

Therapy Dog Training Class for Prospective Pet Partners Teams

Thank you for your interest in becoming a therapy dog team! Volunteering with your dog is an incredibly rewarding experience, and the need for registered therapy dog teams is only growing. Once registered, you will be able to give back to your community in a variety of environments, such as hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, retirement homes, schools, and college campuses.

A) Is My Dog a Good Candidate for Therapy Work?

When it comes to gauging whether or not a dog is appropriate for therapy work, the most important factor is *temperament* – not breed, size, or age. There is often a misconception that therapy dogs must lack personality, but that is not the case. Therapy dogs can have energy and plenty of personality, as long as they are well mannered and under the control of the handler. The key qualities of a therapy dog are:

1. Highly social with new people
2. Confident and resilient in new places and situations
3. Okay around other dogs
4. Able to be handled everywhere – feet, mouth, ears
5. Knows basic commands and good manners

A Fair Shake for Youth facilitates therapy dog team registration through Pet Partners*. Pet Partners is the largest national therapy dog organization in the country. In order to become a registered therapy dog with Pet Partners, your dog must be **1 year old** at the time of the evaluation, and have lived with you for at least **6 months**.

*Please note: Pet Partners does not register dogs that eat a raw food diet based on their research that indicates that dogs that eat a raw food diet are more likely to shed disease-causing bacteria which presents a risk for individuals with potentially weak immune systems. If your dog eats a raw food diet you can still become a therapy dog team with *The Good Dog Foundation*, the largest regional therapy dog organization in the New York City area.

B) Therapy Dog Class Basics: What Will Be Covered

Class will teach you the skills you will need to be an effective therapy dog team and prepare you for the therapy dog evaluation with Pet Partners. The evaluation is included. Although training class is not required in order to take the Pet Partners evaluation, we find that teams who take class are better prepared for the evaluation and have more successful visiting experiences. Please see section C of this document for more information about the full requirements to become registered with Pet Partners. During class, you will:

- Reinforce basic obedience skills with your dog
- Get your dog comfortable around wheelchairs, crutches and walkers
- Role play likely visiting scenarios

- Learn to work around distractions - food, toys, dogs and people
- Recognize when your dog is stressed and when to support them while visiting
- Learn what environment and population is best suited to you and your dog

Classes are taught by Jane Kopelman of All About Dogs. Jane is a consultant to the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's Caring Canine Program, a certified trainer and behaviorist, and is the owner of an animal shelter in upstate New York.

C) What Else is Required?

In order to become registered with Pet Partners, you must:

- A. Complete the handler training (the Online Handler Course [2-3 hours] **OR** a One-day Workshop for humans only)
- B. Pass the hands-on evaluation of you and your dog

The evaluation is an assessment of you and your dog as a team. Key exercises include polite greetings, basic manners, working with distractions and crowds, working around medical equipment, reaction to a neutral dog, and clumsy and exuberant petting. A critical element of therapy dog work is reading your dog's body language and helping them in stressful situations.

The fees for the Online Course and Workshop are \$70 and \$120, respectively. Once you pass the evaluation there is a registration fee of \$95 (or \$50 for age 55 & over), good for two years. This fee helps cover the cost of insurance for you and your dog while visiting. Pet Partners requires that you and your dog pass the hands-on evaluation every two years, as dogs, like people, change over time.

If you have any questions about class, the process of becoming registered, or whether or not your dog is appropriate for therapy work, please feel free to reach out to us at: volunteer@afairshakeforyouth.org.

The class application follows on the next page.

ALL ABOUT DOGS
THERAPY DOG CLASS APPLICATION
Upper West Side January 2020

Handler's Name: _____ Dog's Name: _____

Dog's Age: _____ Sex: _____ Breed: _____

Spayed/Neutered (Y/N): _____ Date of Last Rabies Vaccination: ____/____/____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Phone #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Veterinarian: _____ Veterinarian Phone: _____

How long has your dog lived with you? _____

Does your dog eat a raw diet?* _____

***Please note:** Pet Partners does not register dogs that consume a raw diet.

What kind of visiting would you like to do?

- Children's program
- Adolescent program
- Adults
- Seniors
- READ program (elementary school children read aloud to dogs)

Typically, does your dog enjoy...?

- Meeting people one-on-one
- Large groups of people, lots of activity
- Small children
- Adolescents

Are there any people your dog might shy away from?

- Small children
 - Very noisy groups of people
 - People using wheelchairs/crutches
 - Other: _____
-

What are some of your dog's favorite activities?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lying around on the couch watching TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting brushed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with their favorite person | <input type="checkbox"/> Running on the beach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing in the dog park | <input type="checkbox"/> Going shopping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting treats from the doorman | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with their dog buddy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chasing squirrels | <input type="checkbox"/> Agility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frisbee | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

What commands does your dog know?

___ Sit ___ Stay ___ Come when called ___ Down ___ Heel

How does your dog let you know when they're uncomfortable?

___ Walks away ___ Vocalizes ___ Licks paws/muzzle ___ Yawns ___ Shakes

What do you do to calm your dog?

___ Talk soothingly ___ Pet them ___ Distract them ___ Ignore them

Has your dog ever acted in a threatening manner toward a person? Yes / No

If yes, please explain:

I acknowledge that participation in group classes is not without risk to myself or my dog, because some dogs may be difficult to control and cause injury. Although all care will be taken to ensure the health and safety of all participants, in the event of illness or accident I agree to indemnify and hold harmless All About Dogs, Inc. and its representatives, employees and officers from any claims resulting from the action of my dog or any other dog.

Agreed _____ Date _____

ALL ABOUT DOGS, INC.

janekopelman@hotmail.com

917-699-0177

Class details:

Dates: January 28, February 4, 11, 18th

Time: 7:30-8:30pm

Location: Dog Days of New York (2581 Broadway @97th Street)

Class Fee: \$250 (***Please make checks payable to:*** ALL ABOUT DOGS)

Please mail all checks to:

A Fair Shake for Youth

210 W 101st Street, PH6

New York, NY 10025