



A Guide to Boarding Dogs Safely in a Social Environment



The following ebook is the second installment of the socialization series from Pawderosa Ranch Doggie Play and Stay. If you haven't already read *How to Socialize Adult Dogs, Aggressive Dogs & Shy Dogs*, we highly recommend reading through it as it is an introductory level precursor to this ebook.

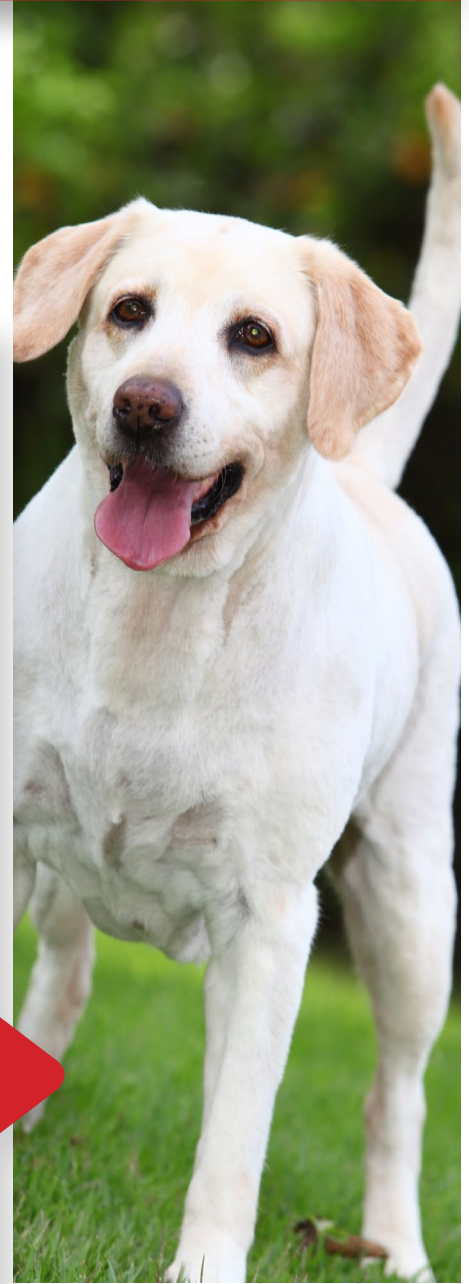
This ebook details the advantages of boarding in a social environment as well as some help from boarding professionals on how to choose the right kennels.

A Brief Introduction to Socialization

1

Socialization is an important part of happy dog's life. Dogs are social creatures much like humans, but like humans, they aren't born with the social skills to interact with others. Puppies are usually quick to master socialization in the first 3 months of life. This can only be accomplished, however, if the puppy is spending plenty of time with mild mannered, well socialized adult dogs. As they mature into adult dogs themselves, they master the fundamentals of social interaction with other animals through new experiences and positive reinforcement. The more you practice rewarding your dog for good social behavior as a puppy, the more socialized your dog will become in adulthood.

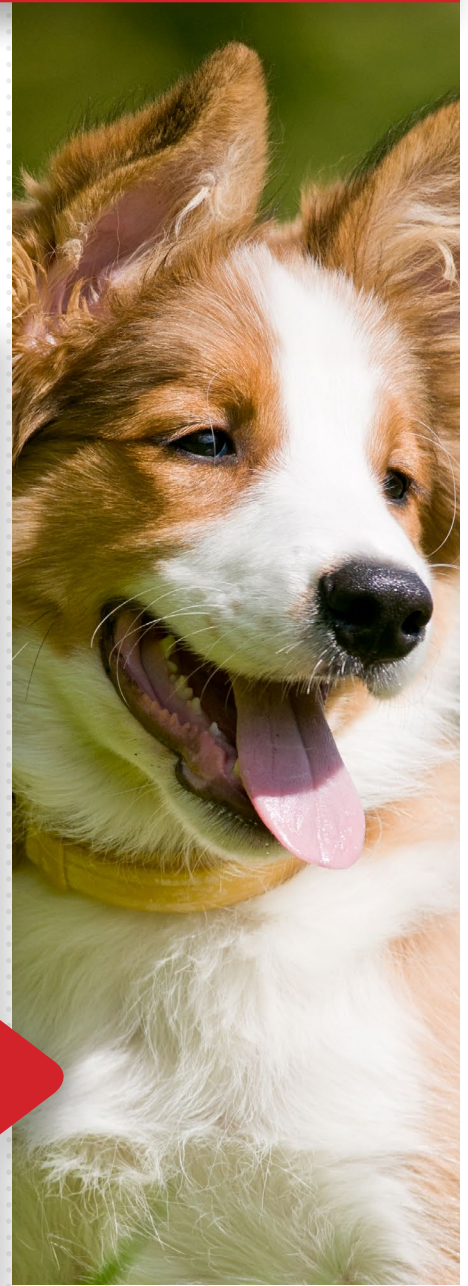
Keep in mind that not all dogs are as adept at socializing with other animals early on in life, but every dog has the ability to learn the fundamentals and hone their skills in time. Mastering socialization is not impossible with adult dogs, but will require more training and patience as adult dogs are less accepting of new experiences.



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Professional boarding is not only beneficial to your dog in terms of care received while away from home, but for practicing healthy social behavior in a new environment.

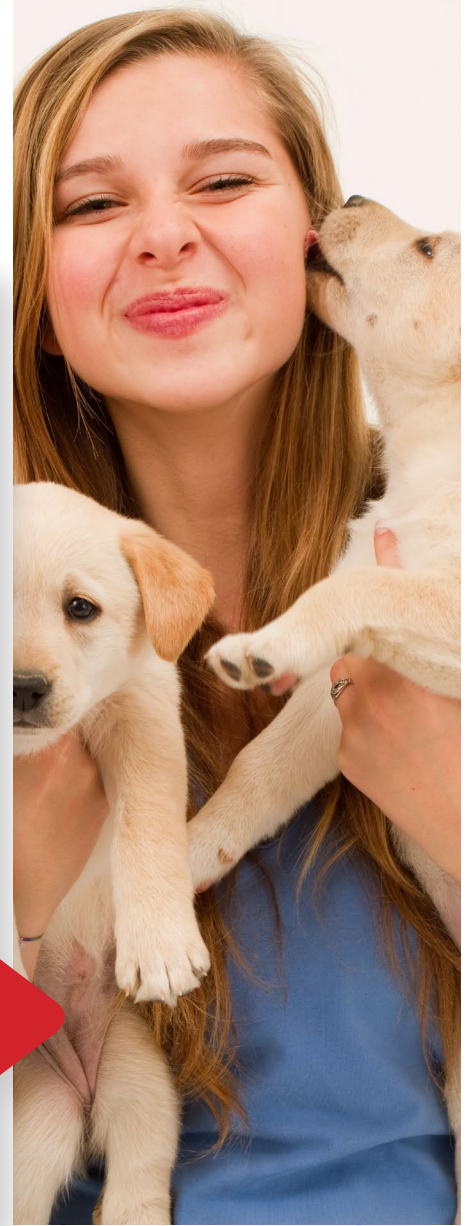
Most kennels offer a space for pets to interact and play while their owners are away. This interaction helps reduce anxiety and discomfort for dogs during their period of time away from home. It also promotes healthy social behavior in dogs, so that they're equipped to handle run-ins with other animals outside of the kennel. Boarding facilities with off-leash group play help give your dog the opportunity to socialize with other dogs in an unfamiliar setting, building their confidence and trust in other dogs. Two things are required in order for your boarding professionals to ensure your dog is comfortable in group settings away from home:



1. Animals must pass the temperament test.

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No matter where you take your dog to board, there should always be an initial screening process, especially in facilities with off-leash group play. Dogs have different personalities and can be unpredictable when introduced to new situations. Some owners may not know how their dog will react in a social environment, so it is important that boarding professionals determine if socialization is safe for your dog prior to registration. For kennels serious about off-leash group play, there should be a designated amount of time for your dog to receive a temperament test. The temperament test is designed to assess your dog's behavior around new people (trained staff members), and around other dogs. During the temperament test, professional dog boarders will introduce your dog to a series of scenarios around the grounds to determine where he/she fits in best. Behavioral cues will be examined closely by experienced dog behavior specialists and compared to standards that determine whether your dog passes or fails. The temperament test is an assessment, that will ensure the safety of your dog and other dogs during socialization, and help boarding professionals best cater to the individual needs of your dog. Extra care and considerations may be necessary for some dogs.



A Note About Registering Dogs at Pawderosa Ranch

We don't believe that there are such things as aggressive dog breeds. Every dog at the Ranch will undergo the individual temperament test to determine whether or not they are a fit. While we reserve the right to deny unsocial or aggressive dogs, we will provide service on a case-by-case basis. If the dog is not a threat to our staff and can be handled safely in the presence of other dogs, we will accept the dog for day or overnight boarding. Your dog will be exercised individually in a separate area depending on temperament.



2. Animals must be supervised by trained professionals at all times.

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Dogs that pass the temperament test are ready to play, but not without professional supervision. Professional boarding facilities take on a lot of doggie visitors, especially over the holidays. Staff members must accompany all registered dogs in order to facilitate their individual daily schedules. This includes:

- Playtime (promoting positive interaction with animals during off-leash group play sessions)
- Exercise (promoting healthy amounts of exercise and stimulation throughout the day)
- Nap time (ensuring all dogs get the proper amount of rest, and are comfortable above all in a temperature controlled environment)



If Your Dog is Shy Around Other Dogs

Owners bring their dogs to the Ranch for many different reasons. Some come because they have an only dog and want him to experience interaction with other dogs. Some come for the exercise, and others for socialization to help overcome separation anxiety. For those dogs that don't fit right in immediately due to fear or misunderstanding, we work with them to build confidence and trust in other dogs and people. We love seeing success stories and, though it takes time, we have seen quite a few!



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1. Sanitation Requirements

The interview process should include an opportunity for you to look at the grounds and make sure staff members implement routine sanitation measures. It's no surprise that mistakes happen when dogs are outside, but play areas should be cleaned regularly. Potty break areas should be easily distinguished from play areas. Sleeping quarters and feeding quarters should also be cleaned and sanitized regularly.

As a disease prevention measure in kennels, routine disinfecting should be taken very seriously. According to Pet MD, "Since 1978, there have been worldwide outbreaks of an intestinal disease called canine parvovirus. This disease is spread when dogs come into contact with a contaminated surface (clothing, shoes, grass, carpeting, etc.). New vaccines are now available to combat this disease, but until the dog population develops immunity to the disease, it will remain a potential problem. Several professional disinfectants, including bleach at a 1:30 solution are effective against parvo virus. Therefore, if there have been any reports of parvovirus disease in your area, your kennel should be using one of these products for routine disinfecting."

2. Vaccination Requirements

Great boarding facilities require proof of vaccination for the safety of all registered dogs. All dogs must be free from internal and external parasites, as well as be on a flea preventative. All dogs registered for boarding should be up to date on vaccinations. Distemper/Parvo is required every 1 or 3 years, depending on your veterinarian, and Bordetella (Kennel Cough) is required every 6 months.

We love talking about this stuff! Start a conversation with us online today!

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Resources:

http://www.petmd.com/dog/care/evr_dg_boarding_your_dog?page=2#.UsTip2RDuDg

