

BluePath

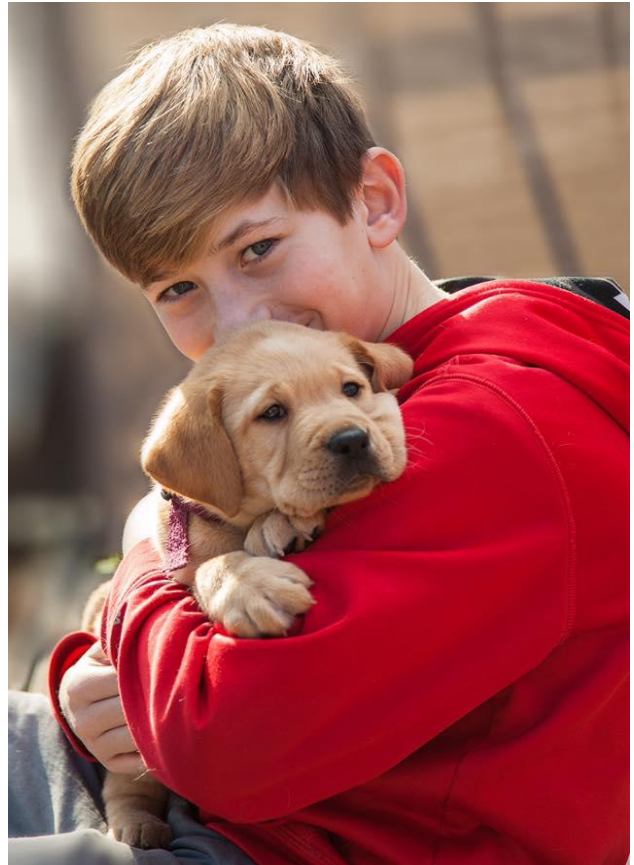
SERVICE DOGS



Puppy Raiser Manual

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BluePath Service Dogs – An Overview

Our mission

BluePath provides autism service dogs, offering safety, companionship and opportunities for independence. We have an unwavering commitment to deliver personalized service beyond expectation, and our vision is to be the definitive leader in autism service dog provision- transforming the lives of individuals, families and communities. We rely heavily on the generosity of donors and volunteers to fulfill our mission.

Why dogs for children with autism?

Scientific studies confirm the transformative nature of the human – canine bond, and as a result, animal assisted therapies have grown dramatically. For children with autism, the comfort and companionship of a well-trained dog can serve as the catalyst for remarkable changes in sleeping, eating, and social behavior.

How does an autism service dog work?

Many children with autism exhibit decreased safety awareness; they can bolt away from a safe environment or the security of a caregiver with no warning. These elopement issues can make trips outside the home a frightening proposition. An autism service dog works alongside parents or caregivers to keep a child safe. The dog is connected to the child via a specially designed tether system, and the dog is trained to “anchor” in response to a child bolting. This immediate, emotionless reaction keeps the child safe – and often helps to reduce or eliminate the bolting behavior.

From a graduate

“Many times we were forced to take turns staying home or just not go out with our son because the stress of going out in public was so great. He got away from us more than once and the agony of getting to him before something tragic happened to him was more than we could bear. Receiving our autism service dog changed our lives; we have been able to participate in many activities that in the past would not have been possible.”

Chapter 1: Welcome Puppy Raisers

It takes a huge heart to become a BluePath puppy raiser. You have selflessly agreed to take a puppy into your home for a year or more – to provide training, socialization and love. It takes a very special person to make this type of commitment and we are so incredibly grateful for you.

You will have several responsibilities during your time with your pup. You have the job of socializing the puppy to all the situations one might encounter on any given day. These day-to-day situations typically include exposing the pup to different scents, objects, sounds, people and animals. Additionally, it is imperative that you establish impeccable house manners with the pup while he/she is living in your home.

Raising a puppy is an exciting experience - whether you are a first time raiser or you have been raising for years. Every puppy is unique and the journey changes a little bit each time. This manual will assist you in many different areas, but never hesitate to call if you can't find the answer here. Remember you are not alone; we offer voluntary monthly conference calls so raisers and staff can connect to share ideas and information on all different topics. You will also be in touch with other raisers via a private Facebook group.

Thank you for joining our team and being an integral part of changing the life of a child and family affected by autism. Let's get started!

What BluePath provides:

- Veterinary care for the dog, including vaccination fees (unless you have agreed to cover this cost)
- Monthly heartworm and flea and tick preventatives. You will get your first few months' supply in your puppy starter bag, and subsequent medications will be mailed. We ask that you return any unused medications to us.
- Support: We will answer all your questions and problem solve any issues you may have. This can be done in person (when possible), via Skype, email, telephone or text.
- Quarterly in-person visits, schedule and geography permitting. You will sit and talk with our training staff, and likely go for a walk or an outing. These are casual opportunities to ask questions and troubleshoot any challenges.
- Puppy 'starter kit' including a toy, puppy sized leash and a small supply of dog food
- Instruction on teaching the commands and skills will be communicated to you via video, Skype, email, phone and text. You are also invited to attend local puppy classes to socialize your puppy to other dogs of different breeds and sizes.
- Private Facebook group to share stories and experiences with other puppy raisers
- A mentor (when available) to provide additional help and support
- A puppy jacket for your puppy to wear
- Invitation to your puppy's graduation luncheon

What we ask of our puppy raisers:

- Provide a safe and loving home, including appropriate food, toys, crate, leash, and collar.
- When outdoors, always keep the puppy on a leash, unless in a fenced in area.
- Never leave a young puppy alone and unsupervised, unless he is safe in his crate. Once a dog ages and has appropriate house manners, you can begin to leave him alone for short periods of time.
- Keep the puppy at a healthy weight, well groomed, well exercised, and up to date on his vaccines, in accordance with our guidelines.
- Teach the puppy appropriate house manners.
- Teach the puppy all the commands using BluePath's training techniques.
- Use these commands and skills when out on your socialization outings.
- Take your puppy out for socializing experiences four to seven times weekly.
- Complete bi-monthly report cards on your puppy's progress.
- Make best effort to be available for quarterly in-person visit.

Puppy raising expenses

Puppy raisers are responsible for the cost of certain items, including quality food, appropriate toys, puppy bed, leashes, and bowls. You can find the full list of items covered by raisers later in this chapter.

In addition to providing supplies, some puppy raisers may agree to take on some of the medical expenses of the puppy, including vaccines, check-ups, and flea and tick and heartworm preventatives. When you sign your contract, you will be asked to indicate whether you are willing to take on these additional expenses.



Chapter 2: Preparing for Pup's Arrival

Bringing your puppy home for the first time is incredibly exciting. Although there will be an initial adjustment period, a schedule surrounding the new puppy should be implemented immediately. This might include eating, toileting and playing at the same times each day. A sample daily schedule is provided later in this document.

Remember that everyone your pup encounters will have an impact on his development and behavior. This is especially important with family members, as they will be interacting with the puppy all the time. Make sure they read the manual prior to the pup's arrival. Talk about the rules as a family so everyone fully understands each rule and its importance in the pup's development. Consistency is the key to a well-socialized, well-mannered dog.

Safety first: puppy proofing your home and yard

Puppies are very mobile, inquisitive, and lack the full strength and coordination of an adult. As a result, your home needs to be prepared for a puppy in the same way you safeguard your home for a toddler.

Get down at the level of a puppy and survey the rooms your puppy will have access to. Puppies go through an extended "oral" phase until they reach approximately six months. They investigate their surroundings with their mouths, picking up objects to see how they feel, what they taste like and what they do. However, there are many objects that are dangerous or poisonous, and these items must be removed from the environment

It is necessary to follow these safety steps to keep your puppy safe and healthy:

- **Human medications are the number one cause of poisonings in dogs and should be put away in cabinets - never leave them out on countertops or bathroom vanities.** As the puppies grow, they can reach pill vials and easily chew them up, ingesting their contents. Tylenol, Advil (Ibuprofen) and Aleve (Naproxen) should never be given to dogs.
- Electrical cords should be completely hidden and away from your puppy's reach.
- Mouse and rat poisons are one of the most common poisons found in households and are extremely deadly for dogs. **Mouse and rat poisons are prohibited in BluePath's puppy raising homes.** This applies to all areas of the house, including the garage, regardless of whether your dog has access to the room.
- All plants should be kept out of reach of your puppy. While most plants cause only mild toxicities (vomiting, diarrhea), others can cause kidney, liver or heart problems. Before adding plants to your household or yard, check the ASPCA website

(<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>) to see if they are safe.

- All chocolates should be kept in cabinets or pantries and never left out on the kitchen counter or in bowls on coffee tables or kitchen tables. Milk chocolate is toxic in larger amounts, but dark chocolate and cocoa powder for baking is toxic in smaller quantities.
- Grapes and raisins can be toxic and even deadly to some dogs, even with the ingestion of only one.
- Ingestion of gums, candies and food products containing the sugar substitute Xylitol can cause life-threatening liver damage and dangerously low blood sugar. Note that some peanut butters contain Xylitol.
- Other food items like garlic, onions, and macadamia nuts cause varying degrees of toxicity.
- Peach pits and corncobs easily cause intestinal obstructions requiring surgery.
- Clothing items left on the floor or in accessible laundry baskets can be chewed into pieces or swallowed whole. Please keep socks and underwear in drawers or sealable laundry bins.
- Cocoa mulch used in some landscaping is dangerous and should not be used.
- Garbage bins need to be kept in latching cabinets or in a locking containers.
- Dogs should not have access to garages, as anti-freeze is extremely deadly, even in small amounts. ANY leakage of anti-freeze under your car should be thoroughly hosed away with copious amounts of water. Dogs are attracted to the sweet taste of anti-freeze.
- Pools, rapidly flowing creeks and rivers, and deep-water ponds can be drowning hazards to all dogs, but especially young puppies. Be sure to thoughtfully manage your pup around any body of water.

There are many more dangerous and toxic items that can be found in the home and yard. Always know where your dog is and what he or she is doing in your home, yard or in public. Here are important websites and phone numbers to refer to in an emergency:

Animal Poison Control 888-426-4435

<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control>

Poisonous Plants: <https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>

(Please note that this center charges a fee per call, which will not be reimbursed by BluePath.)

Equipment list

You will need to provide the following items for your puppy:

- Food: There are many brands of dog food on the market and most are well balanced and nutritious for dogs. It is important to remember that there is no one "best food" that satisfies all dogs requirements. Choose a name brand food, like Iams, Purina, Blue or Hills. Meat-based foods are better than grain based, so as an example, Purina ONE and Purina Pro-Plan have a higher meat ratio than Purina Dog Chow. Any food you choose should be palatable, affordable and lead to normal-formed stool. Additional details about feeding are below, but keep in mind that young puppies will eat puppy food and older puppies will transition to an adult dog food.
- Two stainless steel bowls - Please do not purchase ceramic or plastic bowls because these are more likely to be chewed, broken, scratched, and chipped.
- Short leash of 4-to-6 feet in length - This is a standard leash made of cotton, nylon, or leather. Teething puppies may be more apt to chew on leather but it is a more comfortable material to handle.
- Long leash of 10-to-15 feet in length - This is to provide a more free moving experience for your puppy. You will use the longer leash to easily create a loose leash for the puppy and to let him explore on your socialization outings. By using a long leash, we are less likely to keep the leash tight. A loose leash on the puppy will allow the puppy to explore his environment without being physically controlled by the leash. Instead, we encourage you to use the commands from the Command List, as well as your voice, to direct the puppy and encourage him to explore.
- Crate - Molded or wire crates are acceptable types of crates to use with your BluePath puppy. You can use a crate divider to section off space in a large crate, or you can utilize larger crates as your puppy grows. In choosing a size for the puppy, he should be able to comfortably stand up and turn around. If young puppies have too much space in their crate, they may use one end as the bathroom and sleep at the other end.
- Crate mat - The puppy can have a pad or mat in his crate provided he does not chew it or go to the bathroom on it.

Raiser Tip: *In the early puppy stages, a non-frayed towel might be a good option until your puppy develops appropriate crate manners as it can easily be replaced or washed.*

- Grooming tools - We recommend using the Kong Zoom Groom for young puppies and the Furminator for older puppies. If your puppy is uncomfortable with the Furminator, continue with the Zoom Groom or find a brush that is not too harsh for your puppy's sensitive skin. You'll also need nail clippers and/or a dremel.
- Plastic poop bags - It is important to always pick up after your puppy defecates. The BluePath vest that comes with your puppy has pockets in it; we highly recommend that

you keep some poop bags and paper towel in these pockets. Plastic bags can be purchased at your local pet store.

- Adult collar - Your puppy will arrive with a puppy-sized collar. When he outgrows this collar, you will need to purchase a 1" wide adult, adjustable collar for him. Regularly check that the collar is appropriately sized by ensuring that you are just able to get two fingers underneath it. If your puppy's collar is too loose, he could catch it on something or it could come off and he could run away.
- Toys - There are hundreds of types of toys you can purchase, however, some are much better quality than others. We recommend toys from the following companies: Kong, Nylabone, Kyjen, Busy Buddy, Chuckit, Jolly Pet, JW Pet, Outward Hound, Petstages, Planet Dog, Tuffy's, and West Paw. These toys can be purchased at toy stores or online. We have had much success using Chewy.com. Soft toys, tennis balls, rope toys, fleece toys and squeaker toys should only be available when you are either actively playing with the puppy or the puppy is being well supervised. Never leave these types of toys in the crate with them. **Rawhide, cow hooves, pig ears, raw or cooked animal bones, edible Nylabones or greenies, antlers, or bully sticks are not permitted at any time.**
- Baby gate or x-pen - It is recommended that you purchase baby gates or x-pens to keep the puppy in a restricted area with you. This allows the puppy to be seen and supervised at all times. If you cannot supervise your puppy, put him in the crate. If your puppy is given too much freedom in your house, this can lead to accidents, mishaps, and ultimately poor house manners.

Quick overview chart

The chart below provides a general overview of best practices. Many of these are addressed in greater detail later in this document.

DO	DON'T
Use a flat collar on your puppy and any other training equipment provided to you by BluePath.	Never use slip collars or 'choke chains,' prong or pinch collars.
Use our positive training model to show the puppy how to make the right choices.	Never use a remote, shock, citronella or ultrasonic training collar.
Use a long line to play with the puppy outdoors if you do not have a fenced in yard.	Never allow the puppy to run unleashed in an area that is not fenced in. Invisible fences are not appropriate containment methods.
Use a 4ft, 6ft or a long line (15ft - 25ft) leash.	Never use a retractable leash.
If you need a negative consequence for a behavior, use a verbal "no" or "uh uh" and then show him the behavior you want.	Never hit, swat, spank the puppy, yell, or tap him or her on the nose as a correction.
Take the puppy outside regularly to urinate and defecate. Always do this as soon as they wake up, after drinking water, eating, play or activity. Sometimes this is as often as every 15 minutes when the puppy is young.	Never punish the puppy for urinating or defecating indoors.
Take the puppy to the local town or village, farmers market, hardware store, children's sporting events, etc.	Never take the puppy to a theme park, zoo or animal park.
Take the puppy to a friend's house to play if it is in a fenced in area, and you know that the other puppy(s) are healthy, friendly, and fully vaccinated.	Never take the puppy to a dog park.
Teach the puppy how to walk nicely on all different types of stairs.	Never take the puppy on an escalator or moving walkway.
Take the puppy to family social events when you can. Teach him to be polite and appropriate at these functions.	Never take the puppy to a fireworks display.

Allow your pup to check out bodies of water like streams and ponds, while on leash or long line. Allow them to go into the water and swim if they want to.	Never allow your puppy to play around the swimming pool.
Always use a regular doorway or automatic opening door.	Never take the puppy through revolving doors.
Allow people to pet your puppy.	Don't allow the puppy to bite or mouth people. Don't allow the puppy to jump on people.
Teach the puppy to be responsive and remain connected and calm when around moving items or animals.	Don't allow the puppy to chase bikes, cars, skateboards or any other animals or faster moving items, other than appropriate toys.

Chapter 3: Bringing Your Puppy Home

Waiting for your new puppy is exciting. The anticipation of soft fuzzy fur, puppy breath, and the unbearable cuteness factor would make anyone giddy, not to mention the promise of incredible adventures to come with your new friend. However, it can still feel overwhelming to be handed an 8-week-old puppy and sent along on your merry way. The puppy never fails to be as lovable as expected, but little puppies can also be a big handful.

Puppies live in the moment and are unaware of what their important future holds. They will look to you for love, nurturing, and interaction - to help them over the hurdles in life as they navigate an ever-changing and complicated world. You will be an important leader for your puppy.



One idea to keep in mind... there are often numerous ways to accomplish the same goal. For those of you who have raised many puppies, we are happy for you to stick with what works, provided it fits into our reward-based philosophy. We would also love to hear if you have a specific method or tip you would be willing to share with the rest of our group!

Whether you're a new raiser or a veteran, the path is not always easy - mistakes will be made by both of you. Together you will learn from them and you will both move on. Puppies need time, repetition, and patience to learn everything they need to learn, so relax and take a deep breath, and above all, enjoy the journey.

Let's get started.

The first day

When you pick up your puppy, bring a leash, some poop bags, a bowl, water, a hard chew toy and a crate if you have one. If you do not have a crate, we will provide you with a puppy-sized crate. Place a towel or puppy bed in the crate, along with a chew toy for him to occupy himself on the ride home.

When you receive your puppy and before riding in the car, put his leash on and give him a chance to relieve himself. If he does relieve himself, praise him quietly for doing so. If you praise him too enthusiastically, you may interrupt the puppy from doing his business. If he defecates, use a bag to clean up after him immediately.

After your puppy has fully eliminated, place him in the crate in your vehicle for the ride home. To keep the puppy safe, make sure the crate is secured in your vehicle. The puppy may cry or bark on the ride home; you can talk softly to him to reassure him and then be quiet and allow him time to settle. Remember that this is a new and somewhat strange situation for him. Never carry the puppy on your lap if you are the driver. For his safety, he must either be crated or held securely in a passenger's lap.

When you arrive home

As soon as you arrive home, take your puppy to the area that will be his regular toileting spot and allow him to relieve himself again. Your home is a brand-new experience, so give him time to explore both the outside and inside of your home on a loose leash. As this is his first time in your home, confine your other pets and limit the rooms he can explore. He does not need to see the bedrooms or formal dining room. He should explore the kitchen and any attached area, (preferably tiled), where he will spend most of his time in the first few weeks. Let him do this at his own pace with you there to provide quiet support. During this initial exploration, keep your other pets away from him so he gets comfortable in his new environment.

Establishing a daily routine is paramount to having a positive puppy raising experience. The puppy will learn the routine over time making him more confident at what to expect throughout the day. It takes a lot of time, energy and forethought to care for a puppy. You must establish that extra time every day in your own schedule so the needs of the pup are met. You will find that a bulk of your routines and rules will happen in the home environment, but the time must be set aside to allow that to happen.

Daily Puppy Routine Example

The below chart is an example of a possible routine you can follow with your puppy. There are frequent get busy breaks along with plenty of time for play, exercise, training, socialization, and rest. The times and duration of your activities will vary depending on your own schedule and the age of your puppy.

6:30am	Wake up and immediately take puppy outside to "get busy" Begin soaking pup's breakfast while pup engages in activity – play, exercise, training
7:00am	Feed puppy and immediately take outside to "get busy"
7:10-9:00am	Crate puppy while you take care of your own morning routine (i.e. shower, breakfast, read paper, etc)

9:00am	Release pup from crate and immediately take outside to “get busy”
9:10-10:00am	Brief socialization outing for puppy with “get busy” break at the end
10:00-11:30am	Crate puppy. Begin soaking food for pup’s lunch.
11:30am	Release pup from crate and immediately take outside to “get busy” Feed puppy and take outside again to “get busy”
12:00-1:00pm	Activity with puppy – play, exercise, training Take puppy outside to “get busy”
1:00-4:00pm	Crate puppy. Begin soaking food for pup’s dinner.
4:00pm	Release pup from crate and immediately take outside to “get busy” Activity with puppy – play, exercise, training
5:00pm	Feed puppy and immediately take outside to “get busy”
5:00-6:00pm	Brief socialization outing for puppy with “get busy” break at the end
6:00-8:00pm	Crate puppy
8:00-10:00pm	Release pup from crate and immediately take outside to “get busy.” Activity with puppy – play, exercise, training Take puppy outside to “get busy” Put puppy in crate for the night

Introducing family and friends

Quietly introduce your puppy to the other members of your family. Do this slowly and at a speed that your puppy finds comfortable. Make sure everyone remains calm, so the puppy understands his role is to remain quiet and relaxed when interacting with people. It is your job to keep your puppy from becoming overwhelmed. If he does become stressed, take a step back. Bring him to a quieter part of the house and try the introductions again at a slower pace.

Interaction with children

Be sure that all children in the house know the basic rules and keep all interaction safe for both child and puppy. NEVER leave a young child and a puppy alone together. All interactions must be supervised for safety. Children should never be put in the role of babysitter.



Introducing your personal pets

Allow the puppy to meet your other pets one at a time, slowly and carefully.

Dogs: If you have a pet dog in the home, this introduction should be done outside in the yard or in the driveway. Put your pet dog and the puppy on leash and slowly allow them to greet each other. Do not allow them to mouth, grab, or bite each other. Give them time to get acquainted and keep the leashes loose, praising both dogs for calm and appropriate behavior.

Cats: Introducing your puppy to the family cat should be delayed, if possible, to allow the cat to get used to the smell of the puppy before they meet. Keep the litter box and cat food in an area that your puppy does not have access as ingestion of these items can cause intestinal upset. When you do introduce your puppy to the cat, puppy should be on a leash. This will help prevent the puppy from chasing your cat and gives you the ability to move the puppy away from the cat when needed. Do not force the puppy and cat to meet and never allow the puppy to chase the cat. It may be helpful to have a room where the cat can go to escape the puppy. Using a baby gate to block off a room allows your cat the ability to choose the amount of interaction.

- Birds: Keep birdcages up high and do not let the pup and birds interact. Small birds could easily die of fright if repeatedly startled.
- Ferrets: Ferrets may bite the puppy or the puppy may nip at the ferret. Keep them separate at all times.

Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, Gerbils and Mice: Keep separate from the puppy at all times.

The first night

Limit the areas of your home that the puppy has access to and do not give him freedom to roam. Your puppy should be supervised at all times and if you are unable to supervise him, place him in his crate with a Nylabone or other chew toy. Supervision and use of the crate are the best ways to teach appropriate house manners so your puppy does not have opportunities to get into dangerous situations.

Take the puppy outside regularly to relieve himself. If he has been napping, playing, eating or drinking, take him out. Initially you may be taking your puppy out every 15 minutes. In the meantime, play with your puppy gently if he wants to, making sure he is playing appropriately with toys and not chewing on you. You may sit with him on the floor, but do not bring the puppy up onto the furniture with you.

When it is time for the puppy to go to bed, give him one final opportunity to relieve himself outside before placing him in his crate. At first, he may bark or whine. You can talk to him quietly to reassure him for a couple of minutes, but then ignore him and he should settle himself. If he wakes up at night, put on his leash and carry him outside to relieve himself. Stand still and be quiet as we do not want him to think that getting up in the middle of the night is a time for fun. Praise him quietly when he relieves himself and then carry him quietly back to his crate. Do not play with him or give him food as this will encourage him to wake up in the middle of the night.

Food and water

We'll work with you to determine the correct amount of food to feed your puppy; it'll vary based on his growth, size and level of activity. Note that dog food bags often recommend feeding more than what is necessary; it's imperative for our dogs to maintain an appropriate weight, as even mildly overweight dogs are more prone to early onset joint disease, heart and lung disorders, cancers and shortened life expectancy. See chart on the next page for information on how to assess your dog's weight.





Nestlé PURINA

BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

TOO THIN

1 Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.

2 Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.

3 Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.

IDEAL

4 Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.

5 Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.

TOO HEAVY

6 Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.

7 Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.

8 Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.

9 Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.



1



3



5



7



9

The BODY CONDITION SYSTEM was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated as documented in the following publications:

Mawby D, Bortges JW, Moyers T, et. al. *Comparison of body fat estimates by dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and deuterium oxide dilution in client owned dogs.* *Compendium* 2001; 23 (9A): 70

Lafamme DP. *Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs.* *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 22: 10-15

Kealy, et. al. *Effects of Diet Restriction on Life Span and Age-Related Changes in Dogs.* *JAVMA* 2002; 220:1315-1320

Initially, your puppy will eat three small meals of dry puppy food daily, at increments that work within your lifestyle, i.e., breakfast at 7am, lunch at 1pm, dinner at 6pm. From 8 to 12 weeks of age, you can soften the kibble by soaking the food in a small amount of water for 5 to 10 minutes before feeding. By four months of age, you can feed a larger quantity of food twice a

day at breakfast and dinnertime. Around five months of age, you'll transition your puppy to adult food, which slows down the rate of growth and decreases the incidence of diseases of growing bones and joints.

To transition your dog's diet, you will mix a small quantity of the adult diet in with a larger quantity of the puppy food. (See chart below.) This slow transition over 7 to 10 days can help prevent loose stool and diarrhea from occurring during the switch. If at any time the stool becomes unformed or liquid, go back to the previous proportions until the stool is normal again for 2 to 3 days, then try again. If the stool does not improve, call us for advice.

	Puppy Food	Adult Food
Days 1-3	3/4 puppy food	1/4 adult food
Days 4-6	1/2 puppy food	1/2 adult food
Days 7-10	1/4 puppy food	3/4 adult food
Day 11	No puppy food	All adult food

Do not limit water during the day; this will cause the puppy to 'tank up' when it is available. However, if your pup continues to drain the bowl or climb in it, remove the bowl when the puppy has finished drinking. With a young puppy, we do recommend lifting the water bowl approximately two hours before bedtime to help the puppy sleep through the night.

Chapter 4: Basic Training - Where Do I Start?

Raising a social, well-mannered puppy is a combination of patience, consistency, and hard work. There is no magic involved.

Housetraining

Puppies need to relieve themselves **frequently**. Take him out when he gets excited, after playing, immediately after waking up, and after eating or drinking water. Use a leash and go to a designated relief area, which we refer to as the “park” area.

Stand still and wait for him to relieve himself. If he has not gone within five minutes, bring him inside and place him in his crate. After five minutes, take him out on leash again, to the park area. Repeating this pattern teaches your puppy that you want him to relieve himself outside.

Puppies cannot tell you when they need to go to the bathroom at this age. When they feel the urge, they just go. Therefore, you must anticipate needs as much as possible. Watch for any signals that the puppy must use the bathroom. This can include circling or a sudden interest in sniffing. Example: You are sitting on the kitchen floor, enjoying a game with your puppy and he suddenly stops playing and wanders away from you. This is a red flag and a signal that he may need to go out immediately. Don't wait. Pick him up and carry him outside to ensure you get to the park area in time.

If the puppy starts to have an accident in the house, try to interrupt the behavior by making a sudden noise like “oops”, then lift him up and carry him outside to finish. At this stage, puppies may have to go out as often as every 15 minutes. As you get to know your puppy, you will start to recognize signs that he is about to go in the house. When you see the signals, pick him up swiftly and carry him to the appropriate area outside. The more successful you are to catch your puppy before he goes indoors, the faster and more successful house training will become.

Successful house training is built upon the dog's innate desire to “not soil the den.” Therefore, crate training at a very young age is vital to successful house training, as dogs do not want to toilet where they sleep. From the crate, always



go straight out to the park area. This quickly teaches young pups where their toileting area is. It is your job to be proactive and get them to this area every time they need to relieve.

The trick to successful relieving outside is to be passive and boring. Do not talk to him or beg him to go because it is 10 degrees below zero and you are freezing. He will pick up on your frustration and it will likely slow him down. After puppy goes to the bathroom and you have praised him, do not go directly back indoors. Some puppies learn early on that going on a fun adventure around the yard is thwarted if they go to the bathroom right away.

It is very important that you pick an area in your yard that will become the consistent toileting area. Be sure this area is easy for you to get to regardless of the weather or the time. Keep in mind, it should be away from children's play areas. Even if your yard is fenced in, you must take your puppy out on leash to this designated area every time he goes out for a toileting run. You should have a pick-up bag or pooper scooper with you at all times for immediate clean up and have somewhere easily accessible to place the waste.

Never send your puppy out to relieve on his own. You must be there to supervise as well as quietly praise as he toilets so he learns where the toileting area is. As the puppy begins to toilet, talk quietly, "good busy. Good boy/girl, get busy." When he completes the task, praise him, and repeat, "Good get busy." Over time, the pup will learn that "get busy" is the signal to relieve himself.

Crating your puppy during house training is especially important. However, you must use the crate appropriately. Do not leave him in the crate for so long that he is forced to soil the crate – this is human error. Puppies can hold their bladders longer when crated, as they have no access to water or exercise, but this does not mean that they can be left in a crate for many hours. If your puppy is coming out of a nap in the crate and you see the signs that he is waking up, be proactive. Do not wait until he is howling or barking to let him out of the crate. When he is awake, quietly open the crate door, pick him up, and go straight out to the park area.

Raiser tip: *A simple rule I follow while housebreaking is that if I have even a passing thought that MAYBE the puppy needs to go outside, I take him out immediately, no exceptions. Generally, your intuition is right.*

Accidents

Toileting accidents are going to happen and shouldn't be treated as a puppy error; it is a lesson to you that the puppy was not let out soon enough. If you find an accident in your home but you did not see the puppy in the act, then say nothing and clean it up. Do NOT draw the puppy's attention to it or act frustrated; a puppy that is scolded will try to hide when he needs to go because he is frightened that toileting makes you upset.

Raiser Tip: *Using cleaners like Nature's Miracle will eliminate odors and make it less likely for the puppy to toilet in the same spot again.*

Accidents in public

If you are planning a walk around the neighborhood or even venturing in to a store, “park” your pup first. But remember, he may need to relieve again en route. Accidents out in public are going to happen. Although embarrassing, always carry all the items necessary to clean up an accident so it can be handled quickly and discreetly. You never want to be “one bag short” walking by your neighbor’s house or in the middle of Home Depot.

Crate training

Crate training is incredibly important, as your dog will be crated on and off throughout life. The benefits are endless; the crate is a safe and secure place for the puppy to take a break; it will assist with house training; and it’s always the right choice for any time the pup can’t be supervised.

The crate should be situated in a central area where the puppy spends a lot of time and where he can be monitored regularly. This is often the kitchen area, yet be sure if there’s just one crate in your home that you’ll be able to hear the puppy from your bedroom. Children must be taught to ignore the puppy once he is in the crate. The crate should be cozy with a few towels or blankets inside as well as a favorite toy or two. It is important that the puppy can see and hear family activity.



The puppy may initially fuss, but the best thing to do is ignore him, and eventually he will settle down. Do not get in to the habit of letting your puppy dictate when he wants to come out of his crate by opening the door when he is fussing.

Do not put the puppy in an upstairs crate during the day when everyone is downstairs. The puppy should be sleeping contentedly in the middle of ongoing family activity. This is important for his feeling of safety and security but equally important that he should not have to vocalize when he wakes up to get someone’s attention.

Remember, your puppy is reliant on you to meet all his needs. If he’s barking or howling in the crate, consider what he might need... does he have to go outside? Has he eaten? Has he had

enough exercise today? If all of his needs have been met, ignore him until he settles – then take him out if you'd like. If he appears to be highly anxious, you can take him out sooner. Keep in mind you may need to go back a few steps in your work on crate acceptance.

The most important part of crate training is making sure the puppy always associates it as a positive experience. Never use the crate for punishment.

Teaching your puppy to accept his crate

Start with the door of the crate open. It's important that you introduce the crate casually. Some puppies will amble in and out of the crate on their own. (Be sure to praise if this happens!) If your puppy is not so brave, throw treats in the crate or a favorite toy and let him go in and out on his own accord to retrieve the reward. As he goes in to retrieve his reward, begin associating the word "kennel" with the entrance into the crate.

Do this several times without closing the door until the puppy goes in and out happily. Use lots of verbal praise throughout the process. If he is lying on the floor chewing on a favorite toy, move the toy into the crate so he follows. Every time the puppy begins to enter the crate, pair the entrance with the word "kennel" to build an association. Once he is comfortable going in and out of the crate, feed him in his crate and close the door. Try to put the food bowl toward the back of the crate so he must be fully inside the crate. This is usually an easy scenario for Labradors and Goldens as they have a very positive affinity for food! However, monitor closely, and as soon as he finishes, open the door and take him outside to his park area.

As you continue playing crate games with your puppy, start extending the amount of time he can be left in the crate. When you see that he is comfortable, gently close the crate door but stay vigilant. Do not allow him to become stressed. Before he gets agitated, open the door and let him wander out on his own. In another scenario, if he falls asleep on the floor, carefully lift him up and gently put him in the crate for the duration of the nap. If he stays asleep, close the door. However, once again, your job is to monitor closely. When he wakes up and begins to stretch, open the door, and quietly praise your puppy, then scoop him up and go straight outdoors so he can park.

As the puppy gets more comfortable in the crate, extend the time he is in it. Move from room to room while he is crated. When you come back in the room, do not go directly to the crate, open the door, and cuddle him. These actions will tell the puppy to be fearful of his crate as it is keeping him from you. When you come back in the room, do some dishes, or make a sandwich, after a few minutes, casually go to the puppy's crate and open the door. These may seem like trivial tasks, but your puppy is learning.

To help your pup enjoy his time in the crate, place a sterilized bone, a stuffed kong or another type of safe, appropriate toy in the crate to keep him occupied.

As the days move forward, there will be times when the puppy saunters into his crate on his own to take a nap. At other times, you may just need to put him away because you need a break from each other. Don't feel bad. Putting a puppy in the crate so you can handle other family tasks is not a punishment for him or a failure on your part. Because of your consistent crate training technique, he will see these instances as part of the routine and will happily chew on a toy or take a nap. These excellent crate manners your puppy is learning from you will be utilized throughout his lifetime.

Be very aware of how the puppy exits the crate. He should wait to exit until the crate door is completely opened and the command "break" is given. Start by opening the crate door just slightly. He may charge. Calmly close the door so he is still inside his crate. Continue this exercise. Quickly he will begin to wait until the door opens wider. Again, close the door immediately leaving him wondering. As soon as you can open door fully and he still has not attempted a jailbreak, give a happy verbal "break" cue. The puppy is learning that rude behavior is not acceptable.

Feeding your puppy

Your puppy must learn mealtime manners right away. This helps to build patience around food, and can be helpful in reducing the chance of the pup developing any guarding habits around the food bowl. The goal is for puppy to sit calmly while you fill the bowl and it on the floor. There are a few steps to achieving this:

1. Feed the puppy inside his crate for the first week.
2. During week two, feed the puppy outside the crate, away from any other pets. Hold the bowl containing the meal over the puppy's head and wait for him to have all four paws on the floor. Then say "break" and place bowl on the floor. When he can consistently do this, move to step three.
3. Lure the puppy into a sit using the dish. Move the dish over the puppy's head and he will likely sit to look up at it. The moment he sits, say "sit," then say "break," and place bowl on the floor. Split the puppy's meal into three equal amounts so you can practice three times each meal.
4. Hold the dish up and wait until the puppy sits. Say sit, begin to lower the dish and if the puppy gets up, raise the dish again until he sits. Say the word "sit" as he sits. Lower the dish again a small amount and if the pup remains seated, you can say "break" and place the dish on the floor. Continue to repeat this at each meal until the puppy can remain seated until the bowl is placed onto the floor. Depending on the level of excitement around food, it can take multiple days to achieve this.
5. Once you can place the dish on the floor without the pup getting up from his sit, continue to practice extending the time until you say "break" so that the puppy learns that he must remain seated until the break command.

Riding in the car

The safest way to transport a puppy is in a crate. Always crate him on car rides when you are driving alone. As he gets older, he will learn to travel in the car freely. However, the best way to teach that is when two people are riding in the car together so the passenger can teach the puppy to lay quietly on the floor using the appropriate verbal cue “down” with the leash cue. It can help to have a blanket for him to lay on as well as a good chew toy. It is important for the puppy to remain laying down in case of airbag deployment.

Teething and mouthing

All puppies explore their environment by using their mouths. Puppies will mouth everything including hands, arms, clothing, shoes, and anything else they find in their path. As the puppy begins to mouth or chew an inappropriate item, gently place an appropriate toy in the pup’s mouth and redirect him to chew on that instead. Storing your toys in the food bin will infuse the scent of the food onto the toy, making it a high value item to your puppy.

Outdoor areas are just as lush with non-food items for a puppy to mouth or chew. This includes mulch, sticks, rocks, pinecones, plants, etc. When you don’t have a toy handy, you may need to redirect the puppy’s attention to a different behavior, such as practicing “sit,” and then receiving a food reward.

Accepting the leash

We want the puppy to learn that the leash is great and that it gets him where he wants to go. This is a hard lesson for him to master because right away he will realize that the leash actually stops him from going his own way. Once he understands how to navigate with the leash, he will see the leash as a source of freedom, a means of going out for a walk with his favorite person.

BluePath issued you a lightweight leather leash that is a perfect length and width for your new puppy. Start out by letting your puppy get used to it. Let him wear it for short periods of time. Have a bag full of treats ready and clip the leash to your pup’s collar. Don’t force him to follow you. Bend down, call him to you using the words “puppy, puppy, puppy” as well as his name, as he starts to come to you. Example: “Puppy, puppy, puppy, Miller. Good boy.” Try using a higher intonation in your voice. You want to sound and look so exciting that your puppy drops everything to get to you. It is a very powerful cue if always followed by a treat. Keep in mind that if the treats stop coming, the pup stops coming. It’s just that simple. When the pup gets to you, give lots of praise and let the treats flow.

Now stand up and start to walk, you can walk backwards, looking at the puppy. Repeat the verbal words or cues above. Use your high-pitched voice or get down low, call him and clap

your hands. Treat and praise him when he gets to you. He is starting to get the hang of this new, fun game. Now start to back away from him a little faster, get him to chase you. Again, treat and praise when he reaches you. The leash is becoming a game for the puppy but remember, like any new behavior we are teaching the puppy, stop when you are ahead and your pup is still excited about the new game. Find something else to do and come back to the leash game later on.

At some point during the leash game, the puppy will go his own way and the leash will stop him. This will surprise him. As soon as he turns to look at you, start up the game. Again, get down and call him or be silly or back up and have him chase you, whatever works. It won't take long before he begins to understand what he can and can't do on the leash and how to get rewarded. As the daily lessons continue, you will find the puppy walking better and better and even coming to you on his own to get a treat.

Walking on a loose leash

We now have a puppy that accepts and enjoys the leash. It's time to teach him how to walk by your left side in a relative "heel" position with the leash and collar loose. When first walking with your pup, we recommend that you start with a long line. This is a longer leash, 10-15 feet in length. Each and every time the puppy moves away from you so that there is tension in the leash, stop and back up (but use no commands), until the puppy turns to look at you, which will relieve the tension on the leash. When the tension is relieved, praise and move forward. You are teaching your puppy that the only time he can get where he wants to go is by walking on a loose leash.

Once the pup has started to do this consistently, start asking him to walk for short periods at your left side, maybe 5 to 10 seconds at a time, rewarding him with treats and then letting him wander again. Build on this, increasing the time he can spend walking beside you. Try moving in different directions so that he pays attention to where you are and learns to follow your lead. Don't forget to praise him when he is doing what you want.

This method works but initially does not allow for you and the puppy to go for long walks together as you will spend a lot of time not moving or moving for only short spurts. That's normal. As the days go by, you will find you and your pup will be able to go on longer adventures together. You can also play these types of games in parking lots or slightly more "interesting" locations, so that the puppy is simultaneously getting some socialization.



There will be times that you will find your puppy pulling harder to reach his goal - your front door perhaps. Don't give in. He needs to learn that goals are met by walking on a loose leash only. Your puppy will learn that dinner does not come faster by charging the end of the leash as he gets closer to the front door but by walking through the door next to you. This concept of patience and a loose leash will be difficult for the puppy to grasp in the beginning but it's a good lesson in patience for both the pup and for the handler.

Barking and whining

If your pup is barking or whining excessively, try to determine if he is communicating a genuine need to you. For example, if a puppy whines at 3am, there is a good chance he may need to go out to the bathroom. Give the pup the benefit of the doubt and take him out for a chance to "get busy". However, there are other reasons your pup may bark such as a need for attention, support or concern.

If your puppy just wants your attention, try to ignore him; turning your back to your pup signals to the pup that this behavior does not get him the attention he is seeking. If this technique works, immediately give him calm and quiet praise for being quiet. If turning your back on your pup does not quiet him, try giving him a series of obedience commands. If he is still quite young, work on "sit." If he is older, try a series of commands such as "sit," "down," "sit." This will take his attention off the barking and give him something more constructive to work on with you.

If you are in public, take the puppy away to a quieter area and give him a chance to calm down. He may be trying to tell you that he is overwhelmed. If your puppy is barking because he is afraid of something, take him further away from what is upsetting until he becomes more comfortable. If you are unable to increase the distance between the pup and the object of his concern, try blocking his vision of the object by standing in his line of sight. Your job now is to become his new object of interest by verbally praising him and treating him for eye contact. Continue this approach with your puppy until he forgets about his concern as he is now fully engaged with you. Once you have reached that point, continue the game but begin to move him away from the area.

Grooming and body handling

Grooming keeps your puppy healthy and it's important to make time for it every day. Brushing distributes natural oils throughout his coat and helps curb shedding. Additionally, daily grooming cuts down on the amount of baths your pup will need. Bathing often dries out the coat and removes much of the essential oils the puppy's coat needs to be soft and silky.

The best time to groom your puppy is when he is tired and relaxed. Grooming should be considered a massage for your pup and it's a great way to help him become comfortable with

body handling. In addition, it's an ideal time to find bumps or scrapes, a broken nail, or a dirty ear. Be sure to utilize approved grooming tools with your BluePath pup.

Comfort with body handling of all types is imperative, not only for BluePath pups but for all dogs. Dogs must trust human hands on their body. This may be something that your puppy naturally loves or it might be something that you need to work on. Hands of all types will be on this pup for his entire life. The dog's trust in those hands, regardless of whose they are, is imperative to raising a safe dog. Remember, this pup will be placed with a child, and children are unpredictable and impulsive. Although a child may surprise a dog, we want the dog to immediately recognize the hands as safe and harmless.

Practice touching them and handling them all over their body. Start by touching a part of their body, like an ear, and reward with a small piece of food. Practice with ears, muzzle, legs, feet, toes, tail, tummy, chest, back, etc. When the pup is young, make the sessions short so they don't get overwhelmed. Feed them a treat after you touch each body part. This develops their tolerance to being handled and makes it a fun and pleasurable experience for them. This will also help develop a trusting relationship.

Special areas to check

Eyes: Watch for redness and irritation, excess weeping with discharge of color.

Ears: The inside flap of the ear should be relatively clean and pink in color. If you look when your dog is excited or has been active, they may look a dark pink color; this is typical blood flow from arousal. Watch for redness and irritation or an excess of discharge. If there is a foul or yeasty smell, contact us as this may be the sign of an ear infection. To clean the ear, take a piece of gauze and gently wipe inside the canal and remove any debris. This should be done approximately once per week. Do not clean the pup's ears with a cleaner unless directed to do so by one of our vet staff.

Mouth: Look inside the pup's mouth and check the teeth and gums for any cracks, broken teeth or bleeding. Clean the teeth once a week with a toothpaste that is specially formulated for dogs. You can use a finger or regular brush or gauze.

Raiser Tip: *I have found the easiest way to clean the puppy's teeth is by wrapping a piece of gauze around my finger, squeezing a dime sized piece of peanut butter or chicken flavored toothpaste on it and feeling my way around the teeth. The pups seem to like it and tolerate it much better than putting a brush in their mouths.*

It is important that your puppy learn passive restraint. A young puppy should become accustomed to laying on his back in your arms. The technique builds trust and provides a good

way for you to handle his paws and toes, peek in his ears and play gently with his tail. It also gives you easy accessibility to your puppy's mouth, where you can gently slide a lip up and check on those baby teeth.

Gently squeezing your puppy's toes is an important aspect of body handling and it will help him become comfortable with nail trimming. It is very important he enjoys being handled and touched in these different ways as it builds his trust in human contact. As he gets older, have him lie down gently on his side. Kneel next to him and gently hold him down with your forearm. You can scratch his belly while you do this and talk softly to him. As soon as he stops squirming and becomes calm, release him. Stay calm as you walk away, and make this a part of your daily routine. Your puppy needs to learn while he is young, that being held down is not a time to panic but to relax.



Chapter 5: Becoming a Leader

As a puppy raiser, your job is to raise a confident well-socialized dog. Puppies do not become well-socialized, well-behaved dogs on their own; they must learn the rules from a “pack leader.” Stepping in to the leadership role is crucial for your puppy because he will be looking to you for guidance.

Dogs’ delight in pleasing us is what makes them so unique; they want to bond with humans just as much as humans want to bond with them. This is the very essence of the human-animal bond and this mutual interest in being together and learning together is what makes raising a puppy so rewarding.

How do I establish leadership with my puppy?

When you are matched with your puppy, you and all the members of your family will become the puppy’s leaders. In this role, your job is to create clear, attainable goals as well as concise strategies on achieving them.

When the pup enters your home, it is easy to let him run the show based on cuteness alone. A good leader will instill in the puppy that he must learn to work for everything he wants, including verbal praise, food rewards, and even physical praise. This will teach the puppy to look to you for support and guidance as new rules are introduced and his world gets bigger. Once he understands that you are his leader, and that you will teach him appropriately and praise him for a job well-done, your relationship will grow because of this trust and support. You are well on your way.

Leadership Qualities

Respect

As with people, your puppy’s respect is something that should not be expected - it must be earned. The way you handle yourself and the consistent expectations you have of your canine friend will be critical in developing and maintaining your puppy’s respect.

So, how do you go about earning respect? It is not such an ominous task as it sounds. Use the following tenets to get started.

Confidence

At first, confidence is something you might not readily display when handling your new puppy. However, it is important that you act as though you know what you are doing. Your puppy will respond much better and interact much faster with someone who takes charge. Adopt the physical characteristics of a leader, head held high, shoulders back, and move with purpose. Puppies rely heavily on body language from the moment they are born, learning immediately

from their mother what is acceptable and unacceptable without a word uttered. Your puppy will follow your body language as well - it is instinctual.

Perseverance

A marksperson will not hit their target every time and neither will you. Do not get frustrated, impatient, or discouraged when things do not work out as planned. Keep trying. Eventually the pup will have an “ah ha” moment and you will have made valuable progress.

Positivity

Your pup will neither respect nor follow a negative leader. A positive attitude is infectious and will motivate your pup to work more effectively. Motivate your puppy with praise the instant he has accomplished what you have asked of him. Reap the rewards upon him. Tell him how smart he is! And remember, if you don't think you can succeed, you have already lost.

Consistent expectations

Be consistent in your handling and your goals for the puppy. This will eliminate much confusion on the part of the puppy as to what is expected of him in each situation he encounters. If the puppy begins to show a multitude of behaviors, positive or negative, this is a clear sign of confusion. Stop what you are doing and reassess your methods and expectations.

Correction

Learn the rules for correcting a puppy. Correction techniques do NOT include hitting, kicking or yelling at your puppy. Discipline technique may include time outs, redirecting a behavior or ignoring a behavior.

Ways to demonstrate leadership

- The puppy must sit and wait while his food is being served to him. The food's bowl is put on the floor and the puppy must not get out of the sit position until he hears the “break” command.
- The puppy must sit at both sides of doors and barriers. The door opens, and the puppy must wait for the “break” or “let's go” command before moving through the doorway. Example: In a fenced in yard, the pup must sit at the gate while it is opened, be cued to walk through, and then wait patiently at the other side while the gate is latched.
- The puppy must wait in his crate when you open the door. He must wait for the “break” command before leaving his crate. This is also true of entering his crate.
- The puppy must sit before jumping in or out of the car. He may not jump into the vehicle until given the “load up” command and he may not leave the vehicle until given

the “break” command.

- The front door to your home is a very controlling area. The pup should never be the greeter of someone coming in the home. You, or another family member, should serve as the greeter. Do not allow your pup to bark, lunge, jump, or charge someone at the front door. When the pup is on leash and you are exiting through the front door, remember he must wait patiently on BOTH sides of the door. The pup must never attempt to drag you down the front steps the moment you have turned to lock your front door.
- If you and your puppy are heading through a doorway together, he should always yield that space to you. He should not pick up speed to “beat” you through the narrow area. Humans take up space; puppies must learn to yield it.

These are all some very important areas to show your leadership role to your puppy. Your puppy will quickly look to you for guidance and for a “break” command before moving through a doorway. Not only does this put you in a leadership role, you are creating a polite puppy who in turn will not jump on Grandma or your 22-month-old niece. A polite dog is a safe dog!

Distraction: How do I get my puppy’s attention back on me?

Getting your puppy’s attention before giving a command is paramount for success. Be observant of what your puppy is doing or focused on, so you can get his attention back on you before asking him to complete a task. Otherwise, you are setting both of you up for failure.

There are four major stimuli that will distract your puppy:

- **Movement:** All dogs have an instinctive level of “prey drive.” Movement excites them. Birds, cats, dogs, squirrels and balls are out there competing for your pup’s attention. When your pup gets distracted, try wiggling the leash slightly. Sometimes moving your hand down near your pup’s face can instantly change his focus. You may need to block his view of the distraction or walk the other direction. When you get even the slightest eye contact, praise and feed. Success! Your puppy’s attention is back on you. Keep in mind that sometimes you’re going to lose your puppy to distraction and not be able to get him back quickly or at all. This is normal, and you’re not failing.
- **Scent:** Scent is one of a pup’s most powerful senses. When your pup is distracted by a scent, getting his full attention back on you can be difficult. Try shortening the leash so he can’t sniff. See if changing direction gets his attention back on you. Try a strong-smelling food treat, known as a “high value” reward because it’s only given in situations when an average treat is not working. If the treat gets his attention, ask for a position

change (“sit,” “down,” “stand”) and be quick with your verbal praise as you give him his treat.

- **Sound:** Although dogs can hear a much greater range of sound than humans, you are not necessarily the primary sound that they are listening to. Try using a different type of sound (whistle, clicking of the tongue) to get your pup’s attention back on you. Try changing the intonation in your voice, like you did when the puppy was learning to accept the leash. If the sounds you are using are not working, try something else. If you find a sound that works, be quick with your verbal praise as you give the pup a treat.
- **Touch:** Dogs love to be touched. A light touch on the top of a distracted puppy’s head or a scratch behind the ear can be just enough to get the pup’s attention back on you. Quick verbal praise and a treat and you have just secured your dog’s attention.

In all these scenarios, once the puppy’s attention is back on you, use plenty of praise and eye contact to keep your puppy engaged with you so his focus does not wander off again. Remember, you must continue to be more interesting than the chipmunk who is still darting across the lawn; this is not always an easy task.



Toys and games

Toys and games are lots of fun; however, it is an area requiring complete control by human family members. The puppy must learn from day one that you are the owner of all toys, all food and all attention. The puppy does not control any of these areas and must always give up a toy, a dirty sock or a slice of pizza.

There is nothing in the house that the puppy owns and that must be completely understood. To accomplish this, he needs to learn to release an object on cue. There can be no clamping down, keep away, or vocalizing over a toy or food. The puppy must apply this rule to everyone he encounters; humans, dogs, or cats regardless of what item he is trying to covet. There will be certain toys (not every day chew toys) that you play with together; these should be kept away until you bring one out and engage him in play.

Releasing an object on command

It is very important to prevent resource guarding from happening. As soon as your puppy comes home, teach him that you will always be near his food bowl, toys, bed and anything else he decides is “his.” Teach your puppy to “trade good stuff for better stuff.” Then give him the original good stuff back.

Early on, teach your puppy “drop it.” Have a treat ready (and make sure he sees it), so when you say, “drop it” and he drops what he is holding, he immediately gets the food reward. Praise, praise and more praise, then return the toy to him. You can do this a couple of times in a session, several times a day. Pretty soon the puppy will want you to come over when he is chewing his favorite toy because he will get something tasty for giving it up, and then even better, he will get his toy back! Never try to grab what is in his mouth and fight him for it; the puppy will hold the item tighter, possibly growling or running away with it. This “resource guarding” can become dangerous very quickly.

If your puppy starts to show some resource guarding, contact BluePath staff immediately so we can work together on solving the problem.

Managing ‘keep away’ behavior

Some pups love to play the ‘keep away’ game. They will grab a forbidden item and run from you urging you to chase them. The more you chase after them to retrieve the item, the more they enjoy it and practice this behavior. Much as it is tempting sometimes to rush to them to grab what they have, do not do this. Stay calm and use some of the following techniques to entice the puppy to lose interest in the item or to return to where you are.

- Use the “Here” command if the pup knows it well and is responsive to it. Try the “Out” command; note this will only work if you have practiced it a lot.
- Go to the door and grab the leash as if you are getting ready to leave.
- Grab a ball and act as if you are going to throw it for them.
- Play excitedly with a toy and seem very interested in something else. Sometimes the pup’s curiosity will engage and they will be more interested in what you are doing.
- Grab their food bowl as if you are going to feed them. If necessary, drop some dog food in there, but do not do this every time or you are in danger of teaching the pup that he gets fed when he takes something.

Teaching a new behavior

Remember when we taught the puppy to sit for his food? We did not start with a word and expect the action. We started by creating the action and then we added the verbal cue. We did not say “sit” and expect the puppy to sit. We were able to create the behavior in the puppy first, then we added the verbal cue later. The cue must be attainable, and the pup must get immediate praise and a treat when he gives you the desired response. However, the pup must be able to make the association between the desired cue and the action required.

Your timing is important. If you’re not getting the correct behavior, don’t continue to repeat it. If you are getting frustrated, neither of you will get anything out of the lesson; stop what you are doing and take a break. When you are ready to go back to working with the puppy, make sure your mindset has changed as well as your training technique, so you’re set up for success.

We use food and verbal praise to reward the puppy for a particular behavior. A marker word, typically an excited “YES!”, is a helpful way to pinpoint the exact moment the dog has performed a behavior in the manner we’ve requested.

Make it fun! Keep distractions low. Keep the sessions short. Puppies have very short attention spans so quit the lesson when he is still happy and enthusiastic. Keep the game fun and exciting and then find something else to do and later go back and try again.

Be patient! It takes a lot of repetition before the puppy will understand the connection between the cue and the reward. This repetition is called patterning. A pattern is a behavior that is repeated consistently so that it becomes a routine or habit. Once you develop good habits in your puppy, these good habits will eliminate bad behaviors from developing. Why? Because the puppy has learned what behavior gets him his reward so there is no reason for him to try anything else. When he sees you filling his food bowl, he immediately sits. Your pup has been patterned by your consistent teaching method. He sits. The food is delivered. He has developed a good habit.

Remember to praise your puppy! Praise is a vital communication method for effective training; it motivates the puppy and encourages him to repeat the behavior. And remember, there are many ways to praise; you should always use vocal praise, but a favorite toy, a food treat, or gentle pat also can be applied depending on the situation.

Once your puppy is consistent with his response to your cue, it is time to shake it up a bit. Changing the environment and the distraction level is paramount to cementing the response. Dogs don’t generalize as well as humans do, meaning that just because the puppy sits in your kitchen does not mean he will sit outside. It takes lots of repetition in different environments before the puppy understands the cue every time it is given. Once your puppy understands the cue to sit inside your home (and not just in the kitchen), try your yard where there is low distraction. Once your puppy has mastered the lesson at home, branch out. Go to the local park and work with your puppy there.

Be consistent in every new environment. Continue to work with your puppy until his response is consistent in all different locations with all different types of distractions. Remember; never stop praising your puppy for being so smart!

As you work with your puppy, you will learn what type of praise works best in many different scenarios. For example, as you are teaching your new puppy to sit, a calm voice with an immediate food reward makes more sense than throwing his favorite toy. This will just cause the puppy to jump out of his skin with excitement and the lesson may be lost. However, if your puppy navigates stairs for the first time, you might throw a small party for your pup, letting him get silly at his great accomplishment.

When you are praising your puppy, you want to change the intonation of your voice to a sound your puppy enjoys. Match the praise to your puppy's personality. Your puppy needs to know you are telling him how smart he is so be sincere and happy as you praise him. Praise will also establish a routine of desirable behavior and will reinforce your leadership status. Your puppy is learning that you are fun, you are fair, and you think the world of him when he learns something new. This is incredibly rewarding for you too. Enjoy it and don't forget to reward yourself for a job well-done!

Chapter 6: Socialization

Socialization is one of the most important jobs for a puppy raiser. The puppy is growing fast and must learn all about the great big world with you as his teacher, supporter and friend. There is so much for him to experience; every environment comes with its own unique set of stimuli; odors, sights, tastes, sounds, surface changes, movements and textures. There are doors to enter and exit, stairs to climb, people to greet. There are mountains to climb and caves to wander through. There are streams and oceans to wade in. There are sunny days and thunder storms. When you think about the world from a puppy's point of view, it's a wonder puppy can keep his attention on you at all!

It's important for your puppy to spend time in all these environments to become a well-adjusted, social animal - one with the temperament and experience to become a working service dog. Developing these skills must be done in a methodical and age-appropriate way so that your pup's confidence increases on every outing and he does not become overwhelmed. You want to quietly and gently show him the world, starting with your own home, your own yard and your own neighborhood. As he gains confidence on these jaunts, you can begin to move further from the safety of puppy's neighborhood. Your pup's age and confidence level are very important to take into account as you move forward with his socialization. As his confidence grows, so will your ability to bring him to more challenging environments without causing fear and stress.



It is also vital to remember that it isn't just changes in environment that help your puppy grow, but all the different people your puppy meets along the way. It is important that he be touched and spoken to by all sorts of people - from older men with canes, to women in heels, to men carrying umbrellas and women wearing hats. Each time a person is introduced and they look "different," your puppy will need to explore why.

Example: Someone in your household puts on high heels as she gets dressed for a night out. Your puppy shows concern, and backs away, with his ears pinned down and his tail low. He could not understand the sound of the shoes on the floor, or why her height had changed so dramatically. It is important that the heels don't move closer to the puppy while he is in this confused and inhibited state. Instead, have the human in heels get down on the puppy's level and talk quietly and calmly, until the pup's fear dissipates. Eventually, the pup will likely trot over, and you can tell him how smart and brave he is.

Socialization through the ages

Socializing a puppy begins the moment he arrives home, at roughly **eight weeks** of age. Handling and cuddling by a variety of people, including children, is vital. All contact must be calm and gentle. The puppy should be held in different, yet safe positions. The puppy should also be getting used to different sounds, such as children playing, the TV, music, the dishwasher, to name a few.

Since the pup has just come home to you, your home and backyard are good places to start. Remember he may never have seen a rake, a swing set or a garbage receptacle. Let him go up to each unique item on his own, offering quiet praise as he moves closer to the object he is concerned about. Do not drag him over if he is not ready. Let him study the object from a distance, still quietly praising. If your puppy starts showing fear (backing up quickly, barking furiously, or trying to hide), move the puppy to a distance further away until he is comfortable. Do not coddle the puppy at this time as this may reinforce his fears.

Your neighborhood is a good place to start expanding your pup's world. Keep the walks short and fun as he will tire quickly. Every time you head out the door, the multitude of new experiences can be infinite. Be prepared for your outings as you want each trip to be as successful as possible. Make sure you have enough treats, a favorite chew toy, pick up bags and a good mind set.

At this age, short car trips to family members' or friends' homes can be made. Remember to keep your puppy on leash and well-supervised in someone else's home. Take a walk around a park or wander around a quiet ball field. Again, set yourself up for success - it is one thing to have three children wander over to pet him but quite another to have a playground full of children running and screaming as they head toward your puppy. Your job is to monitor this interaction carefully and end the interaction before puppy gets stressed or overwhelmed.

Use treats to help keep your pup's attention on you. Also, remember he has sharp little teeth that can easily hurt a young child. If needed, give the pup one end of the chew toy while you hold the other; this will keep your puppy's mouth away from tiny fingers. Avoid letting him get over-stimulated as you will lose control and he may begin to nip or grab at the children. Do not allow children to put their faces near his.

Begin putting your puppy's service dog vest on when he's about **10 weeks** old. Start this in the home and have plenty of treats on hand. Put the vest on, give lots of treats, take the vest off. Do this several times a day until your puppy becomes comfortable with the vest on. Start by using the luring technique with the vest and your puppy. Using a treat, lure the puppy's head through the vest to get the treat. Stay close to him during the exercise so the vest coming at his face does not frighten him. As he moves his head through the open area of the

vest, use the word “dress,” such as “good puppy, dress” in a quiet praise voice so he begins to associate the word with the vest being put on.

At **12 weeks** of age, your puppy can venture into new environments that you have not yet explored together. Again, let him explore new objects or people at his own pace. Do not force him into a situation that he is not ready for. Treats are important as your puppy begins to associate food with new experiences.

Initial trips should be very short – such as outings to the bank or library. Remember, your puppy is not fully house broken so he should be given one last chance to “park” before going inside. Make sure he is enjoying the outing by paying close attention to demeanor and body language. Is he starting to get squirrely or starting to shut down? Time to call it quits.

Build on success. The puppy must enjoy the outing and be excited to head out with you. If you are running late or your hands are full of packages, leave the puppy home in his crate. You always want yourself in the right mindset, mentally and physically, when you are working with your puppy.



As your puppy turns **16 weeks**, you could consider a stroll through a small town. Remember, there will be more traffic - possibly air brakes or car horns that he has not been exposed to before. Keep praising and treating your puppy as you march down the sidewalks and cross the streets together. It may surprise you how many new objects enter the puppy's life even on the shortest of excursions. You may walk past a baby stroller or be passed by a jogger. There may be a statue in a store window that catches his attention, a cluster of helium balloons, or outdoor decorations blowing in the breeze.

You will find stages along the way where the puppy seems to plateau or even regress. That is normal. Always work with the puppy you have in that moment, regardless of his age. Try not to judge or compare your puppy to other dogs, or even to how he was last week on a different outing. Age ranges are just a rough guide and it's always okay to slow down and give your pup more time in quieter areas.

Your puppy may be ready for new and more challenging environments from **16-20 weeks**. You could try the local playground or a soccer game on a weekend afternoon. The extensive socialization at these events can only add to your puppy's growing plate; there will be cheering fans, children, pet dogs, fast moving balls and excited children. There will be much to grab

your puppy's attention so make sure your treat bag is full and that you move toward the game slowly, possible circling the event from a distance, so that you are able to keep the puppy's attention on you.

Initially, that may be as close as you can bring him for the first few weeks, unless you carry him over to the crowd. Remember to whip out that favorite chew toy once the two of you are spotted by children. As kids surround your puppy and want to pet him, pull out the chew toy and hold it so your puppy can chew on that and not on small fingers or shoe laces. This is also a good way to help your puppy associate children with "good stuff."

Schools are helpful environments for BluePath puppies. Call a school or daycare and explain your role as a raiser of a BluePath puppy as well as the position the pup will one day play in the life of a child with autism. Many schools will be thrilled to welcome you and your pup in to the classroom. It is a great way to introduce autism and help kids understand the work of service dogs. At first, allow just two or three kids to pet your pup at a time. Be sure to praise the children for their good behavior as they are training the puppy to have the same good manners in school.



Appropriate Socialization Outings by Age

The below chart is a summary of the types of socialization outings we feel are appropriate based upon your pup's age. This is a general guideline; if you are ever unsure of whether a particular socialization outing is appropriate for your puppy, do not hesitate to contact us to discuss.

8-11 weeks old	Your home, backyard, and immediate neighborhood People of all ages, especially children Short car trip to homes of family members or friends Quiet parks Playdates with familiar dogs
10 weeks old	Begin to socialize pup to their service dog vest
12-15 weeks old	New environments such as the bank, library, post office, Home Depot, etc
16-20 weeks old	Smaller towns with increased levels of vehicular traffic and people Local playground, soccer games, schools
20 weeks old and beyond	Continue to expose your puppy to new environments and situations and repeat old environments to help build confidence. Continue socialization to familiar dogs.

Socialization – A couple of things not to do

BluePath dogs are not allowed on **escalators**. Escalators can be dangerous and a handler must have all of his or her attention on the dog. As parents, there are just too many mitigating factors that can impede parents' ability to keep both child and dog safe. On a positive note, no matter where you are with your pup, there is always another, more appropriate option.

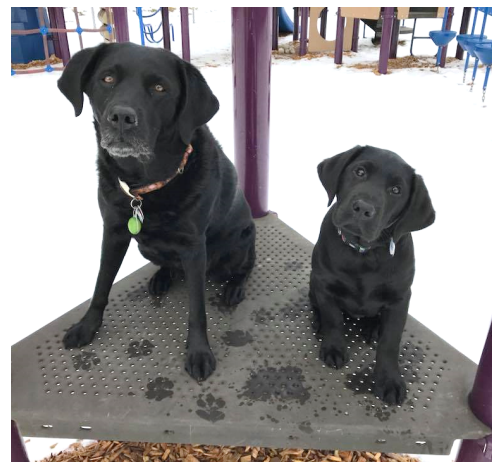
Do not take your puppy in to a **pet store that sells puppies**. Many of these puppies come from establishments that breed puppies at an intense and dangerous rate, often combined with inhumane conditions. Sadly, these dogs can carry a number of diseases that are contagious to your pup.

Socialization with other dogs

Socializing your puppy to other dogs is crucial so he does not become fearful of them as he gets older. We recommend you join a **puppy socialization or obedience class** in your area. These classes are an excellent way for your pup to socialize with all different breeds of dogs and very importantly, your pup will learn about social canine etiquette. The key is to be sure all the other dogs are friendly in the group. Watch carefully for signs that your pup is enjoying the class and that he does not get too close to another dog in class who is sending signals of fear or distress. Remember, it is always your job to keep your puppy safe.

BluePath puppies are not allowed in dog parks as they can be dangerous and unhealthy. However, there are many other ways to give your puppy play dates. You may have a friend with a social, friendly dog and a big fenced in backyard to play in. Regardless of the age difference, the dogs will figure out a way to play together that works for both.

Play sessions must be closely supervised; this keeps the play appropriate and ensures safety for all. These sessions can get loud and boisterous as dogs love to chase each other, roll each other and grab each other. However, this type of play can escalate quickly. Step in immediately if you see this escalation and stop all pups from play. This might mean removing one or more dogs from the enclosure so they can slow down mentally. If this happens to be your pup, try a couple of “sits” and “downs” when you are far enough away from the enclosure so your puppy's attention is back on you. Use treat rewards to cement the puppy's attention on you and to get his head back in the game.



It is also helpful to practice a “catch and release” during a play session, even if play isn't escalating. This teaches your puppy that just because there's a brief pause to connect with

you, the game hasn't ended. Call him or remove him from the group, have him practice a couple of position changes, and then let him return to his buddies.

If it is clear that your pup is no longer having fun or enjoying the play session, remove him immediately. It would be detrimental to his psyche to force him to continue.

Greeting Humans

Everywhere you go with your puppy, people will flock to you as there is nothing cuter than a pup in a service dog vest. Every time you head out public, you are a representative of BluePath. As your puppy ages, and you no longer have a squirming 10-week-old, it is important to teach your puppy appropriate human greetings. The puppy should be put in a sit position and stay in the sit position throughout the greeting. This should be practiced everywhere so "sit for greeting" becomes a good habit.

At times it is easier to put your puppy in a "down" position and bring your body down right next to him; it helps keep your puppy's energy and body down as well. As you speak with the public, talk calmly to your puppy, using phrases such as "Good down, good girl/boy, down" to remind your puppy to stay in the proper position. Keeping a finger or two in the collar will also help to ground the puppy. Calmly inform the public that if your pup can't remain in the proper position, you will ask them to stop petting him until he is back in the proper position and only at that time, may they resume petting him.

If your pup just can't seem to settle himself in this instance, just explain that he is over-stimulated and that it is time for him to go home. There will always be times when you are trying to get a tired, hungry puppy home and just one more person wants to say hello. Remember, your puppy cannot tell the public that he has had enough but you can. Thank them for their interest and hand them a business card if you have one readily available. Suggest they get on the BluePath website so they can learn about these amazing pups and what their future holds.

It is of paramount importance that your puppy does not lunge or jump on the public. If this occurs, remove him from the situation. If the behavior starts to become a pattern, refrain from allowing him to greet the public until the behavior issue is resolved. As with any area you feel you and your puppy are struggling, please call BluePath staff for immediate assistance.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides service dogs and their handlers access to any place in which the public is allowed. This includes restaurants, malls, trains, taxi cabs, etc. While the same laws apply for professional service dog trainers, rules vary from state to state

with regard to volunteer puppy raisers. In New York State, puppy raisers are not given the same public access rights as service dog handlers.

Many businesses will be happy for you to bring your well-mannered puppy inside. Calling ahead is often helpful to make sure you don't arrive somewhere and be unexpectedly asked to leave. If you are ever asked to exit a public place with your BluePath puppy, calmly explain that he is a service dog in training. If the person is still unhappy with your presence, we ask that you leave quietly and find another location to visit.

Note that many important socialization experiences can be accomplished outside of a business establishment. Your pup will have plenty to observe from a bench outside of a supermarket or at any outdoor shopping facility.

Chapter 7: Health and Veterinary Care

**If you need emergency advice, please call us immediately, anytime:
845-377-0477.**

When you first get your BluePath puppy, you will receive a vaccination schedule. Puppies all require a series of vaccinations to build immunity against the most common infectious diseases. Some of these diseases can be very dangerous to young puppies, so it is important to prevent your puppy from interacting with other dogs who you do not know personally and whose vaccination status you are not aware of. Most puppies will have a series of three to four visits for your veterinarian to administer the vaccines, with the last visit occurring around 14 to 15 weeks of age. Once the last vaccine is received, you can allow your puppy to freely socialize with other dogs whom you know, as long as the interactions are closely monitored.

Starting at nine weeks of age, all BluePath puppies will begin taking a preventative for Heartworm disease as well as a preventative for fleas and ticks. We will supply you with the preventatives, which are given once a month on the first of every month. Each product comes in different sizes based upon your puppy's weight. In your puppy packet, you will have doses for the first two months. You will then need to notify us of your dog's weight so that we can ship you the appropriate size preventative for your dog. Please make sure you provide advanced notice so we can keep your pup on the right schedule.

Note: With the exception of an immediate medical emergency, please call or email us to discuss care before making an appointment with your local veterinarian.

BluePath puppies come from special lines of purebred Labrador and Golden retrievers. Parents, grandparents and great-grandparents are screened for the genes that cause some of the illnesses known to strike these breeds. However, it is not unusual for minor ailments to occur during puppyhood, just like in human toddlers. The following are the most common illnesses that puppies can suffer from:

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is the most common puppyhood issue reported by raisers. Almost all puppies will experience diarrhea at some time. The reason is two-fold. As puppies transition to new diets, the bacteria that live in their intestinal tracts changes to adapt to the change in food ingredients. During this adjustment period, diarrhea can be common. Also, and even more commonly, puppies often pick up items and ingest pieces of them before you can react. Twigs, leaves, grass, mulch, pebbles and so on are some of the most common items puppies will chew

and possibly swallow. Monitor your puppy very closely when outdoors and remove any items from their mouths before they can swallow it.

Despite your careful observation, some of these objects will be swallowed and cause irritation to the stomach and intestines, causing diarrhea (or vomiting). Thankfully, this “oral phase” of puppy growth will end, in most cases by about six months of age. Until that time, it is not uncommon that you will see periods of normal stool followed by periods of diarrhea.

Treatment protocol for diarrhea

First and foremost, do not panic! If your puppy is alert and active, this is not an emergency. The consistency of the stool can be any of the following:

- Normal - firm, formed and well defined
- Soft formed - formed but less defined and more soft in composition
- Pudding - unformed and the consistency of pudding
- Liquid - watery consistency that has no form at all, may be accompanied by some red blood streaks
- Mucous may sometimes also be present in any of these types of stool.

It is not uncommon to see streaks of blood in the stool of puppies and dogs that have diarrhea. As long as the blood is not excessive, there is no additional concern. However, if all you see is bloody liquid, then an immediate call to us or your local veterinarian is recommended. You should also call us for advice if your puppy has diarrhea coupled with lethargy. Our number is 845-377-0477.

Next steps

- Normal - Feed normally
- Soft formed - Feed normally
- Pudding - Feed normally and monitor for 24 hours
- Liquid - Skip the following meal to allow the puppy's digestive system to recover, but make sure water is available at all times. After skipping a meal, feed ½ the amount at the next meal before returning to the regular feeding schedule. If things do not improve, you can feed your puppy a bland diet of BOILED chicken and rice until the stools improve, then slowly transition back to dog food by mixing the bland diet half-and-half with dog food for two to three days. If diarrhea persists for more than two days, or if the diarrhea is coupled with vomiting, lethargy or a fever, please call us at 845-377-0477.

Vomiting

Vomiting in younger dogs and puppies is also often related to ingesting items that are not intended to be eaten, such as twigs, leaves, mulch, pieces of a chewed dog toy, etc. Vomiting that occurs at a few weeks of age is generally more concerning than when it occurs in an adult

dog. Most vomiting is short-lived, meaning that it happens once or twice, or lasts for three to four hours. For young puppies between eight and 20 weeks of age, dehydration is a concern. Vomiting at any age that lasts for three to four hours or more is often accompanied by lethargy. Also note that depending on the cause of the vomiting, it is common for diarrhea to develop within 12 hours of the last vomiting episode.

Treatment protocol for vomiting

- For dogs five months and older that vomit once or twice within a half hour:
 - If your dog vomited once or twice within a half hour and then no further vomiting occurred and they are active, SKIP the next meal (but continue to allow water free-choice) and resume normal feeding at the following normal meal time. For example, if your dog vomits once or twice at 2 PM, skip dinner that night and resume normal feeding at breakfast the next morning.
- For dogs five months and older that vomit intermittently for three to five hours:
 - Withhold all food and water while the dog is still vomiting. The stomach needs to remain empty.
 - Once there is no further vomiting for at least three hours, you can begin to offer water in ½ cup increments every hour as long as vomiting does not resume. Do not be concerned if your dog does not want to drink at this point. Never offer a large bowl of water within six hours of the end of active vomiting; some dogs will gulp all of the water and vomit it back up. Continue to offer small quantities frequently to rehydrate for the first 12 hours.
 - Food should not be resumed until at least 12 hours or more after vomiting ceases and the dog is rehydrated. To resume feeding, start with ¼ to ½ cup of a bland diet every three to four hours. Do not start immediately on regular dog food. Bland diets can be purchased in kibble or canned form from a local veterinarian or you can home-cook a bland diet. (See below.)
 - Continue to feed small quantities of the bland diet for the first 12 to 24 hours after vomiting has ceased. If there is no further vomiting by 24 hours, you can increase the quantity of the bland diet to ½ to 1 cup twice a day for the next 24 hours, and then begin to transition back to regular dog food by mixing the bland diet with your dog food half and half in the bowl for a day or two.
- For puppies eight to 20 weeks of age that vomit once or twice within an hour and are active:
 - Withhold all food and water while the puppy is still vomiting; the stomach needs to remain empty.
 - Once there is no further vomiting for at least two hours, you can begin to offer water in ½ cup increments every hour as long as vomiting does not resume. Continue to offer small quantities frequently to rehydrate for the first four hours, then resume free choice water.

- Once there is no further vomiting for four hours and the puppy is rehydrated, offer a small amount of food (generally half of a normal feeding amount) every four hours for the day, then resume normal feeding the next day.
- For puppies eight to 20 weeks of age that vomit for more than two hours, please call us 845-377-0477 for advice.

Home-cooked bland diet

The home-cooked bland diet is used when there is stomach upset leading to vomiting and/or diarrhea. Bland diets are low in fat and low in fiber, making them easy to digest and less irritating to the already inflamed lining of the stomach or intestines. Bland diets also cause less stool to be produced, allowing the intestines to recover from the inflammation.

To prepare a home-cooked bland diet, you can choose one protein source and one carbohydrate source. All ingredients must be BOILED. Boiling cooks the meat and any fat in the meat floats on the surface of the water and can be drained away. We recommend using either lean ground beef or a boneless chicken breast boiled until well cooked (draining the water and fat away) and boiled white rice or boiled peeled potatoes. You may mix one meat with one carbohydrate (chicken and rice, for instance).

While these diets are not balanced nutritionally, they work well for periods of a few days with no ill effect. While eating a bland diet, your dog should not receive any additional food items - no dog food, treats or snacks. Typically, you should expect the diarrhea to subside within 48 hours. You may then see a short period of a day or so with little or no stool production. (This is not constipation.) This will be followed by a gradual return to normal soft formed stool. Once there is normal stool for at least 24 hours, you can then begin to mix dog food in with the bland diet, half and half, for two to three days before returning completely to dog food.

Since some dogs may need to remain on a bland diet for a few days, it is acceptable to boil a larger amount of the food at one time and refrigerate it for use over three to four days. Warm it in the microwave with a little water added before feeding, but make sure it is not too hot. Dispose of any remainder after four days.

As an alternative, a commercial prescription bland diet can be purchased from your local veterinarian.

Ear and skin issues

Ear problems can be common in the Labrador and Golden retriever breeds. This can be partly due to the floppy ears that prevent air circulation in the ear canals. Getting water in the ears during swimming can also lead to an ear infection. Genetics may play a role, too.

Ear infections that occur once a year are often no great concern and can be easily treated by a veterinarian. For dogs that have multiple infections (two or more a year), allergies are often the cause. Occasionally, other areas of skin are affected, leading to pimples, rashes and itchiness.

For dogs with infrequent ear problems, cleaning of the ears is not recommended as it changes the normal levels of bacteria and yeast in the ear canal. For dogs with frequent ear problems, veterinarians may prescribe occasional cleaning of the ears.

For your BluePath dog, we recommend a weekly check of your dog's ears for odor, abnormal redness, or heavy brown or black debris, coupled with head shaking and scratching at the ears. If you notice any of these signs, call us for advice.

For skin issues, including pimples, red patches, lumps, scabs, bald patches, hot spots and so on, take a clear picture with your cell phone camera, close enough so that we can see the spots you are referring too, and e-mail them to us at info@bluepathservedogs.org so that we can call you to discuss a treatment plan.



Home veterinary kit

We recommend that you keep a home veterinary kit as having these supplies on hand may help you in an emergency situation. The following items are recommended:

- Scissors
- A roll of gauze
- Gauze pads
- White adhesive tape
- Hydrogen peroxide
- A large (20 ml or larger) dose syringe for administering Hydrogen Peroxide, only if advised by a veterinarian

- A digital rectal thermometer. Normal canine temperature is 100.5 F to 102.5 F
- K-Y jelly or Vaseline (to lubricate rectal thermometer)
- A flashlight (for checking ears and eyes)
- Styptic powder (Kwik-Stop, a veterinary product)

The following items require approval from our veterinarian to use, but are good to have on hand:

- Benadryl (Diphenhydramine) tablets/capsules, 25 or 50 mg (for allergic reactions)
- Neosporin Ointment (for wounds)

The following items are NEVER recommended for use with your dog

- Ibuprofen (Advil), aspirin, Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or other human medications
- Home, Homeopathic or other alternative remedies

Note: With the exception of an immediate medical emergency, please call or email us to discuss care before making an appointment with your local veterinarian.

Chapter 8: After Puppy Raising

Transitions

BluePath dogs begin formal training with a professional instructor between 14 and 18 months of age. You will be notified of your dog entering formal training approximately two months prior, and we'll begin to make plans for an exact date for pickup or drop-off.

We'll check in with you during those first couple of weeks to let you know how your dog is doing. Your dog will ultimately be placed in a volunteer foster home near our headquarters in Hopewell Junction, NY. Once the dog has settled into the home and we feel confident of the placement's success, we'll share contact information so you can connect with your dog's foster family.

We encourage you to connect with your foster several times while your dog lives in their home. While some relationships may naturally deepen and invite additional connections, we ask that you remain mindful of your foster's time. Please contact BluePath if you're interested in visiting with your dog while he or she is formal training.

You'll receive training reports via email every two months around the first of the month. Note that the first one may be a little sooner or later depending on when your dog arrived for training. The reports will provide a summary of your dog's current status, including any challenging behaviors or areas of excellence.

Formal Training

Our dogs train in schools, restaurants, malls, department stores, bike paths, ball fields, or play grounds, to name a few. Your dog will learn to "anchor" to stop a child from bolting or wandering away. He'll also learn other skills such as "visit," a form of deep pressure therapy in which a dog applies pressure to a child's lap or leg with his muzzle. This pressure can stave off a meltdown or calm a child who is feeling anxious.

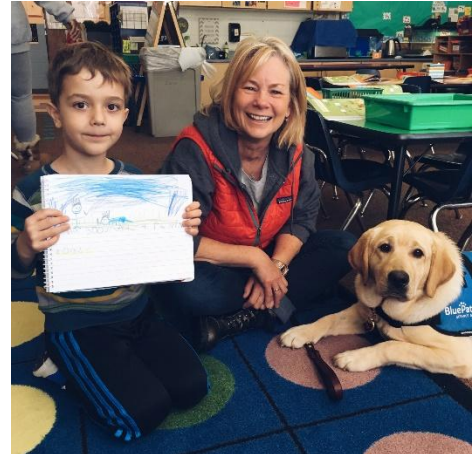
The dogs begin their formal training cementing basic obedience skills in all different types of environments. Obedience training is started in low distraction areas and once the dog proves reliable to the cues, we change the environments and increase the distraction level.

It is using this type of training model that we begin to practice working in public (access) areas. Initially, the work outs are short. We will visit a store at a quieter time of day or enter a building that has low traffic flow. These trips are designed to instill confidence in the dog and not to overwhelm him. As the dog's confidence increases and his work gets more polished, the dog's time working out in public increases.

Once the dog shows a reliable work pattern out in public environments, we begin working the dog in a team of three. The dog will have a handler (the person holding the leash who retains control of the dog) and another person, often a child, who will hold the handle on the dog's vest. The dog learns to continue taking cues from the handler but feels the pressure and inconsistent movements of the child. As the dog becomes more comfortable working in a team of three, the distractions, public outings, and work out time increases.

All of our training is dependent upon the dog's skills, temperament and confidence. We cater our training to each individual's specific needs, advancing only when the dog is ready for the next training challenge. This means that some dogs will stay in formal training longer than others.

As the dog continues to move forward in his training, he will begin to work with children in schools. Over time, the dog will begin to work with children specifically on the autism spectrum. These kids play an important role; they are young trainers, helping to prepare our dogs for other children.



Graduation

After many months of hard work, your dog will be matched and placed with a child with autism. The parent(s) will stay in a local hotel for five days and four nights while they learn to work with the dog.

You will be invited to join us at a graduation luncheon in the Hopewell Junction area towards the end of the week. Your dog's volunteer foster is also invited, as well as BluePath staff, donors and other volunteers. It is a beautiful and emotional time for everyone, with lifelong friendships often created through shared love of a dog.

You'll have the opportunity to exchange contact info at the luncheon. The "Path" in our name refers to the intrinsic connections we form with people as a result of our attachments to these beautiful dogs.

Remember that our commitment to your dog is forever; we will remain connected to each of these families throughout the lifetime of the dogs – and often far beyond. Most BluePath service dogs retire with the families they've been placed with. If we ever need to rehome your dog for any reason, you will be notified immediately and if appropriate, offered the opportunity to adopt the dog.

Watching your puppy graduate as a service dog is a tremendously rewarding experience. Because of you, a family now has the ability to keep their child safe, and a way to allow him or her to connect with the world. You have made a priceless contribution to our organization and to this family, and we are infinitely grateful.

Appendices

Appendix 1.1: BluePath Commands

Back

This command tells the dog to back up. To begin teaching back, have your puppy positioned in front of you and simply step towards him into his space. He will likely back up to move out of your way. When he does, say “back” and reward him with verbal praise and a treat.

If you want the puppy to back up straight, you can practice this initially inside a chute that you can create with two rows of chairs, the wall and another object, the space between your coffee table and couch, etc.

Break

This command tells your puppy that he is free from the last position cued. This includes releasing your puppy to eat his food, exiting a vehicle, or releasing them from the other commands included in this list.

Close

This command tells the puppy to move into a sit position in between the handler’s legs, head facing out. This is done when the handler is sitting in a chair.

Using a food lure, guide your puppy into the space between your legs until his head is facing out. Once in position, lure your puppy into a sitting position and say “close.” Give your puppy the treat with lots of praise before releasing them with “break.”

Down

Down tells your puppy to lay his body on the ground. Take a piece of food and hold it right at the puppy’s nose. Move the treat down towards the ground and in between your puppy’s front feet, luring the puppy into the down. As soon as the puppy lays down, say “down,” give verbal praise, and give a food reward.

It may take the puppy some time to understand how to get the treat; be patient and let him figure it out. Refrain from repeating the command “down” as you wait for the puppy to figure it out. Be sure to release the puppy with “break” before he gets up on his own.



If the puppy is struggling with figuring out down, you can utilize the “under the leg” method to help him out. Sit on the floor with one leg outstretched and lure your puppy under your leg. The light pressure from your leg should help guide the puppy into the down position, at which time you can praise and reward him. After many repetitions of luring your puppy, you will be able to prompt your puppy with the verbal command of “down” and then reward after he performs the behavior.

Dress

Dress tells the puppy to put his head through a collar or jacket. Take a piece of food and put the hand holding the treat through the item you want your puppy to put his head through. Hold the treat up to your puppy’s nose and slowly lure his head through the collar or jacket, saying “dress” as his head goes through the object.

Praise the puppy and give the food reward. After many successful repetitions of this, you can begin holding the collar or jacket in front of your dog and give the command “dress” – your puppy should put his head through the object, at which time you can verbally praise your puppy and give him a food reward.

Drop

This command tells the puppy to drop whatever he has in his mouth. When your puppy has an item in his mouth, hold a treat up to their nose as you say, “drop it.” When the puppy complies, give him the food treat, along with lots of praise as you remove the item from the puppy’s reach.

When initially teaching “drop” to your puppy, it is helpful to practice with items that your puppy can have back, such as toys, as this makes it a win-win situation for your puppy – he gets the delicious treat for dropping the item and he can have the item back. If you only practice “drop it” with items you must take away from the puppy, he may be less willing to comply. After many successful repetitions of practicing “drop it” with the food lure, you should be able to stop using the lure and simply prompt the puppy with the command.

Get Busy

This command tells the puppy to make an effort at toileting. To teach, “get busy,” stand still in one location allowing your puppy the full length of his leash to sniff around. When the puppy starts going to the bathroom, quietly say “get busy” followed by praise.

Keep the command and praise relatively quiet as you do not want to startle and distract the puppy from the task at hand. Give your puppy a few more minutes to make sure he is finished and be sure to clean up after your puppy if needed.

Once your puppy begins to understand the command, you can prompt him with “get busy” once you arrive at the toileting area, rather than waiting until the puppy begins to eliminate.

Heel

This command tells the puppy to sit at your left side. Heel for BluePath dogs is a stationary command. To achieve this position, start with the puppy facing you. The leash should be in your right hand and a treat must be in your left hand. Lure the puppy straight back toward your left side and slightly behind you. Once most of his body is behind you, move the lure in a half circle motion so that the puppy’s head turns towards the handler’s left leg.

The puppy will do a 180 degree turn so that he is now facing the same direction as the handler. Once the puppy’s head reaches the knee of the handler, the puppy should come to a sit position and receive the treat. Regardless of where the puppy is standing in relation to the handler when the cue is given, the puppy must always move into the heel position by staying in front of the handler and never going behind the handler to complete the task.

Once puppy has learned “heel,” the handler can remove the food lure and keep the leash in both hands. The 18 inches of leash in the handler’s left hand will serve as a guide so that puppy can accomplish the task correctly.

When heel can be accomplished with only a verbal cue by the handler, the puppy will hear the cue and move quickly and easily in to the correct position.

Here

This command tells the puppy to come swiftly to you. When initially teaching this command, begin in a quiet, low distraction environment as this will help increase the odds that your puppy comes to you. Having your puppy on leash also helps the puppy be successful as he will not be able to run off in the opposite direction.

Take a few steps backwards as you say the puppy’s name, followed by the command “here!” Be sure to use a happy, upbeat tone of voice as we want the puppy to understand that coming to you is a good thing. Praise the puppy as he runs towards you and reward him with treats. It is a good idea to practice reaching for your puppy’s collar as he gets within arm’s reach of you; this will help your puppy get comfortable with being reached for and also ensure that the puppy remains with you until you release him with “break.” After many successful repetitions, you can begin to increase your distance from the puppy when you call and begin to add in distractions.

If you are practicing in a location other than inside your home or a fenced area, you can utilize your long leash. Never drop your puppy’s leash to practice a recall in public.

Hup

This command tells the puppy to jump up on to a raised object. Be sure this is a goal they can easily attain. These objects can be found indoors or outdoors such as the exam table in a vet hospital, a low grooming table, or even a log or a small stonewall. Hold a treat in your hand and tap the surface you want the puppy to jump upon to make sure the puppy sees the treat. As the puppy jumps up and on for the treat, use a happy high pitched voice and say "hup." Feed the puppy the food reward immediately while you gently praise him.

Kennel

This command tells the puppy to go into the crate. Take several treats and show them to your puppy. Toss the treats into the kennel and as the puppy enters the kennel, say, "kennel" and shut the door behind the puppy.

The puppy can be released from the kennel using the "break" command. After many successful repetitions of being lured into the kennel, you will be able to simply give the command and the puppy enters the kennel.

Let's Go

This command tells the puppy to walk casually next to you. Begin by getting your puppy's attention with name response and follow that with an upbeat "let's go." When the puppy begins walking with you, be sure to praise him and reward him with several treats. If your puppy gets distracted, simply say their name followed by "let's go" and move in the opposite direction, praising and rewarding your puppy for catching up and remaining by your side.

Load Up

This is the command to use when telling your puppy to get into the car, whether he is getting into the passenger footwell or into a crate. Tap the area you want your dog to jump into as you say, "load up!" Once he jumps into the car or crate in your car, you can praise generously and give a food reward.

Name Response

The puppy's name is used to get his attention. You may need to get your pup's attention before giving him a command or when he's distracted. You can begin building solid name response by simply calling your puppy's name and praising him and giving treats when he looks at you.

Off

Off is used for getting the pup off of people and furniture and any other object he should not be on. If the puppy continually attempts to jump up on something, like the kitchen counter, attach a leash to his collar and watch him closely. When it is obvious he is going to attempt to put his front feet on the counter, step on the leash. Be sure you step on the leash where it

touches the floor. If the pup attempts to jump, he will correct himself as the leash is not long enough for him to reach the counter top. Do not say anything to him.

When he stops trying to jump, tell him to sit and when he complies, quietly praise him for sitting. Continue moving about the kitchen but keep the leash attached to puppy's collar and keep your eye on him, in case he tries again.

Place

Place tells your puppy to go to a bed or mat and lay down. The first step in teaching place is to get the puppy to go to the mat and lay down. (It is helpful if your puppy understands 'down' before teaching them place.)

To begin, place several treats on the mat and hold your puppy by the collar away from the mat. He should be pulling against the collar to get to the mat. As you let go, say, "go place" and praise while the pup eats the treats on the mat. As he finishes up the treats, use a treat to lure into the down position. Repeat the command "go place" so he begins to understand that the command means both go to the mat AND lay down. Be sure to release the puppy with "break" before he gets up on his own.

When your puppy develops a clear understanding of the command, you can remove the food lures (on the mat and in your hand) and simply ask him to "go place." Slowly build duration, or how long he can hold the command, by periodically praising for remaining on the place and effectively using your release word. You can also encourage a puppy to remain on his place by giving him a food stuffed bone or toy to enjoy while he lays on the mat.

Quiet

It is important that your puppy learns to be quiet in his crate. If he suddenly starts whining or barking in his crate, be sure that all his needs have been met, as barking is often caused by a pup that's bored or has a full bladder. If this is a new behavior for your puppy, figure out what need of his is being met when he barks and be sure you remove that motivator.

The next step can be difficult but important - you must ignore the barking. When he finally quiets, even for a moment, reward him with a treat through the crate bars. You must teach him that being quiet gets him the reward - not the barking. Give treats at variable times - five seconds, 20 seconds, 12 seconds, etc., as you slowly build in duration. Calmly tell him "good quiet" as you distribute the treats through the openings in the crate.

Sit

Sit tells your puppy to put his behind on the ground. Take a piece of food and hold it right at the puppy's nose. Move the treat back and above the puppy's head; gravity will take over and as the puppy's head goes up, his behind will go down.

As soon as the puppy's behind hits the ground, say "sit," give verbal praise, and give a food reward. Be sure to release the puppy with "break" before he gets up on his own. After many repetitions of luring your puppy, you will be able to prompt your puppy with the verbal command of "sit" and then reward after he performs the behavior.

Stand

This command tells your puppy to stand on all four feet. Take a piece of food and hold it right at the puppy's nose. Your puppy needs to begin in a position other than standing. Move your luring hand away from your puppy's nose in a horizontal direction. This should cause your puppy to stand up, at which time you say "stand," give the puppy the treat and praise him. Be sure to end the behavior with the release command of "break."

Stay

Stay tells the puppy to stay in the last position cued by the handler. Stay is most often used with your dog in the sit or down position so it is helpful for your puppy to understand these commands before teaching stay.

Begin with your puppy in a sit or down position. Tell them to "stay" and take a quick step away from them and back again before they get up. Praise and reward for holding the position and release with "break." If the puppy gets out of position before you return to him, try again but take a smaller step away. After many repetitions like this, you will be able to gradually increase the distance you move away from your puppy after telling them "stay."



Wait

This command tells the puppy to remain in the last position cued and not to cross a threshold or barrier until told otherwise. With your puppy on leash, approach a doorway but do not allow your puppy to go through. You can use the leash to prevent them from going through or use your body to block the doorway. When your puppy stops persisting through the doorway, say "wait" and give him praise and food rewards. Be sure to cue your puppy with "let's go" to invite him through the doorway when you are ready.

Appendix 1.2: Shopping list - quick view

- Food
- Two x two quart size stainless steel bowls
- Dog food - a quality dog food suitable for the breed of your puppy. E.g. Iams, Purina, Royal Canin, etc.
- Nature's Miracle enzyme cleaner: removes the smell of urine
- Leashes
 - You will be supplied with a puppy leash.
 - An additional 4 - 6ft leash is required; we recommend leather.
 - 10 - 20ft long line.
- Crate pad: 36" inches in length.
- Additional crate: OPTIONAL. One 36" crate will be provided by BluePath
- Zoom Groom
- Toothbrush and doggy toothpaste
- Toys from these manufacturers: Kong, Nylabone, Kyjen, Busy Buddy, Chuckit, Jolly Pet, JW Pet, Outward Hound, Petstages, Planet Dog, Tuffy's, and West Paw
- Baby gate to place in doorways
- Home vet kit supplies (please see Health and Veterinary Care section)

Appendix 1.3: Miscellaneous puppy raising rules

- BluePath puppies are allowed on furniture via invite only.
- The puppy jacket should come off for toileting.
- Four on the floor when greeting people, always.
- No human food, ever, with the "exception" of the bland diet for managing basic ailments.
- No food from the table.
- No food from the floor, outside of teaching "go kennel" and "go place."
- BluePath puppies may only be off leash in safe, fenced-in areas. Absolutely no dog parks.

Coming soon:

- A deep dive into house manners
- Exercise
- Nail trimming
- Food Reward
- Teaching collar pressure