



Accredited Facility Dogs

In Victim Services and the Criminal Justice System

Introductions & Housekeeping

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Delta Police Victim Services



Some History...

- Ellen O'Neill Stephens – Courthouse Dogs Foundation
- “Jeeter” – 2003
- “Ellie” - 2004
- Caber – 2010
- US – 64 dogs in 38 states
- Chile – 4 dogs
- Canada – 32 dogs in 7 provinces
- Justice Facility Dogs Canada



Accredited Facility Dogs (AFD's) in Canada

32 dogs working across Canada

- BC - 6
- Alberta – 10
- Saskatchewan - 3
- Manitoba – 1
- Ontario – 6
- Quebec – 5
- Nova Scotia – 1

Dogs working in:

- CAC's
- Police Victim Services
- Police Sexual Offence Sections
- Court-Based Victim Services
- Child Protective Services



ADI Schools Across Canada



Pacific Assistance Dog Society – www.pads.ca – located in BC, serves all of Canada

Dogs with Wings – www.dogswithwings.ca – located in Alberta, serves Alberta

National Services Dogs – www.nsd.on.ca – located in Ontario, serves Ontario

Dog Guides – www.dogguides.com – located in Ontario, serves Ontario

MIRA - www.mira.ca – located in Quebec, serves Quebec



What is an AFD?

A fully trained assistance dog from an assistance dog school that is accredited through **Assistance Dogs International (ADI)**.

These dogs are:

- Trained from birth to 2 – 2.5 years of age.
- Exposed to a wide variety of people, places and things.
- Temperament tested.
- Successfully complete ADI's "Public Access Test" at placement and throughout their life.
- Very low energy, stable and calm temperament, best practice for ppl who have experienced trauma.
- Have exceptional obedience and behaviours conducive to being in a forensic interview or courtroom.



What is the International Best Practice?

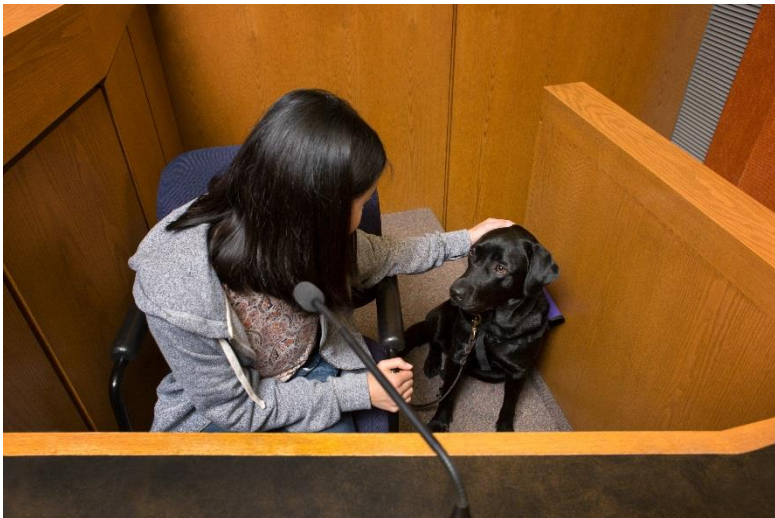
An International Best Practice has been established for dogs working in our industry. It is:

1. The Facility Dog should be a graduate from an assistance dog organization that is a member of Assistance Dogs International.
2. The Facility Dog handler is a professional with training and experience working in the legal system (such as a victim advocate, investigator or forensic interviewer). The handler should have experience in trauma informed practice.

Benefits of AFD Intervention

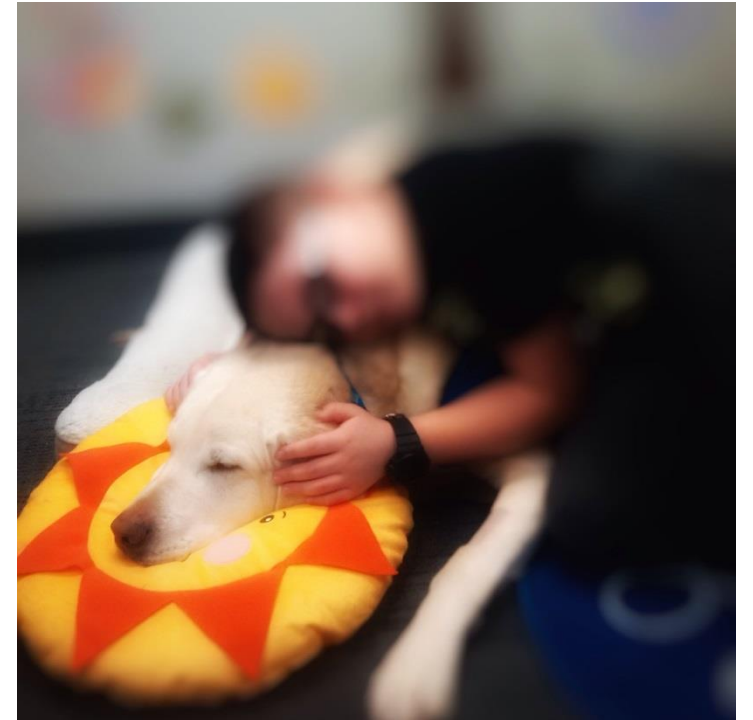
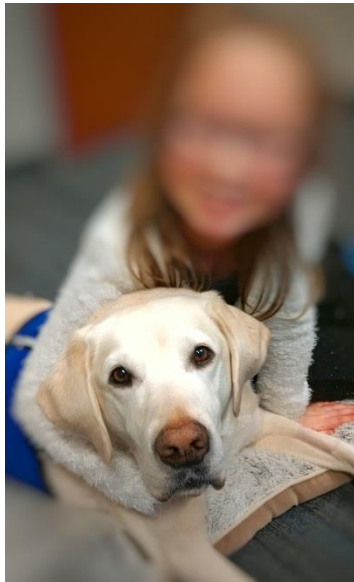


- Defuse intense emotions and anxiety.
- Provide an outlet for cathartic touch.
- Lower blood pressure and heartrate.
- Assist people struggling to communicate.
- Normalize traumatic situations.
- Draw out healthy emotions.
- Act as a goodwill ambassador for agency.



Trauma, AFD's and the Oxytocin Effect

- Trauma and activation of the Sympathetic Nervous System.
- Cortisol and cognitive impacts.
- Dog intervention & oxytocin.



Applications for AFD's

Across the continuum of services:

- Crisis intervention.
- Agency meet-n-greets.
- Client meetings.
- Hospital visits.
- Forensic interviews.
- Forensic examinations.
- Court orientation
- Crown Counsel pretrial interviews.
- Court accompaniment.
- Celebration meetings.



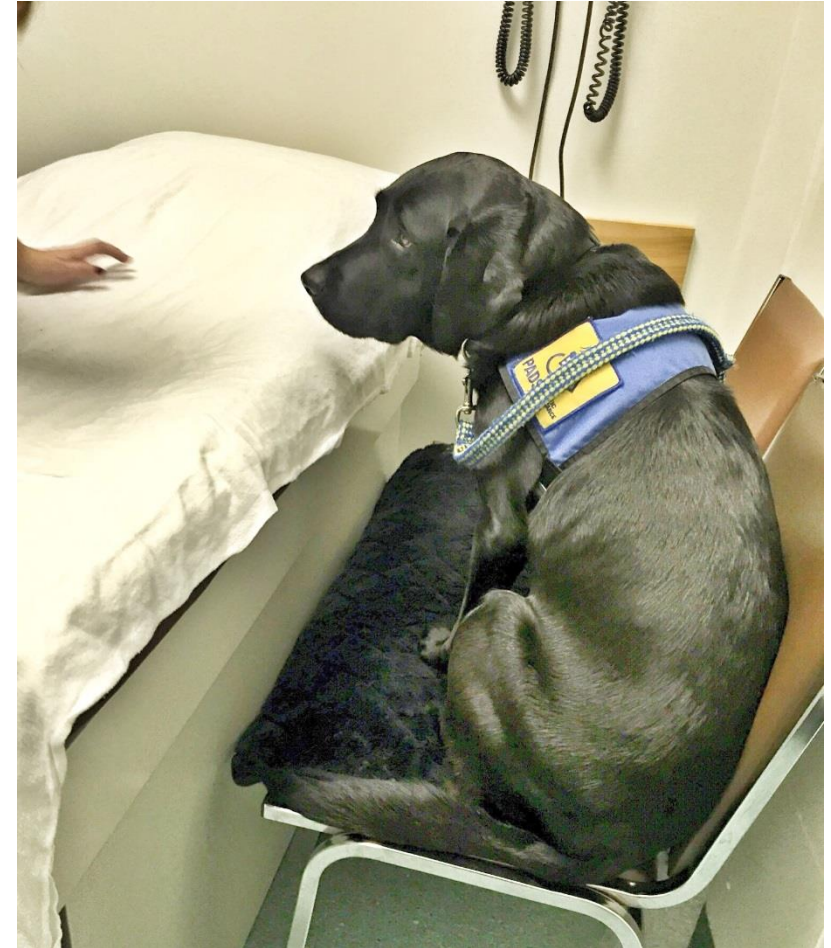
Forensic Interviews



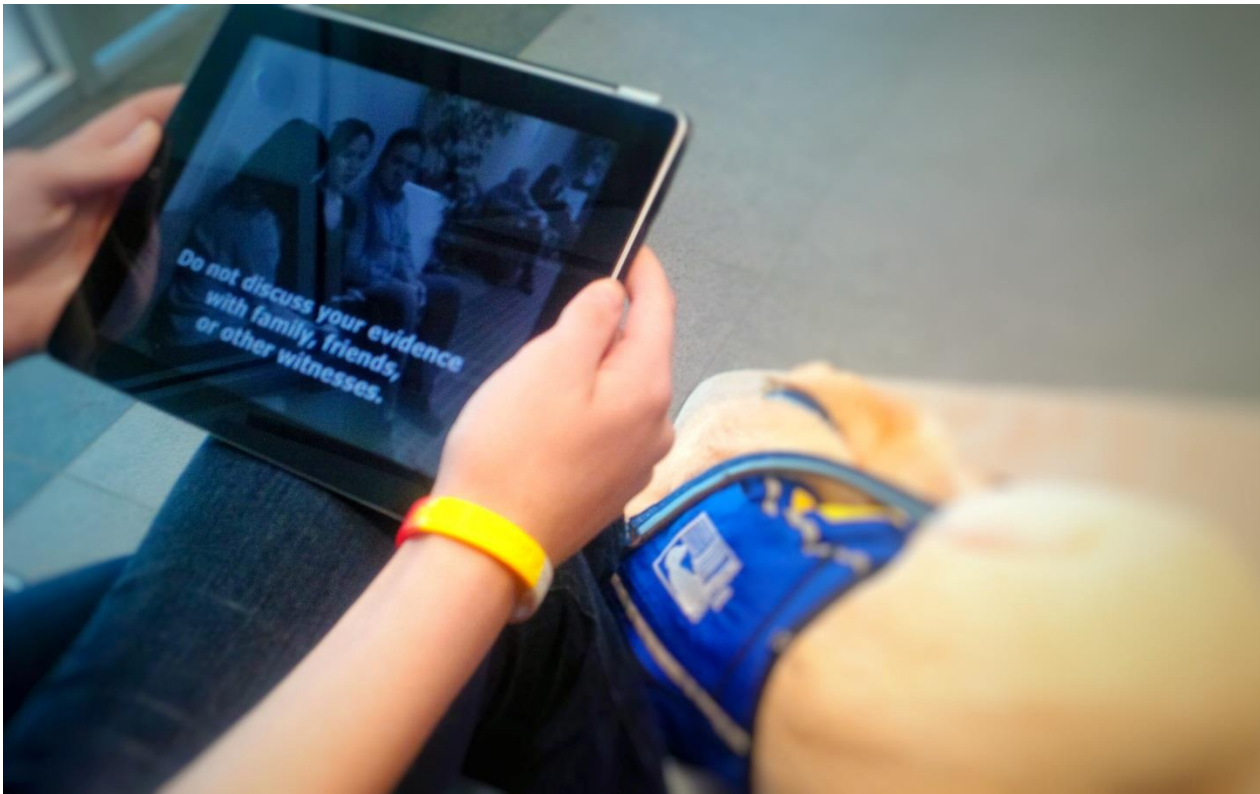
- Reduce anxiety.
- Mitigate the impact of revisiting the trauma.
- Assists with disclosures.
- Can assist in keeping child in the room when they wish to depart.
- Child can look at the dog if it is more comfortable than making eye contact with the investigator.
- Dogs are NEVER to be used as an incentive to come to an interview but the knowledge that the dog was there the last time may be an incentive for re-interviews.
- Tips – not an incentive, pre-interview meet-n-greets are imperative to determine child's comfort and ensure child is not negatively distracted.

Forensic Examinations

- Dog DNA and human DNA are distinct, thus no cross-contamination.
- Incentive to complete exam, provide physical comfort through touch during the exam.
- Calm, low energy of dog is soothing.



Court Orientation



- Incentive to attend orientation.
- Opportunity to determine if utilizing the dog for court accompaniment would be appropriate.
- If emotions arise the AFD can assist in mitigating the impact of the immediacy of court/testimony.



Hospital Visitation

- Assist with fears associated to medical intervention.
- Provide physical comfort.
- Lower BP and HR.

Court Accompaniment

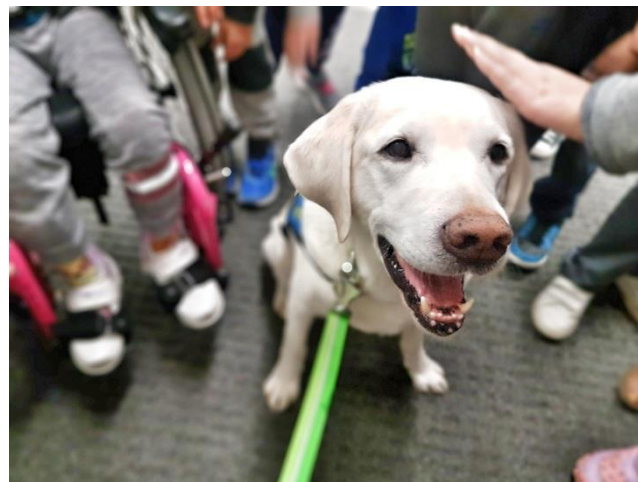
Steps & Considerations:

- AFD resume.
- Client/AFD pre-court meeting.
- Testimonial aid application (handler may have to testify to application).
- Handler to be deemed “support person” and in close proximity to dog.
- Dogs usually on floor on a mat or “target”.
- Dogs must have perfect behaviour and not disrupt the proceedings.
- Seek comments “on the record” about the dogs behaviour.



Other Applications

- Disaster response.
- School support.
- Mass casualty response.
- Public presentations.
- Employee support.



Social Media Opportunities



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[k9caber](#) Today was a [#awesomeday](#). I got to support a young [#victimofcrime](#) at court while she testified. More than anyone ever before, she utilized me for [#emotionalsupport](#) throughout her testimony. Everytime she felt [#stressed](#) or upset she would bend down and pet me in the witness box. And the coolest part...petting me made her [#smile](#). Every. Single. Time. I think I

- Promotion of your services, agency and AFD program.
- Highlight your great work!
- Positive and uplifting interaction with the public.
- Opportunity for victims who have utilized dog to stay connected



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@boostforkidsiggy - Insta

@boostforkidsjersey - Insta

kanak – chien de soutien emotionnel – FB

PADS Accredited Facility Dog Dorado – FB

PADS Facility Dog West – FB

PADS Facility Dog Kane – FB

Odie VSU - FB



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Courthouse Dogs Foundation

www.courhousedogs.org

Assistance Dogs International

www.assistedogsinternational.org