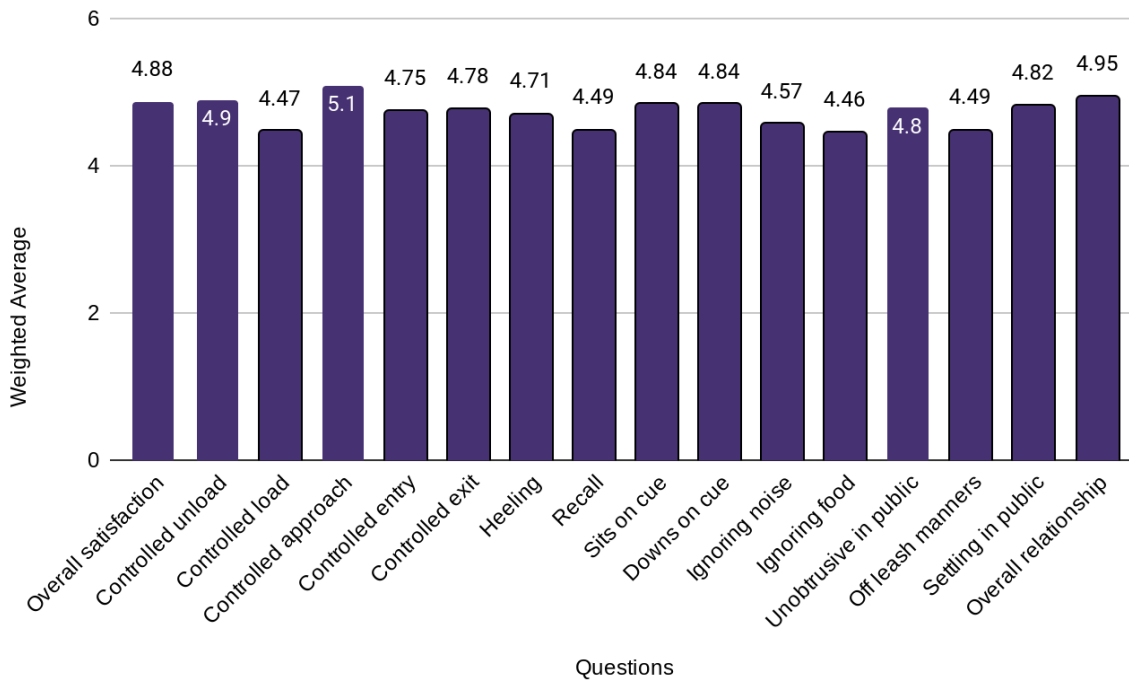




## NSD Skilled Companions Statistics 2023

Since 2009, Skilled Companion Dogs have filled a unique role for the families who rely on them. They provide children and youth with key mental health supports; reducing stress and anxiety, improving sleep hygiene and fostering inclusion, empathy and companionship.



(Above: 2023 Client Satisfaction Survey - Dog Performance Average Rating 94.8% on a scale of 1-5)

Skilled Companion Dogs provide emotional and mental health support for children (under age 18) with a variety of challenges. Their obedience and task training running parallels our other program, but these dogs have personality traits that make them better suited to “work from home” and therefore they DO NOT have public access and will support their partners in the home environment only.

Skilled Companion Dogs help children:

- cope with stress and anxiety
- create healthy sleep routines
- develop empathy and responsibility
- form friendships and experience unconditional love

In 2022, 27.0% of Canadians aged 15 and over, or 8.0 million people, had at least one disability. 13% are youth aged 15-24. Many of these individuals struggle to find peace, independence, security, purpose, and social acceptance. Skilled Companion Dogs help them regain these things. (Source: [Statistics Canada](#))

*“Evidence is found for an association between pet ownership and a wide range of emotional health benefits from childhood pet ownership; particularly for self-esteem and loneliness and for childhood anxiety and depression.”*

~Source: [Semantic Scholar](#)

## Client Quotes

*“Scotty is doing great - we love him... even Lucy, our youngest cat. He is such a joy and definitely a part of the family. Just a quick word to let you know Scotty is happy and doing well. Even happier is my son Matthew, who woke to slobbery wet kisses... no prompting on my part. I haven't seen him wake up smiling from ear to ear in such a long time. Scotty is a perfect match, and Lucy likes him too. Thanks to everyone at NSD.”*

~NSD Scotty & Matthew

“Thank you, thank you, thank you so very much for the joy you have brought into my life by giving us Reece. She is perfect in every way! My daughter Melissa (who has severe autism, and had previously received 2 service dogs from NSD) is in love with Reece. She can't say her name but calls Reece, Ree. Reece has done so well these past 2 days and I know will be immensely loved and cared for. She is so smart- thank you to everyone who was a part of her training. I am playing it quiet here for Reece, but look forward to introducing her to family and friends as the weeks pass. Thank you again. Reece has filled a big void in our life with the loss of my dear hubby in August 2021. Since Reece has arrived, my heart is so full. She is so adorable!”

~NSD Reece & Melissa

*“Julian really has a lot of fun with Rawz. He loves to play ball hockey with her out on the driveway, but mostly she's just a great companion for all of us! She's very comforting, she really reduces Julian's anxiety. When he's having some outbursts she's really good at helping him to stay calm and to just refocus his energy. She just has this knack for being around Julian when he needs her.”*

~NSD Rawz & Julian

*“Sammy is an amazing beautiful dog with a heart that connects beyond words. Last night was the easiest night I have ever had to put my boys to sleep. Usually, it can take up to 2 hours before they can settle enough to sleep (it has taken me 3 hours when they were younger!), and that is already after being in their bedroom! Yesterday they were under their blankets, and Sammy was right between them, giving love! With joy in all our hearts, we started saying goodnight, then goodnight moon (from the book), “goodnight Sammy,” then sleep and quiet snoring!”*

*~NSD Sammy & Ose*