

LOCAL BUSINESS

Community Events Are Puppy-Friendly

Submitted by Happy Pets Palace

Happy Pets Palace hosts free puppy socials every other Saturday, from 10 to 11 a.m., at 1918 E. McKellips Road, in Mesa. Puppies from 9 weeks old to 7 months old are invited to attend. Dates for the remainder of the year include Nov. 4 and 18, and Dec. 2, 16 and 30. The puppy socials take place outside at Happy Pets Palace when weather permits. Puppies are young and innocent. We want to help them gradually build confidence and accept new experiences without fear.

Just like children can learn foreign languages easily, puppies take in new experiences with ease. Puppies 16 weeks or younger are at the optimal age to be shaped and introduced to safe, new experiences. This will lead to a more well-balanced and receptive puppy. Be sure to choose new experiences your puppy will enjoy and not fear.

A friendly and supportive foundation creates a happy, well-behaved puppy. Help shape good behaviors by carefully choosing new experiences. Introduce your puppy to accept handling by having their mouth, ears, tail, feet and collar touched by a variety of people. When your dog is approached, you want him to be receptive. Training your dog to be social with people and dogs is a great thing to do at an early age. It makes going out in public a much more enjoyable experience.

Puppies need to learn how to calm down, and they need a settling period. Self-regulation helps to avoid over-arousal. High energy and high arousal in dog-dog group play are closely linked to aggression, even with the best of friends. If your puppy doesn't learn to self-regulate at a young age, then his adult play style may be considered rude in the dog world, or worse, it may cause aggression during amped up play. Learning proper play etiquette is so important in socializing pups at a young age.

TIPS TO CHOOSE A GREAT PLACE FOR YOUR PUPPY'S PLAY TIME

- 1. Attend a session without your puppy to see if the people and other puppies are a good fit.



- 2. The environment should be clean and safe.
- 3. Look for experienced puppy facilitators to manage play so no puppy is ganged up on or put in a fearful situation.
- 4. Confident puppies should be grouped with other active, eager-to-play puppies. And likewise, shy or timid puppies should be with other gentle, easy players.
- 5. Look for safe zones where puppies can separate themselves from the group, take a rest, and then choose when they are ready to rejoin in play. Safe zones can be under a chair, under a low ramp, or anywhere that separates one puppy from the open group. Let your puppy make the choice when he wants to rejoin the group. Don't force your puppy to participate until he is ready and comfortable, or the bad experience could impact him for a long time.
- 6. A patient, willing adult dog can help teach the puppies proper etiquette, as long as that adult dog is not being

- dominating or scaring the puppies.
 - 7. Avoid corrective collars that can hurt. That means no prong collars, no e-collars and no choke chains.
 - 8. Do not use spray bottles or shaking coins in a can to correct behavior. Instead, use treats or simply pick up the puppy to help soothe and calm your dog down. Or redirect with a happy voice.
 - 9. Avoid verbal sound corrections or angry voices, which could frighten puppies.
- Dogs are pack animals and enjoy being around other dogs. They don't want to live a solitary life. They love having a purpose and going on adventures.

If your goal is for your puppy to have a full and enriched life, please let us help. There will be puppy-training tips, and to ensure good safe play styles, as well as socializing, trained staff will monitor play. There also will be occasional guest speakers discussing nutrition, exercise, photography tips and other fun topics.

Puppy socials at Happy Pets Palace are designed to monitor puppy introductions and gradually build experiences in a fun, happy and playful manner. Your puppy needs play session experiences while they are young. Our wisdom and experience will help pair up puppy play styles to be nicely matched for reciprocal play. We encourage healthy treats to guide puppies along and praise good choices.

Every other Saturday, Happy Pets Palace offers a free one-hour puppy social playtime between 10 and 11 a.m. The social event is held at our facility. Puppies up to 7 months old are welcome to attend for free.

During this puppy social, we share feedback on how to work best with your puppy. We want your puppy to be a happy member of your home for his entire life. Puppy play sessions can begin when your puppy is 9 weeks old, or 7 days after your vet gives the first series vaccination for parvo/distemper. ■

Happy Pets Palace is an award-winning dog boarding facility, located at 1918 E. McKellips Road. We offer doggy daycare, puppy training, puppy socializing and overnight dog boarding. Learn more about our services at HappyPetsPalace.com.

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