



A well-trained dog can be an important service and friend to a child with autism, helping the child to avoid hazards and overcome difficulties.

What is autism?

Autism is a pervasive developmental disorder. As a result of complex disturbances of the central nervous system (particularly in the area of sensory processing), people who are on the autism spectrum have a perception of themselves and the world around them that is "different". In particular, they find it hard to recognise the significances and rules of communication and social behaviour. As a result, the world often remains incomprehensible, overwhelming and terrifying to them.

Launch

In 2012, the Foundation Swiss School for Guide Dogs for the Blind became one of the first training centres for assistance dogs

in Europe to start training autism service dogs for families who have a child with autism. An autism service dog carries out similar work to that of a guide dog for people who are blind: it stops in front of road crossings and helps to keep the child to which it is connected away from danger. It guides and accompanies the child, but it obeys the sound commands given by a trusted adult. Trained dogs may only be provided to children who are aged ten or under at the time they are allocated. An autism dog enables the families of a child with autism to break out of their isolation and find a way back to a day-to-day routine that is as normal as possible.

The breed of dog and breeding arrangements

The breed of choice is the Labrador Retriever and our carefully selected dogs come from the Guide Dogs for the Blind School's own well-proven breeding programme. At the age of ten weeks, the pups are passed on to carefully chosen "foster carers". They take the dog on for twelve to fifteen months, i.e. until the beginning of their training period. The main tasks of the foster carers are to provide the dog with a good basic upbringing and socialisation. Staff from the school are available to advise the foster carers throughout the whole foster care period, helping them to understand the dog and treat it correctly. If you are interested in bringing up a foster dog, please

ask for further information from our Administration staff (061 487 95 80 or 061 487 95 95).

Training

The period of training to become an autism service dog lasts about six months. It is highly demanding and is designed completely around the needs of the families and their children. In the company of their instructors, the dogs experience a loving upbringing based on trust, involving carefully-chosen motivational techniques and a great deal of positive reinforcement.

Introduction

After about two years, the dogs trained by our school are handed over to their families, where their

new keepers are prepared and trained by our instructors. Only then will they embark upon their induction period with the relevant child. During this time, the dog is integrated under expert guidance into the day-to-day life of the family.

Ongoing service

The Foundation continues to retain responsibility for all its dogs throughout their lives, and to provide free service to the families keeping those dogs. Even when an autism service dog has retired after its period of service work, the family can still expect to enjoy its company as a faithful family friend for a few years more.

Thank you very much for your kind donation!

Donations to our Foundation are tax deductible in most Cantons.

Autism service dogs

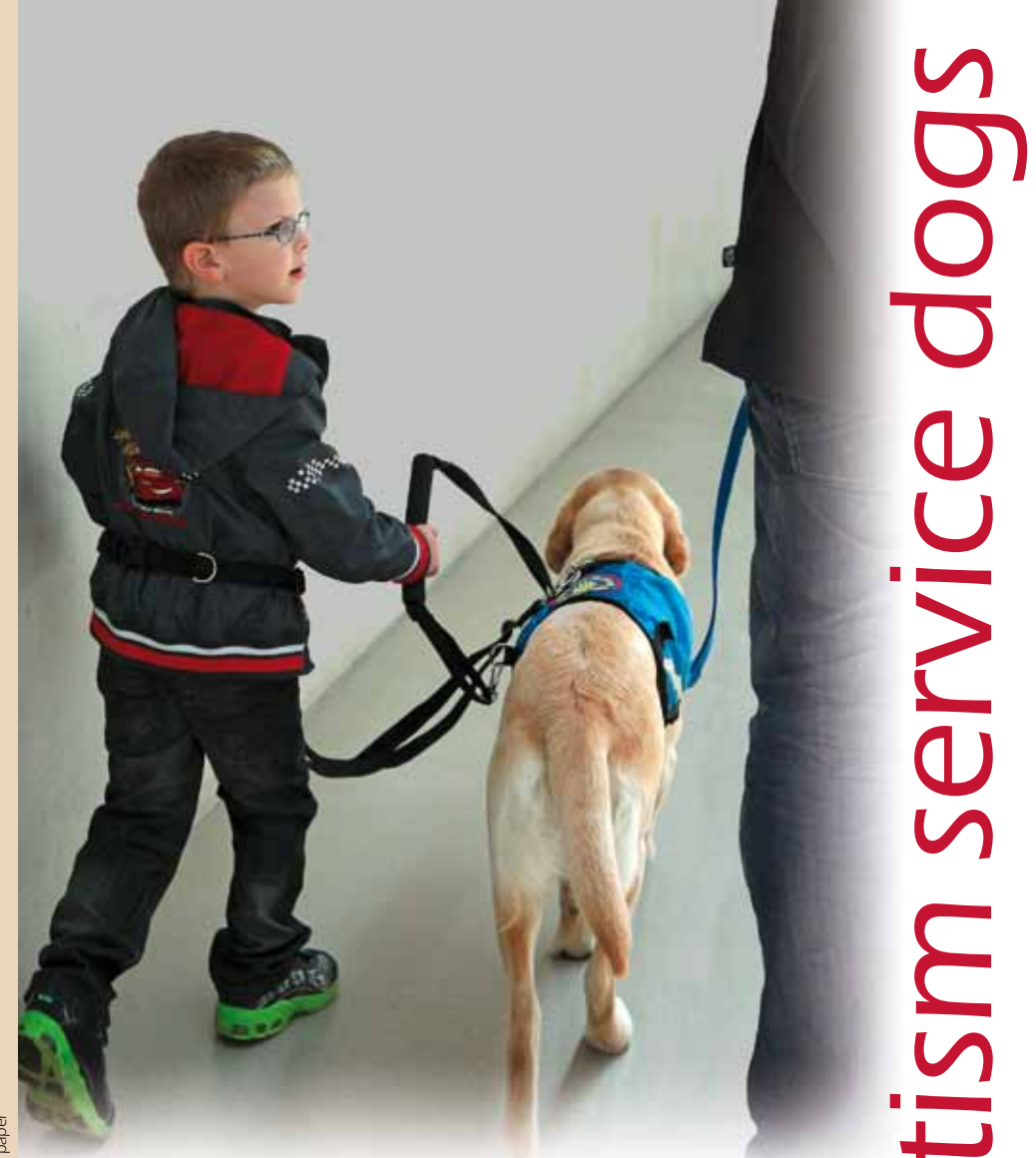
Training
Working
Requirements



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Autism
service dogs



A few tips on how to behave around an autism service dog team

- Do not distract, call or feed an autism service dog wearing a jacket. You may only stroke the dog if its keeper gives you permission.
- When you come across a working autism service dog, put your own dog on the lead and move on quickly.
- Allow an autism service dog to access all areas whenever possible. This makes life far easier for the family concerned.
- Even autism service dogs need to run free, and they are allowed to play with other dogs.

The requirements for keeping an autism service dog

- The family needs to have the time to keep a dog.
- The dog will live in the house, with the family.
- All the members of the family must welcome an autism dog.
- The household must not have any other dogs.
- Any asthma and potential allergies must be discussed.



www.blindenhundeschule.ch



Autism service dogs
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charge. The Foundation provides the funding, but the families themselves pay the costs of keeping the dog (up to CHF 2,000 per year).

The Foundation

The Foundation is funded by donations, inheritances and bequests, as well as from the sale of advertising materials.

The Foundation is subject to the supervision of the Swiss Federal Authorities.

The members of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation provide their services voluntarily.

The process

Once a family has expressed an interest, the first step is to send in some written information and the application documents. A visit to the School in Allschwil is then arranged so that the family can see a demonstration with our dogs, and so that they can have an opportunity for discussion with our instructors. The next step is to investigate the family's living arrangements, i.e. our staff visit the family at home. If the application is approved, a suitable dog will be assigned to the family as soon as possible.

Funding

Families who have a child on the autism spectrum are provided with an autism service dog free of

Einzahlung Giro

Versament Virement

Versamento Girata

Empfangsschein / Récépissé / Ricevuta
Einzahlung für / Versement pour / Versamento per

CH47 0900 0000 4000 1275 0
Stiftung Schweiz. Schule
für Blindenführhunde
4123 Allschwil

Donation for autism service dogs

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CH47 0900 0000 4000 1275 0
Stiftung Schweiz. Schule für Blindenführhunde
4123 Allschwil
Konto / Compte / Conto 40-1275-0
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Die Annahmestelle
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