

North Paws

From Birth to 8 Weeks ...

Neo-Natal Stage (1-14 days):

Puppies are born with very immature brain and nervous systems, with eyes and ear tightly closed. Completely dependent on mum for warmth, touch and food. An enormous amount of development must take place over the coming weeks. New-born puppies are never still: they twitch, jerk and stretch. There is no difference between the brain function of a puppy who is awake or asleep therefore, these reflex actions are vital for the development and exercise of their nerve and muscle system.

Transitional Stage (14-21 days):

Beginning when puppies eyes open and ends when they are first startled by noise. Rapid development takes place: they begin to eliminate on their own; teeth begin to break through; development of usable sight; development of hearing; they will move more; wag their tail; show interest in litter mates, pawing and chewing each other.

Awareness Stage (21-28 days):

Puppies now have all their senses, this is when we begin to introduce a variety of noises and sights. Puppies will begin to recognise mum and that they are a dog. They begin to play fight and growl.

Second Awareness Stage (28-35 days):

Puppies play behaviour becomes more sophisticated, growling, chasing and killing games. Distance perception has improved. Weaning will begin. Puppies need physical and mental stimulation. Plays helps develop strength, agility, coordination and the skills needed to function as adults.

Socialisation Stage (5 weeks-16 weeks) within this stage there are five periods:

The more exposure to smells, textures, surfaces, sounds, vibrations, tastes, sights, animals and people a puppy experiences in this stage the more prepared they will be for the life of an adult dog.

○ Curiosity Period (5-7 weeks):

Puppies have the lowest fear and highest acceptance now therefore they should experience as much as possible for the first time.

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- Behaviour Refinement Period (7-9 weeks):

Puppies brains are fully functioning now and are capable of learning anything.

What do NorthPaws do?

All puppies at NorthPaws are individuals and are treated as this while with us. The work we do aims to understand each of them and build a 'profile' for each puppy. We strive for happy puppies who are confident in their world and aim to find the right fit for both you and our puppies. While puppies are with us we follow several neurological development programmes:

ENS & ESI

ENS & ESI are simple exercises in which puppies are exposed from day 3-16 to help aid their development, resilience and coping mechanisms.

Early Neurological Stimulation is a concept developed by Dr Carmen Battaglia, a breeder, AKC judge, researcher and writer. It encompasses tactile stimulation, thermal stimulation and exposure to mild stressors, which improve your puppies' stress responses.

Early Scent Introduction is a concept developed by Dr Gayle Watkins, a Golden Retriever breeder, scientist, researcher and competitor in a range of dog sports. Scent is the way puppies experience the world. Introducing natural scents early on can help puppies be introduced to new scents in a controlled way, enhancing their confidence, making stable adults and reducing behavioural issues in the long term.

The Rule of 7's

Dr. Carmen Battaglia created the Rule of 7's as a guide to increase puppies exposure to the wider world, introducing puppy to small stresses that will help boost confidence and develop social behaviour.

NorthPaws start at the age of 4 weeks by introducing puppies to 7 new things, after 4 days we change these to 7 new items. So by the time you pick up your NorthPaws puppy they have been introduced to 49 different or new things/changes. Your puppy has experienced:

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- Walking on 7 different surfaces
- Playing with 7 different toys
- Being in 7 different locations
- Meeting humans with 7 different features
- 7 different challenges
- Eating/drinking from 7 different containers
- Eating in 7 different locations

Tellington Touch (TTouch)

Linda Tellington-Jones developed the Trust Touch in 1983 using her work with horse to see the benefits to all animals. Tellington TTouch is a gentle form of bodywork consisting of circles, lifts and slides done with our hands all over the dogs body. The benefits to both the animal and owner are amazing and helps develop the interspecies language without words.

NorthPaws use: The Mouth TTouch (to develop trust and focus); The Ear TTouch (to calm) and TTTouches on Paws (to ground and support nail clipping).

Sound Desensitisation

NorthPaws are a household of three adults, four dogs, three rabbits, a tortoise, fish tank and pond. We are busy and at times loud. We live in the countryside so it can be quiet but also have some noisy moments with farm machinery, livestock, horses, wildlife and RAF jets passing by the house. To help puppies become more ready for the wider world we try to introduce them to as many sounds as we can while with us. We use real life situations and The Dogs Trust Sound Clips. The Dogs Trust also have some very useful information leaflets online to support this topic, they are all worth a read.

Socialisation – only the beginning!

While with us at NorthPaws puppies will have been exposed to pleasant social interactions with human adults, children, vets, other dogs, other pets as well as careful exposure to different environments such as: areas in the home, outside spaces, travelling in car, vacuum cleaners etc.

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It is important that you continue this in your puppy's new home, as during this period an important transition is taking place in the puppy's abilities to take in new situations as their natural fearfulness increases. The free app Pup-Standing has been created by Preventive Vet, it has advice and guidance on how to introduce puppy's to a variety of life experiences. This is an excellent resource that NorthPaws highly recommends using to support you during this vital stage in your puppies development.

Things to remember:

Puppies are not the finished article when born, research has shown that 35% of a dogs ultimate behaviour traits are genetic and the remaining 65% are attributed to the training, socialisation, nutrition and health care of the puppy. This brings about debate regarding nature and nurture. NorthPaws aim to maximise the potential of our puppies by stimulating learning abilities, interests and natural instincts.

Remember raising a puppy is about building a partnership and good communication which paves the way for a lifetime of good, safe behaviour. By using subtle, calm and assertive communication you are aiming for a dog who understands, anticipates and responds to you rather than a dog who does as its told!

Ultimately, have courage, don't underestimate the power of 'puppy-dog' eyes, they are a force of nature and be prepared for the ups and downs. This is a journey and one that is the most rewarding you will ever go on.

There are several stages in a puppies life where learning and socialisation can be maximised. Although there are many debates on the exact age of these stages, different breeds will develop at different stages and puppies within a litter will vary, there is however an importance to know and understand these stages and to utilise the critical periods to raise the best puppies possible.

At NorthPaws we try to maximise all possible opportunities before puppy comes home. Ultimately, the development of a great dog is the responsibility of breeder and new owner. A mature dogs personality, physical appearance and working ability are a combination of breed characteristics, individual genetics, socialisation and the training it receives.