

MOD SQUAD™ Pup Squad

The Pup Squad program targets all puppies 6 months and under before their official evaluation. The critical period of socialization for puppies happens within their first 16 weeks and begins to taper off after this point. By 6 months, the window has closed significantly and the dog becomes fearful of things that it does not know or understand. A dog that missed out on socialization as a puppy may remain fearful of novel things, new people, new situations, etc. for the rest of its life. Behavior problems may result from this lack of early socialization. The Pup Squad program strives to provide socialization opportunities for puppies in the shelter during this critical period of socialization prior to evaluation.

Puppies who are stray, surrendered or transferred from other shelters are eligible for the program. Shelter staff notify MOD SQUAD™ personnel when a puppy enters the shelter. Mod Squad members begin interactions with the puppy immediately.

Mod squad volunteers will implement simple strategies concentrating on socialization, handling, environmental enrichment and the foundations for basic manners. Since each puppy will enter the program at various points of socialization, the program will strive to meet the puppy where it is in its development. Every pup at HAWS gets a head start with Pup Squad.

