

Hi, I'm Dr Gayle Watkins and this is part 2 of Savvy Socialization for owners.

In part 1, we laid the foundation and learned about how to keep our pups safe from disease.

< In this section, we are going to dig into the four things we are going to do with our pups, socialize, introduce, develop and teach manners.

During puppyhood, your mission is also to make sure your pup has a positive experience doing these things.

< Now having a positive experience doesn't mean that the pup is always happy or that every experience has to be a big win. There will be good ones, neutral ones, and challenging ones.

< But what we don't want is that the pup has a bad experience, and ends up frightened or traumatized.

< To check, we have to be able to read our pup's emotions to know if they are having a positive experience or not.

< Research has shown that dog owners are pretty good at reading

< Happiness/Joy

< Affection/Love

< Relaxed

< Anger

< Fear

< Disgust

< But we aren't so good as reading three emotions that are essential to developing our pups. As a result, we often respond in ways that hinder our pups' development.

< Surprise and curiosity

< Suspicion and anxiety

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

- < Excitement/arousal
- < As long as we are talking dog emotions, let me offer a brief aside. There are two emotions that people attribute to dogs that they do not have!
- < They are shame and
- < Guilt
- < There is really good research showing that dogs have no concept of either of these, or right and wrong, so skip the dog shaming and work to recognize the other emotions in your pup.

So let's go over what pups and dogs look like when experiencing these emotions.

- < First, Surprise and Curiosity,
- < Which are usually followed pretty quickly by an action or emotion, such as exploring or running away.
- < When dogs are surprised and curious, their ears are usually up,
- < Their eyes are wide and focused on the object of their curiosity
- < They will sometimes but not always have a wrinkled brow
- < Their mouth is usually closed and
- < They are standing upright.
- < Their tails are carried in a neutral way and it may wag slowly.
- < When pups are surprised or curious, they are processing the situation to make a decision about it. Whether it is something to explore, play with, eat or run from.
- < Depending upon what they are studying, you should make a choice.
- < Most of the time, you should give the pup time to process the situation and then respond to their decision.
- < But sometimes if you are pretty sure the pup is going to end up afraid, then you want to change their state quickly by laughing, smiling, and moving energetically away to do something fun. Examples of when you should do this is during severe thunderstorms and fireworks, and when the pup experiences a surprise like a close car horn or train.

What shouldn't you do? You shouldn't act like the pup is afraid, cuddling or consoling it. Life has surprises. Teach your pup to handle them.

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

- < Next are anxiety and suspicion. These are very important because pups are likely to experience these emotions a lot and you want to know when they are so you can monitor and respond appropriately.

When pups are anxious about or suspicious of something, their:

- < Ears often move up and back
- < Their eyes are wide and like with this chihuahua here, their pupils are large. You may see what is called whale eyes, when the whites of your pup's eyes are visible.
- < The corners of their mouths will likely be pulled back
- < And your pup will be licking its lips, yawning or panting
- < It's tail may be lowered but is probably not tucked
- < In most cases, pups will be sniffing hard to try to understand what is going on
- < It's hackles, the hair along its back may go up
- < The pup may be still and alert or it may move to a safer distance, if it can
- < And you'll usually see its body weight shifting backwards
- < As with surprise and curiosity, this pup is processing the situation but is somewhat worried. What you do is critical at this moment!
- < Your best response is to do little or nothing! Give the pup time to sniff, observe, listen, and process.
- < Instead, your job is to monitor the pup's changing emotions. Is it
- < Becoming afraid as evidenced by lowering its body, ears, and tail, perhaps even shivering.
- < Or does it become Curious → moving towards item
- < Or does it decide that all is well? The most common sign that a pup has made this decision is that it shakes off, as if it was wet, and moves on.
- < Finally, is your pup excited or aroused?
- < Owners often think a dog is happy when it's showing these emotions but excitement and arousal aren't the same as happiness. And in fact, often dogs are verging on aggression or chase when they are in these states.
- < When dogs are excited or aroused their body weight and motion are usually forward,

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

- < They may be hyperalert, staring at the object, or super wiggly.
- < They will likely be completely inattentive to and not processing your cues. It's as if they can't hear you.
- < These two states, pup excitement and arousal often lead to rudeness and frustration, which can get pups into a lot of trouble with people, or other dogs and animals.
- < In the case of excitement and arousal, these are opportunities for pups to learn self-control.
- < Above all, that means that you can't let the pups drag or pull you towards the object. If it gets there, it's going to think that the only way to get to what it wants is to drag you.
- < Instead, you need to move away from the object of the excitement, until the pup can respond to you. Sometimes that takes a while.
- < Your goal over time is to progressively work on your pup's response to your cues, like its name or sit, in less exciting circumstances until it can process them when its excited.
- < When you are working with your pup, you should expect these emotions—
- < Happiness and joy, and
- < Affection and love. These are all great but it's okay if they don't always happen.
- < Sometimes your pup may be relaxed, which is awesome!

But don't be concerned if your pup shows

- < Surprise and curiosity
- < Excitement and arousal
- < Suspicion and anxiety. Just respond to them appropriately.
- < But you should seek to avoid
- < Fear
- < Anger and
- < Disgust during your sessions and honestly, most of your pup's life.
- < Okay, now you know how to read your pup's response to situations, let's get going on exactly what we are going to do.

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

< And just a reminder, whether we are doing something formal with our pups or not, they are learning 24/7. Either good things or bad things.

<

<>In the first two classes, I discussed a recent trend that I've seen where more and more young dogs are showing so much fear, anxiety, and reactivity that it is affecting their and their owners' quality of life. We looked at research and statistics supporting this claim.

Surprisingly, most of these dogs started out as normal pups with no apparent signs of problems early on. They had stable dog parents, their breeders did all of the "right things," and their owners have tried to socialize them according to the current protocols. Yet between 6 and 15 months, issues began to appear. These young dogs became so uncomfortable out in the world, with places, dogs, people, sounds, and more that it was affecting their and their owners' quality of life.

< In this class, we are going to focus on how you can meet your socialization goals for your puppy, the foundation of which is building TRUST. During puppyhood, we are teaching pups to trust four things:

< their owners

< the world around them

< their owner's expectations of them, and

< themselves.

< And we are going to do that through

< Introductions to all kinds of things in the world

< Socialization or building strong social bonds

< developmental experiences that build their bodies and brains, and

< manners or how should they behave under certain circumstances, say when they see a person or dog, meet a person or dog, get left alone, and so on.

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

- < Let's remind ourselves on where our pups are in their development. Here are the 8 stages of puppyhood, taking a dog from conception until adulthood. If you want to review the details of each stage, go back to Intro to Savvy Socialization.
- < Your breeder was responsible for developing your puppy until at least 8 weeks. Some breeders let their pups go to their new homes between 8 and 9 weeks,
- < While others keep them longer, say till 10 or 12 weeks.
- < So when you get your pup home, he is most likely in late sensitive period, between 9 and 16 weeks. Today we are going to outline how you can do a great job with your pup's development up through the Juvenile and adolescent periods.
- < Let's start by digging into the Late Sensitive Period. Pups during this stage are silly things with a mix of good and bad traits. On the good side, they are:
  - < Curious
  - < Playful
  - < Explorers that
  - < Learn quickly and generalize that learning more easily than any other time in their lives.
  - < They also mimic others, especially older dogs but also people
  - < They are primed to form strong social bonds, and
  - < They are hypersensitive and aware of new things—objects, sounds, sights, situations and more.
  - < The obstacles that come naturally with sensitive period pups include:
    - < Hypersensitivity to negative situations and social experiences
    - < Increasingly concerned about new experiences
    - < Wary, even fearful, at times with a fear imprint period between 8 and 10 weeks
    - < Socially unskilled, even inept
    - < At risk from disease
- < All in all, we have a tug of war during the Sensitive Period when developing our pups is essential but also complex

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

- < Because pups have these competing needs to be protected from disease and trauma, while also getting out into the world to learn key lessons. But don't worry, I'm going to walk you through how to do this!
- < Before we go into socialization, I want to pause for a moment and discuss health challenges because this is often a point of confusion and conflicting advice from all sides.
- < Protecting Sensitive Period pups from two key diseases
- < Parvovirus and
- < Distemper is more complicated than just giving them a few shots because
- < The amount of antibodies they got from their mom during the first day of life, can interfere with vaccinations up until as late as 18 weeks of age! And the amount of antibodies varies widely among litters. So for pups in a litter whose mom gave them a lot of antibodies, we could give shots at 6, 9 and 12 weeks but the pups still won't be protected because the antibodies they got from their mom won't let their bodies respond to the vaccine.

But another litter whose mom gave them only a small amount of antibodies might respond to that 6-week vaccination.

Luckily, no matter how many antibodies the pup got, they will be gone by 18 weeks so at least we know when the end point is. But remember, that's past the end of the Sensitive Period...during which we have to socialize our pups...so we are betwixt and between.

- < And unfortunately, no one can look at a pup to tell when those antibodies will be gone.
- < So that means that
- < In puppies, vaccination doesn't always result in protection, only vaccination at the right time, which is
- < hard to figure out.

## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

- < So we either have to give distemper and parvo vaccines every 2-4 weeks until 16 weeks OR
- < We need a nomograph on the pup's mom. I mentioned nomographs in Lesson 2 so head back there for more on these cool blood tests.
- < But in either case, whether you have nomograph results or you are giving your pup multiple shots, you still need to run a confirmatory antibody titer on your pup two weeks after her last vaccination.
- < These titers confirm for you and your vet that your pup did indeed respond to at least one of the shots you gave and is protected against parvo and distemper, probably for many years.
- < It's pretty easy to run a titer.
- < Just have your vet draw blood from your pup and ship the serum to the CAVIDs lab at the Univ of Wisconsin Vet School. You can find the link to their website on the class page.
- < I'll talk more about this in detail as we go along but until you have results from CAVIDs telling you that your pup is protected against distemper and parvo,
- < Take your pups to busy and interesting places but with few to no dogs
- < Except for puppy kindergarten which has been shown to not only be safe but to be very valuable for pups longterm.
- < So if you don't have nomograph results on your pup's mom, you are going to have your vet vaccinate your pup every 2-4 weeks with a distemper-parvo shot until your pup is 16 weeks old and then you are going to titer to be sure the shots worked.
- < However, if your breeder ran a nomograph, you may not need to vaccinate as many times or as long. Follow your breeder's recommendation, which will be based on the CAVIDs lab guidance.
- < Then, run that confirmatory titer to be sure all is well and your pup is protected.
- < Why is this important? Because as we socialize our pups out in the world, we want to avoid situations where they might come in contact with parvo or distemper. These two very serious, often fatal, diseases are transferred through the pup



## Savvy Socialization For Owners, Part 2

coming in contact with feces—poop—or saliva from an infected dog. As a result, it can also be transferred through shoes, the pup's feet, or someone touching an infected dog and then your pup.

So until you have that positive titer result back from CAVIDs, it's very important that you keep your puppy away from dog poop, Unknown, unvaccinated or sick dogs and places where dogs are walked, play or congregate except for puppy kindergarten.

Even be smart about your vet's office. Potty your pup at home so you don't have to do so there and don't let your pup interact with the other dogs that are there.

- < So we can reduce the two primary risks inherent in our Sensitive Period pups by controlling the situations we put them in and social distancing from other dogs.
- < **Now that we have those parameters, let's dig into socialization and have some fun with our pups!**