

Dogs in Society Position Paper

Training and socialisation of dogs

ACAC believes that training and socialisation of dogs of all breeds is crucial to prevent behavioural problems in dogs and ensure that dogs live harmoniously with humans in urban environments. Dogs are pack animals by nature, and are inherently motivated to please their pack leader. Learning and responding to commands helps them to understand their place in the "family pack", and reinforces on the dog that the human owner is the pack leader.

A dog that has been taught to respond to simple commands will feel more secure and is more likely to become a well-adjusted and well-behaved family pet, both at home and in public places. Puppies should be taught basic manners and rules of the household as soon as they arrive in a new home. Importantly, dogs should be taught to socialise in a positive manner with a wide range of dogs and humans from an early age.

Many programs are available that emphasise dog training and socialisation techniques, are available in the community, including:

- Puppy Preschool - offered by many veterinary clinics to small groups of clients with new puppies, to improve socialisation of puppies and teach basic training methods;
- Training courses for pet dogs – programs that emphasise the skills needed for harmonious living with humans in urban environments;
- Dog Obedience Clubs – provide basic obedience classes and more advanced training for obedience trials and dog agility competitions, and
- Private dog trainers that teach basic obedience and/or specialise in behaviour modification techniques for problem dogs.