



*Out N' About*  
dog training



## WHY ATTEND A PUPPY CLASS

Believe it or not, dogs have the intelligence of a 2-3 year old child and can learn upwards of 200-300 words. Not that they are completely equal to children, but their development is surprisingly similar. So let's think about this - given the option, most parents are sending their 2-3 year old children to preschool. Their goal is not solely to start on early education, but to advance their child's social and emotional development.

Preschool offers a positive, safe, and enriching environment for children to learn the following

- How to get along well with others;
- sit calmly during story time;
- listen to and follow through on one or two directions at a time;
- transition from one activity to the next; and
- focus and pay attention.

Preschool also offers opportunities for young children to

- partake in creative and imaginary play with friends;
- explore tactile stimulation by working with different art mediums such as clay, paint, drawing, and cutting of fabric or yarn to create masterpieces; and
- improve upon gross motor skills through outdoor play on play structures or through organized games.

Now, it's not to say that parents can't teach their children all of this on their own, and that is probably why preschool is not mandatory for children to attend. But many parents realize there are qualified professionals that can do this on a greater scale, and with much greater success than most parents who try to teach the very same thing exclusively from the home. There is proven evidence that children who attend even a short amount of preschool are better equipped to deal with life's pressures and responsibilities once they enter their school years.

Given dogs parallels of development to that of children, quality puppy classes now mirror the exact features mentioned above to enrich the lives our four legged friends. Many classes are even called Puppy Preschool. The goal of these classes is not solely on learning basic foundational obedience commands (even though they are incorporated into the curriculum), but on socialization (including play), problem prevention and early solutions.

**The number one reason dogs are surrendered to shelters is lack of PROPER early socialization and the later development of behavioral problems.** Veterinarians have realized the critical role quality classes provide and are now supporting enrolling puppies in class as early as 7-8 weeks of age, with a minimum of one set of vaccines. The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) has published a position statement on puppy socialization. They state, **"The most important time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life....puppies should be exposed to as many new....stimuli and environments as can be achieved safely and without causing over-stimulation manifested as excessive fear, withdrawal or avoidance behavior. For this reason, the AVSAB believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive socialization before they are fully vaccinated."** Furthermore, "behavioral issues, not infectious diseases, are the number one cause of death for dogs under three years of age." To find a quality puppy class in your area, contact your veterinarian.

To enroll in our Puppy Preschool Class, contact us at [OutNAboutDogTraining.com](http://OutNAboutDogTraining.com)  
(619) 417-2368.