

Nibs is more than a pet! She is a Canine Companions for Independence® Facility Dog.



While Nibs was bred and trained to be an assistance dog by Canine Companions for Independence, she is not my assistance dog. She is not an emotional support animal (ESA). Nibs is a facility dog from Canine Companions. Canine Companions is a non-profit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs and a lifetime of support to ensure quality partnerships completely free of charge. Facility dogs are expertly trained dogs who partner with a facilitator working in a health care, visitation, or education setting. Canine Companions facility dogs are trustworthy in professional environments and can perform over 40 commands designed to motivate and inspire clients with special needs.

Facilitators are working professionals responsible for handling and caring for the facility dog. Dr. Tracey Zeiner is an occupational therapist with thirty years of clinical experience and six years of experience with Facility Dog Nibs. Dr. Zeiner received an initial two weeks of full-time training where she was matched with Facility Dog Nibs. She continues to receive annual training and support by

Canine Companions and received approval to transition from full-time clinical work to academia with clinical experiences in 2016.

One of the most valued qualities of a facility dog is the unconditional love and attention she gives to the clients, patients, students, faculty, and staff with whom she interacts.

In an educational setting, Nibs can engage students in schools and special education classes.

In a health care environment, activities such as grooming, feeding and playing fetch with Nibs can aid patients in medical rehabilitation and psychiatric programs.

A well-mannered and highly trained facility dog encourages feelings of calm and security for clients in a visitation setting such as a courtroom.

Nibs has worked with adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in an interprofessional clinic; she has worked alongside speech-language pathology students, physical therapy students, and faculty in an educational outpatient clinic; she has interacted with children in a specialized reading program; and she has taught occupational therapy students how to utilize animals as a therapeutic intervention.

Here are just a few of her commands:

BED: This command tells the dog to go to her bed.

CAR: This command tells the dog to enter or to get into the car.

DON'T/NO: This command is known as a verbal correction. It means the dog needs to stop immediately what she is doing.

DOWN*: This command simply tells the dog to lie down and is implied as a stay.

DROP: Tell the dog to ignore whatever she has in her mouth and make eye contact with the handler.

GET: Retrieve an object from the floor.

GIVE: Release an object into your hand.

HURRY: This command simply tells the dog to go to the bathroom.

JUMP: This command tells the dog to get onto other surfaces.

KENNEL: Tells the dog to go into her kennel or crate and stay there until commanded to exit.

LAP: This command tells the dog to put her front legs across your lap, resting on her elbows.

LET'S GO: This command tells the dog to walk casually on a loose leash at your side, neither forging ahead or lagging behind. A good physical or visual cue for you is that the dog's shoulders should be even with your leg.

OFF: This command tells the dog to get off something or to get out of the car.

OKAY: This command tells the dog she's released to eat.

OUT: Tell the dog go ahead through a doorway then turn and face the handler.

QUIET: This command informs the dog to stop her whining and/or barking.

RELEASE: This command tells the dog that she is free to do as she wishes within the realm of appropriate behavior.

ROLL: This command tells the dog to roll over on her back exposing the tummy.

SHAKE: This command tells the dog to place either of her paws in the palm of your extended hand.

SPEAK: This command tells the dog to bark.

UNDER: This command tells the dog to lay down under something such as a chair or table.

UP: This command tells the dog to put her front paws on a counter, table, wall etc.

VISIT: This command tells the dog to rest her head on your lap.

WAIT: This command tells the dog to not cross a threshold or barrier without further notice. *Implied stay: The dog must stay in the command given (down, sit, stand) until given another command. The "stay" command does not need to be said.

While she is a "working" dog, Nibs can also be "released" to others while her mom Dr. Zeiner attends to other duties. If you have a need for Nibs, I would enjoy discussing possibilities with you.

Thank you for welcoming Nibs and me to ACHE! We feel right at home here!!



Dr. Tracey Zeiner & Canine Companions Facility Dog Nibs



Nibs' Rules

Nibs belongs to Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) & comes with a set of rules. For her safety & on-going training, please adhere to these.

1. Do not give her treats without checking with Dr. Zeiner, & then only carrots, rice cake bits, or ice.
2. Do not encourage or allow her to jump on you (ever).
3. Do not encourage her to lick you in the face. A “hello” lick or 2 to your hand/arm is fine, but excessive licking is not.
4. Do not give her formal commands. CCI has a very specific format for commanding & correcting their dogs. Attempts from others to give her commands will only confuse her & make her less receptive to her handler (me). Just talk to her like you would any other well-behaved dog.
5. She does well taking the stairs; just watch the leash to avoid tripping yourself or others. If you choose the elevator, please stand in the doorway as she crosses the threshold to ensure that you are both on the same side when the doors close. Here's what could happen if leash is on opposite side of door: (This has a happy ending!)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dT_ICfPwwQc
6. She loves visitors so stop by & see her when my door is open.

Please enjoy her!! She loves to be around people.

Thanks,

Dr. Zeiner