

# Business

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## It's a dog's world at day care

**Kelley Scarsbrook**  
Staff Writer

If a dog is man's best friend, at Dog Utopia Day Care dogs reign supreme.

Owner Megan Ferris, who took over the business this spring, has been involved with dogs for most of her life.

"In Victoria, I ran a dog-walking business for many years. I have also worked with the SPCA and helped with dog adoptions," she said.

Ferris also has two of her own dogs, Quinn and Jewel, who are both 11 years old.

When she heard Dog Utopia Day Care was for sale this year, it seemed like perfect timing for her to take her love of dogs to a new level.

The day care, which opens each morning at 6:30 a.m., offers dogs a kennel-free large, indoor area to play and socialize. They provide dogs with dozens of toys and several soft, cushy beds to relax in.

"Most of them want to come here and have a nap if they arrive earlier in the morning, but after that, we give them a hardy play and we have an outdoor area at the back," Ferris said.

Ferris, whose niche is working with small-to medium-sized dogs, believes in exercise, mental stimulation, affection and structure.

Every dog is different and Ferris and her staff have a rigorous screening process to ensure each dog is able to easily integrate with the other dogs. She offers a one-hour trial visit for every dog to see how they respond and fit in with others.

During the trial visit, Ferris determines if her day care will work out for the animal.

"We review the history of the dog, their behaviour, and introduce them to the other dogs one at a time. Usually after a couple of visits we see the dog become more relaxed and comfortable."

However, any dog that has an aggressive or unfriendly demeanor is not accepted. The owner is provided with other avenues they can pursue if Dog Utopia isn't a good fit.

Dog Utopia also offers grooming services, provided by Jessica Pisani, who has been with the company since May.

"I think it's a great environment for dogs here," said Pisani. "I love to be able to groom dogs and enjoy working with customers to ensure they are happy with the end result for their dogs."

For customers like Gayle Goldstein, who brings Royal, her King Charles cavalier spaniel, to Dog Utopia two or three times a week, it has provided her with peace of mind.

"I really like the way they screen dogs here. Both my daughter and I work full-time and I think the socialization is really good," she said. "I don't have any guilt. I plan to bring my other dog, Sampson, who is a long-haired Chihuahua, to try it out as well. He has been groomed here and I am really happy with what they can do. For our dog



Megan Ferris took over Dog Utopia Day Care in South Surrey this spring. They also offer grooming services. **Sharon Doucette Photo**

Royal, every time we turn the corner to the lot here, he gets so excited."

Ferris believes Dog Utopia Day Care stands out from the rest because it offers the full-package.

"I have taken dog behaviour courses and

really understand the behaviour of dogs. I didn't just get into this just because of my love for them – I also have a lot of experience understanding why dogs behave the way they do," said Ferris.

Dog Utopia Day Care will be at BC SPCA

Paws for a Cause walk at Crescent Beach on Sunday, Sept. 12 to offer nail clipping by donation.

Dog Utopia Day Care is located at #8-15531 24th Ave., Surrey and online at [www.dogutopia.ca](http://www.dogutopia.ca).