

CANINES FOR CHRIST READING BUDDIES

GETTING STARTED



Some helpful ideas on how you can successfully introduce our services to both private and public schools.

Initial Contact with School

- Send an Introduction Letter – Write a professional email or letter to school administrators, counselors, or teachers explaining Canines for Christ, our mission, and the benefits of therapy dog visits. Offer to meet in person to discuss how these visits can support students and staff.
- Follow Up with a Call or Visit – After sending the letter, follow up with a phone call and request an in-person visit to answer questions and reinforce your interest in serving.
- Leverage Community Connections – If you have contacts in the school system, such as teachers, parents, or counselors, ask them to introduce you to decision-makers who could facilitate a meeting.

Structuring Therapy Dog Visits - Providing Ideas to the School

- Classroom Visits – Arrange small-group or one-on-one reading sessions where students can read to the therapy dog, fostering confidence and literacy.
- Counselor Support Sessions – Collaborate with school counselors to provide comfort to students facing anxiety, stress, or emotional challenges. Suggest additional visits during times like Mental Health Awareness Month in May.
- Special Needs and Inclusion Programs – Work with special education teachers to offer interaction sessions that benefit students with developmental disabilities.
- Stress-Relief Events – Schedule visits during exams, standardized testing, or high-stress periods to help students and staff relax.

Educate on the Benefits of Therapy Dog Visits

- Emotional Support – Reduces stress, anxiety, and depression among students **and** staff.
- Academic Encouragement – Helps children develop reading skills and concentration in a non-judgmental environment. Serves as a motivation and something special to look forward to.
- Social Connection – Encourages positive social interactions and empathy among students.
- Crisis Response – Provides comfort after difficult school events or personal hardships.

Value of Canines for Christ as a Reputable Organization

- Internationally Recognized Organization – Our therapy dogs serve in various settings worldwide, ensuring professionalism and reliability.
- Highly Trained Dogs – All Canines for Christ dogs undergo rigorous training and certification to provide safe, effective therapy.
- Compliance Focus – Our therapy dogs teams carry their own liability insurance.
- Faith-Based Mission of Compassion – We bring not only comfort but encouragement, joy and fun to those we serve.
 - We have been welcomed equally in public, private and Christian schools. We provide a message of hope without imposing faith-based principles in public education settings, ensuring respect for all beliefs.

CANINES FOR CHRIST READING BUDDIES

CONTINUED

SAMPLE INTRO EMAIL

This is a sample initial introduction email, please make it your own. Be sure to include the national and also local chapter social media handles (if applicable) and a photo of you with your dog, both dressed for a visit in your Canines For Christ shirt and vest.

Good Morning!

I am writing to you today to introduce myself and propose therapy dog visits with your school.

Zoey is a well-trained, friendly, hypoallergenic, ten year old chocolate labradoodle. Zoey and I have been certified as a therapy dog team since 2015 and we are members of an international organization called Canines for Christ. Zoey and I are fully insured through our organization and are required to provide updated vaccine and vet records.

Zoey and I especially adore children and we regularly visit schools, hospitals, churches, nursing homes, libraries, and veterans events. In addition, we are Chaplain trained and certified and work in crisis response. We love to work as reading buddies, come in for testing and finals weeks, and visit classrooms to teach kids about our work in the community. We would love to engage with your students in any capacity you see as a good fit.

You can follow our organization on Instagram and Facebook (@canines4christ & @canines4christ_sanantonio) to see some of our work in the community. I have also attached pictures.

I look forward to speaking with you and am excited for a potential partnership with your school!

**Thank you,
{Volunteer Name}
Volunteer - Canines for Christ
Cell {xxx-xxxx}**