

Intervention Protocol: Sensory

Intervention: All about Dogs- Sensory

Population: Low-cognitive, Dementia

Group size: up to 10

Space: Room large enough to accommodate # of residents in a semi-circle and space for the dog to walk in front of and in between residents.

Materials:

Service dog or good tempered/well trained pet

Dog toys- squeaky

Balls (tennis/playground)

Dog treats

Dog brush

Faux fur pieces

Wet sponge with a rough side

Duster

Blanket or towel

Moist wipes

Time: 15-30 min

Target areas: Sensory stimulation, Social, Communication/Reminiscence

Goals:

-Participants will demonstrate at least 1 response to sensory stimuli

-Participants will stay engaged in the activity for at least 10 min

-Participants will engage socially with peers, staff or animals at least once during the activity.

-Participants will recall at least one memory that is related to dogs.

Program Description:

Introduce yourself and dog. Allow time for the dog to explore his surroundings while participants make observations about the dog. Start introducing a variety of senses/stimuli associated with the dog:

Touch-

1. Allow time for each participant to touch the dog (if they wish).
Talk about how he feels.
2. Hand out faux fur to participants to hold and feel.
3. Allow dog to lick participants and discuss how the tongue feels.
4. Wet the sponge in warm water and have participants feel the rough side of sponge and describe what they feel.
(for those who do not want the dog to lick them)
5. Point out the dog's tail, watch it wag, feel the tail bone under the fur.
Pass out the duster to participants to feel and discuss the similarities.
6. Allow participants to use the brush to brush the dog's coat.
7. Allow participants to feel the dog's wet nose, rough paws and velvety ears.

Sound-

1. Ask the dog to speak.
2. Ask the participants to make a variety of sounds associated with dogs (bark, growl, howl, pant and whine)
3. Introduce squeaky toys to participants and dog and allow time to play

Smell/Taste- not for participants but for the dog.

1. Discuss dog's sense of smell
2. Demonstrate how dogs can find things just by using their noses with a game of hide and seek.
3. Discuss what dogs like to taste.
4. Allow participants to feed the dog treats

Movement-

1. Discuss the way dogs move
2. Have participants walk the dog or simulate walking while seated
3. Throw the ball for the dog to retrieve
4. Play tug of war with the dog
5. Pet the dog in long strokes from head to tail

Social-

1. Allow participants to talk to the dog, give him commands (sit, shake, down, come)
2. Allow the dog and participants to get face to face if they are both willing.
3. Encourage participants to share memories/stories of their pet dogs.

Activity wrap up-

Collect/clean up supplies. Thank each participant for attending the activity. Allow each participant to say good-bye to the dog.

Risk Management Considerations:

-Be mindful of participants' fragile skin which can easily be scratched, bruised or torn (If the participants invites the dog to come up on his/her lap use a towel or blanket on the participants lap to prevent injury to the participant)

-Be aware that some participants may not like to touch or be too close to the dog. Use other props for these participants to touch/hold that mimic the variety of tactile stimuli that is associated with the dog.

-Provide wet wipes to clean participants' hands after they have handled the dog or the dog's slobbery toys.

- Be aware that participants may try to eat the treats that are meant for the dog.

-Monitor for mistreatment of the dog by the participants.

-Monitor for sad or frightful memories that may be triggered by the dog. If this occurs validate the participants feelings associated with the memory.