

Functional Socialization

The Misconception

Why functional? Because over socialization causes reactivity and extra work. Who wants that. We teach owners how to create functional dogs for their lives. There is often a misconception that dogs need to interact with many people and dogs when socializing; in actuality, the opposite is true. As you can see with the chart below, this makes up for only a small portion of your dogs socialization needs. Whether your dog is overly or underly friendly, if you allow your dog interact with multiple dogs and people on your walks you set unrealistic expectations for future walks. Socialization is about showing your dog that various things exist in the world such as different surfaces, sights, sounds and "beings" so they become desensitized and can settle in any environment.

The Goal

The goal of functional socialization is to show your dog your expectations on how to behave and be neutral in various situations. It is also YOUR responsibility when socializing them to teach them how to be optimistic around new stimuli and build their confidence through obedience and boundaries. Obedience skills are confidence excellerators when socializing!

