



Avery Labrador Retrievers New Puppy Packet

Helpful Hints From Your Breeder

- 1. Watch your puppy's weight.** They should not be too thin. They should be well covered until their bones set. Unlike Pointers or Greyhounds, a properly bred Labrador's ribs should never be seen.
- 2. No forced exercise,** jumping, jogging, rigorous field training or road-work, until the dogs are 2 years old and the bones are set. A Labrador's body is not mature until at least 18 months of age. During their growth phases they are more fragile and need supervised daily exercise. One momentary lapse in judgment can mean a lifetime of pain or limited mobility due to injury. The key is moderation and common sense. For strong bones, provide moderate exercise and proper nutrition in order to develop the proper muscle to support the bone.
- 3. Your puppy should not be crated more than 4-6 hours** at time during the day, and less is better. Never punish your puppy/dog by putting them in a crate; it should be their safe place. Their crate should be in a place where there is family activity so they don't feel they are being alienated. (night time crating is not factored into this)
- 4. NO FREE CHOICE FEEDING.** (leaving food down all the time) Some dogs over consume, some pick all day long and don't ever get hungry enough to consume the proper amount of nutrition necessary. You should monitor your dog's diet for several reasons, because many times the first sign of illness is a change in appetite.
- 5. NO CALCIUM (MINERALS) OR VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS** If you are feeding a "name brand/premium" dog food which is labeled AAFCO tested for all life-stages of the dog, you do not need to add supplements. In fact, to do so might throw off the balance of the food and you can do more harm than good. Studies have shown that dogs who consume too much calcium showed increased incidence of skeletal problems, including hip dysplasia.
- 6. Feeding Time:** Allow your puppy a safe, non-stressful environment to eat in. Try feeding in a crate. Allow 10 minutes; if they do not eat in that time remove the food and do not offer any food or treats until the next scheduled meal. They will not starve, so do not try to beg them to eat. You are developing a bad habit if you entice them into eating. Do not let them linger or be distracted. My dogs eat in less than 5 minutes. If they don't, I





know something is wrong. Monitoring their food this way is an excellent way of telling when they are not feeling well.

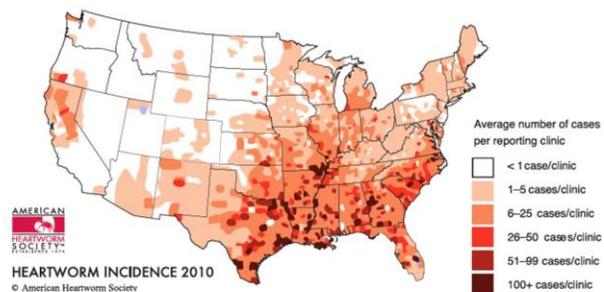
7. **Always keep lots of fresh water available** so they know there is water around, and will be less apt to over-consume. Some people try to withhold water to house break a dog. This sets up bad drinking habits (gorging) and bladder infections, potential dehydration which can cause muscle cramping and potential bloating.

8. **Toys/Bedding:** Offer your new puppy several age appropriate toys. When puppies are very young, stuffed animals that squeak, a few teething toys, and nylabones are all good choices. Be sure to offer several different options for your puppy to chew on so your sofa and shoes aren't the most attractive chew toys in the room. As your pup ages, his toys will change a bit. Many Labrador puppies have phases where they shred or destroy fabric. During this time, you should immediately remove all stuffed toys as they now provide a risk of obstructions if torn up and swallowed.

9. **A word about Vaccines:** We're hearing of more and more young animals suffering from a Vaccine reaction, also known as Vaccinosis or Vaccine Mediated Response.

Please make sure your rabies shot is NOT given at the same time as the other shots and if possible wait until 6 months of age to administer it. You and your vet must weigh the potential risks on the delicate immune system of your pet. Administering rabies at 10-12 weeks has been known to cause convulsions, swollen joints, high fever, loss of appetite, and even loss of life.

10. **Heartworm Preventative:** Every dog in the American southeast region needs to be on Heartworm Preventative year round. Heartworm is a very serious ailment and preventable. Still, each year hundreds of dogs die from going untreated.



In a tough economy corners are sometimes cut. Please do not cut this one! It could cost you hundreds or more in veterinary bills, and it could cost your puppy his or her life.





Suggested Feeding Plan
(Adjust according to condition of pet)

Age in Months	2-4 mos.	5-7 mos.	8-12 mos.	Adult
Approximate Cups per Day*				
Less than 5 lbs	1/4 - 3/4	1/4 - 1/2	1/4 - 1/2	2/3 - 3/4
5-10 lbs	2/3 - 1	1/2 - 1	1/2 - 3/4	1/2 - 1
10-20 lbs	1/2 - 1 1/2	2/3 - 1 1/2	2/3 - 1 1/4	2/3 - 1 1/4
20-30 lbs	2 - 3 1/2	1 3/4 - 3 1/4	1 3/4 - 3 1/2	3/4 - 1 1/2
30-50 lbs	3 - 4	2 3/4 - 3 3/4	2 2/3 - 3 2/3	1 - 2 1/4
50-70 lbs	4 - 5	3 1/2 - 4 1/2	3 3/4 - 4 1/2	2 - 3 1/2
70-100 lbs		4-1/2 - 5	4 1/2 - 5	3 - 4 1/2

A note from your breeder:

It is important to remember that these are very broad canine suggestions with no regard for breed, sex, activity level, etc.

Notice that a 2 – 4 month old puppy weighing 20-30 lbs is suggested to have 2 – 3 1/2 cups of food a day. That is what your puppy is currently getting; 1 cup 3 times a day. Also take note of the guidelines listed for a 70 lb puppy/adult. Note that your puppy should be eating more than an adult's ration from 5 months through the end of puppyhood.



This chart stops at 12 months for puppies, but I would not drop food down until they are at least 18 months – 2 years of age.

NOTE: *Your BEST rule should be the rib test. Put one hand on each side of your dog and gently press up and down the ribcage. You should be able to feel ribs, but without too much definition between them. You should never be able to see ribs on a well built Labrador with a proper coat. If you can see your dog's ribs, he is too thin - increase his food. If you can't feel his ribs, he is too heavy - decrease it. Your conformation style Labrador should look thick and muscled with a strong and broad frame. He should never look like a pointer or greyhound, so please don't withhold food from him in order to achieve that tucked up look.*





Here is an excerpt from the Labrador Retriever official standard....**The underline is almost straight, with little or no tuck-up in mature animals.** This is a physical trait we strive for, and your puppy should have an underline which matches his topline.

Example:



Here is my boy Asher: He is in very good condition in this picture, with an underline that matches his topline. This photo was also taken in the winter, so his coat was thick, plushy, and dense.



Here is an example of a pointer. This is the body style many Americans think of when they think of a Lab. Short, slick coat, skinny legs, and a noticeable tuck up in his waist. This is incorrect for a Labrador.

Always choose a high quality food for your companion with suitable calcium/phosphorus ratios. When this ratio is off during puppyhood, studies have shown there is an increase in HOD, OCD, and hip dysplasia in dogs.

Do not feed what your vet recommends without speaking to me first. Many vets are incentivized to promote lesser quality and more expensive foods. After years of research, one-on-one consultations with dog food experts, and recording what my dogs have performed best on, I have made the decision to feed my dogs Purina Pro Plan. My puppies get PPP Focus for Large Breed Puppies (the one with teal background and the Weimaraner on the bag.) My adults get PPP Sport (the one with purpose background and the Weimaraner on the bag.)

This is one reason I don't recommend feeding your new companion "people food", especially during puppy stages. You could inadvertently be raising the calcium level too high if his favorite snack is cheese, and actually harming his developing bones. Other foods such as onions and grapes are toxic to dogs and can cause organ failure. Your dog will be happy and healthy eating a good quality kibble, and occasional dog treats. (such as MilkBones or dried liver)

Please remember to call, e-mail, or Facebook me if you have questions about food or treats.

~ Page J





HOUSEBREAKING TIPS

Attitude - The first thing you want to do when you bring a puppy home is bond with him. To the dog, your home is a strange new world and he needs love and affection to adjust. Think of a puppy as a baby; would you yell at a six month old baby for making a mistake? Of course not! So never yell at your puppy when housebreaking and don't yell your puppy's name. He will begin to associate his own name with bad feelings.

No Papers - You housebreak your puppy by teaching him to go to the bathroom outside, not by training him to go on newspapers. Housebreaking and paper training are two very different things. It's important for the owner to appreciate this, because if you train a puppy to go on paper, and then expect him to go outside; he's going to be confused.

Outside - You want to take the puppy outside every time after he eats or drinks, then praise him once he goes to the bathroom. It's important to establish a routine, where you feed the puppy and give him water on a regular schedule, then take him out. When you first get a puppy, you should take him outside just to go to the bathroom, because you want him to associate going out only with going to the bathroom until the connection has been firmly established.



Accidents - Food stimulates defecation and water stimulates urination, so don't leave the puppy anything to eat or drink if you're going to go away for an hour, because he WILL have an accident. Like human children, exercise and waking up from naps will also trigger the need to "go". If your puppy does have an accident, the worst thing to do is rub his nose in it and yell at him. I consider every accident a young puppy has to be my fault for not properly anticipating his need to relieve himself after eating, drinking, playing, or sleeping.

Surroundings - You should give the puppy all meals and have him sleep in one confined area such as a crate. The puppy will see this area as his own den. This "den" should be relatively small, because this will give the puppy a stronger incentive not to mess it up. If you confine the puppy to a big area, he's likely to go to the bathroom on one side, then come back and sleep on the other.

Effectiveness - Following a non-yelling, non-hitting housebreaking system works. Your puppy was raised in a clean environment (free of urine and feces), and therefore craves a clean environment. Use this instinct and desire to your advantage. Never force a puppy that has had a crate accident to sit or lay in his waste all night. Immediately remove him to a confined backyard, clean the crate, clean the puppy if necessary, and place him back inside.





Crate Training Your Puppy

Introduction

Providing your puppy or dog with an indoor kennel crate can satisfy many dogs' need for a den-like enclosure. Besides being an effective housebreaking tool (because it takes advantage of the dog's natural reluctance to soil its sleeping place), it can also help to reduce separation anxiety, to prevent destructive behavior (such as chewing furniture), to keep a puppy away from potentially dangerous household items (i.e., poisons, electrical wires, etc.), and to serve as a mobile indoor dog house which can be moved from room to room whenever necessary.

A kennel crate also serves as a travel cabin for you dog when travelling by car or plane. Additionally, most hotels which accept dogs on their premises require them to be crated while in the room to prevent damage to hotel furniture and rugs.

Most dogs which have been introduced to the kennel crate while still young grow up to prefer their crate to rest in or "hang-out" in. Therefore a crate (or any other area of confinement) should NEVER be used for the purpose of punishment.



We recommend that you provide a kennel crate throughout your dog's lifetime.

Furnishing Your Puppy's Crate

Toys and Treats: Place your puppy's favorite toys and dog treats at the far end opposite the door opening. Toys and balls should always be durable and large enough to prevent them from being swallowed. Any fragmented or shredded toys should be removed to prevent choking and internal obstruction. You may also place a sterilized marrow bone filled with cheese or dog treats in the crate.

Water: A small pail of water should be clipped to the crate at all times.





Bedding: Place a towel or blanket inside the crate to create a soft, comfortable bed for the puppy. If the puppy chews the towel, remove it to prevent the pup from swallowing or choking on the pieces. Although most puppies prefer lying on soft bedding, some may prefer to rest on a hard, flat surface, and may push the towel to one end of the crate to avoid it. If the puppy urinates on the towel, remove bedding until the pup no longer eliminates in the crate.

Location of Crate

Whenever possible, place the crate near or next to you when you are home. This will encourage the pup to go inside it without his feeling lonely or isolated when you go out. A central room in the apartment (i.e.: living room or kitchen) or a large hallway near the entrance is a good place to crate your puppy.

Introducing the Crate to Your Puppy

In order that your puppy associate his/her kennel crate with comfort, security and enjoyment, please follow these guidelines:

1. Keep several chew toys and durable “treat balls” in your puppy’s crate.
2. Praise your pup when he enters. Do not try to push, pull or force the puppy into the crate. At this early stage of introduction you may need to gently place your pup in his crate and shut the door. The crate should be placed next to your bed overnight if possible.
3. You may also play this enjoyable and educational game with your pup or dog: without alerting your puppy, drop a small dog biscuit into the crate. Then call your puppy and say to him, "Where's the biscuit? It's in your room." Using only a friendly, encouraging voice, direct your pup toward his crate. When the puppy discovers the treat, give enthusiastic praise. The biscuit will automatically serve as a primary reward. Your pup should be free to leave its crate at all times during this game. Later on, your puppy's toy or ball can be substituted for the treat.
4. It is advisable first to crate your pup for short periods of time **while you are home with him**. In fact, crate training is best accomplished while you are in the room with your dog. Getting him used to your absence from the room in which he is crated is a good first step. This prevents an association being made with the crate and always leaving him/her alone.





A Note About Crating Puppies

Puppies under 4 months of age have little bladder or sphincter control. Puppies under 3 months have even less. Very young puppies under 8 weeks should not be crated for extended periods during the day, as they need to eliminate very frequently (usually 8-12 times or more daily).

Important Reminders

1. **Collars:** Always remove your puppy or dog's collar before confining in the crate. Even flat buckle collars can occasionally get struck on the bars or wire mesh of a crate.
2. **Warm Weather:** Do not crate a puppy or dog when temperatures reach an uncomfortable level. Never leave a dog in a crate unsupervised on a terrace, patio, or inside a car during warm weather. Also, keep outdoor exercise periods brief until the hot weather subsides.]
3. Be certain that your puppy has fully eliminated before being crated. Be sure that the crate you are using is not too large to discourage your pup from eliminating in it. Rarely does a pup or dog eliminate in the crate if it is properly sized and the dog is an appropriate age to be crated a given amount of time. If your pup/dog continues to eliminate in the crate, the following may be the causes:
 - a) The pup is too young to have the amount of control you are demanding.
 - b) The pup has a poor or rich diet, or very large meals.
 - c) The pup did not eliminate prior to being confined.
 - d) The pup has worms.
 - e) The pup has gaseous or loose stools.
 - f) The pup drank large amounts of water prior to being crated.
 - g) The pup has been forced to eliminate in small confined areas prior to crate training.
 - h) The pup/dog is suffering from a health condition or illness (i.e., bladder infection, prostate problem, etc.)
 - i) The puppy or dog is experiencing severe separation anxiety when left alone.

Accidents In The Crate

If your puppy messes in his crate while you are out, do not punish him upon your return. Simply wash out the crate using a pet odor neutralizer (such as Nature's Miracle).





Crating Duration Guidelines

Daytime Guidelines

7-10 Weeks	2 hours
11-14 Weeks	3 hours
15-16 Weeks	4 hours
17 Weeks - Adult	4 - 6 hours (maximum)

*NOTE: Overnight, most puppies and dogs can be crated for 8 hours, but it is vital to let them out as soon as you wake up, before showering or eating breakfast.

The Crate As Punishment

NEVER use the crate as a form of punishment or reprimand for your puppy or dog. This simply causes the dog to fear and resent the crate. If correctly introduced to his crate, your puppy should be happy to go into his crate at any time. You may however use the crate as a brief time-out for your puppy as a way of discouraging nipping or excessive rowdiness.

Children and the Crate

Do not allow children to play in your dog's crate or to handle your dog while he/she is in the crate. The crate is your dog's private sanctuary. His/her rights to privacy should always be respected.

Barking In the Crate

Overnight, a new pup will cry in their crate similar to a baby in a crib. If you know your pup does not need to relieve himself, simply ignore the crying. Talking to him, even to scold, will usually do nothing but prolong the crying. If you let him out to soothe or play with him while crying, he will only cry louder and longer next time.

The Cost of A Crate

Crates can cost between \$35 and \$150 depending on the size and the type of crate and the source.

The Cost of Not Buying a Crate

Your

- shoes
- books
- furniture
- iPhone
- Nintendo DS
- Wii
- (get the picture)

The real value is **your dog's safety and your peace of mind.**





Critical Periods in Puppy Development

- Neonatal Period: 0 - 12 days

The puppy responds only to Warmth, touch, and smell. He cannot regulate body functions such as temperature and elimination

- Transition Period: 13 - 20 days

Eyes and ears are open but sight and hearing are limited. Tail wagging begins and the puppy begins to control body functions.

- Awareness Period: 21 - 28 days

Sight and hearing begin to function. The puppy is learning self awareness and has a need for stable environment.

- Canine Socialization Period: 21 - 49 days

The puppy interacts with mother and littermates and learns various canine behaviors. The animal is becoming aware of the differences between canines and humans.

- Human Socialization Period: 7 - 12 weeks

The puppy has the brainwaves of an adult dog. This is the best time for going to a new home. He has the ability to learn respect and simple behavioral responses such as “come”, “sit” and “stay”. Housebreaking begins. The puppy now learns by association. The permanent man-dog bond begins and he is able to accept gentle discipline and establish confidence. Positive reinforcement is paramount.

- Fear Impact Period: 8 - 11 weeks

It is important to continue to use positive reinforcement of good behavior and calm firmness as a discipline tool. Avoid frightening the puppy during this time. Traumatic experiences may have lasting effects during this critical period. This period overlaps the previous stage and it is important that other animals and humans do not scare the puppy. Children should not be left unattended with the puppy. It is now very important to introduce other humans as a series of pleasant experiences. Learning at this age becomes permanent.

- Seniority Classification Period: 13 - 16 weeks

This period is also known as “the age of cutting”... cutting teeth and apron strings. At this age the puppy is testing dominance and leadership. Biting behavior is absolutely discouraged from 13 weeks on. Praise for the correct behavioral response is the most effective tool. Positive reinforcement for proper behavior is highly important to shape positive attitudes and to teach self-confidence.





- **Flight Instinct Period: 4 - 8 months**

During this period, puppies test their wings. They will often turn a deaf ear when they are called. It is critical to continue praising the positive and minimize the negative behavior during this time. At 4 months of age, your puppy is now ready to attend basic obedience classes. This period corresponds to teething period and behavioral problems, such as chewing, become compounded by psychological development.

- **Second Fear Impact Period: 6 - 14 months**

Your puppy may become afraid of new situations. This often corresponds to growth spurts. The critical age depends on the size of your dog and larger breeds experience this later than small dogs. Great care should be taken not to reinforce (sometime unwittingly) negative behavior. Puppies at this age will take many of their cues from your reaction to situations. Sounding over-protective of new situations will send the message that there is a reason to be fearful. Casualness of tone and happy high pitch voice praise are a very effective tool to allow the puppy to build much-needed self-confidence. Kindness and patience are needed to put your dog in a position of success and happiness to allow him to work things out.

- **Maturity: 1 - 4 years**

Many breeds continue to grow and physically change well beyond 2 years. The average Soft Coated Wheaten will reach physical maturity around 18 months of age, while Bouvier des Flandres will continue to change past 24 months. This period can be marked with a need for the dog to challenge leadership. Regular formal or informal training is required. Praising the dog for the proper response and giving him no inroads to affirm his leadership will confirm in his mind that the matter has already been settled. The outcome will greatly depend on your willingness to train your dog to become a wonderfully happy and confident pet. Lack of leadership and timely reprimand/praise training technique will lead to increasingly more challenging and potentially aggressive behavior of your dog.





Introduction to the Super Dog Program

by Carmen L Battaglia

Man for centuries has tried various methods to improve performance. Some of the methods have stood the test of time, others have not. Those who first conducted research on this topic believed that the period of early age was a most important time for stimulation because of its rapid growth and development. Today, we know that early life is a time when the physical immaturity of an organism is susceptible and responsive to a restricted but important class of stimuli. Because of its importance many studies have focused their efforts on the first few months of life.

Newborn pups are uniquely different from adults in several respects. When born, their eyes are closed and their digestive system has a limited capacity requiring periodic stimulation by their dam who routinely licks them in order to promote digestion. At this age they are only able to smell, suck, and crawl. Body temperature is maintained by snuggling close to their mother or by crawling into piles with other littermates. During these first few weeks of immobility, researchers noted that these immature and under-developed canines are sensitive to a restricted class of stimuli which includes thermal and tactile stimulation, motion and locomotion.

Other mammals such as mice and rats are also born with limitations, and they also have been found to demonstrate a similar sensitivity to the effects of early stimulation. Studies show that removing them from their nest for three minutes each day during the first five to ten days of life causes body temperatures to fall below normal. This mild form of stress is sufficient to stimulate hormonal, adrenal and pituitary systems. When tested later as adults, these same animals were better able to withstand stress than littermates who were not exposed to the same early stress exercises. As adults, they responded to stress in "a graded" fashion, while their non-stressed littermates responded in an "all or nothing way."

Data involving laboratory mice and rats also shows that stress in small amounts can produce adults who respond maximally. On the other hand, the results gathered from non-stressed littermate show that they become easily exhausted and are near death if exposed to intense prolonged stress. When tied down so they were unable to move for twenty-four hours, rats developed severe stomach ulcers, but litter mates exposed to early





stress handling were found to be more resistant to stress tests and did not show evidence of ulcers. A secondary affect was also noticed.

Sexual maturity was attained sooner in the littermates given early stress exercises. When tested for differences in health and disease, the stressed animals were found to be more resistant to certain forms of cancer and infectious diseases and could withstand terminal starvation and exposure to cold for longer periods than their non-stressed littermates.

Other studies involving early stimulation exercises have been successfully performed on both cats and dogs. In these studies, the Electrical Encephalogram (EEG) was found to be ideal for measuring the electrical activity in the brain because of its extreme sensitivity to changes in excitement, emotional stress, muscle tension, changes in oxygen and breathing. EEG measures show that pups and kittens when given early stimulation exercises mature at faster rates and perform better in certain problem solving tests than non-stimulated mates.

In the higher level animals the effect of early stimulation exercises have also been studied. The use of surrogate mothers and familiar objects were tested by both of the Kelloggs and Dr. Yearkes using young chimpanzees. Their pioneer research shows that the more primates were deprived of stimulation and interaction during early development, the less able they were to cope, adjust and later adapt to situations as adults.

While experiments have not yet produced specific information about the optimal amounts of stress needed to make young animals psychologically or physiologically superior, researchers agree that stress has value. What also is known is that a certain amount of stress for one may be too intense for another, and that too much stress can retard development. The results show that early stimulation exercises can have positive results but must be used with caution. In other words, too much stress can cause pathological adversities rather than physical or psychological superiority.

Methods of Stimulation

The U.S. Military in their canine program developed a method that still serves as a guide to what works. In an effort to improve the performance of dogs used for military purposes, a program called "Bio Sensor" was developed. Later, it became known to the





public as the "Super Dog" Program. Based on years of research, the military learned that early neurological stimulation exercises could have important and lasting effects. Their studies confirmed that there are specific time periods early in life when neurological stimulation has optimum results. The first period involves a window of time that begins at the third day of life and lasts until the sixteenth day. It is believed that because this interval of time is a period of rapid neurological growth and development, and therefore is of great importance to the individual.

The "Bio Sensor" program was also concerned with early neurological stimulation in order to give the dog a superior advantage. Its development utilized six exercises which were designed to stimulate the neurological system. Each workout involved handling puppies once each day. The workouts required handling them one at a time while performing a series of five exercises. Listed in order of preference, the handler starts with one pup and stimulates it using each of the five exercises. The handler completes the series from beginning to end before starting with the next pup. The handling of each pup once per day involves the following exercises:

1. Tactical stimulation (between toes)
2. Head held erect
3. Head pointed down
4. Supine position
5. Thermal stimulation

Tactile stimulation

1. Tactile stimulation - holding the pup in one hand, the handler gently stimulates (tickles) the pup between the toes on any one foot using a Q-tip. It is not necessary to see that the pup is feeling the tickle. Time of stimulation 3 - 5 seconds. (Figure 1)
2. Head held erect - using both hands, the pup is held perpendicular to the ground, (straight up), so that its head is directly above its tail. This is an upwards position. Time of stimulation 3 - 5 seconds. (Figure 2)
3. Head pointed down - holding the pup firmly with both hands the head is reversed and is pointed downward so that it is pointing towards the ground. Time of stimulation 3 - 5 seconds. (Figure 3)
4. Supine position - hold the pup so that its back is resting in the palm of both hands with its muzzle facing the ceiling. The pup while on its back is allowed to sleep. Time of stimulation 3-5 seconds. (Figure 4)
5. Thermal stimulation—use a damp towel that has been cooled in a refrigerator for at least five minutes. Place the pup on the towel, feet down. Do not restrain it from moving. Time of stimulation 3-5 seconds. (Figure 5)





These five exercises will produce neurological stimulations, none of which naturally occur during this early period of life. Experience shows that sometimes pups will resist these exercises, others will appear unconcerned. In either case a caution is offered to those who plan to use them. **Do not** repeat them more than **once** per day and do not extend the time beyond that recommended for each exercise. Over stimulation of the neurological system can have adverse and detrimental results. These exercises impact the neurological system by kicking it into action earlier than would be normally expected, the result being an increased capacity that later will help to make the difference in its performance. Those who play with their pups and routinely handle them should continue to do so because the neurological exercises are not substitutions for routine handling, play socialization or bonding.

Benefits of Stimulation

Five benefits have been observed in canines that were exposed to the Bio Sensor stimulation exercises. The benefits noted were:

1. Improved cardio vascular performance (heart rate)
2. Stronger heart beats
3. Stronger adrenal glands
4. More tolerance to stress
5. Greater resistance to disease

In tests of learning, stimulated pups were found to be more active and were more exploratory than their non- stimulated littermates over which they were dominant in competitive situations.

Secondary effects were also noted regarding test performance. In simple problem solving tests using detours in a maze, the non-stimulated pups became extremely aroused, whined a great deal, and made many errors. Their stimulated littermates were less disturbed or upset by test conditions and when comparisons were made, the stimulated littermates were more calm in the test environment, made fewer errors and gave only an occasional distress sound when stressed.





Socialization

As each animal grows and develops, three kinds of stimulation have been identified that impact and influence how it will develop and be shaped as an individual. The first stage is called early neurological stimulation and the second stage is called socialization. The first two (early neurological stimulation and socialization) have in common a window of limited time. When Lorenz, (1935) first wrote about the importance of the stimulation process, he wrote about imprinting during early life and its influence on the later development of the individual. He states that it was different from conditioning in that it occurred early in life and took place very rapidly producing results which seemed to be permanent. One of the first and perhaps the most noted research effort involving the larger animals was achieved by Kellogg & Kellogg (1933). As a student of Dr. Kellogg's, I found him and his wife to have an uncanny interest in children and young animals and the changes and the differences that occurred during early development. Their history-making study involved raising their own newborn child with a newborn primate. Both infants were raised together as if they were twins. This study, like others that followed attempted to demonstrate that among the mammals, there are great differences in their speed of physical and mental development. Some are born relatively mature and quickly capable of motion and locomotion, while others are very immature, immobile and slow to develop. For example, the Rhesus monkey shows rapid and precocious development at birth, while the chimpanzee and the other "great apes" take much longer. Last and slowest is the human infant.

One of the earliest efforts to investigate and look for the existence of socialization in canines was undertaken by Scott-Fuller (1965). In their early studies, they were able to demonstrate that the basic technique for testing the existence of socialization was to show how readily adult animals would foster young animals, or accept one from another species. They observed that, with the higher level animals, it is easiest done by hand rearing. When the foster animal transfers its social relationships to the new species, researchers conclude that socialization has taken place. Most researchers agree that among all species, a lack of adequate socialization generally results in unacceptable behavior and often times produces undesirable aggression, excessiveness, fearfulness, sexual inadequacy and indifference toward partners.





Socialization studies confirm that one of the critical periods for humans (infant) to be stimulated are generally between three weeks and twelve months of age. For canines the period is shorter, between the fourth and sixteenth weeks of age. The lack of adequate social stimulation, such as handling, mothering and contact with others, adversely affects social and psychological development in both humans and animals. In humans, the absence of love and cuddling increases the risk of an aloof, distant, asocial or sociopathic individual. Over-mothering also has its detrimental effects by preventing sufficient exposure to other individuals and situations that have an important influence on growth and development. It occurs when a parent insulates the child from outside contacts or keeps the apron strings tight, thus limiting opportunities to explore and interact with the outside world. In the end, over-mothering generally produces a dependent, socially maladjusted and sometimes emotionally disturbed individual. Protected youngsters who grow up in an insulated environment often become sickly, despondent, lacking in flexibility and unable to make simple social adjustments. Generally, they are unable to function productively or to interact successfully when they become adults.

Owners who have busy life styles with long and tiring work and social schedules often cause pets to be neglected. Left to themselves with only an occasional trip out of the house or off of the property they seldom see other canines or strangers and generally suffer from poor stimulation and socialization. For many, the side effects of loneliness and boredom set-in. The resulting behavior manifests itself in the form of chewing, digging, and hard- to-control behavior (Battaglia).

It seems clear that small amounts of stress followed by early socialization can produce beneficial results. The danger seems to be in not knowing where the thresholds are for over and under stimulation. Many improperly socialized youngsters develop into older individuals unprepared for adult life, unable to cope with its challenges, and interactions. Attempts to re-socialize them as adults have only produced small gains. These failures confirm the notion that the window of time open for early neurological and social stimulation only comes once. After it passes, little or nothing can be done to overcome the negative effects of too much or too little stimulation.





The third and final stage in the process of growth and development is called enrichment. Unlike the first two stages it has no time limit, and by comparison, covers a very long period of time. Enrichment is a term which has come to mean the positive sum of experiences which have a cumulative effect upon the individual. Enrichment experiences typically involve exposure to a wide variety of interesting, novel, and exciting experiences with regular opportunities to freely investigate, manipulate, and interact with them. When measured in later life, the results show that those reared in an enriched environment tend to be more inquisitive and are more able to perform difficult tasks. The educational TV program called “Sesame Street” is perhaps the best known example of a children's enrichment program. The results show that when tested, children who regularly watched this program performed better than playmates who did not. Follow-up studies show that those who regularly watch “Sesame Street” tend to seek a college education and when enrolled, performed better than playmates who were not regular watchers of the “Sesame Street” program.

There are numerous children’s studies that show the benefits of enrichment techniques and programs. Most focus on improving self-esteem and self-talk. Follow-up studies show that the enriched “Sesame Street” students, when later tested were brighter and scored above average, and most often were found to be the products of environments that contributed to their superior test scores. On the other hand, those whose test scores were generally below average, (labeled as dull) and the products of underprivileged or non-enriched environments, often had little or only small amounts of stimulation during early childhood and only minimal amounts of enrichment during their developmental and formative years. Many were characterized as children who grew up with little interaction with others, poor parenting, few toys, no books and a steady diet of TV soap operas.

A similar analogy can be found among canines. All the time they are growing they are learning because their nervous systems are developing and storing information that may be of inestimable use at a later date. Studies by Scott and Fuller confirm that non-enriched pups, when given free choice, preferred to stay in their kennels. Other litter mates who were given only small amounts of outside stimulation between five and eight weeks of age were found to be very inquisitive and very active. When kennel doors were left open, the enriched pups would come bounding out while littermates who were not





exposed to enrichment would remain behind. The non-stimulated pups would typically be fearful of unfamiliar objects and generally preferred to withdraw rather than investigate. Even well-bred pups of superior pedigrees would not explore or leave their kennels, and many were found difficult to train as adults. These pups, in many respects, were similar to the deprived children. They acted as if they had become institutionalized, preferring the routine and safe environment of their kennel to the stimulating world outside their immediate place of residence.

Regular trips to the park, shopping centers and obedience and agility classes serve as good examples of enrichment activities. Chasing and retrieving a ball on the surface seems to be enriching because it provides exercise and includes rewards. While repeated attempts to retrieve a ball provide much physical activity, it should not be confused with enrichment exercises. Such playful activities should be used for exercise and play or as a reward after returning from a trip or training session. Road work and chasing balls are not substitutes for trips to the shopping mall, outings or obedience classes most of which provide many opportunities for interaction and investigation.

Finally, it seems clear that stress early in life can produce beneficial results. The danger seems to be in not knowing where the thresholds are for over and under stimulation. The absence or the lack of adequate amounts of stimulation generally will produce negative and undesirable results. Based on the above, it is fair to say that the performance of most individuals can be improved, including the techniques described above. Each contributes in a cumulative way and supports the next stage of development.

Conclusion

Breeders can now take advantage of the information available to improve and enhance performance. Generally, genetics account for about 35% of the performance, but the remaining 65% (management, training, nutrition) can make the difference. In the management category, it has been shown that breeders should be guided by the rule that it is generally considered prudent to guard against under and over stimulation. Short of ignoring pups during their first two months of life, a conservative approach would be to expose them to children, people, toys and other animals on a regular basis. Handling and touching all parts of their anatomy is also a necessary part of their learning which can be





started as early as the third day of life. Pups that are handled early and on a regular basis generally do not become hand-shy as adults.

Because of the risks involved in under-stimulation, a conservative approach to using the benefits of the three stages has been suggested based primarily on the works of Arskeusky, Kellogg, Yearkes and the "Bio Sensor" program (later known as the "Super Dog Program").

Both experience and research have dominated the beneficial effects that can be achieved via early neurological stimulation, socialization and enrichment experiences. Each has been used to improve performance and to explain the differences that occur between individuals, their trainability, health and potential. The cumulative effects of the three stages have been well documented. They best serve the interests of owners who seek high levels of performance when properly used. Each has a cumulative effect and contributes to the development and the potential for individual performance.

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Figure 3 Head pointed down



Figure 4 Figure Supine position



