



Facility Dog Davis on her first day of school. "Her impact has been beyond what we ever imagined it would be. - Kelly Robinson, social worker at

A four legged Teacher's Aide

Davis' placement at Frankfort school has made an immediate and significant impact. As recounted by social worker Kelly Robinson, "Davis has helped to calm a student with aggressive behaviors more quickly. Davis has helped a quiet student speak up and be more assertive as he/she is learning to give her commands and reward her with treats. Davis has helped to motivate students who are slow to attend group sessions by walking them there." For students who struggle to come into school, holding her leash and having the dog walk them to their classroom, is all the confidence a student needs.

"It makes people happy for a moment, which then in turn spreads kindness," said Principal Jason Isdonas. "Davis is now an integral member of our staff. I'm so proud. I'm proud of our kids and their respect for Davis and the fact that she's working for us."



Scan this code to visit our website!

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Version 1.29.2023





Reducing stress during finals week at UIC SAB

Who we are—

Healing Hearts trains comfort dogs to interact with individuals who are experiencing stress, physical and emotional uncertainty in their lives, and trauma. This can be at assisted living/nursing facilities, in-home hospice, hospitals, churches, first responders, children's reading programs, stress relief for students during finals week, and more.

We also raise and train facility dogs. These dogs work within a variety of environments directed by specially trained professionals, paraprofessionals, or volunteers in association with animals that meet specific criteria. These dogs work and perform a service for many people.

We also provide comfort dogs to organizations in connection with crisis response.

Our Mission—*To enrich the lives of others by providing hope and healing through the compassion of canine companions..*

FACILITY DOGS

A facility dog is a dog that, directed by qualified staff within a designated facility, utilizes its special skills and training in animal-assisted interventions to help providers achieve specific treatment or program goals.

Facility Dogs work in churches, assisted living/nursing facilities, hotels, educational institutions, rehabilitation centers, funeral homes, police and fire departments, court house and child advocacy centers and other public sector organizations in need of a facility dog.

Dogs selected to become facility dogs are highly motivated by contact with people, affectionate, gregarious, of moderate-to-low energy and drive, and calm and quiet indoors and are trained as service dogs.

Facility dogs can help staff achieve program participation and treatment goals. They can aid physical, occupational, and rehabilitation therapists, social workers and other mental health practitioners, speech therapists, activity directors, and patient educators by:

- increasing motivation
- increasing rate of participation in treatment or activities
- helping therapists and patients define specific goals and functional outcomes
- promoting use of language
- increasing social interaction
- increasing feelings of well-being and
- creating a more home-like environment
- improving staff motivation
- reducing stress

COMFORT DOGS

Comfort Dogs offer non-judgemental companionship that can help during tough times. Comfort dogs can help **boost a person's mood and decrease stress.** Our furry friends can't help but bring smiles to the faces around them! The animal's presence can enable a reprieve from negative or sad thoughts a person may have and even sitting in silence near a dog is known to bring a sense of peace and calm.

Being around a dog can provide a much-needed distraction for many folks. People can **forget about their worries as they focus on petting the dog**, watching them perform tricks or commands, and as they chat with others at the event!



Orland Park Fire Protection District Dispatchers

Comfort Dogs Can Benefit Mind & Body
Spending time with a comfort dog **raises endorphins and helps keep people's minds clear of mood-lowering thoughts**, which raises their positivity even further! Furthermore, this positivity and calming effect can, over time, lead to improved physical health by reducing blood pressure and anxiety.