

## The New Puppy Owner

Hello

Congratulations on your new four-legged family member. You can look forward to hours of joy and laughter at puppy antics, along with the frustration of toilet training accidents and puppy nipping and biting with those nasty needle-sharp baby teeth.

Free information documents for downloading, titled, "Toilet Training", "Puppy Nipping and Biting" and "For the New Puppy", can be found on my website. I hope they will assist you prior to commencing Puppy Classes.

My Puppy Classes are generally held on Tuesday evenings at Mosman Vet. It is a four week course and bookings are essential through Mosman Vet on 9960 2856. If you are not able to make my classes for any reason, please call me for recommendations of other suitable classes.

Your puppy is going through numerous critical development phases; physically, mentally and emotionally. There is much misinformation "out there" at present. My condensed advice for raising puppies:

- Your puppy must meet and interact with many different people and enjoy the experience. Keep it *short*, before the puppy tires and becomes grumpy. Include babies, toddlers, young children, teenagers, adults, elderly people, etc. Your puppy should meet new people every day.
- Invite neighbours, friends and relatives to your home to interact with your puppy.
- Take your puppy out and about in the big, wide world even if he is not fully vaccinated yet. In my experience, the chance of contracting Parvovirus in areas such as Mosman, Northern Beaches, the North Shore or the Eastern Suburbs where dogs are vaccinated and well-cared-for, is nominal. The greater risk is in raising a puppy who cannot cope with the world around him and develops behaviour problems that result in his being surrendered to an already over-crowded welfare organisation, or worse, death.
- Ensure the puppy's experiences are enjoyable. If the puppy becomes panicked at any point, the stimulation is too intense and must be reduced immediately. A panicked puppy will be developing sensitivity, rather than desensitisation. Reintroduce the scary stimulus on another occasion at the lowest intensity possible and then gradually increase. Example: Rather than taking puppy to a busy road of trucks, buses, cars and motorbikes; start down a side street where the distance from the busy road greatly reduces the intensity.
- Absolutely avoid off-lead dog parks. No "ifs" or "buts"; stay away from them!

- Avoid interactions with other puppies or adolescent dogs. They have not fully developed their own emotional self-regulation to ensure a beneficial experience for your new puppy who also lacks development in this respect.
- Some interaction with adult dogs is beneficial. However, interaction with many different people is your highest priority.

I can highly recommend Mosman Vet for all of your puppy's veterinary care including nutrition, vaccinations, parasite prevention, medical treatments and surgical procedures.

Please do not hesitate to call me for free advice in regard to puppy behaviour.

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Enjoy your puppy!

Vicki Austin