



Dear Shape Up America,

I am honored to receive this year's Animal Health Advocate Achievement Award and to be a part of Operation Fitness' first "Shape Up America" campaign.

I believe that the pack is a family unit, and every pack leader naturally wants to ensure the vitality and longevity of his or her family members. We want the years we spend together with our packs to be happy and lively ones.

It saddens me that an estimated 25 to 40% of dogs are overweight, yet many dog owners are unaware their dog has a weight problem. Dogs who suffer from obesity develop health issues due to the added stress on their heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, and joints. Also, these physical issues, combined with a lack of exercise, often result in behavioral problems.

This campaign reminds me of a Dalmation puppy named Wilshire I met in Season 3. Members of Firehouse 29 in Los Angeles had rescued Wilshire from near death at a local shelter. The hyperactive puppy was soon causing a commotion, jumping on visitors and kids and running out the firehouse garage onto a busy Wilshire Blvd., not only endangering himself, but also causing problems for the firefighters who need to get the truck out quickly when responding to calls – not chasing their dog down the street!

I have long admired these brave men and women for their calm assertive energy during a crisis, and realized that as long as Wilshire learned to respect boundaries and have discipline, all he needed was a way to drain his energy. The LA City firefighters are required to exercise every morning. As a new member of their pack, Wilshire needed to be a part of this routine, so we taught him how to use the treadmill. In a short time, Wilshire was getting his workout on one treadmill, while the firefighters got theirs on the other.

I am proud to say that Wilshire is now teaching kids about fire safety, and how to "Stop, Drop, and Roll," all over Los Angeles County. While he did not have a weight problem, it was critical that he get exercise in order to be a healthy, balanced member of Firehouse 29.

The same psychology applies to all dogs, no matter the size or breed. I often give advice to people about the health of their dog, from the foods they're fed and nutrients they need to their dental hygiene and cleanliness. And, of course, the amount of exercise the dog requires.

I am humbled every day to help people and their dogs live in a happy, balanced relationship and I am pleased that "Shape Up America" is including pets in this important campaign.

Thank you again for this honor.

Stay calm and assertive!

Cesar Millan



C E S A R M I L L A N I N C .

1033 North Hollywood Way • Suite C • Burbank • CA • 91505

Phone: 818-441-5040 • Fax: 818-441-5050 • www.cesarmillaninc.com