

**Week 4**

## *Briarlea Bouviers*

**Cyrano  
Ruby**

**JANUARY 16 BEGINS  
PICK UP WEEK!**

**4 weeks:**

**TEETH have erupted  
and are sharp!**

**Play with toys begins**

**Routine worming**

**Nasal vaccination for  
kennel cough**

**Friendly dog visits**

**bones and pieces of  
meat added to diet**

- ◆ *The pups are now eating solid food!*
- ◆ *They are getting used to relieving in a 'potty area.'*
- ◆ *Nails are trimmed for the first time and the pups go up on the grooming table.*

## **Early Socialization for your puppy**

Socialization is the process of gently getting your puppy used to new experiences, places, and people. There is a "window" of time that begins at 3 weeks and begins to close at 16 weeks, when you have a golden opportunity to shape the future personality of your puppy. After that time it is still important to keep a puppy (and adult dogs too) exposed to new things, but a puppy that was not socialized during that window of time really loses out. You can always do remedial socialization but not as easily as before 16 weeks.

Unsocialized dogs are often timid and shy. They may not be able to overcome easily their lack of early socialization. They may feel threatened by people they do not know, and this can lead to fear-biting.

Temperament is inherited to a large degree, but is also influenced by the environment. A naturally shy dog won't become the life of the party, but by careful early socialization you can greatly influence temperament.

Early socialization can help you raise a confident well-adjusted puppy. You can help prevent serious behavioral problems such as shyness, timidity, and aggression from developing as the puppy matures.

You need to make sure that each new experience is pleasant for your puppy. Associating new things with treats is a good way to do this. Never force your puppy to go toward things or people. Never let people rush up to your puppy – let your puppy do the approaching at his own pace. Give treats to people.

If your puppy is hesitant in approaching people, have them hold out a treat while they look away from the pup. If you have a shy puppy, direct eye contact might be too much at first.

You will want to keep your young puppy safe from diseases. Until your puppy has completed his puppy shots, avoid places like public parks where unknown dogs have pottied. Socializing can begin within your own home. Invite friends and neighborhood children over to sit down on the floor and hand-feed your new puppy. This is a wonderful way to expose your dog to new people, and the little hands of children. With your supervision, the puppy will learn that children are safe, and those little hands reaching forward to pet the puppy are gentle. It is a great idea to take your young puppy to visit friend's homes and yards.

## More about socialization

Go slow if you think your pup may be shy, and keep a safe distance at first. If your puppy shows any signs of being afraid, you have moved too far too fast. Act to prevent fearful situations. Do NOT coddle or “poor baby” the pup. Coddling will only reinforce the fear. Help your puppy by ignoring fearful behavior (as long as it is not a dangerous situation) and praising any sign of bravery.

Puppies raised in country and suburban environments should be gradually acclimated to city noises such as traffic noise, crowds of people and other everyday life. A weekly visit into town can be very helpful in preventing environmental phobias.

In addition to new places and people, your puppy needs to experience other dogs. Dogs that grow up isolated from other dogs will sometimes develop dog-dog aggression and fear. If possible, other puppies are best, but calm older dogs can be good too. Watch the dog body language and be ready to interrupt if play gets too rough.

### SOCIALIZATION IDEAS

- Go to playgrounds or preschool areas where children are squealing. Be careful not to let small children mob your puppy. Use the small children playground equipment! Some have swinging bridges, ladders to climb, slides to go down (puppy on your lap), tires to jump through or climb on.
- Walk puppy near sprinklers!
- Walk up to an opened umbrella. Have an umbrella opened up very slowly in the puppy's sight.
- Meet a horse; meet a baby pig; meet other safe friendly animals.
- Meet a man with a beard; meet a man with a cowboy hat; meet a person wearing sunglasses or goggles; meet a toddler; meet a person of another race – as many different people as possible!
- Walk on bubble wrap; walk on a tarp; walk on a sidewalk grate – as many different surfaces as possible.
- Ride on an elevator; go on a boat ride.
- Get treats while being exposed to helium-filled balloons.
- Go to a house they've never been to.
- Get treats on the vet table; get treats on a groomer's table.
- Walk on a narrow board placed off the ground on bricks; go up/down stairs even if you don't have stairs at your house.
- Walk over a bridge.
- Walk past a fire hydrant; go \*meet\* the fire hydrant, also a big mailbox.
- Walk puppy near a small fan, then a medium fan, then a larger one.
- Run a blender, food processor, vacuum or other noisy appliance with puppy nearby. Start with the noisy thing in another room if necessary.
- Enjoy the sounds of metal baking pans clattering around. Drop a cookie sheet on the floor – then put a treat on it and let puppy go get the treat.
- Go watch a playground full of running and screaming kids – give treats while watching, from a distance if necessary.
- Meet a dog-friendly cat.

More dogs are surrendered between the ages of 8-15 months than at any other time in their lives because of a lack of socialization.