

Pawsitive Comfort Special Dogs For Special Kids

Michelle McCarthy of K9 Home Schooling and Certified Therapy Animal Consultant and Dr. Mark Bowers of the Ann Arbor Center For Behavioral Pediatrics speak about the relationship between Social Support Therapy Dogs and children with special needs.

Social Support Therapy Dogs are life changing for children with Autism, Learning Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities or Chronic Health Conditions. Social Support Therapy Dogs are also partnered with Clinicians in a variety of Medical settings. These dogs offer:

- companionship
- emotional support
- participate in therapies to improve speech and coordination
- improve social skills and teach empathy for others
- encourage social interaction with others
- encourage exercise, physical activity and responsibility

Dr. Bowers will discuss the goodness-of-fit between child and animal including temperament, behavior, and needs. Michelle McCarthy will discuss the process of raising, training and working a Therapy Dog.

Dr. Mark Bowers is a Pediatric Psychologist in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He has provided psychological services to children, adolescents, and families for over a decade. He specializes in neurodevelopmental diagnoses (i.e., Autism, Asperger's, ADHD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Learning Difficulties) and he is an expert in social skills. He has worked with children at the world-renowned Menninger Clinic, owned and operated a private psychology practice in Kansas, worked as a consultant and therapist within the public school system, and completed his residency in Clinical Child/Pediatric Psychology at Denver Children's Hospital. Dr. Bowers has contributed to articles in WebMD magazine, Scholastic, and Parenting: The Early Years. He recently developed a mobile application for Apple devices to help children practice and improve their social skills and he has written a book on improving social skills with children and adolescents.

Michelle McCarthy is a nationally recognized Certified Dog Behavior Consultant and Certified Therapy Animal Consultant with the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC). Michelle has completed advanced certification programs in canine behavioral studies and stays current by attending seminars by certified trainers, behaviorists, veterinarians and other credentialed experts. She has provided training and consulting services in Southeast Michigan since 1999.

Michelle developed the first Therapy Dog Training Program in Southeast Michigan. Michelle's expertise in the field of Animal Assisted Therapy allows her to prepare canines and humans for testing by national therapy dog organizations. She also works closely with families to train Social Support Therapy Dogs for children with special needs.

If you would like to schedule a workshop or seminar with Michelle and Dr. Bowers for your organization, please contact Michelle@k9homeschooling.com or 734-395-2608.