

# Guide Dogs Puppy



Hello everyone, my name is Abby. That's my Guide Dog name, but you will get to know me by my screen name '**Bella**', (I will tell you a bit more about that later).

I am a 14 weeks old black Labrador female puppy. I arrived in Adelaide on the 6th of June, after an eventful flight from New Zealand with my sister. Along the way we had a slight detour to Sydney which worried us a little, but finally we made it here safe and sound. My sister and I then said goodbye to each other and were taken to our new families, who will be looking after us for the next 12 months.



After a few days resting and getting to know my new home, I was told some exciting news. I had been chosen to be one of The Guide Dog Puppy Love Pups. How exciting! That wasn't all: I was also told that I would be appearing on The Channel 9 Weekend News each week. The Channel 9 Weekend News Team is joining you as a co-sponsor to help me become a Guide Dog.

This brings me back to what I said earlier about my name: As I will be appearing on TV each week, I thought it would be good to have a screen name. Channel 9 ran a competition so everyone would have the chance to pick a screen name for me. There were lots of great names sent in but the one chosen was '**Bella**'. I am so pleased '**Bella**' is such a lovely name. It means beautiful in Italian. Everyone calls me beautiful, so it seemed to be just right.

What an honour to be given the opportunity to be a Guide Dog Puppy in training and a TV Celebrity! I am ready for the responsibility that goes with both these special positions. There are many things I need to learn, and with the help of Tracey White, Guide Dog Instructor, the Guide Dog Services Team and Sue my Puppy Raiser, I am ready and eager to start. You know you can help me a lot with my training. Do you want to know how? Well, from time to time you may see me around town wearing my training jacket. If you do, as much as I would love to stop and talk to each and everyone of you I can't, because it will interfere with my concentration. So I would like to ask you not to pat me when you see me wearing my jacket. I know it will be hard but I am sure you understand and will help me so I can learn to be one of the best Guide Dogs.

I would like to tell you what I did last week. Sue led me to the start of an escalator and before she stepped on, she picked me up and carried me until we reached the end. Then, after getting off the escalator Sue put me down. I tell you something, I was a little suspicious and nervous at first, but after a few times I was feeling quite confident. I think I'm going to be able to do this by my self very soon. When I do step on the escalators for the first time I am sure if you watch the Channel 9 Weekend News you will see me doing that and lots of other important tasks as part of my training. You are going to be so proud of me. Guess what else? I can sit and lay down on command, not too bad for a puppy, don't you think?

Before I finish my very first letter, I want to thank you for being so generous for co-sponsoring me each month. Did you know you will be only one of 140 people to co-sponsor me. You may think that is a lot of people but did you know it costs \$25,000 to train a puppy like me to become a Guide Dog? I think that is a little bit too much for just one person, don't you agree? So you can see how your help means so much to me and other puppies that are in training. If your friends would like to help me and become a co-sponsor too, just tell them to call the **Guide Dog Puppy Love Hotline 1300 137 085**.

See you soon.

