**The Puppy's Rule of 12**

Make sure all experiences are safe and positive for your puppy. Each encounter should include treats and lots of praise. Slow down and add distance if your puppy is scared!

By the time a puppy is 12 weeks old, it should have:

• Experienced 12 different surfaces: wood, woodchips, tile, cement, linoleum, grass, wet grass, dirt, mud, puddles, grates, uneven surfaces, on a table, on a chair, etc….

• Played with 12 different objects: fuzzy toys, big & small balls, hard toys, funny sounding toys, wooden items, paper or cardboard items, milk jugs, metal items, car keys, etc….

• Experienced 12 different locations: front yard (daily), other people's homes, school yard, lake, pond, river, boat, basement, elevator, car, moving car, garage, laundry room, kennel, veterinarian hospital (just say hi & visit, lots of cookies, no vaccinations), grooming salon, (just to say hi), etc….

• Met and played with 12 new people (outside of family): include children, adults (mostly men), elderly adults, people in wheelchairs, walkers, people with canes, crutches, hats, sunglasses, etc….

• Exposed to 12 different noises (ALWAYS keep positive and watch puppy's comfort level – we do not want the puppy scared): garage door opening, doorbell, children playing, babies screaming, big trucks, Harley motorcycles, skateboards, washing machine, shopping carts rolling, power boat, clapping, loud singing, pan dropping, horses neighing, vacuums, lawnmowers, birthday party, etc….

• Exposed to 12 fast moving objects (don't allow to chase): skateboards, roller-skates, bicycles, motorcycles, cars, people running, cats running, scooters, vacuums, children running, children playing soccer, squirrels, cats, horses running, cows running, etc….

• Experienced 12 different challenges: climb on, in, off, and around a box, go through a cardboard tunnel, climb up and down steps, climb over obstacles, play hide and seek, go in and out of a doorway with a step up or down, exposed to an electric sliding door, umbrella, balloons, walk on a wobbly table (plank of wood with a small rock underneath), jump over a broom, climb over a log, bathtub (and bath), etc….

• Handled by owner (and family) 12 times a week: hold under arm (like a football), hold to chest, hold on floor near owner, hold in-between owner's legs, hold head, look in ears, mouth, in-between toes, hold and take temperature (ask veterinarian), hold like a baby, trim toenails, hold in lap, etc….

• Eaten from 12 different shaped containers: wobbly bowl, metal, cardboard box, paper, coffee cup, china, pie plate, plastic, frying pan, Kong, Treat ball, snuffle mat, spoon fed, paper bag, etc….

• Eaten in 12 different locations: back yard, front yard, crate, kitchen, basement, laundry room, bathroom, friend's house, car, school yard, bathtub, up high (on work bench), under umbrella, etc….

• Played with 12 different puppies (or safe adult dogs) in a controlled way, not a free for all

• Left alone safely, away from family & other animals (5 – 45 minutes) 12 times a week.

• Experienced a leash and collar 12 different times in 12 different locations.

A good breeder or rescue will help your pups along with this by providing an enriching environment like these 5 week old golden retriever puppies have.

