



*Companion Animal Hospital of Wakefield  
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## Doggy Day Camp

### Socialization and Behavior Program

Socializing your dog well is a very important part of pet ownership. Dogs are social animals and require social stimulation in order to live a fulfilled life. Unfortunately, dogs can quickly lose their ability to interact normally with other dogs if they are not allowed the opportunity to do so on a regular basis. This is evident any time you go to the park or pet store, and you see a dog barking and growling at other dogs. This is not a bad dog. It is simply a dog who lacks positive socialization.

Our camp is different from most doggy day camps. We limit the dogs' playgroups to no more than six dogs. We do this in order to make sure that each dog receives maximum supervision. If not supervised adequately, the dogs will develop behaviors that could cause trouble for them such as bullying, resource guarding or predatory behavior. The dogs are grouped very carefully. Each dog's age, breed, temperament and previous experiences are taken into consideration. Our goal is for each dog's day to be positive and fun.

Each group will have one play session in the morning and one play session in the afternoon. The length of the play sessions depends on the dogs. When the dogs become tired, they are separated and returned to their runs for nap time. This is very important! If the dogs are not separated when they are tired, they will begin to exhibit some of the above mentioned behavior problems. Also, allowing the dogs to play all day provides an artificial environment. This will actually encourage separation anxiety and cause your dog to require more exercise and stimulation. Behavior problems in the home will become more likely to occur and the dog will actually need more time and exercise from you.

At our camp your dog will also experience the benefit of having a good time at the vet's office and the kennel. This can prove very useful when it comes time for the family vacation or the dog's annual vaccinations. Instead of these experiences causing your dog unnecessary stress, they will be exciting for your dog. There are many other behavioral benefits of day camp. Your dog will learn bite inhibition, self control and avoid such problems as separation anxiety and aggression.

Our camp is directed by Melissa Duran, CPDT. Melissa is a certified pet dog trainer through the Association of Pet Dog Trainers. She has also received extensive training in interspecies canine communication and behavior. All of our day camp counselors are thoroughly trained by Melissa in behavior and training. We make sure that in addition to providing your dog with a fun day, we also reinforce any training you may be doing at home. We are happy to work with you on many of your particular needs for your dog. Your dog's complete behavioral health and well-being is our primary focus!