



**Canadian Chihuahua Rescue & Transport**  
**1830 Bank Street, Box 83023 Ottawa ON K1V 1A3**  
**1-877-783-7333**  
**www.ccrt.net**

### **Rescue Dog Adoption - Adjustment Period**

Adopting a rescue dog is a very exciting time for you and your family. There is much to be done including preparing your home for your new family member, buying food and lots of toys and accessories. This is also the time to prepare yourself for the inevitable adjustment period that will take place for everyone involved – both human and furry. The Canadian Chihuahua Rescue and Transport (CCRT) wants to ensure you are fully and completely aware of what will most likely happen during the first few weeks your dog is with you so you are entirely prepared to handle the ups and downs that will occur.

It is our experience – as well as the experience of all rescue groups – that the first couple of weeks can be stressful for you, your family and your new dog. You have to establish a new routine, your family needs to prioritize feedings and walks and your dog needs to become comfortable and confident in your environment. This can only be accomplished by working together as a family and most importantly, by being extremely, extremely patient with your new pet.

Our rescue dogs come to us from a variety of different backgrounds and experiences, many of which we can only guess at. It would be nice to think the dogs realize we have ‘rescued’ them and that they are grateful for our help. On the contrary, they carry baggage and scars that may take a significant amount of time to heal – and some may never heal completely. A rescue dog is a huge undertaking with an enormous amount of responsibility. You must be fully prepared to deal with the good, the bad and the ugly and to work hard at establishing a life long relationship with your dog.

You can expect your new dog to behave very differently to what it did in foster care. The dog may hide and be very shy or, may exhibit rather negative behaviour. Remember, the CCRT foster home was patient and worked with the dog early on to help it adjust and get comfortable. When the dog is moved to your home, naturally, it will be confused with its new surroundings and be out of its element in relation to its routine.

For the first several days, it would be best to keep your pet confined to a particular area in your house, one that is quiet where the dog can get to know everyone. Set up the dog's bed and/or crate, its food and water dishes and perhaps even some 'pee pads'. Accidents are incredibly common during the first few days in a new home and you should be prepared to handle this.

A great suggestion to help establish a strong bond with the dog is hand-feed it for at least the first 2 weeks. You should also frequently use the dog's name in a positive voice while feeding/grooming.

Do not initiate contact or play with the dog – let the dog come to you. It will make your life a lot easier if you allow this to happen. Make sure you have a set routine for your new family member. Feed the dog at the same time every day, take it out on a regular basis, praise your new pet when it deserves it and be extremely consistent with this. Consistency will go a long way towards making the dog understand its new routine.

This is not the time to start training your dog. The CCRT recommends that you not begin any type of training or allow the dog to be negatively impacted in any way by people it has no bond with. Until your dog is completely at ease with all members of the family, its routine is established and the dog understands who is boss, do not attempt to train or correct your new dog. The dog should not be scolded for anything – the dog needs to trust and know “this is a good home with good people.”

The CCRT is thrilled that you have chosen to adopt a rescue dog and will work with you during this important transition time. We are committed to the happiness and safety of our dogs and trust you are committed to the time, effort and energy it will take to help your dog adjust. We know that if you are, you will be rewarded many times over with a happy, furry family member.