

# 5 WAYS A PUPPY CAN HELP A CHILD ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

puppy love: building connection, confidence & caring



KAYLENE DORE'

# Table of Contents

**1 : A puppy can reduce sensory congestion 3**

**2 : A puppy can provide (safe) connection 5**

**3 : A puppy can help build confidence 6**

**4 : A puppy can encourage caring for others 7**

**4 : A puppy can provide comfort 8**

Children on the Autism Spectrum can seem lost in a confusing world.

In this ebook you will discover 5 ways a puppy can help a child on the Autism Spectrum to enjoy connection, gain confidence and learn to care for others.

We will share how a puppy can help a child on the Autism Spectrum through:

1. Reducing sensory congestion
2. Providing connection
3. Building confidence
4. Encouraging caring for others and
5. Providing comfort

## 1. A puppy can reduce sensory congestion

*“We think of our eyes as video cameras and our brains as blank tapes to be filled with sensory inputs. Michael Shermer”*



- A person with autism often suffers from sensory stimulation issues (hyper-stimulation) which can manifest as confusion, anxiety, panic attacks, physical pain, aggression, meltdowns and breakdowns.
- A structured, safe, predictable environment which reduces stimulation overload can provide a calming influence on the child.

- A well-behaved puppy with a calm, relaxed temperament can provide a calming influence to a child on the Spectrum.



- A puppy also responds well to a structured, safe, predictable environment and this can provide the child with a sense of shared experience.

*A puppy thrives on routine BUT sometimes situations challenge that routine*

- *Puppies are their own individuals so sometimes they change their behaviour which can affect the usual routine and this can present challenges for a child on the spectrum. Changes to the puppy's routine presents an ideal opportunity for the child to learn about flexibility; the importance and uniqueness of others by learning that the puppy is a separate being with needs and a will of their own*

## 2. A puppy can provide (safe) connection

*" Connection is why we're here. We are hardwired to connect with others, it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives, and without it there is suffering.  
" Brené Brown"*

- Children on the Spectrum can become overwhelmed by social interactions. They can worry about being misunderstood and that they will misunderstand others (words, facial expressions, body language can be VERY confusing).



- A puppy doesn't use confusing words, facial expressions or body language to communicate. A puppy's communication is usually quite simple. Wagging tail = happy; hiding or a growl = not happy.
- A puppy's unconditional love can provide a child on the Autism Spectrum with positive and enjoyable connection. Building on this connection, they can learn the skills needed to understand human interactions.



### 3. A puppy can help build confidence

*"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear. Nelson Mandela"*

- A child on the Autism Spectrum can worry they won't know what to say to someone in a conversation. Studies have shown that autistic children living with a dog appear to have greater social skills than those without a pet.
- Children with autism often don't look at the person speaking to them. People can find this 'weird', disrespectful or even confrontational. However this behaviour isn't usually noticed when both the child and the person speaking to the child are looking at and talking about the puppy on its lead;
- When a child knows they know more about their dog than the other person, they feel confident when talking with others about their puppy.



"When I compared the social skills of children with autism who lived with dogs to those who did not, the children with dogs appeared to have greater social skills," Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction (ReCHAI) in the MU College of Veterinary Medicine

#### 4. A puppy can encourage caring for others

*“Our task must be to free ourselves... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and it's beauty.” — Albert Einstein*

- Learning to care for a puppy can teach responsibility. Taking responsibility for a pet provides opportunities for children to learn caring behaviours.



- Children on the autism spectrum sometimes demonstrate more compassion towards animals (who are seen as helpless) than people (who can/should take care of themselves)
- Experiencing a positive relationship with a puppy can provide lots of opportunities to discuss 'feelings' which can help children better understand emotional issues
- Considering the needs of a puppy can be an important first step towards considering the needs of others.



[www.waratahparkpuppies.com](http://www.waratahparkpuppies.com) Australia's #1 breeder of cavoodle puppies for children on the Au sm Spectrum

## 5. A puppy can provide comfort

*“Sometimes we need someone to simply be there. Not to fix anything, or to do anything in particular but just to let us feel that we are cared for and supported” unknown*

- A puppy can become a child's 'best friend'
- Many children on the Autism Spectrum struggle with forming and/or keeping friends.



- A puppy can bring comfort and support to a child on the Spectrum through uncomplicated companionship and unconditional love.



## A paw in two worlds

- A child on the Autism Spectrum can often appear to live in a world of their own.
- A puppy can often provide a positive connection between the child's world and the rest of the family
- 

A puppy can give YOU the cuddles you may not receive from your autistic child

[www.waratahparkpuppies.com](http://www.waratahparkpuppies.com) Australia's #1 breeder of cavoodle puppies for children on the Au sm Spectrum



If you have a child who could benefit from owning a healthy, happy puppy we invite you to contact us at [www.waratahparkpuppies.com](http://www.waratahparkpuppies.com)

We have personally experienced the benefits a puppy can make in the life of a child on the Autism Spectrum and are always happy to discuss your child's individual needs.

We have a growing community of families with a child who has benefited from owning one of our puppies. Here's a mother's story about her daughter Rose and their puppy Muffin.

*We arrived at Waratah Park to be greeted by Kaylene's warm smile and she invited Rose into a puppy enclosure with her. There were five gorgeous little puppies, each introduced to Rose one at a time. I watched Rose relax – the colour returned to her face, her shoulders dropped and she chatted with Kaylene like they were long lost friends (with perfect eye contact), all the while nursing a puppy in her lap. My daughter was actually comfortable. I felt tears on my cheeks and my husband was now convinced that we needed a Cavoodle puppy.*

*Rose held all the puppies and liked the feeling of two of them, one brown and one black. The little black puppy wagged her tail whenever Rose spoke to her and she just wanted to sleep on Rose's lap.*

*There was no decision to make. This little puppy was the one for us, and now her name is Muffin.*

[www.waratahparkpuppies.com](http://www.waratahparkpuppies.com) Australia's #1 breeder of cavoodle puppies for children on the Autism Spectrum

Visit us today [www.waratahparkpuppies.com](http://www.waratahparkpuppies.com)



[www.waratahparkpuppies.com](http://www.waratahparkpuppies.com) Australia's #1 breeder of cavoodle puppies for children on the Au sm Spectrum