

Includes:

ADHD

Covers:

Safe interactions

Relationship building

Increasing responsibility

## Family Dog Success Story

### Karen, Francesca and Dessy

“We realised that a specially-trained autism assistance dog wasn’t right for us; Francesca needed more of a dependable friend.”

Karen is mum to two daughters and her eldest, Francesca, has autism and ADHD. “A couple of people in an autism support group I attend had suggested that maybe a dog would be a good addition to our family but as someone who hasn’t ever had a dog, there was a lot of thinking to be done,” explains Karen.

After a bit of research, Karen decided that her family would ideally want a non-moulting breed with a kind nature; something like a Labrador. “I also remembered that teacher I had when I was at school had a gorgeous standard poodle who had such a lovely temperament... so, I thought about a cross breed and finally settled on an Australian Labradoodle who we named Dessy.”

Karen originally did a little bit of training work with Dessy’s breeder but wanted to know more and also expand her own knowledge and understanding of how Dessy could be trained to help Francesca.



For getting up



For getting out



For making life possible

“I did some research online and came across Dogs for Good’s Family Dog service,” she explains. “The more I read, the more it seemed to be exactly what I was after so I booked onto a workshop that was being held local to me,” says Karen.

“I was expecting that the course might fill a few gaps in my knowledge but even after the first workshop, I realised it was going to deliver far more,” says Karen. “It’s not about training your dog, it’s about training you.”

One important thing that Karen learned after Workshop One was the importance of giving Dessy space. “It’s not something we’d really ever thought about but after the workshop, I realised just how much Francesca interacted with Dessy. I explained to her that just like she needs ‘quiet time’ on her own to process things, Dessy needs the same. She totally understood and Dessy is definitely benefitting.”

Workshop two focuses on how dogs communicate with us, how a dog can help a family, how dogs learn and how to problem solve effectively. Karen found this invaluable. “Once the Family Dog team showed us how dogs communicate with us and how to understand what they’re telling us, you start to understand things from a dog’s point of view. And very quickly, you begin to develop a far deeper bond with your dog which is just amazing.”

Workshop three covers how to set up a training session with your dog and explains the different styles of training families can use that best fit in with their lives and their own dog.

“The trainers explain how to set proper goals that are achievable and this is hugely empowering,” says Karen.

Since attending the workshops, Karen feels more confident about training Dessy and Francesca is benefitting from having more structure around her interactions with Dessy.



For getting out



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“Francesca is learning about responsibility and enjoys joining in with activities and training. I see her and Dessy developing a lovely deep bond and we’re all looking forward to seeing how things progress.

“I always knew Dessy was a lovely dog but attending the Dogs for Good Family Dog workshops has showed me that she’s actually so much more than that – she’s amazing. Being able to understand her on a far deeper level ensures that I can meet all her needs and give her the best life possible and as a happy consequence, she’ll be that lovely, devoted, dependable friend for Francesca.”



For getting up

For getting out



For making life possible

