Planes, Trains & Automobiles

Socialization does not stop when your pup has finished growing

**Socializing your Eurasier from birth through life**

We have all heard how socializing is important for your Eurasier, so here are some thoughts and suggestions to help you grasp the concept of what socializing is and how you can apply it to your life and your Eurasier.

Most Eurasiers are born into a caring home with a breeder that understands the importance of handling a pup, doing the [Early Neurological Stimulation](http://www.lowchensaustralia.com/breeding/ensp.htm) and introducing them to a wide variety of stimulus, situations and environments that will give them the best start in life. But socialization begins for you when you bring your pup home. Although the first few years of socializing tend to have more of an impact on your Eurasier, maintaining safe and stimulating experiences will enhance the quality of your dog’s life and give you the confidence that your Eurasier will not over react in an unusual situation. The more places you can take your dog with you, the better.

When pups are born, everything is new to them and their senses will develop quickly. In the first few weeks of life, the “Early Neurological Stimulation” is a series of tactile exercises, that will help the pup accept minor stress as normal. Picking up a puppy, handling a pup and cuddling a pup are all important first steps to teach a pup that human touch is a good thing. Day by day pup’s senses develop and it is **important to consider stimulating each sense**. Puppies should be exposed to a variety of noises, sights, smells, tastes, surfaces, temperatures etc.

Socializing a puppy with other dogs

Puppies start learning from their littermates a form of communication I call “dog language”. I have seen dogs that are very good communicators with other dogs which helps them play happily and easily at dog parks and on walks. So it makes sense to expose your puppy to healthy friendly older dogs that will teach them the language.

We have a Pomeranian “Tiki” that takes on the pups as an aunt would. At first she is bigger than the pups and plays and scolds and wrestles with them. By the time the pups are ready for their new homes, they are bigger than Tiki, but are able to jump on her and pull her fur, but will release at the first sign of a correction from Tiki. There are certain looks, or showing of teeth or posturing that will communicate in dog language far better than words. So having older dogs interact with young dogs is a great way to help your pup learn canine communication.

Separation Anxiety

Often homes chosen for Eurasier puppies have been households where there is a person around all the time, which is a good thing, especially for potty training, but a pup also needs to learn how to be alone. It is important for your Eurasier not stress out if he is left by himself. To do this, I suggest purposely leaving your pup alone for short periods of time, do not make a big deal of going out the door and do not make a big deal of returning. I simply give the command “wait” as I leave.

Working families

Occasionally Eurasiers will go to families that work during the day, in these cases I recommend that the Eurasier goes to visit with a neighbour that has a healthy dog during the day, or a family member, or a doggy day care centre. At the very least, having a dog walker come to take your Eurasier for a walk or two while you are away is important. A tired puppy is a good puppy.

Breed specific play

My friends and I have observed that certain breeds play and exercise in certain ways, not all dogs play the same way. Those of you who attend Eurasier gatherings, conferences or walks will have seen how Eurasiers seem to know when they meet other Eurasiers (sometimes even other spitz type dogs). Eurasiers love to run! They are not always big on chasing a ball, but will zoom after the dog that is chasing the ball. They are also bumpers, they hip check one another, only a few other breeds do this. Eurasiers can also be vocal and use their mouths showing their “scary” teeth, this is normal Eurasier play, but can scare some people if they do not understand.

Socialization & vaccination

A very common concern for new puppy owners is the problem of socializing their new pup before they are fully vaccinated at 4 months old. There are many things you can do with your pup that will not put them at risk. Socializing is not only about other dogs, although having a few friends that have healthy dogs that you can visit with your pup would be advantageous. You can take your pup with you in the car to a number of stores and other places or along a sandy tidal beach that is covered daily by water coming in and going out. Simply avoid popular dog parks and try to prevent your pup from sniffing excrement of any kind. Ask your vet about your neighbourhood, if any cases of parvo have been reported recently.

Here are a few suggestions of things to do with your pup and your older dog, just to get you thinking of what is available in your area:

**Sounds for pups**

Hair dryer

Lawnmower

Vacuum

Pots banging

Drums

Smoke alarm

Music

Door bells/knocking

Sirens

**Sounds for growing puppies & adults**

Busy traffic

Trains

Fog horns

Boat Whistles

Crowds of people

Shot guns/starter pistols

Airplanes

Busy stores

**Sights for pups**

People – all shapes/sizes/ages

Other animals – cats/gerbils/rabbits

Bicycles

Umbrellas

People wearing hats

People wearing all black

Children playing

Moving balls

Moving water

Rain/snow/wind

Tunnels/slides

Ball pits

Sprinklers

**Sights for growing puppies & adult**

Night time walks

Dark bunkers or caves

Tents

Office or work places

Elevators

Crowds of people

Other animals – zoo

Parties

Heights/bridges

Abandoned buildings

Busy traffic

Busses

Then there are places that combine and overload the senses with sounds, smells, sights, movement and strange surfaces

Ferry ride

Speed boat/Sail boat

Train

Car ride

Campsites

Busy store

Sports game

Group of dogs in the woods, by the beach

Climbing a rock

Climbing a fallen tree

Escalators

Airplane rides

Helicopter rides

Outdoor concerts

The key with socializing your Eurasier is to make it a pleasant experience. With young pups, you are introducing elements, with the older dog you want to teach your dog to be calm in unusual and any situation.

Even with socializing with other dogs, you first want your dog or puppy to learn to be calm before they meet the other animals. The key to remember is to stay calm yourself and expect your dog to be calm.

Eurasiers have a very strong intuitive sense of their owners emotions and fears, if you are afraid, they will pick up on that and be on guard, if you treat everything “like a walk in the park” your Eurasier will likely take your cue to be calm and at ease too.

Bring treats if you like, but always keep it safe, fun and sometimes short. Grab your dog and go!

Life is better experiencing it with a Eurasier.

*By Judi Neumeyer*