

Lort Smith Pet Therapy

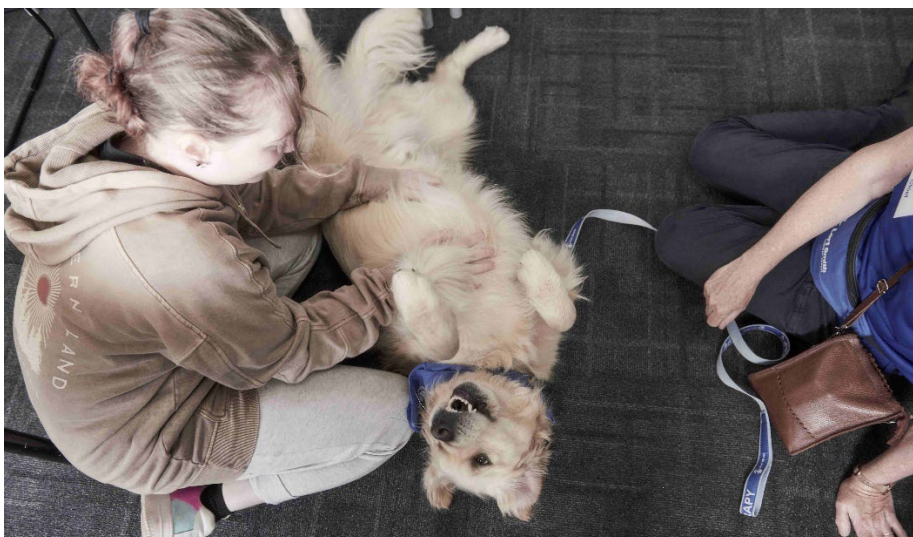
2025 VOLUNTEER INTAKE - YOUTH

Lort Smith Pet Therapy involves volunteers taking their own, specially assessed dogs to hospitals, residential aged care, youth facilities and other settings to bring comfort and relief to people experiencing illness, adversity, loneliness and the long-term impacts of trauma.

Our Youth Programs specifically work with young people who are at risk of disengagement from school or have had contact with the justice system. Visits take place in specialist learning settings, and secure youth justice settings. We're looking for calm, emotionally intelligent people able to engage with at-risk young people without judgement, and dogs who are steady, social, and well-connected to their human. Your presence will offer calm and connection to young people experiencing adversity, and will support youth service staff to deliver meaningful educational and wellbeing supports.

Team Requirements (Team: Human & Dog)

- Dogs must be at least **18 months old**, in **good health** and up-to-date with vaccinations, flea and worm treatments.
- Dogs must have great manners, enjoy meeting and **receiving affection from new people**, and must be **calm and approachable** in new environments, around new people and with other dogs.
- We **do not accept** restricted-breed dogs, working assistance/service dogs, dogs trained in guard or protection work, dogs that drool excessively, or dogs with any history of aggression.
- Volunteers must have excellent **communication skills, empathy, self-awareness** and **resilience**.
- Volunteers must be interested and comfortable working with young people who might present with complex behaviours.
- Volunteers must be willing to work under direction from facility staff to support young people's participation in educational and wellbeing interventions.
- You and your dog need to be **a great team**. Your dog needs to have lived with you for at least six months and your relationship must be positive and trusting. Your dog must be responsive to you and you need to show that you understand and respond to your dog's body language.
- You must be willing to commit to the role for a **minimum of two years**, making 2-hour visits **weekly or fortnightly**. In education facilities visits will take place at set times from Mon-Fri during **school hours**. In justice facilities visits will take place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
- Dogs must be washed before each visit; and an annual veterinary check is required. Raw diet restrictions apply at some facilities.



“It helps me participate when I'm calm and when there is a therapy dog there”

- Student

The Application Process

1. Attend a **Volunteer Information Session (mandatory)**
2. Complete online Volunteer Application form
3. Attend an **Online Group Interview**
4. Attend a **Group Assessment** (with your dog)
5. Complete Dog Health Form, Police Check, Stat Dec and Working with Children Check
6. Complete **Pet Therapy Volunteer Training** (a combination of online and in-person training)
7. Complete a **Buddy Visit** with your Pet Therapy Mentor
8. Complete facility assessments / trial visits
9. Facility induction, onboarding – and get started!

Where are we recruiting for?

Facility Type	Locations
JUSTICE	Parkville
EDUCATION	Ascot Vale, Broadmeadows, Epping, Maribyrnong, Preston

Key Dates

Activity	Dates / timeline
Online Information Session (must attend one)	Tuesday 6 May, 6pm-7pm Thursday 8 May, 11am-12pm
Volunteer Applications Close	Sunday 18 May
Group Interviews (online)	Friday 23 May (time TBC) Tuesday 27 May (time TBC)
Group Assessments (Attend one with your dog)	Week commencing Tuesday 10 June
Individual discussions (online)	Week commencing Monday 23 June
Complete Police Check, Working with Children Check and Dog Health Form	By end of June
Complete self-paced online training	June-July
Attend Training part 1 - In-Person Training	Tuesday 1 July (10am - 4pm)
Attend Training part 2 – Online Training	Thursday 24 July (6pm - 8pm)
Connect with mentor and complete 1-2 buddy visits	July-August
Facility assessments and trial visits	August-September
Get started!	August-September

Next Step

If you haven't already, please sign up for **one** of the following information sessions:

- Tuesday 6 May at 6pm - [Sign up here](#)
- Thursday 8 May at 11am - [Sign up here](#)

For More Information

Please contact the Pet Therapy team via pettherapy@lortsmith.com