

Suncoast Puppy Raisers

Newsletter Training Tips

A collection of tips from the Suncoast Puppy Raisers monthly newsletter.

TIPS PROVIDED BY
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Contents

You Are Not Alone	3
Meeting Attendance	4
Puppy Coat	5
Water Exposures	6
Puppy Liabilities	7
Grooming	9
Summertime Heat & Thunderstorms.....	10
Getting off to a Good Start.....	12
Moulding your puppy.....	14
Achieving the “Loose Leash”	16
Traveling with your Puppy	18
Puppy Shyness or Fears.....	20



As you all know, a major part of your obligation as a puppy raiser is to take your puppy on exposures. Essentially, you are making your puppy your "side kick" taking them everywhere you go. Now consider, that except at dog obedience class or puppy meetings, you rarely encounter another dog. You don't usually see another dog when you go into a restaurant, grocery store, bank, department store

etc. So if you don't have a lot of previous dog experience, you are not sure as to what to expect from your puppy while you are out and about. Even if you do have a good deal of dog experience, every dog will react in different ways to different exposures. You may find you are mumbling to yourself, "why did the dog react THAT WAY, and what should I do or not do to respond to their reaction. There is

no simple answer I can give you but I can assure you; every one goes through this situation at one time or another. This is why we want to let you know that this is not just happening to you and that you are not alone. I want to share with you some tips that Chuck and I have used that have made it a little easier for us.

You Are Not Alone

Attend your meetings. By going to your main puppy Saturday meeting and sub group meetings, you get to see and speak with other raisers who may be experiencing the same thing. Attend a local dog obedience class.

Although the manual puts the information in black and white, it doesn't really come together until you actually have to give the commands and enforce them. Dog obedience class is more to teach the handler how to train their dog than it is for your dog to be trained.

Find time to work one on one with your group leaders or us. If you are having a specific behavioral concern about your puppy, ask us. If you don't feel comfortable asking us in front of the group, pull us aside and let us give you some individual attention.

Learn about dog behavior, dogs have been around for a long time. There are countless books, movies, CD's breed specific organizations out there with great information about dogs in general and specific breed characteristics.

Since there are so many books out there I can recommend one I just read to get you started. I just finished "Solutions For Your Dog & you," by M. Seegal and M. Margolis. You can read it in one day and it definitely hits the nail on the head about how to resolve common puppy misbehaviors.

Don't take it too seriously. If you really want to read a great book about "the worst behaved dog in the world," read "Marley & Me," by John Grogan. It will make you laugh and cry and realize you are not alone and sometimes your dog turns out all right in spite of you!

February 2007

We could talk about attending meetings as part of your commitment in raising a puppy for Southeastern which is true, but that is not why we have 2 meetings a month. These meetings are for you and your puppy!

We hope they are set up in a way to help you raise a better Guide Dog candidate. We try to incorporate

situations a Guide Dog will run into during it's working career. We want to help you do things with your puppy you might not be comfortable doing at first, like this month going into stores and restaurants with your puppy. We also want to see you to help you with any areas in which you and your puppy might be struggling.

We hope to supply a safe supportive environment for you to work on any issues you and your pup are facing. You're A/C's and Group Leaders, only see your pup once or twice a month which can be a very long time in a puppies life. So, we need your help for us to help you.

Meeting Attendance

What can you do to help us in this task?

Attend scheduled meetings. We cannot help you if we do not see you.

Ask questions. We are all in the same boat and you are not likely facing an issue or problem someone in our group has not already faced. When you ask a question it will stimulate conversation.

Puppy raisers in the group may not be facing this issue right now, but they may in the future. We all learn together when you ask questions.



Give us feedback. It is always nice to hear "that was a great meeting" or "I learned a lot today" but we also need to hear if our meetings are not meeting your needs. They are after all your meetings not ours. Let us

know what we can do better to help you. Of course if you have a suggestion for a meeting location or event let us know.

If you have any information that might be helpful, share it with the group. We pass on a lot of information at these meetings that you will not hear if you are not there but, we also want to hear what you have to say so don't be shy.

If we all work together and help each other our puppies reap the rewards. So I guess what we are trying to say is show up and be involved. These are your meetings lets make sure your pup gets the most out of each and every meeting.

What is the purpose of the puppy coat? The most obvious answer is, to identify to the public that this is a puppy in training and not a pet. In general terms, it allows us access into places where pets are not allowed. However, this is not the only purpose for the puppy coat. The puppy coat is to serve as a cue to the puppy that with the coat on, I am working. Without the coat, I am just a dog. Along with that conditioning, there is a whole separate set of standards we

expect from our puppy while “in coat” as opposed to out of coat. “IN coat,” a puppy is not to sniff, play, relieve, eat or drink. Also, “in coat,” the puppy is to be well behaved, corrected for distractions and not be petted without permission.

Why is this important? Because, the concept of “while in coat I am working,” will later be transitioned into “while in harness,” I am working. After your puppy returns to the school, it is the trainers job to introduce the young dog to

the harness. The harness also fits over the dog’s head and buckles underneath them. An activity using the puppy coat has accustomed them to. At some time in your puppy’s life you will see them make this connection and will witness them becoming a different dog while in coat than out of coat. If you could see Maggie out of harness in someone’s house, you wouldn’t believe she was a guide dog. But, put that harness on, and you will immediately see the difference.

Puppy Coat



Here are some tips to help your puppy become conditioned to the coat:

Before starting an exposure, make sure your puppy has had a chance to relieve so that they do not have an accident while in coat.

Remember to take the puppy’s coat off if they are going to eat or drink.

When ever possible, take their coat off before they are going to be petted and definitely before they are allowed to play.

Practice your obedience with the puppy in coat at first so they understand that something new is happening. As the puppy gets older, practice obedience with or without the coat. By then it should not make a difference.

Have the puppy wear it’s coat as soon as you leave the house. They should wear their coat in the car to communicate with them that even in the car, they are still “on duty.”

Don’t forget throw in a fun walk or play time with out the coat. After all, they are still puppies!

Recently, at a home visit, after viewing the promo video, explaining the check list, and sharing the evaluations and attached exposure lists, our prospective puppy raiser summed it up quite succinctly, "your view of the world changes when considering it from your puppy's point of view." Before you had your puppy, going to the mall was just to go shopping. Now with your puppy, it's a major event! You start thinking about it in terms of exposures for your puppy. A trip to the mall becomes, a ride in the car, traffic in the parking lot, relieving

your puppy before you enter, sit on both sides of the door, smell the smells of the bakery, perfume and leather shops, hear the noises, walk around the strollers, wheelchairs, people with canes, running kids, statues, fountains, food courts, skating rinks, people in uniforms, stairs, elevators, well, you get the idea. The last thing on your mind is buying anything. It's all about the dog! The good news is it stops becoming all about the dog after it becomes a guide dog. Then, it's all about the blind person they are guiding. Without the puppy raisers

focusing so hard on exposures a blind person would never be able to walk through the mall with one goal in mind, shopping.

For myself, as well for most blind people, our most reliable mode of transportation is our feet. We have to walk to the bus, store, bank, etc. And as I considered this, I realized how often I am exposed to water in one form or another. Of course the most obvious is rain and consequently puddles and flooded walkways. But I also encounter decorative fountains, sprinklers, garden hoses, neighborhood ponds and swimming pools.

Water Exposures

How does your puppy react to water: If you have a Lab or Golden, is your puppy water crazy: For other breeds such as Collies, Aussie's and Vizsla's, are they water Phobic? The object is not to have either extreme. The object is to have the puppy be neutral.



Approach each new water exposure with a neutral attitude. Walk by it without drawing any extra attention to it.

If your puppy is curious, let them explore, do not attach any emotion to it.

If your puppy shows fear, towards a sprinkler or fountain per say, walk back and forth starting further away and slowly work closer to the source.

If your puppy is overly interested in getting into the water, such as pools, ponds, puddles, do not allow them in coat. Let them satisfy their curiosity, but do not let them be distracted by it.

Take your puppies out when it is raining. Avoid severe thunderstorms, but it is good exposure during a light rain.

If during severe thunderstorms your puppy shows fear, do not comfort them. Distract them with a favorite activity and ignore the fear.

To sum up, as with any exposure, the object is to work toward your puppy having no reaction to the distraction. Since information always travels down the leash, it is important for the handler to also have a neutral reaction.

Your puppy will always look to you for cues, so give them the right direction.

Right now you may be thinking, how could these cute little puppies be a liability? Well it is inherent in the nature of what we do. The entire puppy program is based on the raiser taking the puppy out for public exposures to get them used to people, places and things.

Unfortunately, we cannot control the outside world or predict what other people are going to do while we are out there with our puppies. It only takes a split second to have a mishap that can result in serious consequences. What we can have control over are our puppies and

ourselves! Every time you walk out that door with puppy in coat, you have a responsibility to the school, the public, and your puppy as well as to yourself to make your exposure a safe and productive one. Here are some tips to help you accomplish this goal.

Puppy Liabilities

Age appropriate exposures are a perfect place to start.

Very young puppies, 9 wks to 4 months, are inherently a potential concern. They are teething so they are always mouthing hands, arms clothing, etc. In addition, they don't understand that jumping, nipping and pawing are not the appropriate way to get your attention. On the other hand, they are the cutest puppies and everyone wants to see and pet them.

We ask that you take the puppies out to be seen but keep the exposures short, sweet and WELL supervised. Before allowing the puppy to be petted, make sure they are sitting and you have complete control of the leash as well as the puppy. Allow only a QUICK pat on the head, then finish your visit by explaining that as a working guide dog they will not be allowed to be petted.

Know your puppy. If you know they like to jump or get too excited while visiting in public, do not allow them to be petted until they settle down. Learn to anticipate your puppy. Timing is everything especially when it comes to leash corrections and praise.

It is okay to say, "no, the puppy cannot be petted now, they are working" but do stop to answer any questions and direct them to the web site for more information.

Sharpen your obedience skill. Practice obedience with your puppy every day and everywhere. Before entering a building, take a moment to do some sit/stays or right abouts to get you and your puppy focused on what you are about to do.

Puppy Liabilities

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Consult your puppy manual on obedience and leash management. Your puppy will only behave as well as you can make them behave. The better handler you are, the better behaved your puppy will be.

Get out with your puppy as often as possible. The more conditioned they get to going out, the more comfortable and confident you both will be with your exposures. Ask other puppy raisers to join you. You can learn from each other and have fun doing it.

After having a bad experience, a puppy raisers told us they were hesitant to even take the puppy out and definitely did not want the puppy to be petted. Although this would temporarily solve the problem, it is not what we are all about. As a guide dog user, I carry the same responsibility for my dog and what ever actions Maggie might take. It just goes with the territory. Now you know why they make you sign so many Papers before you accept and take your puppy home!

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Do you have a personal pet that doesn't like their nails clipped, being brushed or having it's ears cleaned?

How about a pet that runs the other direction when you mention the word "bath?" Don't tell me dogs don't understand English or don't catch on that when you get near the bathing area and have

that certain look in your eye that something is a foot. Now that you have a guide dog puppy, proper grooming is going to become more of an integral part of the puppies life because you will be taking them out into the public and you want them to look and smell good. This is also true among the guide dog users. We want people

to admire our dogs as we walk down the street. And trust me, it is a lot more difficult to groom a dog that does not want to be groomed, especially if you can't see! So how do we get puppy to like to be groomed rather than having them pull a disappearing act every time we bring out the clippers or dog shampoo?

Grooming

When you bring your puppy home, get them accustomed to being touched. Feel between their toes, touch their ears, put your fingers in their mouth and ears.

Make the touching positive. Talk to them soothingly while you touch them. Praise them for allowing you to handle them. Then introduce them to being brushed. The brushing process should be comforting and can become a way to bond with your puppy. This will carry through when your puppy is matched with a blind person. Blind graduates are encouraged to pet and brush their dogs to get to know their contours and build a trusting relationship between the team.

Learn the proper tools to use for the type of grooming to be done. There are many types of grooming brushes and you might just have to experiment to find one that suits your dog's type of coat. There are also different ways to clip nails, brush teeth and clean ears. Consult your puppy manual, ask your vet or one of us for a recommendation.

The same is true with puppy bathing. Shampoos should be specifically designed for dogs to ensure the proper pH balance and protection for their skin.

Any grooming experience needs to be a positive one. In the beginning, the puppy may show fear or trepidation. Show confidence and do not cottle their fear. Distract them by talking to them in a calm voice and keep your grooming sessions short. Always finish with LOTS of praise.

Introduce your puppy to a grooming table or bench to stand on. It's easier on your back and will help the puppy to adjust to grooming benches and the vets table in the future.

Never call your puppy to come to you to be groomed, go to them. The "come" command should be reserved only for praise. Calling your puppy to you to have a bath or nails clipped will only create a negative association.



Living in Florida can be hard on a pet. The environment is very extreme sometimes and if you have lived here for a while, you might take it for granted. We are originally from Wisconsin, and I can guarantee we rarely get the type of thunderstorms we get here and only about two weeks of the

summer above 90-degrees. So when we moved here, it was an adjustment. This is the main reason why Southeastern Guide Dogs was originally located in Florida. There are no other schools in the United States in this type of environment. The founder of the school, Mike Sergeant, believed that it would

be easier on guide dogs to adapt to this environment if they were born and raised in it. While there is a lot to be said for this, it is still important to introduce your puppies slowly to get them used to working in the heat and during thunderstorms.

Summertime Heat & Thunderstorms

Working in the heat:

Don't avoid the heat of the day. It is important for your puppy to build up tolerance to the heat.

Your puppy's paws will grow tougher the more they are exposed to the concrete. Be aware of how hot the surfaces are that you want your pup to walk across, if you place your hand on it and are unable to keep it there for 5 seconds it is too hot. Make your trips short and sweet and don't stand in one place for any length of time. If you are forced to cross a hot surface do so quickly.

Bring plenty of water. Even if you are in the shade, your puppy can easily get dehydrated. So make sure you have your water with you. Even though metal grates and manhole covers are going to be extra hot, do not get in the habit of avoiding them. If they are too hot to touch go around them but come back and walk across them after they have cooled down. We do not want to condition the puppy to always go around them for it signals to them that there is something wrong with them. Just walk quickly over them and do not draw any extra attention to them.

Tips on thunderstorms:

Do not avoid exposing your puppy to these either. Of course, we don't want you to take them out in a dangerous situation, but we do not want to shelter them either. We do not want to condition them that this is something to fear. Start slowly by sitting on the screen porch as the storm approaches just to listen to it.

Summertime Heat & Thunderstorms

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Do not draw any extra attention to the noise and rain. If you are calm and nonchalant about what is going on, they will be too.

If your puppy does show fear, do not comfort them. This is only a positive reinforcement for their fear. Instead, distract them with a toy or an obedience game.

After the storm subsides, take them out for a walk. The air is great and they'll get used to getting their feet wet.

Heat and thunderstorms are a reality if you live in Florida. As a guide dog user, I can't only pick the nice days to go out. Also, I can leave work in the sun and head right into a thunderstorm by the time I get home

It is best for your puppy just to find this an everyday occurrence rather than a big ordeal. Remember, how you react will go right down to the leash and signal to your puppy how they should react. As Caesar Milan would say, be "calm and assertive" and your puppy will follow.

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Remember when you were 15, and you thought you knew it all? And then when you were 19, you knew you knew it all? Then when you got married and had your first child, you knew you knew nothing? Well, with a SEGDI puppy, you don't have to know everything or think you do, your Area Coordinators

and group leaders are here to help you. Since we have so many new puppies and some new raisers coming to our group we thought we might highlight what to do after your new puppy comes home. First, unlike kids, our puppies come with a manual. We try to get the manual to you prior to picking

up your puppy, but if that is not possible, our group's web site www.suncoastpup.org has the manual on it in the "Raisers Only" section. Next, you should have a crate, leash and buckle collar for assisting you in housebreaking. Now that you have all the tools, what do you do with the puppy?

Getting off to a Good Start

Set up good habits and positive conditioning from the very first moment you meet your puppy. Do not let them jump on you or mouth your hand. Establish correct behavior and your status of "boss dog" early. It's "off" for jumping, and "no" for mouthing. Then direct them to a new toy or behavior you can praise them for doing.

On the way home, teach them that their place is on the floorboard of the vehicle, not in your lap or on the seat. Sure they're cute and cuddly but that changes when they are 70 pounds and still want to sit in your lap.

Your first night might be a sleepless one. Puppy is unfamiliar with their surroundings and might express this by a lot of whining and crying. This is why we recommend the crate be placed in the bedroom. It is okay to talk soothingly to the puppy and touch it through the crate but not okay to take the puppy out and cradle it every time it whines. This only reinforces the negative behavior. Instead, suffer through about 5 to 10 minutes of the whining. They will eventually calm down and go to sleep.

Get the puppy on a feeding and sleeping schedule. This will assist in housebreaking and help the puppy adapt to their new environment.

Try not to expose your puppy to too many new things for about the first two weeks. It is okay to take a few short excursions, but not every day. This time should be spent getting to know one another and working on housebreaking.

A common mistake is thinking you have to do everything in the manual right a way. Remember, you will have at least 12-14 months

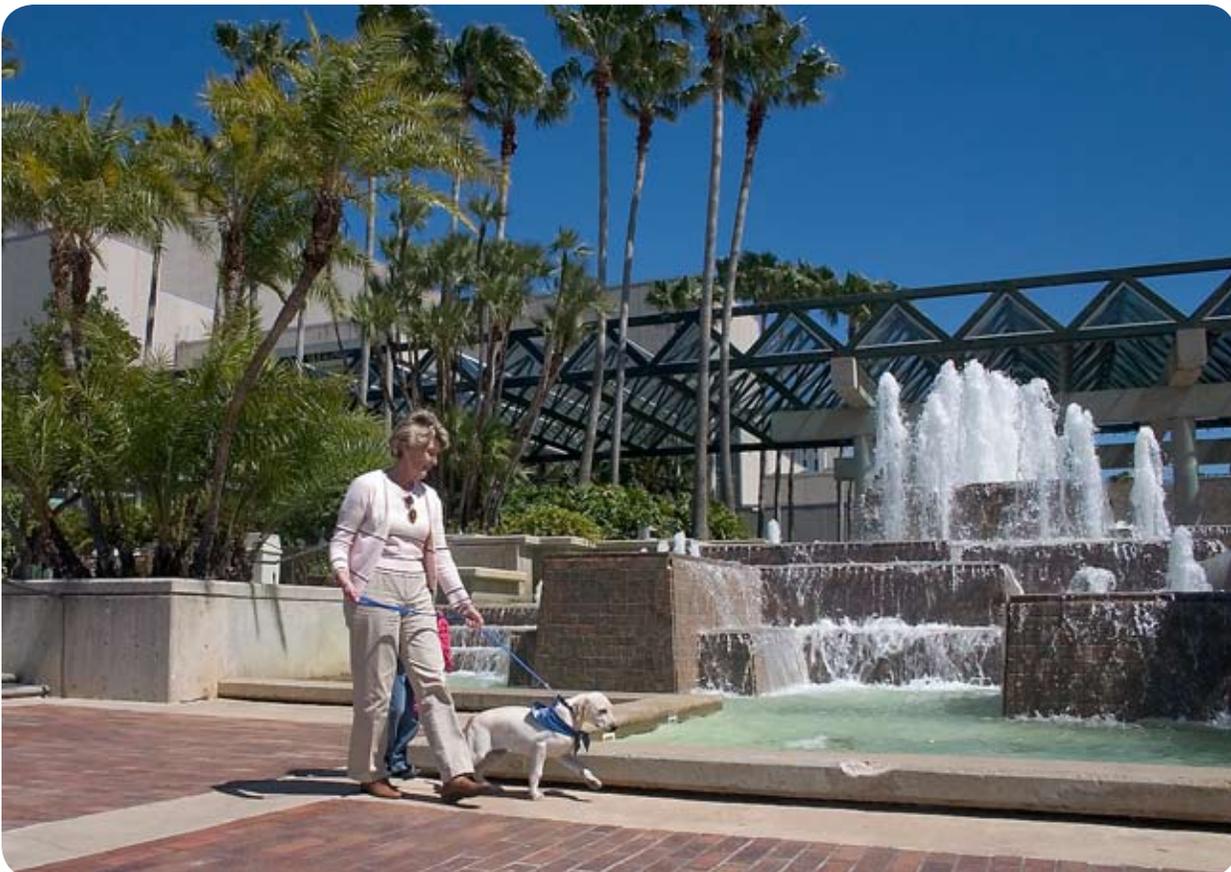
Getting off to a Good Start

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to accomplish all the obedience and exposures recommended in the manual and your evaluations. It doesn't happen over night.

Make sure you attend your 2 scheduled puppy meetings a month. This is the best time to ask questions of your group leaders and fellow puppy raisers. At least half of our group is repeat raisers and can relate to whatever you are experiencing. And can offer useful advice.

Raising a puppy may sound like a lot of work, but it is also a lot of fun. We don't expect anyone to be perfect, none of us are. But we do want to let you know you are not out there on your own and we are all pulling for your success.



From Darlene Bigham.

For a moment imagine you picked up 11 pounds of modeling clay instead of a puppy from Southeastern. You look at the clay and think, "I am too busy to make anything, I'll do it later." The clay is put away on a shelf where it will

sit for a couple months until one day you have time to start the project. When you reach for the clay you find that it is all dried out and crumbly. It will take a lot of hard work to get that clay into any shape to use. The same holds true with a new puppy. If you don't take

the time to properly work with the puppy it will develop bad habits and will take a lot more work to get it ready. The first couple months are so important to mold your puppy into the beginnings of a working dog.

Moulding your puppy

House breaking is fairly simple. Be consistent, pick the puppy up about every 45+ minutes and take it outside (the same door every time) to relieve itself. Apply plenty of praise as soon as the puppy starts to relieve. You can slowly extend the time depending on the individual puppy.

Introduce the tie-down and the crate the first week. Starting young the puppy soon learns not to fight the tie-down. Be sure to keep using the tie-down at least 2-3 times a week to reinforce the behavior.

Make the crate a happy, safe place. Your puppy will probably howl the first few times it is left alone in the crate (be sure to include its favorite toys). Take a walk, go to the store and it should be quiet when you return. When you release the puppy give plenty of love and praise.

Start obedience training right away. Keep the sessions short and happy. These dogs will work for your praise, be generous. Go beyond the basic sit/ down and stay. Take the dog on working walks, in coat every day

(but don't forget the fun walk too). Discourage sniffing and encourage the puppy walking slightly ahead of you without pulling. A very light tug on the leash will curb a pulling puppy and the command "easy". This sure beats giving a large dog "flying lessons".

This is a good time to introduce "right" and "left" and the recall command. When the puppy starts pulling, drop back and call it to you. Introduce the finish and alternate with finishing around your dog. Also use the "right about". By the time you puppy is 4 months old it will be doing all of these



The concept of the “loose leash” is the ultimate achievement in walking your dog. So what does “loose leash” mean. What it means is while you are walking your dog, there is no tension on the leash. Considering these rambunctious retriever breeds we use, this may be a totally foreign concept to you. Our Labs primarily, and all the other breeds too, tend to strain at the end of their leashes because they are so excited to get to where

they are going. They don't know where that is but boy are they in a hurry to get there! The hardest part about what we are trying to achieve while walking guide dog candidates, is a dog that will step out or forge ahead without dragging us down the street. We don't want a leash that is always pulled taut but rather hangs loosely while you walk. This is called “leash management.” How to get there is the tricky part! Now that we

know what the goal is, how do we get there with a high energy, want to pull you everywhere but where you want to go, young puppy? Like everything else in dog obedience, it takes consistency and repetition. The most important is to establish the ground rules with your puppy as early as possible. It is a lot easier to manage a 20lb puppy than it will be to manage a 50lb – 70lb one! Here are some helpful hints.

Achieving the “Loose Leash”

Let your puppy know early that straining on the leash is not going to be allowed. This is the appropriate time for a leash correction, however if there is no slack in the leash, you cannot give the appropriate “pop” that is necessary to feel the correction around their neck.

Puppies less than 6 mths of age, are still wearing a buckle collar. This does not mean you cannot communicate to the puppy through the tug on the collar that you want their attention. Right now they don't understand that the pulling is not what you want. Next we try to communicate our wishes.

To get some slack in the leash, stop the direction you are heading and turn around. A change in the direction will get the puppies attention momentarily. As soon as the puppy starts pulling again, be ready by having at least one hand on the leash about 12” to 15” away from the collar, and give them a short sharp “pop” and release on the leash while saying firmly, “no”.

As the puppy moves forward, it might only take 2 steps before lunging again. Repeat the procedure as often as you need to. You might only get 5 feet towards where you are going before a correction is necessary, but sooner or later, your puppy will get the idea.

It is most important that you have your puppy's attention before you try to give a command or correction. If they are focused on other things, you will not be successful. Then just stop and wait them out, and start over again.

"Tis the Season," or it will be shortly. Starting with Thanksgiving and all the way through New Years, a lot of you are planning to travel. So the question is, do we take the puppy or not. That is a question that only you can answer. Taking the puppy requires a little extra

planning and organizing, but also can be a lot of fun with once in a life time memories. I remember the first time my Florida dog saw snow. I asked her to relieve on it and she gave me the look that said a thousand words. "You want me to do what where?" We raised

eight times, and each one of our puppies got the opportunity to fly all over the country with us. There are, however, some tips we can offer you to make your vacation with your puppy a successful one:

Traveling with your Puppy

Keep in mind your destination. If it is a hotel, make sure you contact them ahead of time to let them know you will be traveling with a **guide dog in training**. Each state has different access laws so make sure you & your pup will be allowed in the hotel. If it is a relatives' house, make sure the puppy is welcome. It's hard to believe but not every one likes dogs as much as we do.

Plan to travel with an up to date health certificate and your dog's crate. If you are flying, let the airlines also know you are traveling with a **guide dog in training**. Your crate must be a plastic airline certified crate, wire crates are not allowed to transport pups on an airplane. More often than not, the puppy will be allowed to travel on the plane at your feet. But you must be prepared with your health certificate (you get this from your vet the week you leave at your expense) and airline certified crate if the gate agent requires you to put your puppy in luggage.

Airlines have different rules and do not have to follow the same access laws when it comes to puppies in training. Major airlines let you fly with your pups but some of the small low cost ones have different policies so check with them before you purchase your tickets. If they do not want our pups I do not want to give them my money! This happens rarely but you don't want to be caught unprepared.

Along with your crate, you should also pack your dog's food, toys, bowls, heartworm (if applicable while you are gone), water and/or other meds your puppy might require. If I am flying, I always put a couple of meals in my carry on bag for my dog in case I get separated from my luggage. I



Traveling with your Puppy

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may not get to eat, but my dog is not going to miss a meal.

During the vacation, try to keep your puppy on a schedule. It is just as difficult for your puppy as it is for you to have their routine changed. Don't be surprised if they don't feel like eating or have an accident even though they have been house broken for months. Just do the best you can to get them back in step.

Keep your Area Coordinators and group leaders informed as to when and where you will be traveling with your puppy, and make sure you have their contact information available in the case of an emergency.

Make sure you pack your camera and video recorders to capture all the great experiences you and your puppy are going to have on your vacation. Remember, traveling with your puppy is like traveling with a young child, it can be fun but is a little extra work. Therefore, don't feel guilty if you elect to have your puppy stay with a sitter instead. Your puppy will have just as good of a time as if they went with you and you do not have to worry about them



One of the main reasons why your evaluations are for 4, 6, 10 & 14 months of the age of your puppy is to coincide with your puppy's maturation and development. Experience has shown that as your puppy matures, they drift in and out of various curiosity, fear, testing and stubbornness phases.

Generally, they start out with no fear and a lot of curiosity, as they experience the outside world. Sometime between 4-8 months, they become a little more tentative about their environment. You might find your puppy backing away from previously familiar people, pets or inanimate objects while they are

trying to process whether or not to be afraid of them.

How you, as the handler, respond to the way your puppy is reacting will affect their final perception. The following story sent to me by Darlene Bigham is a perfect illustration

Puppy Shyness or Fears

“The city came out and dug up some pipes next to the sidewalk. When Molly and I walked by, there were two large cones to warn people of the drop off.

If you listen to Molly's side of the story these cones eat unsuspecting yellow labs. She did a switch to the right side and would have continued on if not for the leash. I moved the cones to the middle of the sidewalk and we did figure eights and circles around them. She got up close and personal and even laid on one, not willingly.

After she settled down we went on with our walk. This was an evening walk and a bit dark outside. This morning I took the same walk and again encountered the dog eating cones. Molly figured that if they didn't eat her last night that she was breakfast for sure. We did the same routine as the previous evening and she calmed down a bit sooner. We encountered a cone at Home Depot this morning in the parking lot and she didn't mind this one at all. She doesn't like things on her home ground that are different.”

So let's break this down into simple steps :

Awareness- First, Molly encountered something new, she was tentative and tried to avoid it. Other puppies may react by barking at it or backing away refusing to walk past it.

Ignore- Darlene did not attach any positive or negative attention towards the object.

Redirect- Darlene took the dogs attention away from the object by practicing some dog obedience walking around the cone

Puppy Shyness or Fears

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Repeat- The next day she did the same activity.

Desensitize- By the time they made their trip to Home Depot, Molly did not even react to the cone there.

Today it's the cone; tomorrow it will be something else. It doesn't matter the steps are still the same. What not to do is force the puppy to encounter it by tapping on it or dragging them towards it. Each day work closer and closer until the puppy can ignore the object. This works the same if your puppy shows fear to people or other animals.



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