

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photos available upon request.

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Has Fido Become a Terror??

You got a cute little puppy that is growing by the day and at 5 months old is suddenly “acting up” or “not listening” any more. You feel like you have unwittingly created a canine monster. The Animal Welfare Society, in West Kennebunk can help! AWS offers Puppy Kindergarten and Basic Obedience class but also offers an Adolescent Behavior class formatted to help people and dogs through the “in between months” of adolescence.

Canine adolescence, the time after puppyhood but before adulthood, like human teen years, can be difficult to understand. During this time many dogs explore and test the boundaries. This can mean ignoring known commands, exhibiting previously discouraged behavior like jumping or mouthing while also showing adult behaviors like protective or defensive barking. All of this could be frustrating and confusing to dog owners and their families. However, with some structured, positive training of both the dog and the people, you can come through adolescences with a wonderfully mannered family dog...you're whole plan in getting a puppy in the first place!

AWS has two nationally certified dog trainers on staff: Kim Van Sickle is the Director of the Obedience Department and Amy Valinski Allenwood is one of the instructors. Both have met the criteria and passed the extensive test of the Certified Pet Dog Trainers (CPDT) Program. CPDT has set the national standard for people who want to be professional dog trainers.

“Whether it is puppy, adult or adolescent dog, our job is to **teach the people** how to teach their dogs.” says Van Sickle. “After all, we see them for one hour a week and they live with their dogs 24/7! The more the people understand what is going on with their canine family member, the easier it is to navigate through the adolescent months and to live a long mutually respectful life with the dog. The training style people choose to use with their young dog helps to define that relationship.”

To help to establish, grow or maintain a positive relationship with your dog, sign up for the appropriate training level class at AWS. The classes are offered year round and at various times during the week. Check out the schedule and sign up on line at www.animalwelfaresociety.org or call 985-3244.

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