

Therapy Animals of Western New York (TAWNY)

"Helping Animals help People"

Are there different roles for animals in therapy? YES!

- Animal Assisted Activities (AAA) offer encounters that enhance the quality of life.
- Visitation Programs (one type of AAA) use certified animals who visit with residents and/or patients in a residential or institution setting.
- Animal assisted therapy (AAT) involves animals as an integral part of a specific treatment plan.
- A Service Animal is specifically trained to meet the needs of a disabled individual.



*Being part of a volunteer therapy
pet team is a way to give back to
your community. Let us help you get
involved!*



**Therapy Animals
of Western New York
(TAWNY)**

<http://therapyanimalswny.org>
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(716) 628-6926



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**Do you live with a friendly
companion animal who
loves people?**

**Have you ever wanted to
visit a nursing home,
senior apartment complex,
or other facility with your
companion animal?**

What is a therapy animal and what do they do?

- Therapy animals are trained and then certified to be calm and gentle with people in many different settings including health facilities.
- Therapy animals provide opportunities for contact with people who may or may not be disabled.
- Therapy animals offer unconditional acceptance and the opportunity to touch another living creature.

Do pets really improve human health?

- The healing effect of animals on patients has been well documented. The simple act of stroking a dog will lower blood pressure and reduce stress.
- Dogs are the best known therapy animals - cats, birds, horses and other species are also used.



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My dog is friendly - why do we need training?

- Dogs become familiar with differently abled people including children, seniors, and those in assisted living or nursing facilities.
- Dogs learn to be comfortable around wheelchairs and other medical equipment.
- The AKC Canine Good Citizen Program is one way to begin preparing your animal for certification.

Are there local trainers where we can prepare for the AKC Canine Good Citizens (CGC) test?

- Some local training facilities offer extensions of traditional obedience classes as a precursor to CGC training. Visit the TAWNY website for information on local trainers.
- For a full description of the CGC, visit the American Kennel Club web site at <http://www.akc.org>.

My dog is obedience trained - why do we need certification?

The certifying organization, for a fee, makes sure that:

- Each therapy animal is vaccinated, free of disease, and able to be calm in any situation.
- There is no fee to the facility for visitation.
- Owners are educated about diseases that can be transmitted between animals and humans.
- Therapy animal teams are covered by insurance.

How do I get certified?

Visit the TAWNY web site for information on local trainers who can help you get started. Also visit these certifying organizations' web sites for more information about the process:

- Therapy Dogs International
<http://www.tdi-dog.org/>
- The Delta Society
<http://www.deltasociety.org/>
- Therapy Dogs, Inc.
<http://www.therapydogs.com/>

My dog and I are already visiting a nursing home... is that ok?

- Only as long as there are no problems. However, being protected through certification and insurance is the best way to go. You can continue to visit the same place during the process.

