

# Exemplary Values and the Ripple Effect

## Dog Scouts of America's Code of Ethics

Dog Scouts of America was established to help reduce the number of unwanted dogs in this country that are put to death at an alarming rate each year. Our mission is a proactive one, focusing on the education of pet parents (\*\*defined below) and future pet parents so that dogs are not discarded or reproduced by breeders without ethics. We aim to provide information to anyone who seeks it on how to develop a communication system for training that strengthens the bond and devotion between the human and dog. We educate the public about responsible pet parenting and how this can impact a person's own community as well as pet parents nationwide. We provide the tools for people to avoid or fix common behavior problems, without the need for physical punishment, yelling, threats or pain inducing training equipment. We hope to provide the help that will enable each and every dog to enter a home as a member of the family and be part of that family forever. For dogs that have already been thrown away as a lost cause, we provide informational training help for the rehabilitation of these "second-hand" dogs, so that the next home they go to will be their forever home.

This Code of Ethics should not be recognized in passive observance, but as a set of dynamic principles guiding the members' conduct and way of life in the dog-owning (we refer to it as pet-parenting) community. It is each member's duty to practice the principles that DSA espouses, always using positive methods of instructing (for both the dog and any pet-parent/trainer you may be helping). You should willingly and freely share the benefits of positive training and responsible pet parenting with others, so that, like a pebble dropped into a still pond, the ripple effect will go on to help people unseen and unknown to you at this time, leaving behind a legacy of responsible pet parenting the Dog Scout Way.

As a Member of Dog Scouts of America, I will obey the Dog Scout Laws, and this Code of Ethics, and use it as a tool for self evaluation:

I will remember that to my community and all with whom I come in contact, I represent all other DSA members and pet parents. When handling my own dog, another's dog and even when not accompanied by a dog, I agree to conduct myself in a manner that exemplifies the responsibility and ethics explained here so as not to bring discredit to DSA or anyone who cares about dogs.

I will always strive to better the understanding of dog behavior, proving it a work and pursuit worthy of admiration. I will advocate training with a behavioral approach, using love, kindness, and positive reinforcement that will keep in mind the best interest of the dog, the handler, and most of all the relationship that exists between the two.

I will do my best to carefully select, socialize, train and care for any dog I bring into my family, and give it a safe and loving home for the dog's lifetime. If the dog develops issues, I will do everything within my power to address these sensitivities and manage my dog's environment so that his or her stress and/or fear are minimized as much as possible. I will honor the covenant I have with my dog to help him/her feel safe, so that the dog does not feel the need to display or use aggression in perceived self-defense.

*\*\* The use of the term "parent" and "pet parent" has been used to describe the dog's handler, owner, caretaker, etc. because DSA defines a parent as: A person who raises, nurtures, loves, provides for, teaches and protects a younger being so that he or she can become a welcome and productive member of society. This comprises all the tasks involved in raising a youngster to be a well mannered adult. Parenting begins even before the youngster is born or adopted, it is a part of the relationship within a family and it is something that lasts a lifetime. While we recognize that as far as the law is concerned, dogs are considered property, we feel the relationship is much greater than that of object and property owner. Being a responsible dog owner involves parenting.*