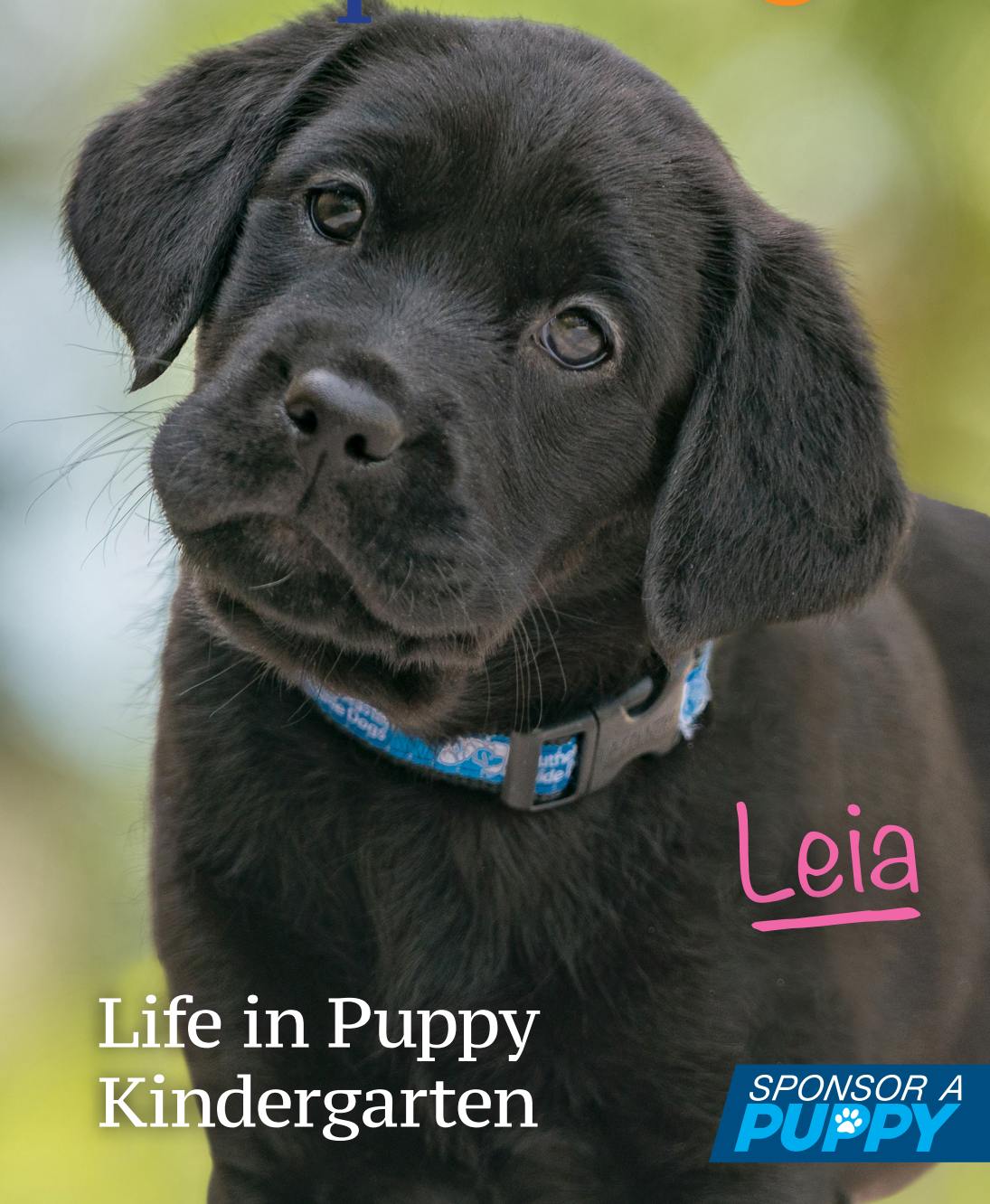


 Southeastern Guide Dogs

# PupDate **1**



Leia

Life in Puppy  
Kindergarten

SPONSOR A  
**PUPPY** 





## A Princess of a Pup

Days after she was born in our Puppy Academy, little Leia's learning began as volunteers stroked and tickled her to start her socialization. In Puppy Preschool and Kindergarten, her teachers followed a carefully planned educational

curriculum, getting her comfortable with new noises, novel objects, irregular surfaces, gentle massages, fitness activities, and medical exams. Every day provided a fun mixture of learning, play, and rest, designed to strengthen little bodies and minds.

Leia loved interacting with her toys. Her favorite was a tiny star, a tribute to her Star Wars namesake. Our Princess Leia is a sweet, gentle, and loving puppy who won the hearts of all during her time in Puppy Kindergarten.

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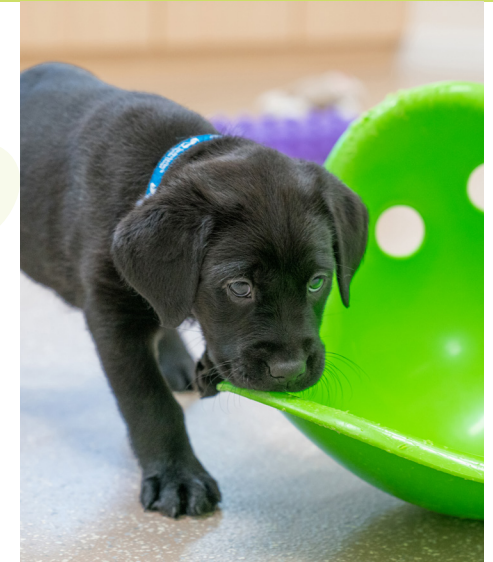
**Every day provided a fun mixture of learning, play, and rest.**

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## Once Upon a Classroom

During massage time, Leia learned that it was good to trust human touch. She wasn't shy about gentle handling and got used to people touching her ears, eyes, mouth, tummy, and paws during real and mock veterinary exams.

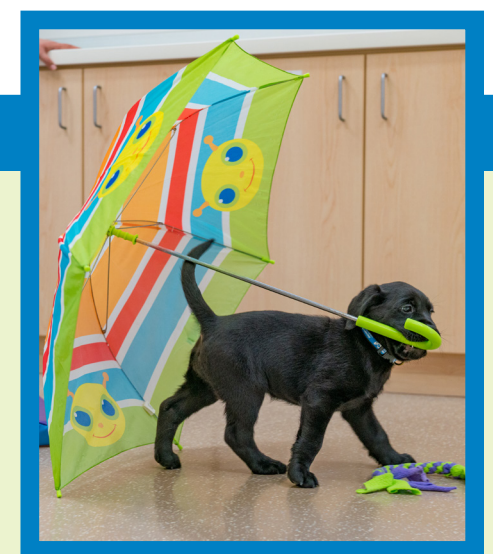
Leia excelled at exploring unusual objects and surfaces. Clever and confident, she tackled the steps and slope of the sliding board and tried balancing on a wobbly plastic shell. She walked over grates, gravel, grass, and more, learning to accept textures beneath her paws. Future guide and service dogs need to be able to navigate their handlers safely over, under, or around obstacles that might



appear in their travels. Walking on different surfaces prepared Leia for encounters with other unusual underfootings she might one day face in her working life.

## // Unfazed

Puppies can be startled by stimuli like the noise of a vacuum, the rush of an electric fan, or the sight of a Halloween costume. During formal assessments, staff observed Leia's responses to new sights and sounds. Opening an umbrella in her path only made her more playful and curious. "Bring it on," she said!





## The World Awaits

Leia graduated from Puppy Kindergarten and now lives with Bob and Ann, volunteer puppy raisers who have taken her into their hearts and home. She will learn a lot as she practices good manners and visits public places. For this smart girl, it's a time of exploration, mastering new skills, trying a variety of experiences, and finding where her talents lie. Exercise and fitness routines will maintain her flexibility and strength while she builds upon basic cues and skills.

Before you know it, it will be time for Leia to return to Canine

University at Southeastern Guide Dogs. There, instructors will teach her more advanced skills and evaluate the direction of her future path. What an exciting journey!



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