



Therapy Dogs of Vermont

Therapy Dogs of Vermont (TDV) is an all volunteer, non-profit organization of well-mannered, sweet-tempered, people-loving dogs and their handlers. Our handler/canine teams work toward the emotional health of patients in a variety of settings. They bring joy and comfort to people in a host of Vermont hospitals and other health-related venues, nursing and retirement homes, child and adult day care centers, and correctional facilities. They also visit schools, universities, and give presentations in the community to bring young people in touch with good dogs and show them what can be accomplished with love and training, and a desire to help others.

TDV has a large membership throughout the State of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Canada.

All dogs are certified and insured. TDV's mission is to keep members organized, motivated, and volunteering. We place people in teams, arrange regular TDV visits to new institutions, and share information and stories by publishing quarterly newsletters as well as maintaining a website.

www.therapydogs.org

For More Information

For Volunteers

Could your canine companion qualify to wear our bandanna?

If you are looking for an exciting way to make a difference, go to www.therapydogs.org

- Certification requirements
- How to become a therapy dog team
- Contact information

For Facilities

TDV teams are flexible and creative—willing and able to volunteer in your facility in the way that best meets your program's needs.

- TDV visits are free-of-charge; we are a non-profit organization driven by the efforts of our volunteers.
- TDV has experience with developing therapy dog policies and procedures and is happy to consult with your facility regarding such guidelines.

For guidelines, testing criteria, and contact information, visit www.therapydogs.org



P.O. Box 1271 / Williston, VT 05495-1271
www.therapydogs.org

An all-volunteer, non-profit, 501 (C)(3) organization of therapy dogs and their handlers who have worked to improve the emotional health of Vermonters since 1992.

This printing of this brochure was generously donated by:  **KBA**
By perfectionists
For perfection



A non-profit organization dedicated to a special kind of volunteerism involving canine companionship.

www.therapydogs.org

The Heart of Canine Therapy

It's been a dreadful day. The car wouldn't start. Traffic made you late. You spilled coffee on your new pants. A hole in a paper bag sends your groceries tumbling across the rain-puddled driveway. Full of frustration, you throw the front door open...and there is your dog. Her entire body wags. She rolls on her back for a tummy rub. You can't help but smile. As you touch her soft fur and feel the warmth of her body, thoughts of stained pants and spilt groceries slip away.

This emotional transformation is the heart of dog therapy.

Think about the capacity our own pets have to ease stress, make us happy, offer comfort. Apply this to patients in hospitals, children in day cares, elders in nursing homes—this is canine therapy.

Canine therapy works toward the emotional health of people in a wide variety of settings—and they bring immense joy and comfort to the many people we serve. During visits, dogs may play, sit to be patted, or take walks with those who are able. For a bedridden patient, a dog might hop on the bed and rest quietly with him or her. Sometimes, all they can do is be there for someone to look at. There are all sorts of activities and levels of interaction possible—based on whatever the person needs at the time.



Benefits of Canine Therapy

Dogs can have a profound ability to touch and engage people. While it may not always be possible to quantify the benefits of dog therapy, the magical interaction possible between animal and human is unmistakable. Tears dry. Frowns become smiles. Inactive hands caress soft fur. Silence becomes a conversation whispered softly in a dog's ear.

Therapy Dogs:

- Bring joy and laughter to institutions that might feel sterile, cold, and frightening
- Give something to do, talk, and think about other than the illness, difficulty, or problem
- Help people cope with illness, loss, depression, and loneliness
- Stimulate the senses, facilitating exercise and activity
- Encourage communication and break the ice
- Provide a source of touch and affiliation
- Boost morale and lower stress levels

Therapy Dog Teams

Therapy dogs come in all sizes; they are young, old, purebred, and mixed. Some wear costumes, some do tricks, some just sit for patting, and other give enthusiastic kisses. Along with their handlers, they bring smiles to the elderly, they chase away the tears of the toddler, and they bring a sense of the outside world into sometimes sterile, cold institutions.

Therapy dogs are certified working animals. A therapy dog must have outstanding temperament, stable personality, obedience training, and a love of people.

Therapy dogs are owned by their handlers; these handlers volunteer their time and energy to share their canine companions with the many people they visit.

For guidelines, testing criteria, and contact information, visit www.therapydogs.org

“The dogs from Therapy Dogs of Vermont that visit our pediatric patients probably do more to bring smiles to their faces than any treatment I can ever prescribe.”

—LEWIS FIRST, MD
Chief of Pediatrics
Vermont Children's Hospital
at Fletcher Allen Health Care



www.therapydogs.org