

## THE FIVE CRITICAL PERIODS

| Period | Days                                     | Basic Needs  | Mental Capacity   | Trainability   | Special Notes   |
|--------|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1      | 0-20 days                                | Warmth<br>Food<br>Sleep<br>Mother  | Nearly Zero   | None   | Little or no handling by humans.  |
| 2      | 4th week<br>(21-28 days)                 | Warmth<br>Food<br>Sleep<br>Mother  | All senses functioning<br><br>Awareness of living begins  | Slight   | Extreme critical period—Do not remove from littermates or mother. Introduction to human society should be instituted but carefully controlled.  |
| 3      | 5th through 7th weeks<br>(29-49 days)    | Canine socialization within litter<br><br>Socialization with human society   | Capable of responding to voices<br><br>Ability to recognize people  | Developing   | Awareness of difference between human and canine societies.   |
| 4      | 8th through 12th weeks<br>(50-84 days)   | Remove from littermates & mother influence<br><br>Supervised human socialization<br><br>Love-Security<br><br>Supervised play with children<br><br>Requires new mother image for security | Brainwaves can be recorded<br><br>Ability to establish permanent bond and man-dog relationship<br><br>Ability to establish confidence<br><br>Capable of accepting gentle discipline | Ability to learn respect<br><br>Capable of learning simple behavioral responses Come-Sit-Stay-No<br><br>Begin house-breaking<br><br>Begin fetch games<br><br>Learning by association | Children and other animals should not be allowed to scare or hurt puppy—either maliciously or inadvertently—Introduction to other humans is very important now but must be closely supervised to minimize adverse conditioning. Expose to loud noises gradually; i.e. autos, vacuum, washing machine. |
| 5      | 13th through 16th weeks<br>(85-112 days) | Love<br>Attention<br>Discipline<br>Socialization<br>Security   | Fully developed needing only experience<br><br>Will attempt to establish self as dominant being<br><br>Mind still being influenced  | Capable of undergoing formal obedience training<br><br>Capable of adopting a positive or negative attitude toward training   | Obedience trainers should be selected with great care—Puppy's mind still being influenced. Praise for correct behavioral response is most effective training tool. Meaningful praise highly important to shape positive attitudes.  |