

What to expect in Playgroups

Our playgroups are small, fully monitored, carefully selected 50 minute sessions. Each group will have 8 - 12 dogs or puppies, with an average attendance rate of 6 - 8, since most people have busy schedules and will not attend every week.

I would appreciate a heads up, as early as possible, if you will/will not be in attendance for the following session. This allows me to add new dogs from the waiting list.

- 1) Please have your dog on a flat collar or harness with a 6' leash. Absolutely no choke chains, prong collars, or E collars. Depending on the dogs in attendance, I may ask that your dogs drag the leash for a few minutes. All new dogs will drag a leash until I am comfortable with their body language.
- 2) The last meal before playgroup should be a couple of hours before playgroup starts. This is especially important for deep chested breeds as it is sometimes a **contributor to bloat (GVD)**.
- 3) Please refrain from training your dog (sits, downs, etc) during the session as there is limited space, and I want your dog to be focused on the other dogs signals.
- 4) Please understand that I am fully focused on the behavior of all the dogs at play. If you need to talk to me in depth, please wait until the session is over, or call/email/text as I am likely not fully focused on you. I am honestly not trying to be rude, I am simply making sure that your dog, and the others are happy, and enjoying their play.
- 5) Please keep an eye on dogs playing around you or running towards you. Getting knocked off your feet hurts like crazy, and can cause a concussion or broken ribs. You are at your own risk if you are walking around during play sessions. Please refrain from bringing children younger than 10. Children must remain seated at all times. We have chairs available at all times.
- 6) Play growling, wrestling, chasing, biting (non aggressive) are all natural play behaviors. Do not correct your dog for these things. If I find it concerning, I will handle it. I may ask you to call your dog, bring it for a short walk outside (time out) or ask you to take him/her home if she/he is too amped up to play nicely.
- 7) Please don't yell. Yelling can escalate bad behaviors. Walk up to your dog if need be, or call them with an indoor voice.
- 8) Feel free to engage in conversation with the other humans, but please also keep an eye on the dogs, for your safety and theirs.
- 9) Please check that your dog is in good health, parasite free, and is not limping or sore prior to entering the building. We reserve the right to turn anyone away if we feel the

dog is ill in any way. If your dog has any health conditions PLEASE tell us ahead of time. We may switch your dog to a different playgroup, depending on the dog's needs.

- 10) All dogs will enter into a fenced area, to give us a chance to quickly assess health and behavior. One dog/owner in the penned area at a time.
- 11) On the remote chance that a fight does break out, follow my direction. DO NOT put your hands or body in the middle of it. Most fights are loud, sound fearsome, are all air snapping, and end in a few seconds. Yelling and rushing in can actually cause a serious fight.
- 12) No toys or food during these sessions please. Some dogs may have allergies, and food or toys, and even people (especially if doting on a single dog) can trigger possession issues.
- 13) Please know that as dogs mature (2 -3) some will become selective naturally, in the way that when you were a kid, you tolerated lots of different kids, but as you aged you became more selective. Playgroups won't prevent dogs from choosing better friends as they mature, however playgroups done right (and not a free for all) will offer your puppy/dog opportunities to meet other dogs successfully, learn body language and play skills, and have a more enriching life. Playgroups are also good for spotting potential problems early so that we may address it before it becomes a problem.

The idea behind these playgroups is for dogs (and people) to make a few friends that they see weekly or regularly, in a controlled environment. Meeting new dogs that rotate in, gives all dogs a chance to hone greeting skills. With all dogs vaccinated, and all surfaces able to be disinfected (including our small, fully fenced, pea stone back yard) we strive for a safe, clean, and fun environment for everyone involved.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to email at 2lexibru@yahoo.com