



Irish Pet Advertising Advisory Group

Pre-birth information – Looking after mom

The Science

The Puppy Plan starts from before the puppy is born. For anyone planning to breed a litter of puppies, they need to make sure that the mother is healthy and happy and is kept in warm, stress-free conditions. Most importantly, they should ensure that the mother has a good temperament - as this will be passed onto her puppies (in the same way that if she is nervous, worried or fearful, this will also be passed on). Puppies born to mothers suffering from poor nutrition, extremes of temperature, and mental or physical stress, are more likely to show behavioural and emotional problems.

Research has also shown that if the mother is stroked, handled and given the care and attention she needs during her pregnancy, the puppies will be more likely to be docile, more emotionally stable, and be born with more enjoyment of being handled.

In addition, if the mother has a good relationship with her owners and feels relaxed and secure, she is going to be happy for her puppies to be handled by them (which is vital for the Plan as well as the puppies' development), and will pass on that positive attitude to her puppies – which is vitally important.

This highlights the importance of obtaining puppies from breeders or owners who look on their dogs as their companions and friends – and not just dogs (or even worse, units of commercial enterprise) In other words, it underlines to new owners the importance of finding a good breeder – and not buying their puppy from internet adverts, pet shops or puppy farmers.

Task: Make sure mum gets all the care and attention she needs.

Weeks 1 & 2

This should be a quiet time for both the mother and the puppies, as this is the time when the maternal bond is established. At this time, you should be gently handling the puppies to check on good progress, and generally ensuring the mother and puppies are doing well. Any causes for concern should be discussed with your vet.



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