



## **Socializing Your New Puppy During Quarantine**

**It can be challenging to properly socialize and train your new puppy when you are limited to at-home activities and very few external environments. It is still very important to be creative and to try to overcome some of these challenges to ensure your puppy is developing skills during this crucial stage of development. Puppies have a window of learning social and coping skills between 4 and 14 weeks old. During this time, you can help your puppy learn skills that will help them for years to come.**

**How can we accomplish this if the very things we are guided to do, (meet lots of novel people, go places, be exposed to changes of environment) are very limited right now because of social distancing?**

**We have gathered a list of some helpful ideas that are outside the box, but still beneficial.**

- Keep your puppy on a schedule even though you may not be on YOUR normal schedule. The goal is to have them used to our normal work schedule as much as possible even though we may be staying home now. It is ok and advisable to give them time away from the family during the day so they learn coping skills and how to “be alone”. Baby gating in another room or crating in another room away from the activity of the household will teach them that quiet time is normal. This is a good time to give them some extra enrichment like a frozen Kong, or special toy or chew. Check out our article on enrichment ideas!
- Make sure your puppy is exposed to as many surfaces as possible such as concrete, grass, rocks, water, mud, tile, carpet, etc. Also, encourage stairs, climbing and crawling under things. You want your puppy to investigate new things and to feel confident in new surroundings.
- Take your puppy for car rides! You can put your puppy in a crate for safety or there are many types of doggy seat belts on the market.
- Even though you may not be getting visitors at this time, you can work on what is expected when someone does come to the door. Have a family member ring the doorbell and “be a stranger”.
- This is also a great time to work on your puppy’s leash skills! Start with small distances and lure with tiny treats if needed.

While it is tempting to allow our puppies much more freedom and slack on our scheduling during this time, it can come back to bite us as we head back to work and our “normal” routine. A little forethought and preparation now will greatly increase your chances of a well-rounded adult dog.

If, after trying these suggestions, you are still experiencing undesirable behaviors in your dog, SUBMIT QUESTIONS by clicking the link under Ask A Trainer on the Behavior and Training page of the Wayside Waifs website: [www.waysidewaifs.org](http://www.waysidewaifs.org).