



THE FOSTERING EXPERIENCE **SOME TIPS FROM CESAR MILLAN**

Fostering a dog can prove to be a positive experience for both human and canine, where a dog reaps the benefits of a safe and loving shelter until a forever home is found, humans learn to appreciate the world around them from their dog dwellers.

The work that Guardian Angels for Soldier's Pet does is even more unique, as it offers a safe-haven for pets who cannot presently live with their forever family. Cesar believes fostering is one of the kindest things we can do for dogs in need and is also a great way to test the waters before permanently adopting a dog. Many people do not know what their true lifestyle or energy level is until they have a dog and can see the impact it will have on their lives.

Fostering can be a wonderful introduction to being a dog owner, and the personal fulfillment of knowing you played an instrumental role in the life of a dog in need can last forever. Here are a few tips to get you started on your fostering experience:

PREPARING YOUR HOME:

- Make sure that you have all of the proper accessories
 - food & water bowl
 - leash & collar
 - bed
 - crate
 - grooming supplies
- If you are living with other people, be sure to introduce them to the new addition as well or go for a long walk together when you arrive home.

PREPARING THE DOG:

- The walk is an excellent litmus test for a new dog. Take the dog out for a spin around the block and see how the two of you get along. It's a great way to measure his energy level too.
- Upon bringing the dog into your house for the first time, limit the space he has access to, let him get used to his surroundings and sniff around one room at a time before letting him into the next. He will find his "place." If you have other dogs at home, make sure you introduce them outside of the house and go for a long pack walk first. Try to measure your home environment and keep it consistent with what he's used to – if the foster dog has never lived with other dogs and your house has multiple dogs, it may not be the best fit.

- You don't want the dog to have a drastic lifestyle change, so think of it as getting in shape. Just as it takes weeks or it takes days for you to get in shape, it will be the same process for the dog in getting used to any new schedule or activity.
- Practice exercise, discipline, and affection every day! Start every day with some rigorous exercise, especially in the initial days until a new routine is established.
- If barking or other behavioral issues are present, keep in mind that a foster dog has been accustomed to another's way of leadership and care. You should show the dog that you are his pack leader while his permanent pack leader is away by earning his trust, respect, and loyalty.

PREPARING YOURSELF:

- When selecting a dog to foster (just as in adoption), it is vitally important to take into account how that dog's energy will harmonize with your own. The most important step is to take some time for self-reflection and to identify what your own energy levels are. This may not be your forever dog, but it is still important to go into it with the best intentions for both you and the dog.
- Practice calm assertive leadership. Always maintain a calm assertive energy. It can be hard to do at times, but it is what's best for the dog and you!
- Remember that dogs live in the present! From the moment he's in your care, show him leadership by not smothering him or projecting on him your own human emotions, like sadness or missing a loved one.
- Enjoy the process. Dogs have brought me more gifts and taught me more than I could have ever dreamed of.

**Congratulations for taking on the role of a foster parent!
You are helping out both the dogs and armed forces of
America by opening your home to these dogs in need.**