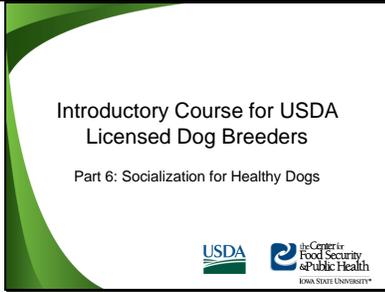


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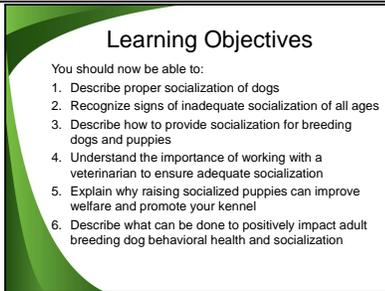
Introductory Course for USDA
Licensed Dog Breeders

Part 6: Socialization for Healthy Dogs

USDA   IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Learning Objectives

You should now be able to:

1. Describe proper socialization of dogs
2. Recognize signs of inadequate socialization of all ages
3. Describe how to provide socialization for breeding dogs and puppies
4. Understand the importance of working with a veterinarian to ensure adequate socialization
5. Explain why raising socialized puppies can improve welfare and promote your kennel
6. Describe what can be done to positively impact adult breeding dog behavioral health and socialization

The learning objectives for this presentation are detailed on this slide and include the following:

1. Describe proper socialization of dogs
2. Recognize the signs of inadequate socialization in puppies and adult dogs
3. Describe how to provide socialization for the breeding dogs and puppies under your care
4. Understand the importance of working with your attending veterinarian to ensure adequate socialization
5. Explain why raising properly socialized puppies can improve their welfare and help to effectively promote your kennel
6. Describe what things can be done to positively impact adult breeding dog behavioral health and socialization

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Socialization: A Best Practice

"Socialization is good for the puppies, good for the future owners of these pets and good for the kennel industry, but it is not a regulatory requirement."

Animal Care Tech Note:
Puppy Socialization
September 2013

Socialization is not a requirement under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) standards and regulations. It is good for the puppies, good for the future owners of these pets and good for the kennel industry. USDA Inspectors will never write a citation for "improper socialization."

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Socialization Video

Before we go through this presentation, please view this short video about Socialization of dogs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wVdOcWYRc>

This video shows socialization programs for puppies and breeding dogs. Your Animal Care Inspector can provide information on how to develop socialization programs that can be good for your business.

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Socialization for Healthy Dogs

This first section will discuss socialization practices for healthy adult dogs. These methods can also apply to puppies as well.

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Meeting Socialization Needs

- Socialization: process by which puppies learn skills needed to mature into normal adults
- Proper socialization requires meeting needs
 - Mental
 - Behavioral
 - Physical
- Wide variety of psychological needs determined by individual factors
 - Genetic makeup
 - Personality type
 - Prior socialization and experiences

Socialization is the process by which puppies learn the skills needed to mature into normal adult dogs. Proper socialization requires meeting the mental, behavioral, and physical needs of your dogs. Individual dogs have a wide variety of psychological needs that are determined by such factors as:

- Genetic makeup
- Personality type
- Prior socialization and experiences

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Inadequate Socialization

- Problems occur with inadequate socialization
- Improper socialization and prolonged confinement may lead to stereotypic behaviors:
 - Spinning
 - Pacing
 - Excessive licking of paws or legs
 - Excessive barking
 - Fearfulness/aggression

Problems occur with inadequate socialization in some breeding kennels. Improper socialization and prolonged confinement may lead to stereotypic behaviors, which are seen as constant and repetitive actions such as:

- Spinning
- Pacing
- Excessive licking of paws or legs
- Excessive barking
- Fearfulness/aggression

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Socialization Programs

- Socialization and behavioral health can be improved by programs developed with a veterinarian
- These programs may include:
 - Socialization strategies
 - Enrichment opportunities (e.g., toys, play structures, music)
 - Exercise plans

Socialization and behavioral health can be improved by programs developed with the attending veterinarian. These programs may include:

- Socialization strategies
- Enrichment opportunities (e.g., toys, play structures, music)
- Exercise plans

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Socialization Practices

- Provide dogs with regular
 - Social contact
 - Mental stimulation
 - Physical activity
- Dogs develop abnormal behaviors when stressed
 - Social companionship
 - Mental stimulation
 - Exercise



Dogs should at a minimum be provided with regular social contact, mental stimulation and physical activity. Dogs become stressed and develop abnormal behaviors when they are not given the opportunity for:

- Social companionship (with dogs and people)
- Mental stimulation
- Exercise

Photo: Puppies playing indoors as a group learning socialization skills.
Source: Anson Eaglin, USDA-APHIS

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Puppy Socialization

This section will discuss the socialization of puppies in kennels. Socialization is the process by which puppies learn the skills needed to mature into normal adult dogs.

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Socialization Definition

- Proper socialization allows puppies to:
 - Explore and become accustomed to their surroundings
 - Learn how to get along with other humans, dogs, and other animal species

Only through proper socialization can puppies become loving, confident and trainable pets

Proper puppy socialization allows puppies to learn how to explore and become accustomed to their surroundings. It also allows them to learn how to get along with littermates, puppies from outside their litters, older dogs, other animal species and people. Only through proper socialization can puppies become loving, confident and trainable pets.

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Breeder Socialization Role

- Breeders who properly socialize their puppies
 - Make a positive investment in their business
 - Provide owners with healthy, well-adjusted pets



Breeders who properly socialize their puppies make a positive investment in their business by providing their clients with healthy, well adjusted pets. Photo: Puppies being socialized with larger dogs and children while playing. Source: Danelle Bickett-Weddle, Iowa State University

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Importance of Socialization

- Raising social, healthy, and trainable puppies is better for animals' welfare
- Can effectively promote your kennel and increase sales
- Failure to properly socialize puppies may lead to lifetime behavioral problems

Importance

- Raising socialized, healthy and trainable puppies is better for the welfare of the animals
- From a business standpoint it will help you to more effectively promote your kennels and increase sales
- Failure to properly socialize puppies during their time at your breeding kennel may lead to lifetime behavioral problems

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Improper Socialization Risks

- Animal is often abandoned or relinquished to shelter, unhappy customer may never acquire another pet
- Unhappy customers may share their negative experiences with friends and family, hurting the dog breeding industry

Risks of improper socialization

- When owning a pet leads to subsequent problems, the animal is often abandoned or relinquished to an animal shelter, and the unhappy customer may never acquire another pet.
- Unhappy customers are known to share their negative experiences with friends and family, which hurts the entire dog breeding industry.

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How to Socialize Puppies

The socialization of puppies can begin moments after birth and last until they leave the breeder. This section will provide some helpful tips on socializing puppies.

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Before Birth

- Puppies can be affected by the health of their mother
- Increased stress in the mother may lead to
 - Miscarriage
 - Low birth rate
 - Increased susceptibility to disease
 - Learning difficulties in puppies

Before birth – Puppies can be affected by the health and stress levels of their mother. Increased stress in the mother may lead to miscarriages, low birth rates, increased susceptibility to disease and learning difficulties in the puppies.

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Before Birth cont'd

- Decrease stress levels in breeding dogs
 - maintain proper air quality
 - maintain proper temperature/humidity
 - avoid overcrowding
 - assure overall health of breeding dogs before breeding



Before birth –Ways to decrease the stress levels in your breeding dogs include:

- Maintaining proper air quality throughout your kennel
- Maintaining proper temperature/humidity levels
- Avoiding overcrowding
- Assuring the overall health of your breeding dogs *before* breeding takes place

Photo: Breeding dog resting comfortably in a kennel. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Birth to Three Weeks of Age

- Puppy isn't fully developed with immature
 - Brain
 - Spinal cord
 - Nerves
- Neurologic development can be positively influenced
- Make sure tail-docking and declawing is NOT the only handling experience
- Gently handle your puppies in a positive manner daily



Birth to 3 weeks – The brain, spinal cord and nerves of the puppy are not yet fully developed during this stage. Neurologic development can be positively influenced during this 3-week window by touch, temperature and the position of the puppy's body. When necessary, tail docking and dewclaw removal (3 - 5 days of age) usually take place during this stage of development, but this potentially painful procedure should *not* be the only handling experience that the puppies receive from humans during this stage. Ideally, you should gently handle your puppies in a positive manner every day that they remain in your kennel.

Photo: A young puppy being handled positively. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Three to Sixteen Weeks of Age

- Critical for developing social relationships with humans and other animals
- Puppy should belong to a known social group – *mother and littermates*



3 weeks to 16 weeks – This period in the puppy's life is critical for developing social relationships with humans and other animals. It is important for the puppy to belong to a known and secure social group – *the mother and littermates*.

Photo (Left) Puppy socializing with kitten. *Source: iStockphoto.com;* (Middle) Puppy socializing with small child. *Source: iStockphoto.com;* (Right) Littermates playing together. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Three to Sixteen Weeks of Age cont'd

- Puppies separated from mother at 4-5 weeks can have more behavioral problems than those separated at 8 weeks
- Problems may include
 - Excessive barking
 - Fearfulness
 - Destructive behavior
 - Toy possessiveness
 - Food guarding
- Last two problems above may lead to biting people



3 weeks to 16 weeks –Studies show that puppies separated from their mother and littermates at 4 - 5 weeks of age grow up to have more behavioral problems than those separated at 8 weeks. These behavioral problems include excessive barking, fearfulness on walks, fear of noises, destructive behavior, toy possessiveness and food guarding – the last two of which can lead to dogs biting people.

Photo: Three week old puppies being housed with their mother. *Source: Claudia Baldwin, Iowa State University*

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Daily Positive Interactions

- Gently touch and pet
- Talk in a low-volume, calm voice
- Open mouth to inspect teeth, tongue, throat
- Touch all four feet
- Look inside both ears
- Gently brush

Here are some important things you can do:

- Start by gently touching and petting the puppy
- Always talk to the puppy in a low- volume, calm voice
- Gently open its mouth to inspect its teeth, tongue and throat
- Gently touch all four feet and look inside both ears
- Gently brush the puppy

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Walking Surfaces

- Ensure puppies walk and play on different surfaces
 - Grass
 - Gravel
 - Dirt
 - Sand
 - Carpet
 - Tile



Make sure the puppies walk and play on different walking surfaces such as grass, gravel, dirt, sand, carpet, and tile.

Photo: Puppies playing on a grass surface. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Human Interactions

- Provide human interactions
 - Males and females of different ages
 - Appearances – people wearing hats, sunglasses, uniforms, etc.



Provide human interactions with males and females of different ages and appearances – including people wearing hats, sunglasses, uniforms, etc.

Photo: (Left) A man interacting with a puppy. *Source: iStockphoto.com*; (Middle) A woman wearing a hat and sunglasses holding a puppy. *Source: iStockphoto.com*; (Right) Children playing with a puppy. *Source: iStockphoto.com*

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Canine Socialization

- Provide social interactions with dogs of different breeds and ages
- Stay within established kennel population for biosecurity



Provide social interactions with dogs of different breeds and ages. Please stay within your own established kennel population for biosecurity reasons.

Photo: (Left) Dogs of many ages and breeds interacting with each other. (Right) Puppies playing together in a group setting. *Source: (Both) USDA APHIS*

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Tips for Socialization

- Encourage positive contact with other animals
- Safely introduce your puppies to unique sounds
- Take the puppies to safe, new areas or locations on your property

- Encourage positive – not potentially scary – contact with other types of animals such as cats, rabbits, birds, horses, etc.
- Safely introduce your puppies to unique sounds (music, singing, machinery, sprinklers, etc.)
- Safely introduce your puppies to unique objects (toys, brushes, collars, automobiles, buggies, etc.)
- Take the puppies (ideally with the mother and littermates) to safe, new areas or locations on your property, and let them explore and play for 5 - 10 minutes every day (exercise yards, grooming areas, your house, etc.)

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After Puppies Leave the Kennel

- Socialization will continue in new homes
- Teach house-training and basic obedience
- Teach manners
 - No biting
 - Taking proper walks
 - Riding in cars
- Educate new owners on their role in this process
 - Starts with breeder
 - Continue with veterinarian



Ideally, socialization will continue as the puppies become adjusted to their new homes. Pet owners should be educated about their role in socializing their puppies. Puppies should become house-trained and learn basic obedience. They should also be taught not to bite people, as well as how to properly take walks, ride in automobiles, etc. Breeders and pet store employees begin this process with the owners, and then it continues with each owner's veterinarian.

Photo: A puppy being placed in its new home. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Success of Socialization

- Success of socialization starts at the kennel while the puppies are under your influence



Remember, the success of the entire socialization process starts at your kennel while the puppies and mother are under your influence. Each stage of puppy development is a window of opportunity for you to help improve the health, quality, trainability and marketability of your puppies. A well-socialized, healthy and trainable puppy reflects well on you, and your puppies may be in greater demand as a result of your efforts.

Photo: A new puppy being socialized before going to its new home. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Success of Socialization cont'd

- Each stage is an opportunity for you to help improve puppies' health, quality, trainability and marketability
- A well-socialized, healthy and trainable puppy reflects well
 - Your puppies may be in greater demand

Each stage of puppy development is a window of opportunity for you to help improve the health, quality, trainability and marketability of your puppies. A well-socialized, healthy and trainable puppy reflects well on you, and your puppies may be in greater demand as a result of your efforts.

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Socialization of Breeding Dogs

This section of this presentation will discuss the socialization of breeding dogs for the success of your breeding program.

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Socialization Programs

- Develop programs with attending veterinarian:
 - Exercise plans by AWA standards and regulations
 - Socialization strategies
 - Enrichment opportunities
 - Behavior modification

There are many actions you take can positively impact adult breeding dogs' socialization and behavioral health. Socialization and behavioral health can be improved by programs developed with the attending veterinarian. These programs may include:

- Exercise plans as required by AWA standards and regulation
- Socialization strategies
- Enrichment opportunities (toys, play structures, music)
- Behavior modification (to change established abnormal behavior)

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Breeding Dog Activity

- Breeding dogs should be provided with regular activity:
 - Social companionship (with dogs and people)
 - Mental stimulation (enrichment)
 - Exercise



At a minimum breeding dogs should be provided with regular social contact, mental stimulation and physical activity.

- Social companionship (with dogs and people)
- Mental stimulation (enrichment)
- Exercise

Photos: (Left) Breeding dogs playing with other dogs and people outside. (Middle) Breeding dogs playing with each other indoors. (Right) Breeding dogs being housed outside in groups for social interaction. *Source: (All) USDA APHIS*

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Additional Considerations

- May require behavior modification to change abnormal behavior
- Make sure replacement breeding dogs introduced are well socialized prior to purchase
- Puppies kept as replacement breeding dogs
 - Should be well socialized
 - Exhibit a good temperament

Some breeding dogs may require behavior modification as instructed by the attending veterinarian to change established abnormal behavior. Ensure that any replacement breeding dogs that you introduce into your kennel are well socialized prior to purchase. Be sure that the puppies that you keep as replacement breeding dogs have been well socialized and exhibit the temperament that you feel would best promote your kennel.

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Breeding Dog Temperament

- Mothering instinct, temperament – highly heritable
- Keep puppies for breeding that are well socialized and exhibit the temperament that you want in your kennel



Mothering instinct and temperament are highly heritable traits in dogs. Be sure that the puppies that you keep as replacement breeding dogs have been well socialized and exhibit the temperament that you feel would best promote your kennel

Photo: (Left) A female with good mothering instinct. *Source: Danelle Bickett-Weddle, Iowa State University*; (Right) Puppies that are socialized. *Source: Dani Ausen, Iowa State University*

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Conclusion

You should now be able to:

1. Describe proper socialization of dogs
2. Recognize signs of inadequate socialization of all ages
3. Describe how to provide socialization for breeding dogs and puppies
4. Understand the importance of working with a veterinarian to ensure adequate socialization
5. Explain why raising socialized puppies can improve welfare and promote your kennel
6. Describe what can be done to positively impact adult breeding dog behavioral health and socialization

This presentation has provided you with a basic background concerning behavioral health and mental well-being of kennel dogs. You should now be able to:

1. Describe proper socialization of dogs
2. Recognize the signs of inadequate socialization in puppies and adult dogs
3. Describe how to provide socialization for the breeding dogs and puppies under your care
4. Understand the importance of working with your attending veterinarian to ensure adequate socialization
5. Explain why raising properly socialized puppies can improve their welfare and help to effectively promote your kennel
6. Describe what things can be done to positively impact adult breeding dog behavioral health and socialization

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Questions?

Acknowledgments

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