

MEDIA RELEASE

7 January 2009

Promoting
Responsible
Dog
Ownership



Socialised dogs make better companions

Many people have found themselves unexpectedly becoming new dog owners after being given a puppy for Christmas. New owners are often overprotective of puppies or overwhelmed by the responsibility and therefore leave it too late in their pet's lives to socialise them. By not introducing puppies to a variety of different people, things, and other dogs early on in life, owners could find their dog disruptive and socially unacceptable later in life. **Dogs NSW** stresses the importance of socialising your puppy by 12 weeks of age as part of a complete training regime.

"Dog socialisation is vital to a puppy's mental development. Put simply, it involves taking the time to introduce your puppy to new objects, new sounds, different people and other dogs, so that they are comfortable in a variety of situations," advises veterinarian and **Dogs NSW** spokesperson **Dr Peter Higgins**.

Dogs that have not been well socialised can become fearful of everyday occurrences, have disruptive and unacceptable behavioural patterns, and often have nervous, frenetic personalities.

"I have seen the results of unsocialised dogs. These unsocialised dogs have had little or no proper training while growing up and I believe that the dog should not be blamed," says **Dr Higgins**.

"What nobody wants to see is a dog that becomes a liability rather than a companion. This is totally up to the owner. Socialising a dog is easy and fun, and a great way to spend quality time with your four legged friend," highlights **Dr Higgins**.

Socialised dogs have several positive traits. They:

- Get along well with other dogs,
- Have better manners with neighbours, and
- Tend to bark less at home.

These positive traits means that socialised dogs are:

- Well adjusted companions, with
- Secure, stable, and trustworthy personalities,

"Be mindful of your puppy's safety while introducing them to new things. Some owners keen to socialise their puppy will quickly place them in situations where they can get sick from other dogs and pick up diseases around the garden. It's a good idea to organise a puppy play-date with a friend's dog that you can be sure is well behaved, in good health, and up to date with vaccinations," suggests **Dr Higgins**.

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