



TOPLINES

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Editor: Susan Quinn, 48226 Revere Drive, Macomb, MI 48044

Email: quinndixie@gmail.com, Ph. (586) 532-0725

Officers 2021

President: Sue Quinn
Vice Pres.: Beth Santure
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How to Socialize Your Puppy During Times of Social Distancing

By [Yasmine Ali, M.D.](#), April 1, 2020, akc.org

Puppies have a short time window for optimal socialization, and that requires exposure to multiple different surfaces, people of all backgrounds, and various new situations. But what about the puppies who happen to be within that window now, during this time of necessary social distancing due to COVID-19? How can they be socialized so they can grow to be confident and happy dogs for the rest of their lives?

Inside this issue:

Cover Story	pg 1
Next Meeting Info	pg 2
2021 Calendar & Club News	pg 3
Performance Corner	pg 5
Show Calendar	pg 6

The Goals of Socialization

First, it's important to keep in mind the goals of puppy socialization. Paul Owens, professional dog trainer and bestselling author of *The Dog Whisperer* books, points out that "socialization does not mean putting a dog in a new situation and seeing what happens. Socialization means introducing new situations and making them safe, positive, confidence-building experiences."

Certified dog trainer and CGC evaluator Jacqui Foster, CPDT-KA, agrees: "As one of my mentors says, 'Absence of one bad experience far outweighs 100 good experiences!'" She adds that each puppy learns differently, so "work with the dog in front of you ... I tend to lean more towards developing self-confidence in the puppy, rather than flooding the dog with loads of people, noises, and experiences."

The Most Important Exposures for Your Puppy

There are certain new situations to which all puppies should be exposed if possible, preferably during the first 16 weeks of life, and the good news is that most of these can be accomplished in and around your own home. Each positive experience builds your puppy's self-confidence. These exposures include:

- Different surfaces: grass, leaves, concrete, gravel, linoleum, carpet, wood, sand, etc. Different sounds: think of all the everyday sounds around your home, including hairdryers, phone ringtones, radios, vacuum cleaners, and more. There are even recordings of sounds like thunder and other dogs barking that you can download for your puppy to hear. Be sure to make each noise exposure a positive experience by acting happy around the sound and associating the sound with yummy treats, and watch your puppy for any signs of stress.



Continued page 4

Miniature Schnauzer Club of Michigan

General Meeting

Sunday, March 14, 2021

at

Ann Arbor Dog Training
Club

1575 E. North Territorial
Road

Whitmore Lake, MI 48189



Bring your own chair, so
you're not sitting like this.

Our rental of Room 1 starts at 1 pm, meeting will start promptly at 1:30 pm. Please bring your own chair & mask.

Dogs are welcome. Conformation practice will be after the meeting. Along with dog/people socializing.

There will be no food/potluck. We will be following AADTC Covid protocols (wearing a mask in the building & any other requirements of AADTC.)

Please RSVP to Beth Santure at bsanture@gmail.com.

CLUB NEWS:



- The Miniature Schnauzer Club of Michigan donated to the American Miniature Schnauzer Club Trophy Fund. Our donation will help fund the trophies at the national specialties.
- The MSCM also renewed our club membership in the Michigan Association of Purebred Dogs. Please consider an individual membership in this organization, as they help protect the rights of all dog owners in Michigan. More information can be found at <http://www.mapbd.org/>.

AKC has expanded the Virtual Rally program to include Advanced & Excellent levels. AKC has also started a Virtual Obedience program. Visit AKC.org for more information.



2021 Calendar of Important Events

March 14-

Ann Arbor Dog Training Club, Whitmore Lake, MI

April 10-

MSCM Dinner Meeting, Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth, MI

June 12-

MSCM Meeting at Beth Santure's Milan, MI

July 30-Aug. 1-

MSCM Agility Trial, All Dogs Can, 2040 N. Lapeer Road, Lapeer, MI 48446

August 14-

MSCM Meeting at Joanne Forster's, Elkton, MI

September 25-

MSCM Specialty, Monroe County Fairgrounds, Monroe, MI

October 23-

Location TBD

December 11-

MSCM Meeting/Christmas Party, East Lansing, MI

The objective of the Miniature Schnauzer Club of Michigan is to advance the principals and scientific practices in the breeding of purebred Miniature Schnauzers; foster co-operation between breeder, owner, and veterinarian; encourage the exchange of information and experience among the club members and between show-giving clubs; to conduct sanctioned and licensed specialty shows and matches; and to encourage the adherence to the high standards of conduct and to the rules and regulations of the American Kennel Club.

We're on the Web!

www.miniatureschnauzerclubofmichigan.org

Continued from page 1—How to Socialize Your Puppy During Times of Social Distancing

- **Other dogs:** this can be done if you have other dogs in the neighborhood you know and trust to be safe and well-mannered with your puppy. It will be important for you to know the other dogs' owners as well; the best-case scenario would be to have a trusted, healthy friend who is also a dog owner, as you could then arrange safe play dates with the other dog while maintaining a safe distance from the other owner (more on this below).
- **Other people:** this may be the most difficult of all at this time, but there are still ways to achieve this exposure for your puppy. Certainly have your puppy socialize with all the members of your household who are healthy. You can also let your puppy look out the window of your home as other people go by, and let your puppy see you act happy about those people. Also, consider all that your puppy can see and hear from the safety of your own car.

Safe Puppy Play Dates and Walks

Your first worry may be that your puppy can pick up or spread COVID-19 to you or other humans. However, statements from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) have all emphasized that, based on the available evidence, dogs cannot transmit COVID-19 to humans.

Kelly L. Moore, MD, MPH, is a medical epidemiologist and public health physician with expertise in pandemic planning and response; she trained at the CDC as an Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officer. She notes the importance of paying close attention while out on a walk so as to maintain your own six feet of space from the nearest human being—that's the length of a six-foot leash—and, above all, the vital importance of washing your hands for at least 20 seconds after every encounter.

Dr. Moore adds, "It's helpful to identify trusted friends that you know will tell you if they develop any symptoms of illness and that you can trust when they say they're feeling well, who can spend time with your puppy." She also notes that "being outside is a great thing for people to do. The outside is an open environment with air that's well-circulated; you're able to stay more than six feet apart, so that's a good environment for puppies to socialize in. I would have no issue with someone petting my puppy if they're also healthy and have no symptoms [as long as] when you come back in from your walking and socializing, you wash your hands thoroughly."

Crate Training Is Still Important

Even though you may currently be at home all day, your puppy still needs a structured schedule to reduce stress on everyone and to let the puppy know what is expected. Trainer and dog sports enthusiast Alexa Hagood, LVMT, states that this is a good opportunity to institute periods of "alone time," like crate and nap breaks, so the puppy doesn't develop separation anxiety when you do return to your place of work. Crate training can be an invaluable tool for your puppy at this time, just as with any other time.

As Hagood puts it, "Just because someone is home with the puppy, doesn't mean they need to be with the puppy 24/7. Crate breaks, even when brief, can help the puppy become acclimated to going in the crate and having some alone time, even when people are home." She recommends starting with feeding times inside the crate (for five to ten minutes), and when the owner needs to do daily chores.

Is This a Good Time to Get a Puppy?

While Dr. Moore acknowledges that puppies can be a wonderful source of joy and distraction during stressful times, Paul Owens suggests thinking hard and being extra prepared if this will be your first puppy. He notes that "all the things related to having a new puppy, like vet visits, grooming, and socialization, can be more of a challenge" at this time. He adds, "But the first thing I would suggest, if a dog does come into a home, is to contact a professional trainer."

Enlisting the help of a professional trainer can still be done during social distancing—you can do so over the phone or via online sessions, which many trainers are now offering. For example, AKC GoodDog! Helpline is live telephone service that connects you with a professional trainer. The trainer will offer virtual, individualized advice on everything from house-training to behavioral issues.



It's Time To Work Out!

I've always found winter a difficult time to keep up the dogs' fitness. The weather often prevents going for walks or playing games of ball or Frisbee outside. Here are some exercises designed to give your dog a total workout indoors. Of course, these excises can be used all year long to maintain the muscular and skeletal fitness required for safe participation in performance sports.

The goal is to try to do this workout three times a week. You can do fewer exercises in a session and do them everyday, whatever best suits your schedule. Please consult with a rehabilitation professional that knows your dog if you are unsure about the suitability of any of the exercises. The number of repetitions of each exercise are the desired end state. If your dog is not used to doing these, it's best to start with less and gradually work up to a full number of reps. Always be aware of your dog's level of fatigue which can show up as a change in speed or form, pausing after cued, offering the wrong behavior, etc.

1. Circles to the left and right

Turning in a tight circle not only engages the core, but warms up all four legs, stretches your dog's outer core muscles and maintains spine and neck flexibility. Correct form for this exercise: The dog's head should stay in a neutral position in natural alignment with the spine. The dog should circle as tight as their body allows, ideally with the nose touching the dog's flank. Speed does not matter as long as this form is maintained. Progress from level A to level C as appropriate for your dog.

A. Circles continuously on the flat. Start with 2 sets of 3 circles to the left and right. Progress to 4 sets of 6 reps in each direction.

B. Circles continuously, on a raised stable platform (square preferred, slightly larger than your dog's body length. Start with 2 sets of 3 circles to the left and right. Progress to 4 sets of 6 reps in each direction.

C. Circles continuously, on an unstable surface appropriate for your dog's size like a peanut or large wobble cushion. Start with 2 sets of 3 circles to the left and right. Progress to 4 sets of 6 reps in each direction.

2. Power up sit to stands for explosive jump strength

The power up sit to stand replicates the motion that your dog's body has to go through when jumping an agility jump. This fitness exercise is specific to produce power in jumping. Correct form for this exercise is for a square even sit, with rear feet under hips and pushing up into a stand with even weight and minimal movement of rear legs, and a strong topline with a natural head position in the stand.

A. Sitting on the floor, cue your dog to power up into a stand with minimal movement of his feet. Start with 2 sets of 4 reps. Progress to 3 sets of 10 reps.

B. Sitting on the floor, cue your dog to place his front feet onto a raised stable platform while powering up to a stand. Pause with rear feet on the floor, front feet on the raised platform. Start with 2 sets of 4 reps. Progress to 3 sets of 10 reps.

C. Sitting on an unstable item like a wobble cushion, cue your dog to place his front feet onto a second unstable item (around shoulder height for your dog) while powering up to a stand. Start with 2 sets of 4 reps. Progress to 3 sets of 10 reps.

3. Stand, balance and give a paw to the side.

Stability occurs when muscles perform isometric contraction, such as when maintaining balance on an unstable item. Combining a stand with equipment, and single paw lifts increases strength, stability, and challenges both the core and the front limbs. Correct form for this exercise is the dog standing on separate items for the front

and rear feet, placed in a position where they can stand with even weight on front and rear paws with a strong topline and natural head position. When in a stable stand dogs should be asked to give a single front paw up and out laterally. This will cause some shoulder rotation. Each paw should be held for a few seconds before moving back to a stand, pause, then work the other paw.

A. Stand on two stable platforms, giving each front paw alternatively. Start with 2 sets of 3 front paw lifts on each side. Progress to 4 sets of 6 reps of front paw lifts on each side.

B. Stand on one stable platform on the rear feet, and one level, unstable item like a wobble cushion, under the front paws, giving each front paw alternatively. Start with 2 sets of 3 front paw lifts on each side. Progress to 4 sets of 6 reps of front paw lifts on each side.

C. Stand on two unstable items like wobble cushions, FitBones or a single peanut, giving each front paw alternatively. Start with 2 sets of 3 front paw lifts on each side. Progress to 4 sets of 6 reps of front paw lifts on each side.

4. Cardio interval training.

Alternating sustained trotting with sprint work is specific to the demands on a competing agility dog, and will work both aerobic and anaerobic fitness. This exercise could occur in a wide range of different set ups from a treadmill to sending around cones, to a harness on a walk, to off lead walking.

A. Start with five minutes total interval training with 50 seconds trotting and 10 seconds sprinting. Progress to 10 minutes total interval training with 50 seconds trotting and 10 seconds sprinting.

B. Start with 10 minutes total interval training with one minute 30 seconds trotting and 30 seconds sprinting. Progress to 15 minutes total interval training with one minute 30 seconds trotting and 30 seconds sprinting.

C. Start with 15 minutes total interval training with two minutes trotting and 45 seconds sprinting. Progress to 20 minutes total interval training with two minutes trotting and 45 seconds sprinting.

Gear your fitness work to your dog's capability and enjoy watching him/her gain the stamina and strength needed for safe competition in performance sports.

SHOW CALENDAR

Breed Shows listed in AKC events,
as of 3/1/2021.

April 3 & 4 Willmington, OH	May 15 & 16 Tallmadge, OH
April 17 & 18 Crown Point, IN	May 21 Marietta, OH
April 23-25 Marion, OH	May 22 & 23 Greentown, IN
April 29-May 2 Chesaning, MI	May 28-31 Kalamazoo, MI
May 8 & 9 Lima, OH	

Agility 2021

Feb28-March 1
Sportsmen's DTC
Lapeer, MI
Closes 2-13

March 5-8
Oakland Cty KC
Lapeer, MI
Closes 2-19

March 12-15
Various Clubs
Midland, MI
Closes 2-27

March 19-22
Various Clubs
Midland, MI
Closes 3-5

March 27-29
Various Clubs
Wyoming, MI
Closes 3-13

April 3-4
Various Clubs
Midland
Closes 3-20

April 10-12
Siberian Husky
Lapeer, MI
Closes 3-27

April 24-26
AADTC
Whitmore Lake,
MI
Closes 4-10

MINIATURE SCHNAUZER CLUB OF MICHIGAN

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May-June

July-August

September-October

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Editor-Susan Quinn