



Healthy Paws Doggie Day Camp

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Purpose

“Healthy Paws Doggie Day Camp” is an event that will help owners and dogs incorporate physical activity into their daily lives. General knowledge of exercise concerning dogs is considerably lacking, obviously observed as they become more obese over time (Fennell, 2005). Between 40-50 percent of our dogs are overweight (Fennell, 2005). It is not only humans who have trouble controlling their body weight, while metabolism begins to slow down with age, canines are also affected. (Borzendowski, 2007). Walking a dog could help a large proportion of the U.S. population [dog owners] increase their physical activity as well as that of their dogs (Ham & Epping, 2006).

Results

There were 15 owners and dogs who attended the event. The agility course was the most successful with the pet and his owner maneuvering the obstacles together. 66% of dogs and owners participated in the agility course. According to the pre-surveys, 86% of owners put their dogs outside when they are not home, and play with them for two to three hours once the owner gets home; and only 60% take their dogs out two to three times a week for a 30 minute walk each day. The survey also shows 80% of humans remain faithful to feeding their dogs only dog food. Many dogs are kept away from human food. The post survey showed that 86% of owners most enjoyed the agility course and would use it in their future exercise time. In addition, 33% of owners were able to learn from the obedience training portion. Based on a liken scale, 86 % of the participants ranked the event a 4, meaning good, where 1- poor, 2- below average, 3-average, 4- good, and 5-great.



Methods

The “Healthy Paws Doggie Day Camp” was one day of scheduled exercises and educational activities involving pets and their owners. Activities included Frisbee fetching, an agility course, a vertical jump, healthy eating tips and an obedience training primer. Owners also completed registration information including general demographics, a pre-knowledge survey, and a post-knowledge survey. PetSense, Precise, and Wal-Mart sponsored the event.

Conclusion

In conclusion, “Healthy Paws Doggie Day Camp” is a much needed event that promotes healthy lifestyles for pets, while providing educational and practical information to their owners. This type of community forum allows pet owners a valuable tool for incorporating simple, as well as, fun activities to improve their pets’ lifestyles. The activities utilized in this event helped provide a basic jumpstart for a better lifestyle. Whether it’s extra time to go on walks, playing Frisbee in the park, or even building an agility set in the backyard, additional interaction will greatly impact a dog’s health. A dog depends on its owner to provide adequate health support; in turn the fortunate owner also benefits from the healthy advantage of owning a loving and loyal pet.

Participants’ Comments

- “I loved the agility course!”
- “I can’t wait to train my dog on an agility course.”
- “The healthy eating circle and basic obedience really helped.”
- “Great job for the first time.”
- “My daughter loved the entire event!”
- “What a great way to have fun with your dog and exercise at the same time!”

