.

## Novel Objects, Under footings, and Other Various Stimuli

Program puppies will need to be exposed various stimuli both while in the home and while out on public outings. Similar to public outings, you will want to introduce new stimuli to program puppies slowly, to ensure you are building up their confidence successfully.

For example, you would like to expose the puppy to the vacuum. To start, you will want to bring the vacuum into a common room, do not plug the vacuum in or turn it on, just allow it to sit there. Then allow the program puppy to enter the room. Make sure the program puppy is off leash and has the freedom to explore the room and the vacuum if they so choose to. Do not make a big deal of the vacuum being in the room and calmly act as if the vacuum has always been there. If the program puppy chooses to investigate the vacuum on their own, mark with yes, and then reward. During the session, make sure the program puppy is rewarded every time they choose to investigate the vacuum, even if it is just looking in the direction of where the vacuum is placed. When you are done with the session, make sure to put the vacuum away. After the program puppy has become accustomed to the vacuum, then we can move to the next step of turning the vacuum on. Have someone start vacuuming a room out-of-sight from where you and the program puppy are. Mark and reward the program puppy every time they look or walk towards the sound of the vacuum. While the vacuum is going, make sure to not make a big deal of the situation, continue to sit calmly and act as if nothing is happening that is particularly interesting. Eventually the goal is for your helper to be able to vacuum within sight of the program puppy. If at any point the program puppy seems fearful or has a negative reaction, stop the session, and try again at another time.

You will also want to make sure the stimuli you are introducing to the program puppy are age appropriate. When first bringing a program puppy home, you will focus on introducing new stimuli that are commonly found in households like, vacuums, brooms, children, adults, elderly people, other pets, yoga mats, big hats, carpet,

tile, doorbells etc. Then as they grow, you can start exposing them to more stimuli. The goal is for the program puppy to grow into a well-adjusted service dog who is confident in any environment.

## Examples of Under Footings

- Dirt
- Gravel
- Cement
- Asphalt
- Grass
- Astroturf
- Sand
- Wooden decking
- Bridges
- Metal grates
- Metal plating
- Snow
- Wet surfaces
- Slippery surfaces
- Rubber mats
- Textured door mats
- Shaggy rugs
- Yoga mats
- Hay

## Examples of Novel Objects

- Statues\*
- Umbrellas\*
- Flags
- Windchimes
- Fire hydrants
- Hula hoops
- Gardening tools
- Luggage
- Wagons
- Bicycles
- Scooters
- Shopping Carts\*
- Skateboards
- Surf boards
- Kayaks
- Inflatable innertubes
- Mannequins
- Heavy Equipment
- Playground equipment
- Mirrors\*
- Rakes
- Vacuums\*
- Power Tools
- Wheelbarrows

## Examples of Other Various Stimuli

### People:

- Adults
- Seniors
- Babies
- Toddlers
- Children\*
- Male/Female/Non-binary
- Delivery People\*
- Firefighters\*
- Police Officers\*
- Postal workers\*
- Veterinary clinic staff
- Medical professionals

### People with:

- Backpacks
- Beards
- Canes\*
- Crutches
- Scooters
- Walkers\*
- Wheelchairs\*
- Costumes
- Face masks
- Winter jackets
- Hoodies
- Rain Jackets
- Sunglasses\*
- Varied hair styles
- Hats\*

**Animals:**

- Cats
- Friendly, healthy dogs
- Horses
- Cows
- Sheep
- Birds
- Squirrels
- Goats
- Pigs
- Llamas
- Fish
- Reptiles
- Small pets

**Noises:**

- Clapping
- Music
- Sirens
- Thunder & lightening
- Traffic
- Yelling
- Whistles
- Buzzers
- Timers
- Phones
- Doorbell
- Horns

**Different Environments:**

- Automatic doors
- Beauty salons
- Bus stops
- Car rides
- Church/temple
- Doctor's office
- Downtown
- Elevators
- Farms
- Grocery stores
- Libraries
- Pet supply stores
- Restaurants (indoor/outdoor)
- Shopping malls
- Banks
- Train stations\*\*
- Tunnels
- Walk after dark
- Airport\*\*
- Boat rides\*\*
- Car wash
- Drive thru
- Farmers market
- Groomers
- Golf course
- Gym
- Hiking trails
- Hotel
- Schools/Colleges
- Offices
- Parks
- Beaches

\*Expose program puppy to these items as often as possible.

\*\*These environments can be very overwhelming for program puppies. Program puppies should be at least 10 months of age, sessions should be kept short (around 20 minutes), and not during peak hours. If you have questions, please contact your area coordinator.