



## ENGLISH CREAM MINIATURE DACHSHUNDS

### CRÈME OF THE CROP DACHSHUNDS' NEW PUPPY TRANSITION, ENRICHMENT, SOCIALIZATION, AND FAMILY EDUCATION

**The moment you have been waiting for since the day you decided to become a pet parent has finally arrived - your puppy is about to come home, excitement levels are high and you need to puppy prepare the house! Are you ready? It's time to take a walk through your home and begin puppy-proofing it, much like you would if a baby were coming to stay. Here are a few things to help you in the process:**

- Are there any mouse traps lying around that need to be picked up before your puppy gets trapped in one? It's amazing all the things your puppy will find - so do a walk through and look for all those things you want to eliminate as puppy temptations that have the potential to turn out painfully negative!
- Hide any open electrical cords if possible to prevent your puppy from getting a shock. For example, tuck them behind furniture, place them under rugs, or unplug and set them on top of something else where possible so your puppy will not chew on them. Ideally, you will be watching your puppy if and when they are out and about anyway (RIGHT?) so this should not be a problem, but for the times they get away playing, it is a good idea to put these things out of sight.
- Your puppy's young joints are growing and developing so take extra caution not allowing them to bound down stairs, to jump off of couches or beds, as well as any other high places - the impact can do serious and unfortunate damage. When in doubt, choose to carry them down the stairs and keep them off of things where they may fall and or jump down. For example, if you want your new puppy to sit on the couch with you, plan to simply lift them down when you are done. In short, be aware of the dangers in your home to help prevent your puppy's access to them and as needed, use baby gates and ramps to prevent hazards!
- What's more, it is helpful to have several places inside your home where you can place your puppy in order to contain them when you cannot watch them. For example, I have a Puppy Nursery in my kitchen where my puppy sleeps and takes naps and a movable pen I will arrange in other rooms as needed depending upon what we are doing as a family. Likewise, I close bedroom and bathroom doors as a way to further control their access to areas when they are out and about playing with us. In summary, create as many Puppy Nurseries as needed for your home to contain your pet and that work best for you in order to prevent the unintended consequences.
- Remember to check your floors to make sure they are clean and free from small items or toys your puppy might swallow. Further, it is always a good idea to do a quick sweep of your anticipated play area prior to letting your puppy out to pick up any items you do not want them to chew on, such as socks, toys, magazines, books, stuffed animals, etc.. If they are out, they will find them.

- Also important to note, certain plants and foods are toxic when ingested by dogs. I have found it best, especially during the puppy stage when they want to chew on everything, to put any plants on a shelf where your puppy does not have access to them. Likewise, it is a good idea to know the common toxic foods for dogs and educate family members to keep your puppy safe. Dangerous foods for dogs include: alcohol, avocado seeds, chocolate/ coffee/ caffeine, citrus, coconut, grapes/ raisins, macadamia nuts, onions, garlic, chives, xylitol and yeast dough.
- Additionally, if you are not in the habit now, it is a good time to start clearing off your counters and keep food in a pantry, or other closed area in order to prevent any counter surfing as your puppy grows - do your best to eliminate the temptations as a way to prevent bad habits you won't want later on.
- Training treats are very useful as positive reinforcement for doing specific behaviors and as a way to help your puppy want to achieve success. I have them readily accessible around my house and strategically place a jar of yummys by my back door for when my puppy needs to go outside to go potty, by my front door to help me reward their good behavior with visitors - also easy to have my guests feed my puppy a treat when they sit to be greeted, in my kitchen or another room where a lot of time is spent and other places as appropriate to build and reinforce desired behaviors. In short, I have rewards where I know I will need them most so I am ready to reward the instant it is deserved. While this isn't necessary, it sure helps!
- Choose an ideal spot for a water bowl and always keep fresh water available for your puppy while they are out playing.
- Create your Puppy Nursery as a safe, comfortable environment for your puppy to decompress for the first (3) days after arriving to your home. Puppy will not leave her nursery for these first critical days. After the first (3) days, the Puppy Nursery is perfect for nighttime as long as you can hear the puppy when she wakes up during the night (you will go into the nursery to comfort and reassure your puppy when she whines by laying and playing with her until she goes back to sleep). Puppies will whine the first 3-5 nights as they get used to their new home and family. It's also a place for the puppy to nap or stay when she is not playing outside the nursery, interacting with the family or primary care giver, and exploring her new home. This is not a place where your puppy just stays all day. This is a safe place for her when you need a shower, or run an errand, for naps when you can't supervise, and for bedtime. Your nursery needs to include the following important items: pawd, calming bed, blankets, snuggle heartbeat puppy, Bully sticks, food and water bowls, toy box, many chew toys, interactive puzzles, squeaky toys, crinkle toys, stuffed animal toys, tennis balls, snuffle mat, slide, wobble board, treat dispenser, and puppy play gym. You want to protect your floors and have a comfortable, soft bottom for your nursery. I use exercise mats or baby mats on the floor. I cover those with the gray whelping liners. Then, I put the large washable pee pads over those and place the smaller washable pee pads on top of the larger one. Lastly, I cover the entire puppy nursery with All Star or Vibrant disposable training pads. I put those about 5 layers deep and take out the soiled pads as needed and each day add new ones.
- All of our puppies are free feed and always have access to fresh water. Keep puppy's food bowl full and wash the water bowl daily with dishwashing soap. I have back up food and water bowls so I can run mine through the dishwasher daily on high temperature.
- We do not believe in crating our puppies and do not train them for it. We use a puppy nursery which is described above. Dachshunds love to be with their families and require lots of attention, love, and interaction. Keep life positive and exciting for your puppy which is vital to mental and social development. Continue exposing your puppy to new sounds, surfaces, smells, and surroundings. Your goal is to successfully help your puppy become comfortable to the world around her. You don't want your Puppy Nursery in an isolated location. It needs to be in the area where the family spends the most time.

- Your puppy needs constant attention and playtime with you and your family all day long between naps. They are like newborn babies and require 18 – 22 hours of sleep a day. Play with them and interact while they are awake. Always reinforce positive behavior with praise and treats. Puppies require a lot of love and attention. You can't just sit down food and water and leave them on their own expecting them to eat, drink, and be happy. Love your puppy! Make sure they are eating and drinking well and getting plenty of rest. We play classical music softly to signal nap time and while the puppy is napping during the day. We turn off all lights and music at bedtime. Remember to keep your puppy on her schedule. You will get a copy of your puppy's schedule with your other important information at puppy pickup.

## **OUTSIDE YOUR HOME**

- Similar to doing a walk-through of your home, as described above, it is important you likewise walk outside of your house, looking for things your new puppy could theoretically get into, but shouldn't, as well as items they may climb upon and or jump off of that may be dangerous. Obviously, while doing your walk review, make the necessary adjustments to puppy proof the outside of your home in order to compliment the safety that can now be found within!
- Choose a place where you would like to be your puppy's dedicated potty spot to be and remember to ALWAYS take your puppy to this particular spot (on leash) to do their business... On leash for at least the first six months to help create a strong habit, as well as being right there ready to properly reward them for going when and where you wanted!
- Secure a contained exercise run, large kennel or other play area for your puppy to run around outdoors. This could be an exercise pen for small breeds, a sturdy dog run or another space defined by temporary fencing, an enclosed deck, etc. This is especially important if you live in tight quarters, close to busy streets or in areas where your puppy could easily get lost. If you live in a rural area, you can decide how much freedom to give your puppy while maintaining their safety as that should always come first! Having a fenced in back yard is ideal for dachshund owners!

**TRANSITIONING YOUR PUPPY FROM YOUR BREEDERS' HOME TO YOURS:** When you first arrive home, place your puppy inside its Puppy Nursery and allow it to decompress as it is transitioning from the breeder's home to its new home. Read about how to allow your puppy to decompress below.

**DECOMPRESSION!** As humans, we intuitively know what this word means. And we know we need it. So do our new family members.

While our impulse is to smother our new puppy with hugs and kisses, inviting everyone over to meet their cuteness, this is actually extremely stressful for a new puppy.

They are overwhelmed. They have just left everything "known" in their world, including not only their mama, siblings, and humans, but all familiar smells. Gotcha Day is an assault on all of their senses.

Your new puppy needs a chance to get the lay of the land. A consistent schedule and a quiet home go a long way towards helping them decompress, but so do choices.

For example, rather than everyone picking your puppy up and holding her, allow puppy to make the choice of entering your space bubble. By sitting in your puppy nursery (and please oh please, have a puppy nursery!!!), your puppy can choose to approach and investigate new people. This one thing is a massive trust builder.

Once your pup has had a chance to decompress, you can begin your socialization protocols in earnest. **But decompression must come first!** Your puppy will thank you for it.

### **Feeding and Watering your New Puppy during the car ride or flight home and puppy's first 3 days at their**

**new home:** Due to the stress of the puppy transition, your puppy may stop eating or eat very little the first few days. The more stress they endure, the worst this will be, so it's imperative that you are following the information about decompression, the first 3 days in the puppy nursery, and make sure you are providing the environment that is quiet, peaceful, and relaxing that I have already mentioned. If you don't follow our advice and training for New Puppy Parents, your puppy will pay the price and you as well with an ER trip to the vet or the loss of your puppy. Water and food are essential to the puppy's well fair. You may see them drinking and eating some, but it may not be enough. You have agreed in our contract to stay in contact with us every 4 hours or more by text and phone calls during the first 3 days of the puppy transition to your home. Every puppy is different, so I discuss what to do with each individual puppy with their New Puppy Family during this time. What works for one puppy does not work for another. Therefore, I will be speaking with you on an individual basis regarding drinking, eating, peeing, and pooping. Below are the necessary items from our checklist that you will be using to entice your puppy to eat and drink but only with the breeder's specific instructions for your puppy which will be different for every puppy. Because of these differences, I will explain what to do in person with our New Puppy families. It's not something that I can type out for our New Puppy Parents because it can be easily misunderstood and done incorrectly. Our new puppy parents need to have the following foods and supplements stocked in their home before picking up their new puppy. Stores may be closed when you arrive home, and this is not the time to leave your puppy and rush out shopping with causes more stress to your new puppy.

- Cesar Classic Loaf variety wet food (one case)
- Several Jars of Gerber Baby Food Chicken (10)
- Dyne (ordered from Amazon as soon as possible)
- A few cans of evaporated Goat's milk (found at the grocery store)
- Diamond Naturals Pure Breed Small puppy dry kibble (Chicken and Rice)
- Light Karo syrup
- A box of 3 ml syringes
- A box of 1 ml syringes
- A package of chicken thighs with skin in the refrigerator not frozen and ready to cook
- White rice ready to cook
- Low Sodium Chicken Broth
- 2 cans of wet Purina ProPlan Puppy (chicken, beef, etc...)
- Pet Nutri-Drops for dogs (order from Jeffers Pets online – it's fabulous for puppies and Mommy. Tastes bad, but absorbs through the tongue. Great for transport stress for puppies)
- Bottled Water

It's so exciting bringing your new puppy home; however, it can also be a bit unnerving as it is not always clear how to transition your puppy from your breeders home to yours. I have including a lot of very important information that needs to be read thoroughly and read again as many times as needed BEFORE picking up your new puppy. Listed below are several areas we recommend you review. If you look at the transition through the eyes of the puppy, you will see that there is some very important information to share.

**Reviewing the Puppy Tracker :** Reviewing your puppy's Breeder Bootcamp Puppy Tracker will allow you to become familiar with how the puppy has been raised, the kinds of experiences it has had, and gain insight into the foundation that has been set. This information is including in your puppy Gotcha Bag.

**Understanding the Fear Phases:** It is critical that you educate yourself on what a fear phase is and the importance of protecting a puppy during this time, especially if you are getting your puppy at 8 weeks old. Additional research has shown that while the first 12 weeks of a puppy's life are extremely important, the first 12 months are also very important for the long term confidence and stability of a dog. It is important for you to learn how to protect your puppy from negative and frightening experiences, all while making sure it gets plenty of POSITIVE exposures that are safe and fun. You will want to be aware of your puppy's body language so you are able to recognize if anything is wrong. And remember, how you handle the fear phases your dog goes through is very important.

**Training/Marker** – The very best way for you to learn the appropriate use of the clicker/marker is by visually seeing it done. This is why we have included it in our course, so you can visit it and review it to ensure you are using it appropriately. (Breeders Bootcamp Masters Class)

**Puppy Puppy Puppy Call** - This is one of our power commands that can be a very valuable tool. Make sure you continue to offer this call whenever giving your puppy their food or treats.

**The Polite Sit** - Over the course of training, the breeder has worked very hard to teach the puppies that sitting and making eye contact is how they can communicate. If you do not understand the importance of this form of communication and maintaining it, the puppy will resort to typical dog behaviors such as jumping and barking for attention.

**Eye Contact** – Continue clicker training for eye contact. It is important that you establish good eye contact because you can't train a puppy if it refuses to look at you. This can be done by simply waiting until the pup looks you in the eye, then immediately following it with a click and treat.

**Collar/Harness** – It is important to continue having the puppy practice wearing a collar, harness, and working with a leash. This ensures they are comfortable with them and less likely to react negatively. **(I personally do NOT believe in putting collars on dogs. They are choking hazards which have cost many people their pets. But, if you want your puppy / dog to wear one, NEVER leave them unsupervised with the collar and check it daily to make sure you can fit two fingers under it or it's too tight.)**

## Grooming Routine

**Bath, Nail Trim, and Ears** – Visit with your breeder (me) to determine what the puppy's grooming routine looked like and what they are accustomed to. By keeping these routines consistent, you will be setting your puppy up for a continuation of success and confidence.

## Questions to Ask Your Breeder...

**How much food and how many meals is the puppy eating per day?** I free feed so I keep dry puppy kibble out at all times day and night. When I'm teaching them to eat, I feed at 7:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. right before bedtime using the Puppy Puppy Puppy call.

**What brand of food if the puppy eating?** Our puppies are eating Diamond Naturals Pure Breed Small Chicken and Rice Puppy Kibble. Some are eating dry kibble when they leave, and others are eating soaked soft kibble. For soaked, soft kibble, I cover the dry kibble in water to cover all of the kibble, microwave on high for 1 minute, and let sit for 5 – 10 minutes until it's warm but NOT hot.

**Will you provide enough food for me to transition the puppy over to my food of choice?** No, I'll provide one small baggie of dry kibble. I don't advise starting to switch food for two weeks during the transition period. It adds more stress to your puppy, and you should wait two weeks to start gradually switching. It should take a week to completely switch food; don't do it drastically to avoid stomach upset.

**Is the puppy on supplements or probiotics?** Yes, NuVet Plus Immune System Wafers and FortiFlora Probiotics sprinkled over their kibble.

**What training treats do you recommend?** Lean treats, high reward treats like Gerber Baby Food, soft chew treats that are healthy. (See our New Puppy Checklists for ideas) Dog safe fruits and veggies need

to be cut up correctly into small pieces. Be careful when feeding people food; some food is poisonous to dogs!

**Where does the puppy typically relieve itself?** Disposable potty pads in their puppy nursery.

**Has the puppy started potty training?** Our puppies are only trained to use disposable potty pads at this age. Because puppies are not fully immunized until 18 weeks old, we don't put our puppies outside on the ground until then. It's not worth the risk factor to me. I recommend that all puppy vaccinations be given subcutaneous NOT in the muscle! Also, don't let your vet give the rabies along with your last immunization. Schedule puppy's Rabies vaccinations at least a week later after the last booster shot. It's too much at one time, and dachshunds are prone to have reactions to vaccines. I recommend waiting at the vet clinic for 20 to 30 minutes in your car after having vaccinations in case of an allergic reaction you are at the vet for emergency care. I also keep Children's liquid Benadryl in the glove compartment or in my puppy bag along with a 3 ml syringe in case of allergic reactions while I'm not at the vet. You only have a few minutes to get the Benadryl in your puppy. Ask your vet the dosage for pound. Always syringes very slowly from the side of the cheek; never from the front of the mouth because you can aspirate your puppy/dog. Remember to also put down potty pads on every surface to keep your puppy/dog from touching anything. Vets' Offices are high traffic dog areas for sick dogs! Throw all pads away and don't touch the bottoms of the pads. If you have your own privately fenced back yard, a week after the second puppy vaccination, you can decide for yourself if you want to start potty training. You have to weigh the risk factors that you are taking and make a decision. I personally don't take risks with my puppies.

**Where is the puppy used to sleeping?** In our puppy nursery on an assortment of different beds, pawd, or crate pads in their nursery along with their littermates. Bedtime is 9 -10 p.m. All lights are turned off as well as the classical music or TV. I tell them "I love you," "Sweet Dreams," "Jesus loves you," and "Good Night, Sleep tight!"

**Has the puppy been introduced to crate training?** NO! I do not believe in crate training! I place our puppies in homes where crate training is NOT needed. I use the Puppy Nursery instead.

**What music have you been using as a que to settle?** Puppies listen to relaxing classical, spa, Pandora relaxing and calming dog music, Native American flute, Andrea Bocelli station, and easy instrumental music.

**Is the puppy on a sleep schedule?** Yes, we get up when puppy wakes up on its own; I don't wake the puppy up. Then, we have breakfast, play, potty and play some more with Mommy Leslie. We turn on the TV and watch animal shows, Dog TV, Hallmark movies, Dr. Pol, Netflix animal and sea channels, or we listen to a variety of music: relaxing classical, spa, nature sounds, 70's and 80's hits, slow rock, Italian, dog music, etc.. After an hour or an hour and a half of playing and training, it's then massage and cuddle time until we all fall asleep for about 4-5 hours. They wake up on their own and eat, play, train, potty, massage and cuddle and nap for about 4 hours. Repeat until bedtime! Create fun activities and games to play with your puppy while she's awake, do some training, or socializing using the puppy sling or stroller so you keep the puppy off the ground safe from exposure to disease and parasites. Everything lives in the ground. Parvo is there forever! Puppy wakes up during the night around 2:00 a.m. – 3:00 a.m. and eats, plays, and goes back to sleep. However, you will have to go in to the nursery to play, feed if not eating well, massage and cuddle, and comfort puppy until she falls back to sleep. (Then, repeat daily!) I highly recommend the Baxter and Bella Online Puppy School for our new puppy parents. The only part of the training that I don't recommend is the crate training sections. My new parents don't have a need for it, and I don't think it's healthy for the puppy mentally.

**Do you have genetic or health testing on your breeding dogs?** Yes.

**Does the puppy come with papers?** All of our puppies are out of AKC registered parents. We do not let their AKC papers go with the puppies. They either come with CKC paper or no papers.

**Does the puppy have breeding rights?** **NO!**

**What shots has the puppy had?** Six Weeks First Immunization

**Has the puppy been seen by a veterinarian?** Yes, we take out puppies in for its first immunization, physical exam, and a fecal test. A letter from our vet is also obtained and included in your important paperwork.

**Do you offer a health guarantee?** Yes, and it's doubled if our New Puppy Parents purchase (3) 90 wafer bottles of NuVet Plus Immune System Supplements, and they are given every morning to the puppy as a treat for the first year. I recommend you keep your puppy/dog on them for life as well as any other dogs you have. They also have supplement for cats!

### **Recognizing Puppy Time**

**Importance of a Safe Puppy Space (Puppy Nursery)** - It is VERY tempting to hold and play with your new puppy non-stop. However, you need to understand the importance of allowing the puppy a safe place to put itself into "time out" as needed. Just like people, puppies need breaks too.

**Signs of a Tired Puppy** - A new puppy needs an average of 18-20 hours of sleep per day. A puppy that is not getting adequate sleep will throw "puppy tantrums." This is when biting and thrashing around begins and is a sign that it is time for the puppy to go to bed.

### **Establishing Health and Medical Care**

**Vet Check and Vaccinations** - PLEASE make an appointment AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to have your puppy seen by your veterinarian. It still needs very time-sensitive vaccination boosters, a rabies vaccine, and to be started on heartworm prevention and flea and tick prevention. I recommend Heartguard and Nexguard – it's the BEST on the market! (along with any other specific treatments.)

**Loose Stool** - Occasionally the stress of going to their new home can cause a puppy to develop loose stools. The use of probiotics, and bland diet, and adding canned pumpkin to the puppy's diet will help calm their tummy. HOWEVER, if your puppy develops persistent diarrhea, it is important that you have your puppy examined by your veterinarian.

**Keeping the Puppy Safe** – It is essential that you educate yourself on what Parvo is and the risks associated with it. It is very risky to set your new puppy down in public areas until they are FULLY vaccinated. Pet supply stores, dog parks, and the floors of veterinarian offices are some of the worst places for catching Parvo. This becomes a question of risk vs. reward, so be intentional with the exposures you give your puppy. Remember that an ounce of protection will go a long way in protecting your new baby. I strongly recommend using a puppy sling and stroller!

Parvo is no joke. It is a huge consideration when raising a young puppy and one not to be taken lightly. And yet, to the degree that Parvo can physically harm a young pup, lack of socialization can emotionally harm a young pup. A thoughtful approach is required.

Some common symptoms of Parvo are bloody diarrhea, vomiting, and lethargy. The tricky thing is that an infected dog will usually begin to “shed” the virus (meaning it’s being passed through feces) several days before becoming symptomatic. And that hardy virus then lives in the environment for a very, very long time (forever)!

So, a couple of easy things. If you’re bringing a puppy home, disinfect your home. Anyone can track Parvo in on the bottom of shoes. It’s a sticky virus that can hitch a ride, so mop your floors with a diluted bleach solution. And then don’t wear shoes where your puppy is going to be (because we are all going to have a defined, gated area for our new puppies, right?!?). I don’t allow anyone to wear shoes in our home, so our new puppy parents will be asked to take their shoes off before entering.

And then socialize in a thoughtful way. Invest in slings, wagons, strollers, and backpacks. Yes, it’s a pain. Yes, you’ll feel ridiculous pushing a puppy in a stroller through Lowe’s. But your puppy will be getting the necessary socialization without the unnecessary risk that paws on the ground presents.. There is no “cure” – just supportive therapy. The earlier Parvo is caught, the greater the chances of recovery. The test is fast and easy, so better to be safe than sorry.

One other thing: pups get their immunity from mama and that begins to wear off around 6 weeks of age. In order for a puppy to be fully protected from Parvo, puppy must have COMPLETED all vaccinations. One doesn’t do it. Two doesn’t do it. Puppy needs to have received the last on around 15 weeks of age (depending on the protocol that your vet uses) and then a week AFTER that last shot, puppy will be protected. Until then, it’s strollers and wagons friends.

### **Beginning Their New Normal**

Begin introducing activities and experiences that will become a normal part of your puppy’s life as soon as you safely can. This helps them to acclimate to their new environment and learn what to expect.

### **Playing with a Purpose**

**Treat for Pickup** - Puppies often reach an age where they think it is fun to run away whenever someone approaches them. To nip this behavior in the bud, offer a treat each time you go to pick your puppy up.

**Treat for Name** – Say the puppy’s name, and as soon as it looks at you, offer a treat.

**Food in Hand** – A puppy’s natural instinct is to immediately go after food, but we want it to learn to wait until we offer it. To work on this, hold a treat in a closed hand and allow the puppy to smell it. As soon as the puppy backs off, even if just slightly, mark it and reward the puppy with the food.

**Polite Sit** – A puppy loves to follow movement, which often becomes the humans around it. A good way to prevent inappropriate jumping is to practice the polite sit. When your puppy approaches you, wait until it sits, then mark it and reward the puppy.

**Find your Food** – This is a fun game that combines scent work and mental exercise. To begin, place cups of food fairly close together, then let your puppy find each cup. Gradually, place the cups further and further apart and eventually in different rooms and see how smart your puppy is.



We highly recommend that you check out <https://www.baxterandbella.com/>, the online puppy school. Use the discount code CREMEOFTHECROP for significant savings. It's one of the best investments I've made for my puppies/dogs!

## **Socialization**

There are so many questions about socializing your puppies! I hesitate to write something like this, as I fear you'll take my words in black and white, when this is an area with a ton of gray. YOU must use discernment as to what's best for your puppy.

But here's what we know. The puppy brain is uniquely different until about 12 -14 weeks of age. Its ability to absorb information and then CHANGE the neural wiring is specific to this period of life.

Once pups reach about 14 weeks of age, their brain "hardens." While an old dog can of course learn new tricks, the ability to do so is radically different than when pups are young. The brain is different. Physiologically, it is incapable of making the kinds of changes it could make during "the window of socialization."

Thus, there is an urgency to socialize and socialize well. This urgency clashes with the risk that Parvo poses. It's a paradox! Socialization is both critical and potentially dangerous.

For the most part, we counsel our families to socialize their pups with a stroller, sling, backpack, or wagon. Paws and noses off the ground. And then there are the calculated risks.

Once pups have had their first 2 (of 4) sets of vaccinations, we recommend doing things like letting puppy briefly run on the beach or walk across the dock. These are unique experiences that their young brains should encounter. Done carefully, it's a risk taken, and we think it has paid off with our dogs.

I am not advocating a beach day or a walk in the park. I am talking about a brief jaunt across the dock while rapidly dispensing treats (to keep the nose up), or a short jog along the shore. Brief. Treats. These are the keys.

## **BEGIN SOCIALIZATION**

Socialization in simple terms is strategically introducing your puppy to, and helping them become comfortable with, things they will encounter living in a human world. We want them to bounce back from anything that startles them and be okay with experiencing something new.

Your puppy will need to feel relaxed around many different types of people – old, young, short, tall, large, small, loud, quiet, different types of places - homes, playgrounds, quiet roads, busy streets, open rural areas and crowded cities, sights and sounds of all types and magnitudes, as well as different types of things - toys, bikes, cars, trucks, cats, other dogs and animals, as well as smells, sounds (fireworks), etc...

**Your window to do this is LIMITED (first 3-16 weeks of your puppy's life is CRITICAL and then continue on for at least the first year) so take it seriously from the beginning and do not overlook the importance of getting started right away! In fact, the more your puppy is introduced to and becomes familiar with during their younger and more impressionable age using positive techniques the better.**

## KEY POINTS

- **Your puppy's experiences with new things must be neutral or positive in order to count as effective socialization.**
- **Do not force them into uncomfortable situations for any reason.**
- **It is normal for a puppy to exhibit initial shyness or fear toward something new.**
- **As long as it is not too stressful or overwhelming, a normal puppy given time and distance will recover and feel comfortable around it.**

**The first day home with your new puppy will be filled with many new sights and sounds all around them. It is important to be patient and allow your puppy to take their time as they explore. Do not feel pressured into starting their training right away - it is better to wait until they have settled into their new home and appears to feel comfortable with all that is going on around them.**

## START BODY HANDLING EXERCISES

- **Help your puppy become comfortable being handled all over their body, rubbing their ears, petting under their chin, giving them some scratches under their collar, massaging their paws and paw pads, pulling gently on their tail, encouraging them to roll over onto their back for a nice belly rub, etc. (We do NOT recommend collars for our puppies or dogs!)**
- **Pair any touching and picking up with food if needed to prevent puppy biting and create positive experiences.**
- **Additionally, place your fingers in and around their teeth, which will help with brushing teeth later. Doing this regularly, even multiple times a day, helps them realize being handled is non-threatening and to be expected.**
- **In summary, physical touch, time and attention can become a very valuable reward for both of you and starting early is a great way to help alleviate issues down the road with guests, when you visit the vet, as well as your groomer. In short, pet your pup from head to tail and do it often!**

The first few days home with your new puppy are so much fun! Take time to build a strong relationship with them. Teach them you are someone they can trust and good things happen when you are around. Here are some tips to get you started.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR PUPPY

- Over the next few days, get to know your puppy.
- See which rewards (toys, treats, belly rubs, praise, etc...) your puppy likes most\*\*\* as we will use these throughout The Baxter & Bella Online Puppy School.
- Do they like apples, sweet potatoes, string cheese, freeze dried liver, chicken chunks, attention, praise, belly rubs, tug or fetch?
- Likewise, test out a number of their toys and work to figure out which are their favorites
- Recognize they will be in a bit of shock/transitional stress the first few days and may not be interested right away in food - make this an ongoing process involving several weeks - introduce a new food to your puppy one at a time every 3 to 4 days.
- We suggest making a list of things they like from least value to high value and use accordingly. We call this the hierarchy of training rewards.

\*\*\* Plan to use these items as rewards and reinforcement for the good behaviors your puppy offers - remember, "What gets rewarded, gets repeated!"

Use low value items for simple tasks that are easy for your puppy to do. Use high value rewards for harder tasks - such as paying attention to you in a really busy environment with a lot of puppy distractions.

All-in-all, consistently reward your puppy with a yummy treat or an exciting toy they really like as a proven and positive way to clearly communicate to them you are pleased with how they are responding.

**IMPORTANT:** It is not a good idea to feed your puppy all of these new foods on day one! Simply set a goal that over the next couple of weeks to pay particular attention to the things that really excite your puppy and motivate them to work. Obviously we don't want you to have a sick puppy on your hands from an overload of new foods on the very first day! Still, the concept of a hierarchy of rewards is important, so start to formulate a list of what are their favorites, and it's okay to take a number of days and weeks to figure it out.

### **FIRST WEEK HOME SCHEDULE:**

Follow your puppy's lead.

- When they want to sleep, let them.
- When they wake up, take them potty. (We use disposable training pads, and our puppies are familiar with them.)
- Then play or train for 5-15 minutes.
- Offer them a chew as needed.
- Repeat.

After several days, you and your puppy will start to fall into a routine.

**Effective Socialization:** There is a critical socialization period for all puppies from 3 to 16ish weeks old. Once this window closes, the effects are permanent for the life of your dog. It is so important to introduce your puppy to as many new people, animals, places, sights, sounds and smells as you safely can before that time ends. Make sure you are smart about where you take your unvaccinated puppy. Do not go to places where other dogs frequently roam. But do take your puppy out, carrying him or her as needed and help them have positive experiences with the world. If your puppy acts fearful, do NOT force them to investigate the scary something or someone. Instead, move on to something else and make a note to revisit that item on a later date.

**BUILD A SOCIALIZATION JUNGLE GYM:** build this fun puppy adventure toy. Once the jungle gym is built, play with your puppy in and around it, giving them treats when they explore each of the different items on their own. Want to make one? You can see several on Etsy or the puppy online school Baxter and Bella teaches you how to make one.

**YUMMY TREATS:** Teach your puppy to love a Kong or West Paw Toppl and watch as these simple toys help your puppy relax when you are away. Licking relaxes dogs and the good things found in the toy help your puppy associate you leaving with good things.

- Buy 2 or 3 Kongs/Toppls (size appropriately for your puppy.)
- Every morning, measure out your puppy's daily food amount.
- Place 1/4 of the food in a baggie to be used throughout the day as rewards.
- Put the other 3/4 in a bowl and add water to soften it up. Let it soak up the water for 5 minutes. Then spoon into the toys.
- Freeze the toys, pulling one out as needed throughout the day. Save these for times you will be gone or when you need your puppy to spend time in their puppy nursery. Your puppy only gets the toy in the puppy nursery.
- Just before giving the toy to your puppy, top with a spoonful of peanut butter, cream cheese or plain yogurt to make it more enticing.(Make sure these food do NOT contain artificial sweeteners – deadly to puppies/dogs!!)

- By having more than one toy, you can wash as needed and always have one ready to go for their next time in their puppy nursery.
- If freezing is too frustrating for your puppy, give it to them fresh.

## **INTRODUCING THE HARNESS & LEASH**

- Put a basic body harness on your puppy starting day one. They will likely scratch at it to try and remove it. Engage them in a game of tug with a squeaky toy and they will start to forget they are wearing it. .
- As for the leash, when your puppy is out playing and training with you, attach a thin lightweight 4-6 foot leash and let your puppy drag it around. They will forget about it as you engage them in play just like you did with the collar. Do this for the first several weeks until we get to more formal leash training.
- To attach the leash, feed your puppy a treat so they do not bite your hands. They should be busy chewing instead

When you take your puppy on leash outside to go potty, bring food rewards the size of a pencil eraser and feed a treat every few steps as you walk out to go potty and repeat as you walk back in from taking your puppy to the potty spot. This helps your puppy focus on the food, not biting the leash. If your puppy does bite the leash, DO NOT give it attention, drop the leash and keep walking. Treat your puppy when they walk by your side.

**NEW & EXISTING PET INTRODUCTIONS:** The best way to introduce a new puppy to your current pet(s). Don't allow contact with your pets until your puppy has had their 72 or less hour vet examination and a fecal test with results back. Once you know your puppy's fecal is clear and the (3) day decompression in the Puppy Nursery has passed, then you're ready to introduce puppy to existing pets.

### **The Initial Greeting**

When first introducing a new puppy to existing household pets, we recommend using a gated greeting with several 3-5 second sniff sessions.

Set up a gate or exercise pen. Lead your puppy on leash to one side of the gate while someone else leads your other dog/pet to the opposite side of the gate. Allow the animals to sniff through the fence for three seconds, then call them away and reward them for following you. Repeat several times and pay attention to the body language of each pet.

Over the next several days, continue to monitor their interactions and in time, great friendships may develop. Keep the first interactions very short and then redirect to separated areas. Give older pets space and time away from the new puppy as needed. Most puppies have a lot of energy and that doesn't always match up with existing pets. Providing these pets spaces to retreat and get time off from the new puppy is helpful.

### **TIPS & TRICKS**

- Set up a gate or exercise pen.
- Lead your puppy on leash to one side of the gate while someone else leads your other dog/pet to the opposite side of the gate.
- Allow the animals to sniff through the fence for three seconds, then call them away and reward them for following you.
- Repeat several times and pay attention to the body language of each pet.
- If they are both loose and relaxed, you can allow them to greet without the gate. Leave leashes on and closely supervise in case you need to quickly get them apart.
- If body language is tense or stiff, keep the animals separated and allow them time to warm up to the idea of each other over the next several days.

**KIDS & PUPPIES:** Structure their time together to prevent unwanted puppy behaviors.

When it comes to kids & puppies, there are a lot of ideas and best practices to both be aware of and begin implementing sooner rather than later. For starters, kids oftentimes will absolutely adore their new canine companion, however they may not understand how to properly play and interact together. For example, how should they prevent the dog from jumping, biting or chasing them, or taking their things, etc.

What's more and please take special note, puppies generally DO NOT appreciate being picked up by kids, they DO NOT enjoy having things forcefully taken away from them and more often than not, they DO NOT like being hugged – all of these activities can, and unfortunately sometimes do, lead to dog bites.

You will focus on creating a culture where kids and your puppy will learn to live in harmony together. You will learn to use structure and routines through our GAMES & ACTIVITIES area (available through the Baxter & Bella Online Puppy Training) to help kids who want to interact with your dog to do so in a way that it is positively productive and will lead to a healthy and happy long-term relationship.

## **WHY IT'S IMPORTANT**

If there are children in your home, set a few ground rules to help everyone get along better.

1. Let a sleeping puppy lie. Don't scare or startle them.
2. Puppy Nurseries are off limits to kids - always let the puppy come out on their own.
3. If you want to be the puppy's favorite child, don't pick it up. So true I promise!
4. No teasing. That's a big fat period. Don't steal a toy from your puppy or yank it from their mouth. Instead trade them for something better!
5. Always ask a parent's permission before interacting with the puppy; 100% adult supervision is required.
6. No giving orders (for now.) See what you can get your puppy to do without any talking! Make this a challenge and kids get excited to participate.
7. Puppies are FUN! But you must respect them and play appropriately with them.
8. Avoid hugs. Dogs often don't like them and let us know by growling or biting. Stay safe!

## **UNDERSTANDING WHAT PUPPY LIFE IS LIKE**

Please recognize in the typical life of a new puppy, much of their waking hours are spent playing with littermates and they play with their mouths (biting/ nipping/ mouthing) - this is not only normal but healthy for development! Suddenly after weeks and weeks of playing, they are picked out of the litter in the morning and by afternoon they are placed into a living room full of people.

It's exciting and although this new litter appears very different than the one before, I can only imagine that new little puppy looking around and sensing all of the obvious enthusiasm in the room. Anticipating these people are just like their previous litter and anxiously wanting to play, they jump right in and do what they have done for much of their life up to this point - THEY BEGIN TO PLAY - with their mouth of course. As they do this, the people laugh, holler, squeal, scream, move, run, etc... all things that your puppy will anticipate mean everyone is having the time of their lives.

## **SPECIAL NOTE:**

In the beginning, puppies will act like puppies - THEY DON'T KNOW ANY BETTER! However, with time, energy and effort, as well as practice, patience and persistence, you can teach your new canine companion that although we love to play, we do it differently than they are accustomed to.

It is also important to note your puppy is very young and too much play leads to a puppy who is too tired to focus, and resorts back to doing puppy things, like biting and jumping.

Just remember, as your puppy's energy levels increase, so do their unwanted puppy behaviors. Set a timer and end play BEFORE your puppy gets to the point of not playing nice. For times like these, their puppy nursery is a perfect place to give your puppy much needed rest.

We hope that this information is helpful to our New Puppy Families, and we want your new puppy to be a happy, positive experience for you and your family as well as the puppy. Please don't hesitate to call me with any questions or concerns during this important transitional phase and enrichment and socialization phase as it continues for your puppy in its new home. Thank you for entrusting us to raise your new puppy! It's an honor and a blessing! We look forward to watching your new puppy grow and all the adventures that lie ahead in the future for your puppy and your family. You will always have a piece of our hearts in your home. It's such a bittersweet day for us when our puppies go home, but your puppy needs to go to their new puppy family. The puppy needs you, and you need your puppy! We love watching people's lives change before our eyes when I place their puppy in their arms for the first time as well as the relationships we have built with our New Puppy Parents.

God bless,

Leslie Urso

Crème of the Crop Dachshunds