PROPRIOCEPTION AWARENESS

Body confidence in puppyhood can help prevent anxiety in adulthood

> **“How can we expect a puppy to feel safe and confident in the world if they don’t yet feel safe and confident in their own body?”**

What is proprioception?



Proprioception is your puppy’s awareness of where their body is in space. It helps them know where their feet are, how their body is moving and how much force to use.

Why does it matter?

When body awareness is reduced, puppies may use extra muscle tension or less efficient movement patterns to stay stable. If movement feels effortful, unstable or unpredictable, the nervous system may stay on higher alert. Over time, that can contribute to stress, uncertainty and anxious behaviour.

The vestibular system

The vestibular system sits in the inner ear and helps puppies process balance, movement and head position. Together, the vestibular system and proprioception help puppies feel organised, stable and secure in their body.

Why we do this in puppyhood

Puppyhood is a key developmental window. Safe, manageable movement experiences help the nervous system learn that movement is organised, secure and safe. Building body awareness early can support confidence now and help reduce anxiousness as puppies mature into adulthood.

Try this

- Explore different safe surfaces
- Step over low obstacles
- Use stable, low platforms
- Allow slow, thoughtful movement
- Let your puppy work at their own pace



CONFIDENCE STARTS WITH BODY AWARENESS

When puppies feel safer in their body, they can feel safer in the world — helping build calmer, more confident adult dogs.