



# The Right Steps

To A Well Behaved Dog

“**DOGGY DIGEST**”

1st Quarter Newsletter 2025

## The Right Steps Training Facility has moved to Florence!

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**We are excited and proud to announce The Right Steps Training Facility has moved to Florence, MT** from our prior Northern, California Location of over 25+ years! Professional Trainer of 40+ years.

We are now located at 419 Wolfville Ln #6, Florence, MT 59833.

Our new location has endless potential!

**Our New 1500 Square Foot Indoor Heated and Insulated Training Facility offers** a great central location for Bitterroot Valley Puppy and Dog Owners, tall visual dividers when needed to help shy pups or excited Puppies/Dogs in Classes, an inside litter box for Baby Puppies, all in all a fantastic, safe, and

Private Training environment!

For our K9 Nose Work Clients we have a 300 foot loft upstairs to crate Dogs when they are resting waiting for their turn to run.

Same great training enhanced by a fantastic new location!

We also have an updated website being designed. as well as a new Online Class Platform in the works.

We have worked very hard over the years to create Structured Small Private Group Classes and/or Private Training Sessions utilizing Positive Reinforcement and Force Free Methods to allow Puppy, Dog, and Human Clients a fun and safe way to learn.

You will have homework!

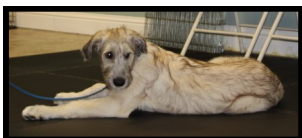
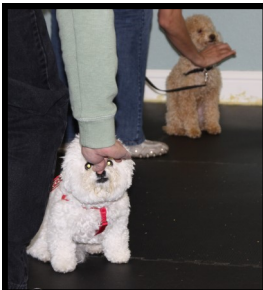
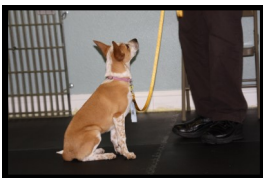
**We come highly recommended both by top Veterinarians and Clients.** Please take the time to read their very thoughtful Testimonials and Referrals: <https://www.therightsteps.com/testimonials.html>

**Are you interested in learning more about us?** Check out About Us on our Website: [https://www.therightsteps.com/about\\_us.html](https://www.therightsteps.com/about_us.html)

Also follow us on our Business Facebook Pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/K9NWCNWI/>

<https://www.facebook.com/TheRightStepsK9NWBitterrootValleyMT/>



## We Support Local Veterinarian/Client Relationships

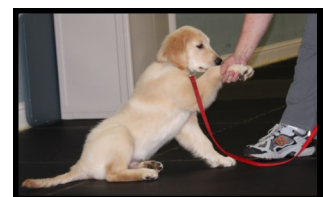
We encourage our Clients to choose a Veterinarian they and their Puppies/Dogs (Animals) can trust.

For our Records we require our Clients provide copies from their Veterinarian Receipts/Invoices of their: New Puppy/Dog Exams, Age Appropriate Vaccines, and Fecal Results.

This ensures the Puppies/Dogs training with us at our location are free of disease, parasites, and are healthy physically and emotionally ready to train safely.

It also helps our Clients catch anything the Puppy/Dog may have pre-existing that they were unaware of, which can be huge!

This simple Training Facility Rule is a win/win for us, our Reputation, our Clients, and Local Veterinarians.



## Holiday Puppies & Dogs in the Year: Help for the frustrated and lost!

At the time you thought getting that cute little puppy or even perhaps an older dog for the family for Christmas seemed like a great idea! Perhaps the decision was a wild impulse or on the flip side you tried your best to research and make an educated decision on what breed and type of dog to add to the family.

When adding a new doggy member it seems to those who have had dogs before (especially if it has been a long time) that adding a new puppy or dog to the family should be a breeze.... Yep, "Old Shep Syndrome" hits again! Old Shep my childhood dog was perfect and gee he must have just come that way, he never had any issues! Or to those who are new dog owners the "Oh how hard can it be to raise a puppy Syndrome"...you may watch old reruns of Lassie on T.V. and it looks so easy and fun!

Unfortunately, reality sometimes differs from our memories and/or expectations and you are left scrambling trying to figure out what you got yourself into! Yikes instead of being a breeze it is work, work, and more work.

Is your new best friend peeing and pooing around the house and ruining your carpet or hardwood floor? Has he eaten grandma's irreplaceable antique furniture? When called runs away faster and believes sit, stay, or down is a foreign language? It is!

**We have the answer for you! Sign up for our Small Private Group Training Classes**—We offer Baby Puppy Socialization & Training Classes, Adolescent & Adult Dog Training Classes, For Fun Classes,

and K9 Nose Work Classes!

What if in the New Year you have a new little 10 week old Border Collie, German Shepherd, Chihuahua, or a shy puppy of any breed and size? Look at starting our Surviving Puppy Hood Classes A.S.A.P. These Classes are specifically geared to begin in providing you with the tools to raise, train, and socialize your puppy.

Week #1 is for the Humans and is an approximate 2 Hour Lecture geared to go home and start your Puppy's Training in advance of the first week with the Puppies at Week #2. Also, we go over the important information to help you, your Family, and Puppy be best set up for success. Examples of what we cover? Management, House Training, Play Biting, Humping, Jumping, Fear Periods, Socialization what it is and is not, Mental Stimulation, Age Appropriate Physical Exercise, and much more!

These Classes teach handlers how to work with their pups with distractions, how to begin to get a foundation on basic training, and most importantly begin to safely socialize their puppy with other people and puppies of different shapes, sizes, and voices. This great class not only offers training, but a short complimentary on or off leash play session with other Baby Puppies!

We offer an Inside Training Facility, Inside Litter Box, we vacuum and mop before the pups arrive, and have very strict health and safety requirements to help new puppy Clients and their Veterinarians confident to have your puppy train with us.

The Right Steps has over 25 years of

having an outstanding reputation for working with puppies as early as 8 weeks of age at our Training Facility! Wow, yes that is a long time and a fantastic record we are proud of.

Our Training utilizes only Positive Reinforcement and Force Free Methods and only Humane Equipment is allowed. You will be using YUMMY Treats and Food Rewards.

Our goal is build confidence slowly with our Puppy and Human Clients, one baby step at a time.

Our Small Private Classes allows us time to do a Demo, then come around and help each Puppy Parent/Puppy with the exercises, before the next demo.

Our Classes are very structured and you will have homework after each Class to work on daily at home.

We run a very tight ship, so to speak, to allow for a safe and fun learning environment for Puppies/Dogs and their Humans.

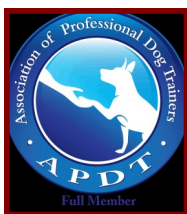
We also offer Private Training Sessions at our Location, In-Home, and Off-Site. Private Training allows me to see first hand what you are dealing with and evaluate, discuss your goals, and from there create a Personalized Training Plan.

You can take Group Classes, Private Training, and/or a Combination!

We love what we do and work hard to help our Puppy/Dog and Human Clients be successful!

**Questions?** Please call and speak with us and/or e-mail before signing up to ensure an awesome fit!

[406-317-1213/therightstepsmt@gmail.com](mailto:406-317-1213/therightstepsmt@gmail.com)



## Back to the Basics: Good Manners ~ Please Be Polite....

**First catch on basic manners is having a foundation in some Basic Training Cues such as:** Sit, Down, both Sit & Down Stay, and a Recall (a.k.a. Come).

**You may ask why are the basics so important?** In a nut shell it gives you options of asking for nice behaviors in place of those behaviors that drive you nuts! Remember safety while you train.

**Changing our thought process comes in handy....** Instead of just reacting, think ahead and be proactive versus reactive.

**Use your Management Tools** like Crates, Exercise Pens, Leashes attached to the Dog and Leash in your Hand, have Treats out and ready to be in Training Mode.

**Think how do I set my Puppy/Dog up for success to learn** versus setting them up to fail.

**For example what drives you crazy?** Door rushing? Barking at the doorbell? Door bolting and not coming back? Jumping on your our your Guests? Play Biting? House Training Accidents? Begging while you are eating dinner?

**Once you have those behaviors in mind, think hmmm** what are my options of an alternate behavior that would bring peace to my home? What can you do in advance to set them up for success vs. failure?

**Instead of barking, jumping, and going nuts on your guests** how being proactive before they arrive have a leash attached to your Puppy/Dog and be in

Management and Training mode! Reward nice behaviors like: focus on you, sits, downs.

**Instead of running out the door** ultimately create a solid sit or down stay on a bed away from the door anytime it is opened. **Also**, teach a Release Word (example: free, release, break), so there is no confusion on when he is released.

**Use Management while Training so they have ZERO chance of practicing escaping and not coming back.** We want them learning from you, not the environment.

**Separate, take the time to work on a solid Recall** (a.k.a. come or here) ultimately with distractions and/or an emergency/reliable recall, slowly one baby step at a time. **Make it FUN!!!!**

**First priority for demanding dogs** is to make sure you have honestly met his Mental Stimulation and Age Appropriate Physical Exercise Needs—a must!

**During dinner time you can be in Training Mode** — teach him to stay on his bed or other ‘go to’ place while you eat. **Or be Proactive with Management** and have him in an Exercise Pen or Crate **combined with something interactive to keep him busy and calm** with a Yummy pre-stuffed Kong Toy or West Paw Toppl that is Frozen with YUMMY Food/Treats or a Bully Stick in a Bully Buddy.

**What about that throw my ball throw my ball or pet me pet me?** Remember it is easy to accidentally reinforce behavior you do not want as easy is it is to

reward behavior you do want. Think about what you are reinforcing and teaching, be sure to stay consistent.

**Jumping? Reward an incompatible behavior** like a Sit or a Down.

**Basic Barking?** Teach a Speak **and** a Quiet Cue (think of it as an on and off switch).

**Frustration Barking?** Why is your Dog frustrated? Listen to your Dog.

**Last but not least....** I realize we love our dogs, they are so cute and cuddly, but take the time to have them work for what they want most, as a fun way to get some easy Training Homework in (example: play, pets, toys, access to outside/inside or leash for a walk, treats, food bowl, etc.). How you ask? You initiate, ask them for a nice behavior like a Sit or a Down or Sit/Down Stay, even a trick, then reward them with what they like or enjoy most....you will over time be amazed at how their listening skills and response times will begin to improve, and how much little time it takes to get in your Class Homework in mini sessions on and off throughout your day!

**Need to Improve those Basic Training Cues first? Ready to make a commitment, now is the perfect time....**

**Sign your Puppy or Dog up for The Right Steps** Private Small Group Classes? Limited on time? We also offer Private Training Options at our Location, Off-Site and in the convenience of your own home.

## Past Review of Nina Ottosson’s Interactive Puzzle Toys for Dogs (& Cats)

In 2011 at an Agility Trial vendor booth over the summer I saw my first Nina Ottosson Puzzle for Dogs (& Cats) and was intrigued. As fate would have it the following Monday a fellow student in my agility class offered, out of the blue, to let me take hers home to try with my dogs, it was the plastic DogFinder.

My dogs were instantly hooked, they found it quite easy to solve and quickly get the treats, yet were ready to play again and again!

Off to Amazon.com I went and bought the wooden Turbo Dog Puzzle. This one slowed them down quite a bit, more frustrating, but kept their interest. The key is

using small treats or it will jam.

Our newest puzzle purchase was the plastic Tornado. Found this puzzle in the middle of the two in difficulty and so far seems to be their favorite! Quite addicting for the dogs (although my cats haven’t caught the bug yet).

Puzzles must be supervised at all times.



# The Right Steps

To A Well Behaved Dog

**The Right Steps / Cindy C. Smith, CNWI**  
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**Facebook Pages:**

<https://www.facebook.com/K9NWCNWI/>

[https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/TheRightStepsK9NWBitterrootValleyMT/)

[TheRightStepsK9NWBitterrootValleyMT/](https://www.facebook.com/TheRightStepsK9NWBitterrootValleyMT/)

## **Indoor Heated & Insulated Training Facility**

**Physical Location:** 419 Wolfville Ln #6,  
Florence, MT 59833

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 74, Florence, MT  
59833



## **Upcoming 2025 Class Schedules:**

<https://therightsteps.dogbizpro.com/public/registration/index.aspx>

**Surviving Puppyhood Classes: Puppies 9 Weeks to 16 Weeks of Age** — Saturday Mornings/Afternoons **or** Thursday Evenings

6 Week Sessions / Small Class Size of 2 Puppies Minimum to 6 Puppies Maximum / (Puppies 10 Wks to 16 Wks of Age) - Each Class 45 Minutes of Training, plus 10-15 minute complimentary on or off leash Socializing Time. 2 Humans Maximum per Puppy.

**Surviving Adolescence & Adult Dog Back to Basics Classes: Puppies and Dogs 4 Months and Older** —

Saturday Afternoons, Sunday Afternoons, **or** Wednesday Evenings

6 Weeks Sessions / Small Class Size of 2 Puppies/Dogs Minimum to 4 Puppies/Dogs Maximum - Each Class 60 Minutes of Training Time. 2 Humans Maximum per Puppy/Dog.

**Advanced Classes & Misc. For Fun Classes:** For Graduates of The Right Steps Basic Training Classes.

6 Weeks Sessions / Small Class Size of 2 Puppies/Dogs Minimum to 4 Puppies/Dogs Maximum - Each Class 60 Minutes of Training Time. 2 Humans Maximum per Puppy/Dog.

**K9 Nose Work Classes:** Introduction to K9 Nose Work Classes, Ongoing K9 Nose Work Classes, and K9 Nose Work Workshops.

K9 Nose Work Group Classes are 6 Week Sessions each, and are Ongoing from one level to the next in 6 Week Sessions, as we continue to build a solid foundation of building confidence, problem solving, independence, Dog and Handlers Skills—whether just for fun and/or for future Trialing/Competition Goals. Great Mental Stimulation.

Open to Existing and New Clients to The Right Steps, as no Training in advance is required. Reactive Dogs under control may do, as only 1 Puppy/Dog works at a time/safe space. Great for building confidence. 2 Humans Maximum per Puppy/Dog.

**Private Training:** Is Offered Wednesdays, Thursday, & Fridays by Appointment. Offered for puppies and adult dogs of all ages. May be located at our Training Facility, in your home, and/or Off-Site. Great for families and/or those with limited time! Personalized Training customized to your and your family's specific goals & needs.