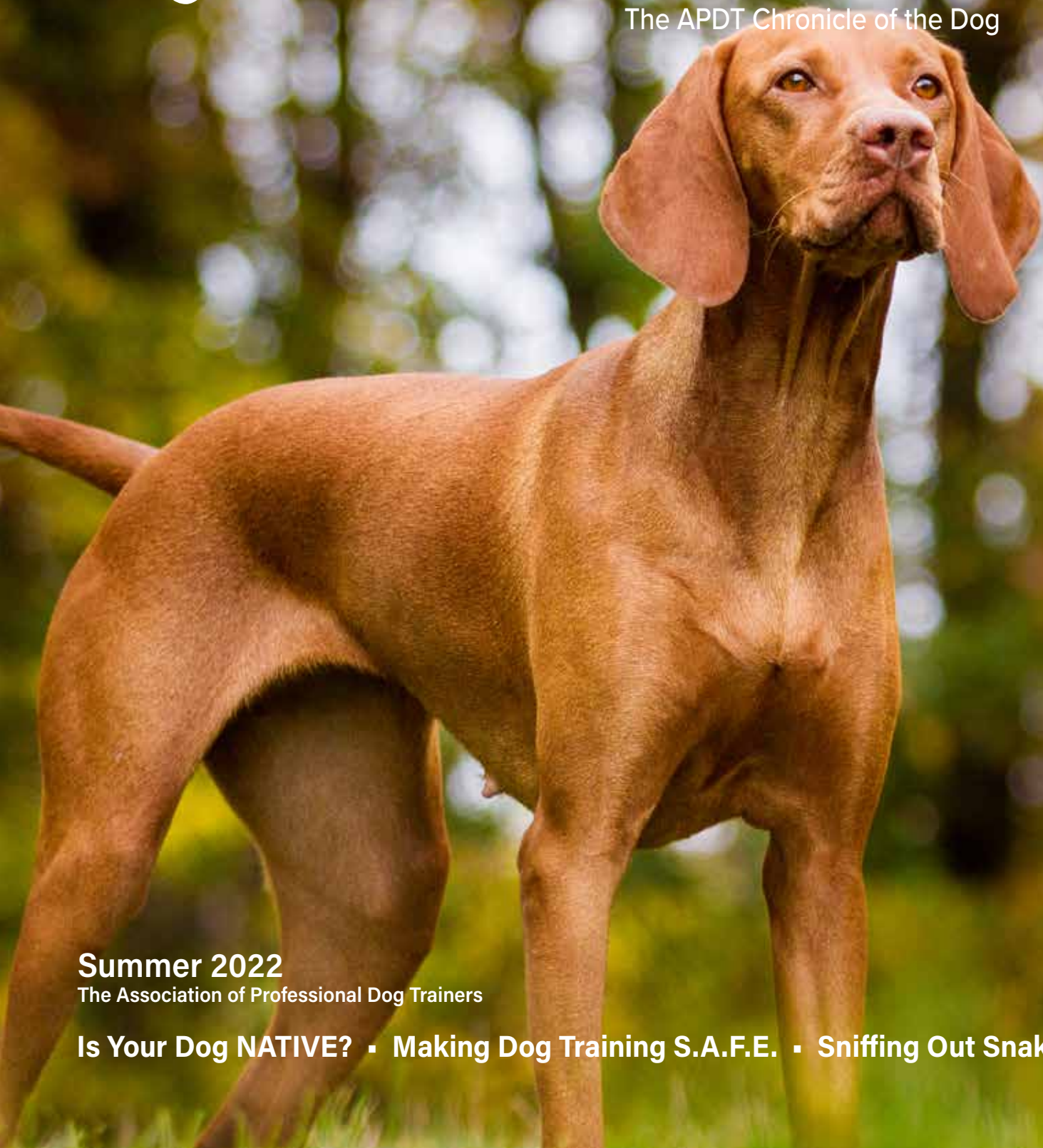


Chronicle

The APDT Chronicle of the Dog



Summer 2022

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers

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NATIVE?

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The APDT *Chronicle of the Dog*



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APDT/CAPDT Conference preliminary registration kit inserted in COTD's polybag



It was three years ago when we were gearing up for an in-person conference on the west coast of Oregon. In about three months, we will be headed to the East Coast for the APDT/CAPDT 29th Annual Educational Conference and Trade Show Oct. 19-21 at Daytona Beach, Florida. After two years of virtual conferences, there is a lot of excitement as plans are finalized

for this in-person conference. As mentioned in the SPRING issue of *Chronicle of the Dog*, the opening keynote speakers will be Taylor Barconey, CPDT-KA, IAABC-ADT, and Jiovany Alcaide, CPDT-KA, IAABC-ADT of Smart Bitch Dog Training, while the closing keynote speaker will be Michael Shikashio, CDBC, owner of AggressiveDog.com. Between them will be plenty of speakers, sessions, shorts, workshops, poster presenters, demonstrations and the ever-popular trade and vendor show. If you haven't already reserved your spot to attend this conference, please go to APDT.com and click on conference at the upper right.

Inserted in your mailing packet with this issue will be a registration kit that lists the speakers and sessions thus far. Take the time to go through speaker biographies and the sessions they will headline. This conference will have something for everyone. More information will be forthcoming as things finalize by the time our FALL issue is published in September.

Besides conference information, this SUMMER issue has a plethora of articles to peruse. In Association News beginning on page 10, check out the changes to the LIMA statement that better aligns it with APDT's mission to promote trainers who use positive reinforcement methods on Locate A Trainer. And speaking of Locate A Trainer, the APDT Board approved 38 categories trainers may use to tell clients what their skills are. The APDT Foundation is holding two auctions: one online in August and a silent auction during the conference, so if you wish to participate, check out their website (apdtfoundation.org).

For our regular columnists, Veronica Boutelle and Harriet Alexander explain in the Business End of the Leash how trainers might use videos to connect with clients (page 20); Dr. Melissa Bain writes in Veterinarian Perspective (page 22), on how behavior is an indicator of abuse and neglect; David Pearsall, who pens Insurance Insights (page 24), explains the ins and outs about workman's compensation

insurance, and Jamie McKay's Ask the Trainer column discusses ways to socialize puppies (page 60).

As for features, we have plenty of them! The writing duo of Kristina Spaulding, Ph.D., and Irith Bloom take a gander on what is 'typical' for a dog across many countries and cultures. Read "Is Your Dog NATIVE?" beginning on page 28. Grisha Stewart, one of this year's conference speakers, gives a peek into her session on "Can We Make Dog Training S.A.F.E.?" Grisha is known for her Behavior Adjustment Training (BAT) methodology. Her article begins on page 32.

Summer always brings out critters we don't normally see in the winter, like snakes. Jenny Yasi explains the process she uses to teach her dogs to alert when they sniff out snakes, rather than going on attack. That training will likely reduce injuries and even death caused by snake bites and a too-curious canine. Her story begins on page 38.

Tori Ganino has two stories, one about integrating a new puppy into a house with two cats and a blind dog, and in a related story, she outlines the differences between socialization vs behavior modification of a new puppy. Those stories begin on page 42. Another pair of stories, one written by Melissa McMath Hatfield and the other by board member Benjamin Bennink, delve into dealing with lawsuits – either as the defendant, plaintiff, or expert witness. Each author offers their own perspectives on handling the stress of courtroom appearances and testimony. Those stories begin on page 50.

We hope you'll take a moment to scan through this issue of *Chronicle of the Dog*, and be sure to register for the conference early to get all of the Early Bird perks by going to our website at apdt.com. Just click on the conference tab at the upper right corner of your screen.

Until next time!

Devon Hubbard Sorlie,
Editor | devon.sorlie@apdt.com

“We hear you!”

Look for the artwork that signifies valuable members’ feedback through surveys and email groups



Happy summer APDT members! It’s time to reflect over the last few months of hard work while continuing to push forward with new ideas and initiatives. As we follow the APDT Strategic Plan, we have new ideas starting to surface. The “We hear you!” logo will signify valuable members’ feedback through member surveys,

email groups and at conferences. Thumb through this issue’s pages and look for the new “we hear you” logo, I think you’ll like the new changes to our LIMA policy! So many members voiced their concerns that LIMA allowed aversives, so we made a change.

We want to continue hearing from our members! Member surveys are critical tools to gather suggestions, ideas, favorite things and continue to move our industry in the right direction. Personally, I find tremendous value in peer feedback; I want to hear about the latest business software, employee hiring tips, favorite business insurance company, new behaviors taught in puppy or basic group class, new training equipment feedback and so much more. Keep an eye out for future surveys each month and please take a moment to complete. We will share each survey results in *Chronicle of the Dog*, SPEAK! and APDT’s member’s website page under the “We hear you!” logo.

If you’ve renewed your membership lately, you’ve noticed a free “thank you” gift card from APDT. Continuing education is vital to our industry, and renewing members receive a free \$25 webinar coupon. Our most popular webinars are Passion to Profits, Trainers Supporting Shelters and Drive and Motivation. Hop on to your membership page and put your renewal gift to good use.

This year, we updated the look and content of SPEAK! and continue to search for additional *COTD* article content. SPEAK! is emailed less, filled with education opportunities and has an adorable Border Terrier on the updated logo. We are always looking for new and updated *COTD* article content, so please reach out if interested.

Summer usually brings larger group classes, so check out an amazing member benefit that can help build this part of your business. If you’re looking to spice up your current group class or contemplating adding a new group class to your business, take a peek at CLASS! Premium professional members receive BA (Basic) curriculum and CLASS Handbook (PDF format) for FREE plus additional discounts on Puppy, Intermediate and Advanced class. We did not forget our professional members; you’ll receive a discount on all curricula also.

Our annual 2022 APDT/CAPDT conference is October 19-21. The venue is in Daytona Beach, Florida, and our host hotel is right on the beach. This is the perfect time and place to relax, recharge and learn with old and new friends while soaking up rays and putting your toes in the sand. Mark your calendars!

Happy Summer!

Fanna Easter
fanna@yaho.com



2022 APDT Strategic Plan

MISSION: APDT is the leading voice for dog trainers and the dog training industry.

VISION: To educate and professionalize the dog training industry, and the behavior consultant community.

GOAL 1: Provide Value to Our Members

Increase the value of APDT membership to retain members and attract new members.

1. Develop highest priority items to draw and increase membership and retain current members.
2. Deliver on those highest priority member needs.
3. Promote LIMA Trainer search through marketing.
4. Create a new feel and look in our marketing, branding, and website.
5. Improve communication with our members to ask what we can do for them.

GOAL 2: Advocate for Our Members and the Profession

Serve as the most trusted and influential advocate for our members and the dog training and behavior consulting industry.

1. Work with CCPDT and other partners to pass licensing legislation.
2. Promote sample legislative packet for licensing of dog trainers and behavior consultants.
3. Continue to analyze the dog training industry, including research on the number of dog trainers in the country.

GOAL 3: Educate and Develop Our Members' Competency

Provide premier education and professional development tools based specifically on the needs of our members and the industry.

1. Develop more member-oriented and business-related educational offerings.
2. Continue to educate our members on LIMA.
3. Set a path on how to become a dog trainer for new trainers and members.
4. Differentiate the APDT conference from other industry conferences.
5. Reassess all conference technologies.

GOAL 4: Conduct a Thorough Assessment of Our Organization and the Industry

Conduct a deep-dive assessment of our organization and the profession.

1. Board Liaison's will review and revise the committee charters with respect to the Strategic Plan.
2. Analyze the effectiveness of the Board, staff and available resources.
3. Streamline association priorities.
4. Gear the organization towards attraction and retention of new members.

APDT Member Survey Reveals Accounting Software Choices

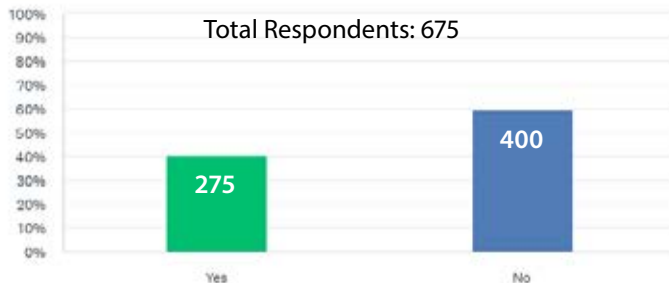


In the beginning of May this year, we sent a brief “Member Business Survey” to the APDT membership on the topics of accounting software and tax preparation. We received a total of 675 responses, so we appreciate everyone taking the time to provide us with your responses. As your APDT Chair Fanna Easter explains in her message (see page 6), survey results

in the *Chronicle of the Dog*, and APDT’s member’s website page will be under the “We hear you!” logo.

Member Business Survey (Results)

Q1: Do you use accounting Software?



Following are some comments from the respondents:

- Would love a better affordable option.
- I think I will need to at some point, just haven’t gotten to it.
- I am interested in learning what others use.
- I’m a single person business and manage with spreadsheets.
- I need accounting software!

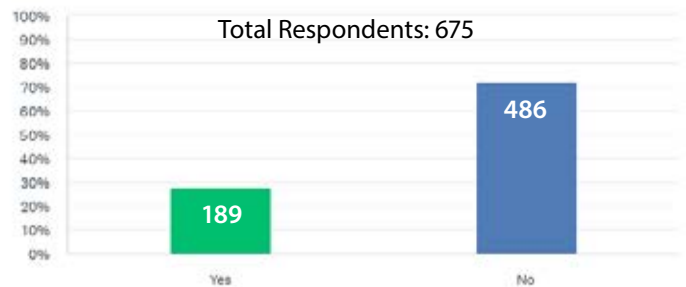
Q2: If Yes, what accounting software do you use?

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Freshbooks – 0 | Microsoft Great Plains – 1 |
| Odoo – 1 | Oracle Suite – 0 |
| Patriot – 0 | Quickbooks – 212 |
| Quicken – 27 | Sage – 0 |
| Wave – 16 | Xero – 4 |
| Zoho Books – 0 | |

Following are some other software mentioned:

- Bankivity • Elite • Excel • Hurdlr • Microsoft Money
Pocketsuite • Workflow

Q3: Do you prepare your own tax forms?



Q4: If No, who do you have prepare them?

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Personal CPA – 193 | Family Member – 30 |
| Business CPA – 241 | Business Associate – 3 |

Following are some other responses:

- I am a CPA • H&R small business • Tax preparer
Have not filed taxes yet • Credit Karma • Intuit Turbo Tax
My husband

We created this brief survey for a few of reasons:

1. To see how our members approach the business side of dog training by how they run their business accounting and tax preparation/filing.
2. To show you, the APDT members, how your peers responded to these questions and maybe provide some ideas that you can investigate for your own business.
3. How APDT can help provide resources and education on how to run your business, so you can spend more of your time training.

Thank you again for everyone that contributed to this survey! We will continue to reach-out to the membership with short surveys, provide you with the results and look for ways to help you grow your business.

David Feldner
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Jiovany Alcaide and Taylor Barconey

Be a Better Trainer, Build a Better Business

*APDT/CAPDT Conference
Covers All Aspects of Training*



The 29th annual Educational Conference and Trade Show is only four months away, so if you haven't taken the opportunity to register, just visit our website at APDT.com and click on the conference tab in the upper right-hand corner. This year's conference, Oct. 19-21, will be in Daytona Beach, Florida, and packed with workshops, seminars, sessions, demonstrations, exhibitors, and vendors.

There will be lots of opportunities to network with APDT/CAPDT colleagues, earn continuing education units for recertification and check out exhibitors and vendors who support the animal training industry. And did we mention the conference hotel is on the beach?

The three-day conference sessions cover all aspects of training: Animal Learning, Human Learning, Canine Behavior, Health and Nutrition, Business and Laws and Regulations. Those who sign up for the full conference may earn 21.5 CEUs that are accepted by CCPDT-KA, KSA, CBCC-KA, IAABC, KPA, and NADOI. Those who sign up for the On Demand sessions available after the conference may earn up to 30 CEUs. Full registration includes access to all the conference recordings between 7 to 10 days after the conference when they are uploaded to the LMS.

Register by August 1st for the following Early Bird rates:

- Premium Professional - \$440 for all 3 days, \$360, for two days, and \$280 for one day,
- Professional - \$470/3-days; \$390/2-days, and \$310/1-day
- Supporting Member - \$485/3-days; \$405/2-days and \$325/1-day
- Non-Member - \$545/3-days; \$445/2-days and \$345/1-day

After Aug. 1, however, the rates will be:

- Premium Professional - \$500 for all 3 days, \$420, for two days, and \$340 for one day,
- Professional - \$530/3-days; \$450/2-days, and \$370/1-day
- Supporting Member - \$545/3-days; \$465/2-days and \$385/1-day
- Non-Member - \$605/3-days; \$505/2-days and \$405/1-day

A special flat rate of \$175 has been set for shelter/rescue volunteer, active military/veteran and students. To register at this rate, one must provide a letter from the shelter/rescue owner/manager, proof of military service (not extended to family members) and an .edu email for students.

Keynote Speakers

The opening keynote speakers Wednesday morning are Taylor Barconey, CPDT-KA, IAABC-ADT, and Jiovany "Jio" Alcaide, CPDT-KA, IAABC-ADT, of Smart Bitch Modern Dog Training in New Orleans, Louisiana. Their talk has been titled "Professionalism Bites: Being Authentic Online to Promote Your Business."

Taylor, a native of New Orleans, and Jiovany, a Tennessee native and New Orleans transplant, got their start in the dog training business while working at Camp Bow Wow. They both earned their CPDT-KA certifications in 2018 and decided to become partners in their start-up business, Smart Bitch Modern Dog Training in January 2019. Both have since earned Fear-Free Animal Trainer certification and become an Accredited Dog Trainer through the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC), and plan to continue to earn certifications and titles as they educate themselves with the advances in dog training methods. Besides offering puppy training, advanced training for behavioral issues such as aggression, and a 12-week online course for dog obedience training called Smart Bitch University. One of their missions is to reduce dog bites in their community and beyond, while promoting rewards-based, science-backed methods.



The closing keynote speaker late Friday afternoon is **Michael Shikashio, CDBC**, a well-known authority on dog aggression cases and for his entertaining talks at previous conferences. His address has been titled “Are you Profitable, Successful, Fulfilled and Happy?” As Michael explains: “When we think about “things we want

to avoid in dog training,” words like aversive, flooding, or coercion might come to mind. What about words like profit, success, fulfillment, and happiness? These certainly aren’t laden with the same negative connotation, but then, why are they avoided so often in the dog training profession? Perhaps it’s our unconditional love for animals that keeps us going? Or maybe we like having a “side hustle” or “side hobby?” Or is it that we all are independently wealthy and are doing this for the greater good? After all, we are all just “having fun playing with puppies all day,” right?

He points out that most who start out as dog trainers do it because of your love of animals. “We like to use our training skills and knowledge to help clients and dogs with training and behavior challenges! But what happens when we sidestep from the building of a legitimate, respected, and bona fide profession? We can do a great disservice to our colleagues and the dog training community. A variety of challenges, such as balancing the needs of a business, burnout, lack of support, or even criticism about our training in “social media wars,” can quickly lead to being unprofitable, or feeling unsuccessful, unhappy, and unfulfilled. And when this fallout happens, it prevents us from doing what we started out doing in the first place — helping dogs and their guardians.”

As a recipient of APDT’s Member of the Year in 2020, Michael said he is “excited to be presenting the keynote talk at the annual APDT conference this year in Daytona Beach where I will expand on all the potential opportunities for the dog training community, and how we can all work together to continue shifting dog training to a reputable, enjoyable, and sought-after career. I will highlight the “wins and losses” in my journey from a being a “part time hobby trainer” to a global brand with a focus on helping dogs with aggression around the world, and detail steps you can take for profitability, success, fulfillment, and happiness!”

For more information about the conference speakers and sessions, check out the conference website at <https://apdt.com/apdt-conference-2022/> at the upper right-hand side of the page on the APDT website.

APDT’s LIMA Statement Gets Updated



The Association of Professional Dog Trainers Board of Directors recently approved a change to the association’s LIMA (Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive) statement due to members’

requests. LIMA is a position statement jointly adopted by APDT, CCPDT and the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC). It establishes an ethical standard that training methods should be effective while also minimizing side effects and aversive experiences for the animal. Although LIMA includes and is often associated with the Humane Hierarchy, it involves much more than just the Humane Hierarchy. LIMA also sets a competency standard and states that “trainers/behavior consultants [should] work to increase the use of positive reinforcement and lessen the use of punishment,” that protocols should be “maximally humane,” and that trainers and behavior consultants should achieve and maintain a level of education that allows them to change behavior both effectively and humanely by minimizing any stress or aversive experience to the animal.

All APDT Professional Premium and Professional members who qualify for the Locate A Trainer search must attest to being LIMA-compliant in training methods:

- Not use aversive/invasive methods of training, such as choke, prong and e-collars, leash/pop corrections, sprays or shaker cans, to name a few, without first exhausting all other less aversive or invasive techniques.
- Continually monitor a dog for distress signals during behavior modification training, and if the dog does show distress, re-evaluate the training plan.
- If unfamiliar with the issues a dog is presenting, what plans do you have to continue to work through those issues on your own, and
- If you are working with a dog that is not showing progress and you have no other ideas on how to keep distress at a minimal level, do you continue to work with the dog anyway?

Those four questions lead up to the bigger question: If as a dog trainer you have reached your limit in dealing with the behavior modification of a dog, before you reach for the prong or choke collar, APDT urges trainers to first reach out to more experienced trainers who are successfully using positive reinforcement methods to mitigate those behavior modifications.

The revised LIMA statement stresses that addition in its conclusion: “APDT takes the stance that there are no training or behavior cases which justify the use of intentional aversive punishment-based interventions in any form of training ranging from general obedience and tricks to dealing with severe behavior problems. This is in agreement with the American Veterinary

Society for Animal Behavior and available literature. Trainers who use aversive tools such as choke collars, prong collars, shock collars (including “stim-collars” and “e-collars”), bonkers, shaker-cans, citronella spray, water spray, leash-pop/leash-corrections (with any type of collar/harness), yelling, or any other technique designed to cause fear, pain, or startle in the dog, are not practicing LIMA as described and used within APDT. Trainers who are unable to train a specific behavior or to a specific outcome without resorting to aversive techniques should use resources such as the APDT community pages to contact and work with trainers who do.”

“The reason for that change was largely because there was a lot of confusion with members and non-members that LIMA allowed for the use of shock and aversive tools,” explained APDT Vice Chair Benjamin Bennink. “So this statement makes it clear that before you move away from positive reinforcement, first you should consult with people who know more, such as experienced trainers or behaviorists, because you should never need to move away from positive reinforcement. This conclusion brings the LIMA statement more in line with the LIMA attestation statement for Professional Premium and Professional members in order to be listed in the Locate A Trainer search. This statement is now consistent with that.”

Benjamin pointed out the conclusion also clarifies the question of whether a dog trainer can state he/she is a positive reinforcement trainer, but not follow LIMA and the Humane Hierarchy. A LIMA-compliant trainer will always make sure the dog’s wellbeing is being addressed and monitored, before embarking on that training program, and he/she will maintain competence in the field of dog training and behavior through education, and only accept cases for which they are qualified.

To read more about APDT’s LIMA statement, check out page 59 in this issue of the *Chronicle of the Dog*, or go to APDT’s website (apdt.com) and click on About APDT on the upper left-hand corner of the page, and then click on LIMA Statement.

Search Categories Increased to 38 for Locate A Trainer

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers’ Locate a Trainer advanced search capabilities have become, well, more advanced. The APDT Board of Directors approved adding 13 service categories to the search, creating 38 categories from which Premium Professional and Professional members may select to include on their trainer profile that will appear in a search.

“We heard our members! We’ve added additional search categories for potential clients to narrow down their search criteria on the APDT Locate A Trainer page. Take a moment and update your member profile, our industry is growing so fast,” said APDT Chair Fanna Easter.

There is no limit to the number of categories a trainer can select for their profile and the online trainer search, so select as many as appropriate that reflects your business. And while you are updating those categories, be sure to check for other information that can be updated as well, such as website URLs, phone numbers, emails, and addresses. Those 38 categories are:

- Aggression
- AKC Canine Partner
- Assistance Service Dog
- Behavioral Consultation
- Breed Handling/Show Handling
- Canine Freestyle
- CLASS Evaluator
- Clicker Training
- Dock Diving
- Group Training
- In-Home Training
- Multi-Species
- Private Lessons
- Puppy Classes
- Rally
- Separation Anxiety
- Shelter Behavior Training
- Teleconference/Virtual Sessions
- Therapy Dog Evaluator
- Agility
- AKC Obedience
- Barn Hunt
- Board and Train
- Canine Fitness Classes
- CGC Training
- CLASS Instructor
- Day Training
- Fun Games
- Herding
- Lure Coursing
- Nose Work
- Private Training
- Puppy Socialization
- Reactivity Group Classes
- Service Dog Training
- Shy and Fearful
- Therapy Dog Classes
- Trick Training

Step by Step:

1. Log onto the APDT website
2. Once the website opens to the APDT Member Dashboard, click on Your Account under Manage Your APDT Membership. There will be five choices available: Edit Your Member Profile; Edit Your Trainer Search Profile; Membership Renewal; Change Your Password and Membership Certificate. Click on “*Edit Your Trainer Search Profile.*”
3. Under your Trainer Profile, click on edit to go to your Trainer Profile to update the information there, including social media links, websites and even languages offered.
4. Once your business information is updated (if necessary), go back to the Trainer Profile and click the Add (+ sign) to the right of the line for Trainer Services Offered. From there, a drop-down box will appear that will allow you to click on any/all of the 38 categories available. **BE SURE TO HIT SAVE AFTERWARD.**
5. While on your Trainer Profile, check for correct information for your email addresses, phone numbers and websites. Be sure to hit SAVE after any and all changes.
6. If you’ve updated or added any certificates, you may add them at the bottom of your Trainer Profile page, also by clicking on the Add (+ sign) to the right. Hit save and you’re all done! You can go back to your profile by clicking on the “*Back to My Profile*” button at the top right-hand portion of the page.

DEI Team Seeking Applicants for APDT Foundation-Sponsored Scholarship



When Curtis Kelley, a dog trainer from Philadelphia, attended APDT's Annual Education and Trade Show Conference in Richmond, Virginia and Memphis, Tennessee, he looked around at those attending the keynote speeches and not finding anyone who looked like him. "I'm used to being the token person of color," Curtis said. "I grew up in middle class neighborhoods in the suburbs. But after looking around and not seeing anyone who looked like me, it was pretty intimidating to try and talk to anyone."

Curtis said in the past few years, APDT has made an effort to interest people of color into the association. "We really try to make APDT's conferences a welcoming space," Curtis said. "In my experience, any organization not making a concerted effort to welcome more diversity, they will not be a welcoming space. We need to highlight the diverse trainers who are out there through better social programs."

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There has been progress, Curtis said, in making APDT and the dog training industry more diverse; the existence of APDT's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Team is evidence of that, and that Curtis is on the APDT Board of Directors. The team is also studying the results from a diversity survey that was done last year. "It's taking a while," Curtis said. "The way we asked questions and the responses it generated made it difficult for a simple algorithm to analyze the data. We need to get that published and out to people." The DEI Team is also putting together diversity in dog training scholarships. The APDT Foundation will cover the registration fee for qualifying applicants, but the DEI Team is looking for sponsors or the association's business partners to see who could pay travel expenses. "We want to bring it full circle – set them up to go to conference without any out-of-pocket expenses," Curtis said.

There is a disconnect between communities of color that involves more than just socioeconomic indicators, Curtis said. Often it is as simple on how people in such communities interact with dogs as a regular part of their lives. For example, Curtis said his Doberman Pinscher Vista gets a different reaction depending on where they are. In very affluent neighborhoods, people will coo about her and say what a pretty dog she is. But in some urban areas, the reaction is more subdued. A few will come up, but mostly people look at her like, "it's a dog, fine." In more impoverished areas, however, the reaction is much stronger. "They will jump backwards like she

is going to attack them," Curtis said. "There is a racial correlation to people who don't have the experience of dogs being around let alone a dog they can train and interact with that dog. Most of my peers in the dog training world have had some experience growing up with dogs or knew someone who did training in dog-owning communities. But in communities of color, people have fewer dogs on a whole, and they are smaller, such as Yorkies (Yorkshire Terriers), or Chihuahuas. There's a barrier of not having larger dogs or experiencing a variety of dog personalities; and a barrier of knowing ways to interact with their dogs, or even the idea a dog can be trained to do something. And when they do contact me for training, they want me to work on potty training for a 7-year-old dog. There is a very baseline level of not acknowledging that interacting with your dog can be different."

Curtis said when he took his certification exam, he was living in Baltimore at the time, and had a difficult time trying to find someone who would sign off on his application. "I didn't know anybody; I went up and down all over for people who would sign off. There was nobody accessible who were already dog trainers, who could set the example, and that makes it harder for those trying to become trainers," he said.

The DEI Team has been bouncing around ideas for community outreach. Curtis is a member of the team that is co-chaired by Dresden Graff and Erin Richardson, with APDT board member Inga From the board liaison. "We're just beginning to lay down the infrastructure, so in a few years – by 2024 – we hope to have a program or an outreach component in place to make that a reality," Curtis said. "There is a level where marketing and social media is all well and good, but to really, really bring people into the field, and have that start to reflect communities where people might not have considered it, it is a long game. Outreach will be a critical piece of that. So, we are looking to develop the metrics. Is what we are doing working? Is this helping? Coming up with the metrics for that is challenging. We need a successful online presence, and it's hard to develop the metrics for that. For myself, I have a goal of bringing in 10-20 diverse people into the field every year, help them become a dog trainer and stay in the industry for the first two years. We need to set up mentors. APDT is development a course for CPDT-KA prep, and developing that network will be hugely beneficial."

But as with all things, bringing diversity to the dog training industry will not be without its challenges. "I would just say in the efforts to bring a more diverse population into the dog training world, it is not going to come without some tension and friction from a lot of directions," Curtis said. "If we, as dog trainers, treat our clients as individuals with their own unique perspectives, then APDT as an organization should operate with the understanding there will other perspectives in working with dogs and their people. We have the skills to be understanding of perspectives outside of ours, and we should apply that to other people."

2022 APDT Foundation Virtual Auction



Want to give back to the canine world by supporting new scientific research, conference scholarships and funding projects to grow our industry?

Mark Your Calendars

- We are very excited to announce that Summer 2022 dates have been set for one of our profession's important and necessary fundraisers!
- While the APDT Foundation auction has typically been held in-person at the amazing annual conference, online bidding is just another way we can support our colleagues.
- Details are being finalized but we wanted you to mark the week of **AUGUST 1st – 8th** on your calendars. The Foundation will use the same online platform as last year.

BID EARLY AND OFTEN!

- Learn more about the APDT Foundation, its mission, vision and projects by reviewing our website at apdtfoundation.org
- Email us with any specific questions at info@apdtfoundation.org



The APDT Foundation's mission is to support applied scientific research on dog training and behavior and to further increase the knowledge base of the dog training profession and related fields.



Mike Shikashio hugs Willie the Perpetual Pig at the 2019 APDT Foundation Auction at Portland, Oregon.

APDT Foundation is prepping for an exciting Summer 2022!

By Lisa McCluskey, APDT Foundation vice-president



2022 FOUNDATION AUCTIONS

Want to give back to the canine world by supporting new scientific research, conference scholarships, and funding projects to grow our

industry? The Foundation Board would like to encourage everyone to generously support the 2022 auctions. Each one of you are an integral part of helping us fulfill our mission. Thank you for all that you do and have given throughout the years. We are grateful to those who are donating again this year to the August virtual on-line event and additionally to the October silent auction Oct. 19-21 at the APDT/CAPDT Annual Education and Trade Show Conference in Daytona Beach, Florida.

The APDT Foundation, a 501(c)3 charitable organization, was unable to host their annual live and silent auctions at the 2020 APDT Annual Conference because of the event's in-person cancellation due to COVID-19 closures. The organization instead held an online auction in 2021. This year, our incredibly impassioned fundraising task force has not only organized another summertime virtual auction event the week of Aug. 1-8, but also is planning for an autumn in-person silent auction to take place during the APDT/CAPDT conference. The latter will be housed in the exhibit hall of the trade show.

One of the main purposes of the Foundation auctions is to raise funds to support scientific research in the fields of dog training

and canine behavior through grants and posters. To make these auctions a success, we are asking for your support in providing an item (or items) that we can put up for auction in one or both of our upcoming events. The in-person silent auction will have a robust number of attendees over multiple days in a physical exhibition hall (drawn from conference registrations), whereas the online event items are marketed directly to APDT's entire membership plus also promoted to the public via our established social media outlets.

The online bidding platform additionally allows us to add company logos and descriptions of information that can help positively promote your business. The virtual auction takes place over the course of a week, so we will also be doing a significant amount of promotion in advance of the event's opening. Since the online auction will be available to all APDT members plus the public, your donated item for that event could be industry-specific to dog training/behavior or not (whereas those you would donate to the in-person silent auction being held at conference likely needs to be more related to the dog training and canine behavior industries).

VIRTUAL AUCTION: While the APDT Foundation auction has typically only been held in-person at the amazing annual conference, on-line is just another way we can support colleagues. Funds from the August 1-8, 2022, online auction will be used to support research grants, scientific and citizen science posters and for dog trainers/behaviorists to attend APDT conferences through various scholarship programs. If you are driven to assist in meeting our goals and objectives financially, then we are asking for your participation in the APDT Foundation's 2022 on-line auction. Specific details are due out soon, but mark August 1st – 8th, 2022 on your calendars. We will use the same on-line platform as last year. Ways to participate in the auction involve: bidding on items and then checking back to see if you are the winning bidder, supporting the APDT Foundation by providing a donation with the "Donate Now" feature, and/or purchasing a Muddy Paw pin to show your support of the APDT Foundation. Once the auction is open, you can access the auction by going to <https://www.biddingforgood.com/apdtfoundation>. Remember to bid early and often! Watch for the following type of unique items (more will be added as they come in):

- training sessions with subject matter-experts
- certification exam registrations
- trainer program and academy courses
- pet supply boutique baskets
- gift cards and certificates
- canine supplements and training supplies

You could be a winning bidder! All items are mailed/emailed to the winning bidders after the week of August 8th. Items shipped (USA addresses only) via courier will likely be received during the week of August 15th. Winning bidders of various certificate-types are connected to the donor to redeem their prize and discuss any specifications.

IN-PERSON AUCTION: The APDT Foundation will also be hosting an in-person silent auction in the exhibit hall of the 2022 APDT/CAPDT conference Oct. 19-21. Funds from the auction will go towards the APDT Foundation mission to support applied scientific research on dog training and behavior and to further increase the knowledge base of the dog training profession and related fields. The APDT Foundation supports this mission by:

- Providing grants to colleges and universities conducting research on dog training and animal behavior,
- Offering opportunities for researchers to present their research findings to the APDT training and behavior community through posters (scientific and citizen science)
- Providing scholarships for trainers, behaviorists, and shelter/rescue volunteers to attend education programs and conferences that host experts in dog training and behavior

Thank you very much in advance for donating to the APDT Foundation online auction and/or bidding on all the amazing items given by our supportive donors. We hope to have a successful auction, in part because of your generous donation. Funds from the auction will consistently help the Foundation continue to provide financial support to scientific research through grants and posters, along with providing scholarships to dog trainers to attend APDT educational programs.

2022 SPEAKER SPONSORSHIP

The APDT Foundation will sponsor a speaker for this year’s conference. Malena DeMartini-Price, CTC, is scheduled to lead sessions, “Separation Anxiety for Beginners and Advanced Level” (Parts 1 & 2) on Thursday, Oct. 20, and Friday Oct. 21. For more information, visit: <https://apdt.com/apdt-conference-2022/>

2022 CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

The following conference scholarships (apdtfoundation.org/awards-and-grants) were offered this year:

- Simply Brilliant Dogs! - APDT members committed to least intrusive, minimally aversive (LIMA) strategies & a primary use of positive reinforcement-based training methodologies (+R),
- APDT Foundation Diversity in Dog Training – individuals who are members of diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and restorative justice within the dog training and behavior community, and
- ZIWI® Guardian – canine enthusiasts currently working at a facility or organization as a rescue/shelter employee or in a trainer role as a staff member and/or volunteer.

The Foundation Board is incredibly grateful to our supporting sponsors, Simply Brilliant Dogs! and ZIWI®. Scholarship winners will receive (pending APDT Foundation trustee approval of the proposed 2022-23 budget): recognition and \$500 in award money onstage during the business meeting at the 2022 APDT/CAPDT conference, publication of their biography on the APDT Foundation website, in Chronicle of The Dog and on social media platforms, plus free general conference registration to the APDT/CAPDT annual conference.

2022 CONFERENCE POSTERS

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) and the APDT Foundation (apdtfoundation.org) plans to host the submissions for poster presentation proposals from the academic (faculty, students, researchers) and professional (dog trainers, canine behavior consultants, shelter volunteers/employees, veterinary staff, etc.) communities for the 2022 APDT/CAPDT Annual Conference. These research sessions highlight topics relevant to dog behavior/training and include preliminary results, completed studies, summaries of relevant published personal research, and/or position papers. Presenters for each poster receive free general admission registration for the annual conference. Additionally, the top poster winners receive monetary awards. The goal is dissemination of research findings to the dog training and behavior profession via poster presentation at the APDT/CAPDT annual conference. We are always incredibly grateful for the time individuals take to sharing their work year after year with the dog training community via the poster judging session, project presentation, and Q&A time for our conference participants during the exhibit hall trade show.

Watch for information on the APDT Foundation website (<https://apdtfoundation.org/research-poster-presentations/>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/APDTFoundation>) regarding updates on our 2022 poster program.

2022-23 GRANT INFORMATION

The APDT Foundation will support undergraduate, graduate, and faculty academic research in a field related to applied behavior, including behavior analysis, ethology, and cognition once again this year. The APDT Foundation will make up to five grants annually of \$1,500 each. Upon publication of that research, the APDT Foundation will distribute the results of these studies via the APDT Foundation website, and to the dog training community through APDT’s magazine, Chronicle of the Dog. The APDT Foundation will also present the research to APDT for possible invitation of the researchers to attend the APDT annual educational conferences to present in poster or lecture format. Please read the conditions of eligibility on our website (<https://apdtfoundation.org/grants/>).

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING

The APDT Foundation raises funds for scientific research and for education of dog trainers and supports applied scientific research on dog training and behavior. The aim to further increase the knowledge base of the dog training profession and related fields. Listed below are three ways to support them.

1. Please consider donating at: <https://apdtfoundation.org/donate/> to the APDT Foundation. Donors may use a credit card and complete the on-line form year-round. All donations are tax deductible, and an email receipt is sent once processing of your funds is completed. The APDT Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and its tax ID number is 27-1498724.

2.If you use Amazon.com, Inc. for your purchases, please consider shopping via the AmazonSmile program and Amazon will donate to the APDT Foundation (“Association of Pet Dog Trainers Foundation” is our AmazonSmile account name at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-1498724>).

3.All APDT Foundation Muddy Paw pin purchase proceeds benefit APDT Foundation, therefore acquiring one shows that you support the Foundation's mission to help fund research in dog training and behavior. Individuals are given an opportunity to purchase a Muddy Paw pin when renewing their APDT annual membership, in-person at the annual conference, and during auction season. There are opportunities in the works that the purchase of a Muddy Paw pin will open the wearer to various science fans fun socialization opportunities at conference (and potentially even some virtual ones too...stay tuned for details!)

CONTACT INFO

Please contact us via email at: info@apdtfoundation.org or through the main APDT office, 2365 Harrodsburg Road, A325, Lexington, KY 40504. More information about project criteria and requirements, APDT Foundation grant and scholarship programs, volunteering, and/or donating may be found at www.apdtfoundation.org. Information is published on our Facebook page

(facebook.com/APDTFoundation) regarding all annual program offerings as they are available, and updates will be made year-round.

FOUNDATION POLICIES

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers Foundation does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. The Grants, Posters and Scholarships Task Force of The Association of Professional Dog Trainers Foundation will abstain from scoring any individual who has applied to their various programs that they may know professionally or personally. All award decisions are confidential; they are made and approved by the Association of Professional Dog Trainers Foundation trustees. The APDT Foundation reserves the right to change the grants, posters, and scholarship policy and the number of awards or amounts provided to individuals at any time. Individuals do not need to be APDT members to participate in most Foundation programs.

NEW FOR 2022

APDT is proud to offer a test prep course for the CPDT-KA Exam

This course will prepare you to sit for the Certified Professional Dog Trainer Knowledge Assessed (CPDT-KA) Exam

If already certified, brush up on your knowledge for 5 CEUs

Email: education@apdt.com
pathlms.com/apdt/courses/18948





Welcome to APDT's Newest Members!

Professional Premium

Amee Abel
Leticia Alamia
Anja Andjelic (United Kingdom)
Janine Ascenzo
Mistie Badders
Will Bangura
Jessica Barry
Jennifer Bradley
Grace Bronfeld
Jessica Brown
Isaac Buckmaster
Allison Camp
Emily Canole
Kenneth Cappello
Alan Carr
Nick Chrysanthopoulos
Debbi Cole
Shelli Crust
Allison Daack
Bronagh Daly
Lindsey Demko
Jason Dill
Caroline Edgar
Deborah Engle
Cody Faherty
Kelley Fecteau
Ellasha Ferriell
Jamie Fonsetto
Lisa Formicola
Heather Fowell (Canada)
Timothy Fraley
Mackenzie Fredericks
Rahul Gautam
Kasara Glass
Kali Grimm
Natalie Hawkins
Kelly Hawtrey
Montana Hayes

Patricia Hayes
Jean-Lee Hayes
Maudlin Heffington
Deanie Hogan
Linda Holenstein
Amber Hoosier
Halley Hopkins
Amanda Janisch
Jeff Jenkins
Catherine Kelly
Aaron Kentros
Heidi Kerr
Laura Killian
Carolyn Kitts
Christine Kourou
Frederic Labbe (Canada)
Christine Lawhorne
Laurie Lawless
Margaret Lenoir
Susan Liddell
Suzanne Locker
Cody Lootens
Joseph McFarland
Suzi Moore
Walter Mott
Danielle Norcross
April Parke
Corey Plunkett
Jennifer Poole
Heartly Purvis
Courtney Reavis
Norma Ross
Timothy Saltgaver
Alexa Sharp-Wiley
Beth Sherdell
Cyndi Smasal
Natalie Spencer (United Kingdom)
Laurel Summerfield
Sarah Teffner

Jutka Terris
Ashley Theis
Linda Tschida
Jeison Vasquez
Jamie Walker
Richard Walter (Spain)
L April Williams
Ashley Wisner
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Mandy Zatorski
Vivian Zottola-Gefke

Professional

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Dawn Barrientos
Veronica Beaupre
Donna Bennett
Martin Bergamaschi
Brittany Bilich
Katelin Books
Erin Bracey
Bob Brasses
Angela Bravard
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Leroy Bromell
Frank Brown
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Rachel Fish
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Alexandra Francisco
Margaret Fraser
Jill Freifeld
Heather Furby
Sheryl Furman
Delyse Gannaway
Catharine Garbo
Lourdes B Garcia
Christine Glosson
Marco Antonio Gonzalez (Chile)
Susan Greenholt
Michele Griffin
Mequell Guidry
Shoshanna Gutis
Karen Hashimoto
Michael Hill
R Renae Hill
Nicole Hitch

The APDT is proud to be an industry-leading association for trainers to network with each other, provide educational opportunities, and grow professionally within the dog training and behavior profession. We salute your commitment to strengthening the professional dog training industry and honor your commitment towards furthering your education through continuing education.

Interested in joining the world's leading professional dog association as we build better trainers through education?

Become a member today!



Visit apdt.com/membership/become-a-member



or call **800-PET-DOGS**

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Using Video to Connect with Clients

By Veronica Boutelle, M.A., CTCS and Harriet Alexander

While most dog professionals absolutely love to geek out on theory, it's sometimes easy to overlook the fact that working with animals is also a physical skill. Much of it requires timing, technique, body positioning and fluidity of movement. Attempting to describe or explain this to clients via the written word can therefore be a challenge. It's why during classes you often get a wave of 'ooh I get it!' and approving nods once you demonstrate a technique you've just outlined. Followed, hopefully, by a renewed desire to give it a go!

Helping clients to succeed involves understanding their challenges and finding ways to help them, so they can get the most out of working with you. At every stage of the customer journey, if they

experience success, they are more likely to stick with you and you are therefore more likely to help them and their dogs. Whether your training class is in-person, online or a combination of both, video content can provide a useful shortcut to client success. A lot of dog trainers and dog walkers now incorporate this into their work, especially since the online training boom of the past two years. Meaningful video content can be a great way to engage with clients during and following sessions, whether you are running these in person, during classes or online. Here's a few ideas to help you channel your inner Spielberg and use video in your business.

Filmed is better than perfect

First things first - how should you film your videos? There is a lot of dog training video content out there in the world. Some of it is super slick and beautifully shot, which can feel intimidating. Before you rush out to buy five boom mics and a green screen, consider what the purpose of your video content is. The key word here is content - it doesn't have to be shiny and perfect. More importantly, you want your videos to be clear, concise, and useful. The pace of online content creation means that people no longer expect or even want perfection.

Finding a quiet room with good lighting is an excellent starting point. If you do want to invest in some equipment, a tripod for your camera and quality microphone are useful tools, as is a basic video

Motivating clients to implement changes can be a challenge. Requesting video updates is one way to maintain engagement between sessions. Make a plan with them for the videos they will send. It could be a specific skill they're working on, an enrichment activity or monitoring reactions on a walk. By prompting them to send these clips, you can provide quick feedback and also gain a sense of how they're progressing before the next session. You could also watch the video with them during the session, which can be a helpful way to generate discussion and identify what they're acing and what needs work.

editing program such as Apple iMovie, Movavi Video Editor or Pinnacle Studio. Most mobile phones these days have decent cameras that are absolutely fine to use. If the thought of being on camera makes you want to move to a cabin in the woods, don't despair. Practice in advance and have some bullet points on hand as prompts. You may find it more comfortable to film some demonstrations and then provide a voice-over afterwards. Sometimes finding a spot to look at slightly above the camera (so you don't have to stare at your own moving image) can help as well.

Video your training plans

Some of our THRIVE! members have mentioned that writing training plans can be a time-consuming task. There are lots of ways to streamline this process, and video can be one way to provide personalized but more succinct information to clients. This could involve a short message summarizing what you'd like them to work on this week, as well as a reminder and demonstration of the training techniques you discussed during the session. You also don't need to restrict things just to the training plan. Sending messages of encouragement between sessions, as well as responses to any questions clients may have, can also be done via video.

Create an online library

Creating a content library for clients is a great service add-on and can also be incorporated into training plans. By signposting clients to demonstration or explanation videos, you save yourself time by not having to recreate these each time. You can maintain this resource library in any way you like. Pop your brand all over it and use them as part of your marketing materials. Make them exclusive access only for current clients, or as part of a package. Or even create a membership option that allows people to subscribe at any time for access. So many possibilities!

Pass the mic (and camera) to your clients

Motivating clients to implement changes can be a challenge. Requesting video updates is one way to maintain engagement between sessions. Make a plan with them for the videos they will send. It could be a specific skill they're working on, an enrichment activity or monitoring reactions on a walk. By prompting them to

send these clips, you can provide quick feedback and also gain a sense of how they're progressing before the next session. You could also watch the video with them during the session, which can be a helpful way to generate discussion and identify what they're acing and what needs work.

Showcase your amazing work

Telling clients about the great day training session you had, or the brilliant dog walk you took Coco on that day, is not quite the same as showing them. Videos can be used to demonstrate your work when clients aren't present. It can be reassuring for clients to see how their dog is doing while they're away, and it also allows you to track and celebrate progress. If you've recently introduced a dog to your dog walking group, you can illustrate how well they're settling in and who their new buds are. Conversely, if you are seeing some things you're concerned about, video can be a helpful way to have these discussions.

There are many ways to connect with clients and video provides a lot of scope for creativity and scalability. We'd love to know if this is something you use in your business, or if it's something you want to do more of. Happy filming!



*Veronica Boutelle, M.A., CTC is author of *How To Run a Dog Business: Putting Your Career Where Your Heart Is*, and co-founder of dogbiz, whose business is to help yours succeed. Learn all the ways dogbiz can support your success at www.dogbizsuccess.com. While there, join the THRIVE! waitlist to be first in line when membership opens this fall.*

Behavior as an Indicator of Abuse and Neglect

By Melissa Bain, DVM, DACVB, M.S., DACAW
Professor, Clinical Animal Behavior
University of California School of Veterinary Medicine



One must hope that you never run into a situation of animal abuse or neglect. However, what are our obligations, legal or otherwise? Do we give the owner the benefit of the doubt and educate them? Do we immediately report them to Animal Control or other authorities? Aside from reporting, you may be asked to testify in a case, should it go to court. Some of the answers depend on what the legal requirements are in your municipality, county, or state, but aside from the requirements, what is our ethical obligation?

There are special considerations necessary when dealing with an animal that is considered “evidence,” as behaviors will likely change over time. The animal you see at one point may be in much better, or worse, condition in as little as a few days; therefore, appropriate documentation must be made quickly. Much of the actual evidence animals offer should be obtained through visual observation, in addition to physical exam and biomedical samples done by a veterinary professional. If there is a situation that you think is concerning, copious notes are your friend.

Animal Communication

Most animals are skilled communicators. Communication can be as direct as a vocalization. More subtle communication can take the form of a scent left behind by an animal or the way the animal is holding its ears or tail. This latter form of communication – body language – is very useful in determining an animal’s emotional

state or its motivation for a particular action. In addition, body language can suggest possible medical issues, potentially arising from the situation under investigation.

Animals use posture, ears, mouth, and tail to indicate its intentions and emotions, in response to surroundings and specific stimuli. These elements together provide a complete picture of the dog in that moment. Taken individually, these visual signals are of little use; taken together, they present a more complete picture of the dog at that moment. However, visual cues occur in a state of continual shift, depending on the triggers present, the environment, and the animal’s resiliency.

Physiological vs. Psychological States

Observing an animal often gives us as much insight into the physiological state of the animal as it does the psychological state. Physically demanding physiological states include pregnancy, lactation, pain, sickness, hunger, thirst, and starvation, and while trainers are not expected to assess those, it’s important to know that they can affect an animal’s behavior. Stress, fear, and anxiety can manifest as observable behaviors and may be overlooked when assessing the health of the entire animal, yet one or more can be the underlying cause of problem behaviors such as aggression and repetitive behaviors. Documenting the triggers for aggression and other behaviors may help investigators identify potential areas to look into.

So often, people assume that the dog who shies from a man's approach or attacks a broom when it comes out of the closet was abused by those things in the past. While it is difficult to know for certain what may have happened in the past, fearful dogs that were never socialized to men or to brooms may behave in the same manner. Similarly, animals that have been neglected and ignored to the point of becoming somewhat feral can be confused with victims of abuse. Physiological changes related to abuse, such as healed fractures or wounds, often, but not always, accompany behavioral changes.

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Studies have shown that canine victims of abuse display behaviors that differ from the norm in certain identifiable patterns. They are more likely to be aggressive toward people or other dogs. They show increased excitability and hyperactivity. They may be persistent in their attention-seeking behaviors and may show signs of attachment very rapidly. They may engage in more persistent barking and/or increased repetitive behaviors and, as such, these behaviors should be documented if you suspect abuse.

Behavioral Assessments (“Temperament Tests”)

Organizations with the goal of adopting animals into new homes would like to know that they are not sending dangerous or highly undesirable pets into households. For this and other reasons, several “temperament tests,” more accurately known as behavioral assessments, have been developed. What they strive to do is uncover behavioral patterns that might exist but not be apparent in simple interactions with the animal.

While some behavior assessments have proved useful in certain circumstances, they are not without their serious drawbacks. First, each person administering the assessment must be well versed in the assessment protocol. Then, the assessment should be administered the same way to each animal. Finally, the results must be analyzed properly. Even with appropriate knowledge and consistency, studies have shown these assessments are relatively non-predictive for how the animal behaves in other settings at other times.

Document, Document, Document

As noted, detailed, objective documentation should happen early and often if you suspect that there may be abuse or neglect

happening. This may seem daunting; however, if broken down into documenting a moment in time, followed by any additional information as you have available, may make it seem less overwhelming. Written documentation should be descriptive, objective, and thorough, and can include things such as known history and behavior observations.

Written documentation can be supplemented with videos or photos that you may have. Videos are useful for documenting behaviors, and can supplement other information gathered by veterinary professionals, such as if limping is captured on video. Please be aware of laws in your area limiting video- or audio-recording without an owner's permission.

In conclusion, as animal care professionals, we should prioritize the physical and emotional well-being of the animals in our care. It may be intimidating to think about reporting a case to Animal Control, or to be called up onto the stand to testify. However, your detailed observations can provide extensive useful information about the welfare of these animals and can be very impactful on the situation under investigation.

Additional Reading

Webinar Series: Canine Communication & Behavior, <https://www.aspcapro.org/training-webinar-series/webinar-series-canine-communication-behavior>, Accessed May 2, 2022.

Feline Communication: How to Speak Cat & Understand Cat Behavior, <https://www.maddiesfund.org/feline-communication-how-to-speak-cat.htm>, Accessed May 2, 2022.



Dr. Melissa Bain is a veterinarian and Professor of Clinical Animal Behavior, and is board-certified by both the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and the American College of Animal Welfare. She received a Master's degree in Advanced

Clinical Research from the UC Davis School of Medicine in 2007. She is a past president of both the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior. In 2016 she was selected as the Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year, awarded by the American Veterinary Medical Association, and in 2019 she was selected to receive the Companion Animal Welfare Award from the World Small Animal Veterinary Association. Additionally, she is the Director of Professional Student Clinical Education for the UC Davis Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. Her responsibilities include student and resident education, clinical case management, and research.



Workman's Compensation Insurance

To insure or not insure – or just not sure?

By David Pearsall



As a professional dog trainer, you are likely aware of the need to carry general liability insurance to protect yourself and your business against bodily injury or property damage claims to others, including your clients and the dogs in your care/classes. But what about those injuries that you, your employees/team members, or your independent contractors sustain while on the job? Now that most of the U.S. is open for business again from the COVID-19 pandemic (all though this is subject to change before this article is printed), many trainers

who had gotten away from in-person training are going back into client's homes or training facilities to perform in-person training classes again. In addition, we are hearing from many professional trainers who are now adding additional team members to assist and keep up with demand. So before you or one of your team members suffers an injury on the job, please be sure educate yourself on the importance of workers compensation insurance, and the differences between what it covers versus your general liability insurance and/or health insurance.

To begin, it is important to note that the APDT liability policy offered via Business Insurers of the Carolinas is a general liability insurance policy that provides coverage for bodily injury or property damage claims to a third party caused by your negligence. In addition, it also provides coverage for the dogs in your care/classes, as well as optional coverage for professional liability (errors or omissions) for your professional training if you choose. However, what the APDT liability policy does not cover are injuries sustained by you, your employees or your independent contractors. The exclusive remedy for injuries to you, your employees, and anyone required by your state statute to be covered is workers compensation insurance. This includes covering claims such as dog bites, slips, trips and falls, auto accidents while in route to client's home or training facility/class, etc. All of these are claims that we have received over the years. And yes, workers comp will cover the owner(s) of the business even if you do not have employees, so long as you elect to be included.

Unfortunately, unless you or one of your employees or independent contractors have ever suffered an injury on the job, it might be hard to fathom carrying this insurance. However, I recommend you consider the consequences of not carrying this coverage, especially if you are hiring others to work in your business. Suppose you or one of your employees suffered a significant injury from a slip and fall or dog bite and were unable to work for several weeks. Although you and your staff may have health insurance, you will find many health insurers will look to exclude work related injuries. And even if your health insurer does cover the medical expenses incurred, they most certainly will not cover your lost wages while you are unable to work. According to the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI), the average cost for a workers compensation claim filed between 2018-2019 was approximately \$42,008, which includes medical expenses, such as visits to an emergency room or health clinic, follow up doctor visits, surgeries, and prescriptions, etc., as well as lost wages from being unable to work for a period of time and settlements when an injury causes permanent damage.

Workers' compensation covers all work-related injuries arising out of employment and occurring during the course of employment. It also covers occupational diseases resulting from employment, and employers' liability that is excluded from employment. It is the exclusive remedy for workplace injuries, meaning the employee relinquishes the right to sue the employer in exchange for a guaranteed set of benefits. Workers Compensation benefits include payment for medical expenses, disability (loss of income), rehabilitation, and death.

Each individual state has its own workers compensation statute, and the specific laws and benefit amounts vary from state to state. Coverage is compulsory in all states except for Texas. State laws differ based on the number of people you employ or in which you have an employee/employer relationship. Some states mandate you to purchase coverage if you have even one part time employee, while other states may require if you have three, four or five employees. Even if you have less than the number required, you still can be held liable for an employee's injuries, so be aware of your state requirements. Most all states have substantial fines and penalties for not covering your employees. For example, California defines failure to have workers compensation coverage as a misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in jail and maximum fines of up to \$100,000. In some states you can even be charged with a felony if you do not secure coverage for certain number of employees in a reasonable time. And now many states will specify that failure to have coverage due to lack of knowledge is not a valid excuse for failure to insure, so please be aware if you hire someone or utilize an independent contractor to work for you or on behalf of your business.

Furthermore, each state's workers compensation statute differs on how they view independent contractors and/or subcontractors. Just because you pay someone via IRS form 1099 and call them an independent contractor, does not mean there is not an employee/

employer relationship (which requires you to carry workers comp coverage). The tax code is a federal law whereas workers compensation is a state law.

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For workers comp law, states typically look at the following when determining whether an employee/employer relationship exists:

- 1) The right to control the work/set work schedule
- 2) The right to hire and fire
- 3) Can the contractor make a profit as well as a loss?
- 4) Does the person perform the same type of work as your business?
- 5) Can the contractor select and hire helpers?
- 6) Does your business furnish tools or equipment for the job (carrying liability insurance can be considered a tool for the job)?
- 7) Does the contractor have the freedom to offer services to, or work for others?

If it is determined there is an employee/employer relationship, you would need to obtain a workers compensation policy, as again it is the exclusive remedy to cover on-the-job injuries. If you are truly utilizing independent contractors and are 100 percent sure they are independent and that there is no employee/employer relationship, the best way to remedy the situation is to have the independent contractor(s) purchase their own general liability and workers compensation insurance and provide you with a certificate of insurance showing they are fully insured.

Here are a few more recent workers compensation claims examples:

- 1) Employee was bitten on the hand while giving a dog a treat. Total paid, \$1,472.
- 2) During leash training, a dog pulled on the leash causing injury to the trainer's shoulder. Total paid, \$30,478.
- 3) Trainer was working with several dogs, when one of the dog's leashes wrapped around his finger causing a fracture. Total paid, \$3,892.
- 4) Trainers' assistant slipped on wet floor of training facility, injuring her knee. Total paid, \$13,774.

- 5) While working with multiple dogs in a group class, trainer fell and rolled ankle. Total paid, \$11,282.
- 6) Trainer was bitten on the arm when attempting to place a dog back in its crate. Total paid, \$10,789.
- 7) During training class, employee fell while attempting to run agility course with dog and was injured. Total paid, \$1,526.
- 8) Trainer was walking dog on leash, dog pulled, and the trainer lost their balance and fell, injuring their hip. Total paid, \$39,827

As always, if you have additional insurance questions or concerns or want to know more about your individual state requirements, please feel free to contact us anytime at 1-800-962-4611 or via email at dp@business-insurers.com.



David Pearsall is a licensed insurance agent and co-owner of *Business Insurers of the Carolinas*, an insurance agency specializing in business insurance for pet related services since 1992. David and his team have managed insurance programs for many national pet services associations, including the APDT Insurance Program since 2001. A licensed agent in all 50 states, he holds both the Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) and the Certified Workers' compensation Advisor (CWCA) designations. Contact David at DP@Business-Insurers.com or visit *Business Insurers* on the web at www.DogTrainerInsurance.com

Recent Liability Claims:

- While being boarded for training, dog started vomiting and had bloody diarrhea. Dog was taken to the vet to be treated. Total paid, \$1,254.

- Puppy in the care of a trainer was killed by another dog. Total paid, \$5,665.
- During a one-on-one training lesson, dog started vomiting. Trainer attempted to clear the dog's airway and was rushed to the vet. The dog passed away. Total paid, \$1,339.
- Dog became ill during board and train and was taken to the vet. Dog was suffering from an upper respiratory infection. Total paid, \$539.
- Puppy became ill while staying with trainer. Puppy was taken to the vet. Total paid, \$2,313.
- Dog suffered a snake bite while staying at training facility. Total paid, \$2,263.
- During a training class the trainer's demo dog bit the ear of a dog in the class. Total paid, \$395.
- Two dogs got into a fight during a training session. One dog was injured and taken to the vet. Total paid, \$3,673.
- Dog ingested a tire toy while training and was hospitalized. Total paid, \$5,402.
- While on training walk, dog ate a foreign body that caused an obstruction and subsequent infection. Total paid, \$4,312.

Workman's Compensation Claims:

- Trainer was bitten on the fingers while attempting to give the dog a treat and required stitches. Total paid, \$1,460.
- Employee was assisting another trainer and was tripped by a dog, causing injury to lower back. Total paid, \$11,336
- Trainer slipped while working with dog on an agility course, injuring her right knee. Total paid, \$8,705.

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A dog in Nicaragua accompanies a Mayangna man on a hunting trip to a forested area. (Photograph courtesy of Debra Bardowicks).

Is Your Dog NATIVE?

Re-examining what is 'typical' for dogs across many countries and cultures

By Kristina Spaulding, Ph.D, CAAB, and Irith Bloom, CPDT-KSA, CDBC, KPA CTP, VSPDT, CBATI

NOTE: Our long-time readers know that we usually address recent scientific research on dog behavior and cognition. Today, we would like to discuss a paper that reminded us that much of the research we discuss has a built-in bias that, while quite dramatic, is also easy to forget about. While we have touched on that bias obliquely in the past, today we will address it head on. We hope that you find the information below useful, and that it helps remind you (just as it has helped remind us) to question assumptions regularly.

The dog training and behavior profession is largely focused on pet dogs. Most trainers in the United States work with dogs currently living in homes as pets. Some also work with dogs that have previously been pets or whom they are trying to place as pets in family homes. In other words, most of us work with dogs that fit a typical model of an owned dog that is not allowed to roam free. While at some level we may realize there are other types of dogs out there, very few of us encounter them on a regular basis. This is true for Irith and Kristina, by the way – neither of us has had more than a dozen or so cases involving dogs who have anything but a typical pet dog origin in terms of genetics and background, and most of these unusual cases have involved dogs brought in from other countries.

For a variety of reasons, nearly all of which involve practical concerns, most of the research on dog behavior is also done on pet dogs whose owners bring them into the lab or complete surveys. Yet despite how things look to most of us in the United States, pet dogs only represent a minority of the worldwide population of dogs. Estimates vary, but likely 50 – 75 percent of the world's dog population is "free-ranging" (note that free-ranging dogs may be owned or not-owned) (Bryce et al. 2021). Jeremy Koster, an anthropologist at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, addresses this issue in a recent paper. He makes the point that most dogs are not what he calls "NATIVE dogs." NATIVE, which is a counterintuitive acronym in some ways, stands for: 1) Neutered, 2) Alimented (nourished), 3) Trained, 4) Isolated, 5) Vaccinated, and 6) Engineered. We will cover each of these categories in more detail below. Koster contrasts pet dogs with dogs in subsistence-based societies, using the dogs of the Mayangna in Nicaragua as a case study.

Many of us envision two main groups of dogs: pet dogs and free-ranging, feral, un-owned dogs. Kristina held this view too, until very recently (and Irith's view, though very slightly different, was not far from that, either). If it weren't for some of Kristina's international students calling her out and educating her, she and Irith would still have this impression. Thanks to Kristina's newfound perspective, she has been paying more attention to the question of what a dog is lately.

Koster's article is an excellent discussion of this issue. His article raises many questions about how we should view dogs and our interactions with them. In fact, this article may raise more questions than it answers, but we hope that it widens your perspective and opens the door to thinking about dogs and people in new ways. If we want to truly understand who dogs are, we need to study them in a wide variety of environments and cultures. The differences Koster points out also illustrate that dog-human interactions vary widely from one

For a variety of reasons, nearly all of which involve practical concerns, most of the research on dog behavior is also done on pet dogs whose owners bring them into the lab or complete surveys. Yet despite how things look to most of us in the United States, pet dogs only represent a minority of the worldwide population of dogs. Estimates vary, but likely 50 – 75 percent of the world’s dog population is “free-ranging” (note that free-ranging dogs may be owned or not-owned) (Bryce et al. 2021).

place to another and remind us that we need to be very careful about taking it for granted that our societal values and rules apply in other cultures.

Anthropological work shows that subsistence strategies, diets, and interactions between humans and dogs vary among societies. The dogs of the Mayangna, for example, are free-ranging in the sense that they are not restrained. However, they have owners, are named, fed, and sleep inside the home with their family members. Some, but not all, Mayangna dogs also serve as hunting companions. The differences in ecology of dogs living in different cultures illustrate just how flexible and adaptable domestic dogs are. It also reminds us to use caution when generalizing experiences or research findings from one particular population of dogs to other, dissimilar populations.

Let’s look at the different components of being a NATIVE dog, and how NATIVE dogs, like the ones most of us are familiar with, compare with dogs in other communities.

NEUTERED. “Neutered” here refers to both spayed and neutered (which are often simply referred to as “neutered” in research and in other countries). The rates of spay and neuter in the U.S. and U.K. are typically quite high. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), 69 percent of American pets are neutered, and the American Pet Products Association (APPA) suggests a somewhat higher 78 percent neuter rate. Rates worldwide, however, vary quite a bit. For example, some countries use widespread spay/neuter release programs for free-ranging unowned dogs, while others do not. In Koster’s personal experience with the Mayangna dogs, he was only aware of a single dog who was neutered, and that dog had been a gift to a local family from acquaintances living in an urban area. A survey of 144 different cultures by Chambers and colleagues (2020) found mention of neutering in only 10 cultures. Neuter status is important because we know from rodent studies that sterilization has important impacts on behavior, so the high neuter rate here in the U.S. could mean significant behavioral differences exist between NATIVE dogs and other dogs. That said, the exact impacts of spay/neuter on behavior are not well studied in dogs (yet).

ALIMENTED. The term “alimented” means that humans provide nourishment for the dogs. As you no doubt are aware, pet dogs in the United States are typically fed pet dog food. Very few people in the United States provide table scraps as a primary source of food for their pet dogs. Even those who don’t feed kibble typically provide commercial raw or cooked diets. The Mayangna, on the other hand, usually feed table scraps. A typical dish might consist of rice and bananas, for example. Dogs may also supplement their diets with trash. This may sound horrifying to us, but trash has almost certainly been a primary component of domestic dogs’ diet for most of their evolutionary history. In fact, there is evidence that dogs have adapted to consuming a larger component of starch in their diet (compared to wolves), most likely due to co-existence with humans (Axelsson et al., 2013). Gray and Young (2011) found that 40 percent of dogs living in small-scale societies (such as hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, etc.) are not provided with food at all.

TRAINED. Obviously, dog training is a well-established and growing business in the United States (even if we wish more people would partake). Again, this is not the case everywhere. Dogs in Mayangna communities undergo informal training only, and much of it is based on positive punishment. Koster describes being met with surprise from the Mayangna people when his assistant used food to train a dog. He also shares an anecdote about reaching out to a dog expecting a friendly response and being snarled at instead. It’s difficult to tell from Koster’s description if this was the result of Koster’s being unfamiliar to the dog or if this was the result of a general aversion to people.

ISOLATED. Pet dogs in the United States are frequently isolated. They sleep indoors with humans, are not typically allowed to roam free, and often spend much of their day alone (at least, pre-COVID). Mayangna dogs, on the other hand, have few opportunities for isolation. Mayangna families are usually large, and there is almost always someone home. In addition, Mayangna dogs are free to roam, though most dogs stay in the vicinity of their residence unless they are walking with a human. Mayangna dogs also have the opportunity to interact with other domesticated animals, such as chickens and pigs. Koster adds that this lack of isolation is typical for subsistence-oriented societies (Gray and Young 2011).

VACCINATED. In the United States, most dogs are vaccinated. This is also true in many other countries, where a large proportion of dogs receive vaccines. In some areas, there are governmental programs that attempt to vaccinate all dogs (including free-ranging or unowned dogs) for rabies. Indeed, the Nicaraguan government periodically comes to vaccinate the Mayangna's dogs. Other than that, though, veterinary care is essentially non-existent. As a result, disease burdens are high and almost all adult dogs in Mayangna communities show evidence of previous infection with parvovirus, distemper, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Leptospirosis and giardia infections are also common. Koster reports similar findings in other, comparable communities (Fiorello et al., 2006). The life expectancy of dogs in these living conditions is also relatively low—estimated at 5 to 6 years of age (Jimenez, 2021).

ENGINEERED. Most of the dogs we see in the United States are either purebred dogs or an identifiable mixture of purebred dogs (genetically speaking). The advent of standardized dog breeds, which dates to the Victorian era, has led to a great deal of variation in both the behavior and the appearance (a.k.a. phenotype) of dogs seen in areas such as the United Kingdom. Dogs in the U.S., like those in the U.K., differ dramatically in size, height, girth, coat type, skull shape, ear set, and tail type. This stands in stark contrast to the population of dogs in many other areas of the world. Koster reports that among both the Mayangna and in other rural societies, people make little effort to manage the breeding of their dogs (Coppinger and Coppinger 2001; Koster 2009). As a result, the dogs are all essentially mutts, and in these areas, phenotypic traits such as height, coat, and ear and tail type tend to be relatively homogenous.

Dogs across the world experience vastly different environmental conditions. It's easy to assume that all dogs live the way the dogs we know live, but the reality is that many dogs are not "NATIVE," and live a life that is hard for us to imagine or fully understand. Science suggests that both genetic and environmental factors can have a profound effect on the behavior and cognition of dogs, so broadening our definition of "dog" can only help us in our work as professional dog trainers – especially with the recent increase in the number of dogs who are imported from other countries. We hope that you will carry the ideas from this discussion forward as you evaluate both individual dogs and research studies in the future!



Irith Bloom, CPDT-KSA, CDBC, KPA CTP, VSPDT, CBATI, is a member of the faculty at Victoria Stilwell Dog Training Academy and DogBiz's Dog Walking Academy and speaks at conferences and seminars regularly. She has been published both online and in print. She volunteers with NESR, Annenberg PetSpace, and the LA County 2020 HPHF Coalition. Irith is the owner of *The Sophisticated Dog, LLC* (<https://thesophisticateddog.com>), a pet training company based in Los Angeles.



Kristina Spaulding, Ph.D., has been in the dog training and behavior profession since 1999. She has a doctorate degree in biopsychology—the study of the biological basis of behavior—and is a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist. She is particularly interested in stress, neurobiology, cognition, emotion, and wellbeing and how to apply these concepts to the prevention and early intervention of behavior problems in dogs. In addition to working with behavior clients, Dr. Spaulding teaches a variety of online courses and webinars on the science of behavior through her website, www.smartdogtrainingandbehavior.com. She also regularly presents on canine behavior science at conferences and other events. In 2019, Dr. Spaulding received the Association of Professional Dog Trainer's (APDT's) Member of the Year Award. She currently serves on the IAABC Foundation Board and the Fear Free Advisory Group.

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S.A.F.E. applies attachment theory to canine learning

By Grisha Stewart, M.A., CPDT-KA, KPACTP

EDITOR’S NOTE: Grisha Stewart is one of the speakers for the 2022 APDT/CAPDT Education and Trade Show Conference Oct. 19-21 at Daytona Beach, Florida. Learn the most current version of her acclaimed Behavior Adjustment Training (BAT) and view BAT through the S.A.F.E. lens in Grisha’s session at the conference in October.

We ‘dog people’ love our dogs, in ways that people who aren’t bonded to dogs just don’t understand. We have formed a special kind of connection, what scientists call an *attachment relationship*. It’s not just a preference to attach. We’re literally biologically linked to our attachment figures. Our heart rates and breathing sync up, and if the relationship is secure, even imagining the attachment figure increases heart rate variability, meaning our mammalian nervous system is better able to respond to stress (Bryant & Hutanamon, 2018). Life is less scary, less painful (Failo, 2022, Davies, et al., 2009), and more interesting with healthy attachments.

Attachment includes *proximity seeking*, which is one explanation for why my dog, Joey, just brought his toy to chew on my leg. We can make life better for our dogs by paying attention to their experience of attachment relationships. To that end, I've developed a framework to systematically apply attachment theory to canine learning, which I call Secure Attachment Family Education (S.A.F.E.). This is big stuff and I hope you'll read it through!

"Intimate attachments to other human beings are the hub around which a person's life revolves," wrote John Bowlby, father of attachment theory (1980, p. 422). His seminal work on attachment theory was written in 1951, based not on psychology, but ethology. Bowlby defined attachment as a safety regulation system via behavior targeted at specific individuals. "It is suggested that attachment is not only related to the behavioral control system for avoiding the danger of predation but is also closely related to the feedback system of the neuroendocrinological system" (Nagasawa, Mogi, & Kikusui, 2009).

More than 70 years and mountains of research later, I think it's high time to start deliberately taking attachment theory into account in the way we live with dogs. Why? Because the ways that we train and live with dogs can accidentally activate the dog's 'attachment system' (and our own) and leading to a whole bunch of unwanted behavior.

THE WHAT?

I'll give an example. Let's say your partner is flying from New York to Seattle with a connecting flight somewhere in the middle of the country. As you're driving to lunch, you hear on the news that a plane from Chicago to Seattle crashed at take-off, and you suddenly panic, because you think your partner may have been on that flight. You grab your phone to look up their itinerary, not even taking the time to pull over because you must know NOW. Nothing else matters in that moment except reconnecting with your loved one. **That metaphorical lightning bolt that kicked logic and personal safety to the side is your attachment system activating.** As infants, when we were separated from our attachment figures, we pretty much all displayed characteristic distress vocalizations, such as crying, to bring our parents back and return to safety.

Dogs do that, too. I remember one time I was hiking in the woods and **from a mile away, I heard the loud cries of a 7-week old puppy** who had wandered away from her mother. As adult humans, an activated attachment system causes us to do all sorts of amazing and ridiculous things to save the connection between us and our attachment figures. We see protest behavior in dogs when there's a rupture in or threat to their attachment relationships, too. Attachment is a relationship between two individuals that isn't just important, it's fundamental. Attachment is strong, enduring emotional connection that elicits grief when it's severed, like when we lose our dogs or even when we go to work without them. Attachment relationships promote a sense of security and safety, beyond simple familiarity (Thompson, 2021, p. 21).

Research shows that **attachment is a biological imperative**; human infants naturally form attachments to their caregivers, and the only exception found so far is when there's no consistent caregiver, for example in a group of orphans in Romania (Zeanah, Smyke, Koga, Carlson & Bucharest Early Intervention Project Core Group, 2005). When an infant is "securely" attached to the caregiver, they're secure in the relationship. In an infant-caregiver relationship, the caregiver is a safe haven, a secure base, and the baby seeks proximity to the caregiver. They are confident in the caregiver's responsiveness and availability, because of a "history of attuned, sensitive responsiveness from the caregiver to the infant" (Thompson, Simpson, Berlin, 2021). When we grow up, we continue to form attachment relationships with friends, partners, children, and even animals (Kurdek, 2008; Nagasawa, Mogi, & Kikusui, 2009) and those can also be secure or insecure.

Humans develop different attachment orientations as an individual characteristic, also called *attachment styles*. Each of us has learned a go-to way of forming attachment relationships, and our attachment orientation is stable. About 68-75 percent of the population has the same attachment style they developed in childhood (Fonagy, Bateman, Lorenzini, and Campbell, 2014), although **a person's attachment style can change over time** with therapy, catastrophic events, healthy experiences, etc. Mine did, for the better.



There are various research labels, but the main idea is that about 40 percent of people have a secure attachment style that meets needs for safety, belonging, and autonomy, and 60 percent have developed various flavors of insecure attachment, largely as a response to their environment. In case you need a musical break from all of my words, there is a lovely song by The Feelings Parade (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWHrL_nwXv8), written in the voice of a woman with an anxious attachment style. It's an excellent description of an activated attachment system. People who have the *secure attachment style* are not afraid to love and be loved. They can trust people and share emotions because they've learned that it is safe and nourishing. They trust their own judgement. If there's a rupture in the relationship, it still hurts, but then it's bravely repaired. Cycles of accidental rupture and empathetic repair make the relationship stronger.

In a **secure** attachment relationship, the **attachment figure is a secure base for exploration, a safe haven from danger, and there's proximity seeking** (they like to be together). In adult relationships, both parties are attachment figures to the other; they return to each other for protection in times of danger, they are comfortable with the other's need for solitude and individual expression, and they enjoy time together. **Secure relationships help us be our best selves.** That's the sort of thing I want us to be looking at for dogs, too. **Are our interactions and training techniques promoting a secure attachment or damaging the attachment relationship?**

One set of labels for insecure attachment (in humans) is anxious, avoidant, and disorganized (fearful-avoidant). The key feature is that an insecure attachment system gets more easily activated, and the strategies one uses to calm it down tend to be more destructive than in a secure attachment relationship. For example, anxious attachment is characterized by needing extra reassurance that the attachment figure is attuned and available ("don't leave me!"). With avoidant attachment, one is triggered by the attachment figure not allowing enough solitude and individual exploration ("don't smother me!") Disorganized is like a blend of the two.

From a behaviorism lens, one can see these as response classes, general ways of dealing with a potentially unsafe situation, based on learning history. Dog training is steeped in learning theory, but the good news is that both are evidence based, and learning theory combines well with attachment theory. Bosmans, et al. (2022) recently proposed a new learning theory of Attachment to blend the two. They looked at successful sensitive parenting interventions based on attachment theory from the perspective of learning theory. Combining those lenses makes it possible to make changes to the interventions to make them more effective, and sheds light on the acquisition of fear and safety signals.

Combining lenses what I'm proposing we do with our dog behavior interventions, but from the other direction – keeping our well-honed awareness of learning theory, but also **grounding our work in attachment theory, so that we don't just teach dogs how to behave, we help them thrive in community.** A person with a secure attachment orientation can accurately read behavior that indicates a need for reassurance or more space without taking it personally. That's a giant piece of the work we do with dogs.

Though dogs don't have the words to create stories around attachment, **they do show behavioral and endocrinological responses (like oxytocin release when looking at caregivers) that are similar to the various attachment styles.** (Nagasawa, Kikusui, Ohta, 2009, for example). It occurs to me that almost all dogs are orphans. Being taken from their canine and human families early on has got to have an effect on their attachment styles. I would love to see studies on the attachment styles of dogs who were raised in intact, multi-generation canine families in people's homes or as village dogs (not in a laboratory!). How common is secure attachment, for dogs, and what does that really look like?

What I do see is that most dog training techniques don't take attachment into account, although there's been a shift in the last decade or so. Can you see how some dog training and behavior modification techniques would help dogs have secure attachment relationships with their caregivers and others could make them more insecurely attached? It helps to learn your own attachment style, so you can know how that's informing the way you treat your dog and the other significant beings in your life.

With humans, experiencing secure attachment relationships and learning how to respond to attachment system behavior can **change the attachment style over time.** As Bowlby wrote, "corrective attachment experiences may compensate for early adversity" (Bowlby, 1988). For example, adoption to parents with a secure attachment orientation before the first year of a child's life seems to prevent significant damage to the attachment system, and Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) can change adult attachment styles when the client has a secure attachment relationship with their therapist (Badihi & Mousavi, 2016; Johnson & Best, 2003; Johnson & Whiffen, 1999).

I propose that we (as individuals and as an industry) focus on interventions that improve attachment security for dogs. In behaviorism terms, that changes the antecedent of relationship attachment, so **dogs have a baseline experience of security, which could make it so much easier for dogs to thrive in human families.** Much of the **behavior that people work so hard to change or suppress seems to me to be protest behavior** from an activated attachment system.

This isn't a huge stretch. I think it's the **next logical step.** Behavior Adjustment Training (BAT) and several other canine education approaches like Animal Centered Education (ACE), Learning, Environment, Genetics and Self (L.E.G.S.) and Compassion, Awareness, Knowledge, Empathy (C.A.K.E.) have been developed in the modern era that focus heavily on relationship and the experience of the dog. I know I've been mentioning attachment theory here and there, and I imagine others have, too, but it's time to formally operationalize it in the industry. I think the attachment theory research ties the modern shift toward canine mental health together. The S.A.F.E. framework gives us a new criterion by which we can evaluate any technique or activity with dogs (and other species that bonds with humans).

There's been a lot of research showing humans form attachment relationships with dogs and we've known for a few decades that dogs do form attachment bonds with humans. Recently, there's been a small amount of research showing that dogs also have attachment styles, for example, Sipple et. al found primarily infant-caregiver attachment styles between dogs and humans and sibling attachment styles to each other, although that varied (Sipple, Thielke, L., Smith, Vitale, & Udell, 2021) and D'Aniello, et. al, found features of attachment that were more not found in infant-caregiver relationships (D'Aniello, Scandurra, Pinelli,

Marinelli, & Mongillo, 2022). Sipple et. al, concluded, “Dog–human attachment may play a distinct and important role in the success and resilience of adult dogs living in at least some anthropogenic environments. Bonds formed with other adult dogs, while important, likely serve a different function.”

My main goal for the dog behavior field is that we deliberately focus on techniques that create what John Bowlby (1958) coined the Secure Base Effect and that we use it as criteria for evaluating whether a technique or interaction is the most humane option.

“Quality of attachment is typically evaluated based on the presence or absence of the Secure Base Effect (SBE), first described by ethologist John Bowlby (Bowlby 1958). The SBE is observed when an individual displays a **contact-exploration balance in the presence of their attachment figure. In other words, **in addition to seeking caregiver proximity, individuals exhibiting the SBE are also more likely to investigate novel environments and unfamiliar situations while periodically “checking in”** with the attachment figure (Bowlby 1958). In this context, the **attachment figure serves as a source of security and stress reduction that promotes individual growth and learning about the environment”** (Sipple, et al., 2021)**

That’s pretty much exactly the work I’ve been doing with BAT for more than a decade, having the human be a source of security and stress reduction, helping the dog learn about their environment and become their best self. However, the S.A.F.E. framework will help me steer BAT more accurately, with secure attachment as my North Star. I hope S.A.F.E. does the same for other dog education techniques, too.

5 PILLARS OF SECURE ATTACHMENT

- **FELT SAFETY** (consistency, reliability, and protection - “I am safe. I am loved and therefore loveable.”)
- **ATTUNEMENT** (being seen and known - watching your dog for small signals that indicate their inner state. “I can ask for what I need”)
- **FELT COMFORT** (soothe when distressed. “I know what comfort feels like and eventually I can find comfort myself.”)
- **BEING VALUED** (expressed delight “I belong, they’re glad I’m here and they enjoy my company”)
- **SUPPORT** to explore (Consistent, reliable, unconditional support and encouragement for exploration. “I can figure out who I am and what I like to do.”)

For the 40 percent of people who have developed a secure attachment style, the list above is a cornerstone of human attachment relationships and so it may come relatively easily when interacting with dogs. Adults with secure attachment are comfortable both giving and receiving love in the ways listed above; in secure attachment partnerships, both people care for each other.

For the 60 percent of people who have developed an insecure attachment style, giving or receiving love may come harder with humans, but it still may be more possible with dogs, and it seems to be an excellent place to start practicing the interaction skills that come naturally to a securely attached person. Attachment styles can change over a lifetime. Like most things, it’s a blend of nature and nurture (Erkoreka, et al., 2021). The five pillars above are possible and healthy, and we can help dogs experience them.

By observing how essential secure attachment is for dogs, watching for the effects of one’s actions, and deliberately choosing ways to interact that foster secure attachment, we don’t just benefit the dogs. I believe that if we take a secure attachment approach to canine education, humans can help their dogs and hone their skills for other types of relationships at the same time. Let’s take a look at the five pillars and apply that to how we might work with clients.

1. FELT SAFETY: Is the dog reliably safe from harm and intimidation? Does the family know why and how to provide experiences in which dogs are safe enough and protect them when they need it?

2. ATTUNEMENT: Most ‘behavior problems’ are really just a mismatch of the dog trying to meet their need in a way that doesn’t work for their family. Does the dog have a way to express their needs and meet them with behavior? This is a great overlap with a functional analysis of behavior. Help the family them learn how to assess their own needs in terms of the dog and find a way for the dog to get their needs met in a way that doesn’t conflict. With any dog, not just dogs with ‘issues,’ teach the client to look for and respond to small bids for contact from their dog, as well as requests for space. Help them learn to look for the locus of their dog’s attention, not just as a tool for changing behavior, but in terms of understanding and improving the lived experience of their dog. For clients who have developed an avoidant attachment style, it may be hard to read signs that the dog needs more attention from them. They may find that need for proximity uncomfortable and label the dog as clingy. For clients who have developed an anxious (or pre-occupied) attachment style, they may have trouble recognizing when the dog needs space or may find that need uncomfortable.

3. FELT COMFORT: Do the clients know how to recognize signs of distress or pain, and have a way to help the dog feel comfort? This could be via physical contact, human relaxation exercises, enrichment activities, or moving to a more comfortable location, for example. For clients who have an avoidant attachment style, this may be difficult to do naturally.

4. BEING VALUED: Are clients able to express delight in their dog’s presence and behavior? Some expressions of value that humans can do is apply positive reinforcement, play, and use happy body language, like the slow greeting stretch and frequent soft eye contact. Greeting behaviors are often met with punishment, and regardless of the quadrant, punishing joyful greetings could

possibly be unhealthy for attachment. Instead, clients can redirect greeting behavior to something that's more suitable for the family, say, jumping up on the couch for a love-fest.

5. SUPPORT TO EXPLORE: Does the client allow the dog to be an autonomous being, able to play with friends, explore new environments, and have their own experiences that bring them joy and satisfaction? For clients who have developed an anxious attachment style, giving the dog a chance to be a dog and do dog things may cause anxiety.

As you can see, it's not just the dog's attachment that matters, but also the human family. **I propose that the dog training and behavior industry evaluate interventions through the lens of Secure Attachment Family Education (S.A.F.E.), applying attachment theory to dog behavior with the ethical orientation of promoting secure attachment.** S.A.F.E. adds a dimension that LIMA (Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive) doesn't quite capture. It's more like Least Intrusive, Maximally Advantageous (to all).

The following questions are a way to decide whether a dog training or behavior modification technique is attachment theory informed, i.e., whether it will promote or hinder secure attachment in the dogs in our care.

S.A.F.E. Dog Interactions: Take the Quiz!

1. **Does the dog consistently feel safe** or are they put into situations where they seem afraid, especially ones in which the caregiver doesn't protect them? Is the caregiver always safe or sometimes dangerous?
2. **Does the dog have a way to express their needs and interests** in a way that the caregiver understands? Does the caregiver make it clear that they understand the dog's needs (even if it's not always possible to meet them) or are dog's expression of needs ignored or punished?
3. **Does the caregiver consistently, effectively connect and soothe** the dog when needed, or is the dog ignored, threatened, or distracted when they cannot cope with distress?
4. **Do the human and dog delight in each other** (play together, positive reinforcement, massage, etc.) or is emotion absent or negative?
5. **Does the caregiver promote curiosity** and provide unconditional support and opportunities to learn from the environment or is that behavior suppressed in favor of directing attention to the handler?

The questions in bold should be a YES. If the technique you just answered the quiz about didn't get 100 percent, what could you change about it to make it a S.A.F.E. technique? **The S.A.F.E. questions can be applied to any technique or activity with our dogs.** By asking them, we shift what we do to help our dogs see the world through a more secure lens. Taking attachment theory into account when we choose how to address behavior makes a quantum shift in the quality of life for all involved. When we do that, we are

all on the same team and everybody wins. If you want some practical tips you can share with clients right now, here you go:

- When you first see your dog in the morning, coming home, walking into a room, etc., **do a slow stretch together**, sort of like downward dog. They'll start to copy you (and you, them).
- Make **soft eye contact** when your dog seeks your attention (blink and look away as needed - it's not a staring contest). If it seems like your dog would want contact, invite your dog over for a scratch and use the 5-second rule to make sure they're still enjoying it and that you've got the right spots.
- **Your needs and wishes matter, too.** Just find ways to communicate boundaries that are non-violent and that let your dog know they're still loved. What can they do that works for both of you?



Grisha Stewart M.A., CPDT-KA, KPACTP, is best known among dog trainers for developing Behavior Adjustment Training (BAT), a humane technique for addressing dog aggression, frustration, and fear. Through her international dog seminars, DVDs, books, and in-person and online training school, she's helped hundreds of thousands of dogs and their people thrive. Grisha uses positive reinforcement mindfully in ways that directly benefit the animal, such as teaching cooperative care and consent, which forms the foundation of her online school, the Grisha Stewart Dog Training Academy, where some of the world's top animal professionals come together to help learners grow, and to encourage empowered, trustworthy, wholehearted living with dogs. Grisha also writes and plays music, climbs rocks, reads voraciously, and loves the outdoors. She currently lives in Oregon with her fiancé Tom, Joey the Labrador Retriever, and Zuki the small (but mighty) rescue dog.

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Sniffing Out Snakes

Teaching dogs to alert on serpents requires good recall, high-value treats

By Jenny Yasi, BFA, CPDT-KA, FFCEP, CTDI

One December 20 years ago, my French waterdog puppy, Tigerlily, swam a quarter mile into a rolling Maine ocean after wild geese. In July, we were sailing off-shore when she jumped ship after fish. At home she leaped my fence to harass snapping turtles, and during a freestyle performance in September, she bolted to chase feral cats living under the community theatre. My agility instructor only shrugged when I cried, “I only want to go for a walk without her taking off after deer!” Clicker-training classes in neatly controlled environments weren’t teaching me what I most needed to know. Maybe I had a situation that justified the use of a shock collar?

I started looking for a miracle, but the studies weren’t encouraging. Researchers were “hopeful that someday,” they may find an effective use of shock collars as a non-lethal control against coyote and wolf predation on livestock (see footnotes). But so far, the results haven’t been great. The collars are expensive, batteries short lived, the animals need repeated shocks over a prolonged period of time, long enough that contact points may erode skin on the animal’s neck. Not all the animals respond as desired, and even after a 40-day shock cycle, beneficial effects are not long lasting. Shock training programs would need to be repeated at least annually.

Studies of dogs wearing shock collars show the same not-so-miraculous results: Shock-trained dogs were not more likely to develop fast, reliable recalls than dogs trained using positive reinforcement alone. Dogs trained with punishment are more likely to display anxious and aggressive behaviors. And the low-level “stimulation” trainers demonstrate in classrooms might not be effective on dogs amped on adrenaline, chasing deer or shaking a porcupine. The more I studied, the less I knew, and the more I wanted to learn about training a dog’s self-control around big distractions.

Tigerlily’s antics led me to finding Susan Garrett, Leslie McDevitt, Emma Parsons and other wonderful “choice” based trainers. As she grew older (she died at nearly 18 years) I learned to build self-control, rather than remote control, and with my current dogs (a young German Shepherd Dog and a mixed breed hound), perform just fine around wildlife. But I couldn’t help but wonder: Could there ever be a reason to use a shock collar? I’d answer that question when my students asked by saying, “The only time I can imagine a shock collar might be necessary is where you really need to teach a dog about danger. For example, maybe bomb sniffing dogs?” And they would inevitably reply, “or maybe to protect dogs from rattlesnakes?”

A good scent detection dog doesn't alert on nothing because you've taught them during the training process that they cannot lie; the only time you get reinforced is when you alert on rattlesnake. During the training process, you know what's around, and dogs learn very quickly that alerting to no odor earns you nothing and so there is no reason to alert. We teach them a very reliable recall behavior and that recall behavior is used periodically without snakes. I always encourage people to train a good emergency recall at top speed. If I'm going for a walk with my dog in a park or in a big field somewhere, I may ask for that emergency recall three or four times during a two or three-hour walk. I'll reinforce that recall really, really, well and then let them go off and play and walk again. The recall becomes unpredictable as to when it will occur and it's always reinforced, really heavily. — Ken Ramirez

Then my friend “T” moved to Arizona and hired a shock collar trainer to teach her dogs about poisonous snakes. One dry afternoon, her dogs were shocked a dozen times: near the front steps, the back steps, by a stone wall in the garden with toy snakes and snake scent. The snake aversion trainer told “T” she’d need to repeat the shock therapy at least annually. The ordeal was hard on her dogs. T told me that now they were anxious and shy and she would never do that to them again. “Did it at least work to protect them from snakes?” I asked. “I don’t know,” she admitted. “We’ve never seen a snake.”

So when I saw Ken Ramirez, a well-known trainer, biologist and animal behaviorist serving as executive vice-president and chief training officer for Karen Pryor Clicker training, was doing “snake avoidance” training and research, I couldn’t look away. And it turns out he is one of numerous LIMA-compliant, Association of Professional Dog Trainer member trainers who have been developing snake avoidance and other danger-avoidance protocols that do not use aversion or punishment to train dogs, but rely upon reinforcement. Ken rattled off a quick list of trainers he knows of who are pioneering in this area: Pamela Johnson, Amy Hughes Craven, Jamie Robinson, Eileen Koval, Lynn Webb, Linda Michaels, Penny Diloreto, Lori Slushing, Gail Alexis Davis.

Ken Ramirez is a pioneer in his own right. Known for his experience and interest in “conceptual learning,” he regularly gives talks and seminars on the topic. I was very excited and grateful to be able to ask him my burning question about the concept of teaching “danger,” and to learn more about his approach to snake avoidance training.

Ken Ramirez: First of all, yes, I am very interested in conceptual learning. I often speak about conceptual learning and there’s a lot of conceptual learning that happens in the work dogs do every day. An example of a



very simple concept is if you use hand signals as cues for behaviors. Once a dog has learned three or four different hand signals, they learn the fifth, sixth or seventh much faster... they become aware of the concept that hand signals are important. I spend a large part of my professional career working with organizations that feel that positive reinforcement isn’t the answer to everything they need. I worked extensively for 15 years in the guide dog community, helping them realize that aversives were not necessary to keep a dog from chasing a squirrel, or to keep a dog from pulling away from a blind handler.

I spent the last 20 years working with law enforcement, teaching explosive detection and narcotic detection. In those communities, they’ve always used positive reinforcement when a dog makes a find. But they relied heavily on punishment when it came to what they call “impulse control.” So for me, thinking about thinking about this particular concept of snake avoidance training came on the heels of me doing many, many, many consults for many, many years with professional organizations that were trying to change, and agreed they would love to move to positive reinforcement.

I didn’t think it was possible for certain things. I grew up with and have family who live on a ranch in southern New Mexico. The rattlesnake population is high, and the number of dogs lost to rattlesnake bites were high, so consequently, there was a desire for my family to find solutions. As a professional positive reinforcement trainer, I didn’t give that a lot of thought, until they took a course on snake avoidance training and put shock collars on their dogs. I understood their reason for doing it. My uncle said, “I would rather shock my dog once or twice than have my dog buried in the backyard because he died from a snake bite.” When you put it that way, it’s very understandable, that even the most strong advocate for positive reinforcement might feel that way.

Around 2014, I embarked on a project with a bunch of ranchers in southern New Mexico. They were friends of the family, willing to

work with me on testing out a (positive reinforcement) protocol I thought would work. This was the first of the rattlesnake projects that I did, and I was really pleased that it was successful. I still am in contact with all of the owners of these dogs. So this particular protocol was the dog would recall off the snake, and alert. The way I taught the dogs to alert was to target on the knee, to sort of push at the knee of the owner. That would cause them to leash their dog up and walk in another direction, away from the rattlesnake, and reinforce that really, really heavily.

Jenny: Why wouldn't a dog learn to just alert to your knee to get a reinforcement?

Ken: It's no different than the way scent detection dog works. A good scent detection dog doesn't alert on nothing because you've taught them during the training process that they cannot lie; the only time you get reinforced is when you alert on rattlesnake. During the training process, you know what's around, and dogs learn very quickly that alerting to no odor earns you nothing and so there is no reason to alert. We teach them a very reliable recall behavior and that recall behavior is used periodically without snakes. I always encourage people to train a good emergency recall at top speed. If I'm going for a walk with my dog in a park or in a big field somewhere, I may ask for that emergency recall three or four times during a two or three-hour walk. I'll reinforce that recall really, really, well and then let them go off and play and walk again. The recall becomes unpredictable as to when it will occur and it's always reinforced, really heavily.

Jenny: Can I ask you about the heavy reinforcement? Would you say that the "value" of the reinforcement is as important or more important than the duration of the reinforcement period? Does the duration of the reinforcement period matter?

Ken: I should say high-value reinforcer. This is a whole different discussion, but since you took us down this route, I'm going to clarify and work in the studies that have been done on conjunctive reinforcement. The problem with drawn out reinforcement is if I call you to me and then I reinforce you with 50 consecutive treats, here's a treat, here's a treat, here's a treat, it is unclear and probably unlikely that the 50th treat I give you will have anything to do with your recall.

It will be reinforcing you for being in front of me, for giving me good attention, but it doesn't reinforce the recall. By the time you get to the 10th treat, that 10th treat is no longer reinforcing whatever they did before, it's just reinforcing the dog for sitting in front of you and looking at you. So that's not the way high-value treats are most effective. Generally speaking, a high-value reinforcer is either a large quantity, maybe given all at once or a treat of high value or a toy of high value for that matter. What constitutes high value is different for every dog, so it is critical that you make your decision about reinforcement based on that.

The key thing is, forget the fact that the snake is dangerous. It's just interesting to an animal, either they're afraid of it, or they



German Shepherd Dog M'Ocean alerts Jenny Yasi when he sees ducks rather than chasing them.

want to chase it, or they want to bark at it or whatever, that's the real attractant. So it's critical the dog recognizes that coming off a snake is for something that is also equally rare and highly valuable. I like the emergency recall, because it brings the dog off of something fast, which is really important. You might need to use your recall for something other than a snake being present, so we use our emergency recall at other times, but the presence of a snake becomes a new emergency recall cue.

Jenny: This is the thing I'm stealing from you! Here in Maine, our most common dangerous animal is probably a porcupine or skunk. How can I teach dog to see a porcupine and come running? It seems if a dog has caught a porcupine once, they tend to go after them again and again.

Ken: That's kind of a normal thing. My dog likes to chase after moles. Prey drive is very strong in some animals and once they've caught something, even if it was an unpleasant experience, they don't associate the fact that it was the prey that caused pain and discomfort. I have never taught the concept [of danger]. Animals will learn the concept if there's something that scares them. That's why dogs can be aggressive, protective, reactive dogs. That's why dogs can get separation anxiety. All of those things come from dogs learning inappropriately the concept of danger. I can see an advantage to it, I suppose, depending upon the situation, but realistically speaking, in normal situations, I'm not trying to teach them to be afraid of a rattlesnake. I'm teaching them to run away from it, and get very highly reinforced for that.



Bee chooses to alert rather than give in to her prey drive.

Jenny: Why don't they just learn to go off and find snakes in order to get a reinforcement opportunity?

Ken: Partly because we do plenty of recalls at other times. The joy of a dog running and playing and stuff like that, that's a very highly motivating thing for them to do. I've done follow up studies for the dogs we've trained in this procedure, probably 60 to 70 dogs... They've been very, very reliable and we've never had a dog that goes searching for snakes because most of the time the walk itself is highly reinforcing.

Jenny: So maybe there's just no appropriate use of a shock collar for anybody? It sounds like you are saying that teaching your dog to be afraid of something, even something like a poisonous snake, isn't going to help them perform better.

Ken: Yes. Some fears will come naturally. And if my dog is afraid of traffic and avoids the street, I'm not going to do any major counterconditioning protocol to make them more comfortable with the street. Well, "sorry it scares you, but I'm glad you don't want to go in the street." I will let that natural fear that you already have continue, and help you understand that if you're with me, you're safe. But I don't want to be the one who instills fear in a dog or teaches them the concept of be afraid of this or that or the other. You know, really good explosive detection dogs have absolutely no fear of explosives. They're just having this fun "Find it" game. And so this is a fun thing. There's a lot of training challenges to being able to get realistic looking snakes and other things too. There's a visual alert and then we transition to an odor alert, usually using shed skins, or

fecal matter that we can get hold of, but there's a number of ways that you can get biological samples, and that's what we ultimately train the animals to respond to, the particular types of snakes.

Jenny: So I need to find some porcupine quills to train with. It would be hard to get anything that looks like a real porcupine.

Ken: It would be scent that you're focusing on. But it's surprising how available biological samples are. Once you know what you need, you just have to know who to talk to, and where to where to go for a variety of samples. Certainly, with a lot of the rattlesnake stuff that we did, we had no trouble getting samples from herpetological societies, from snake collectors, from zoos, you name it. There are a lot of places that provide those kinds of samples.



Jenny Yasi, BFA, CPDT-KA, FFCP, CTDI is certified through the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, and she is also a Fear-Free Certified Professional animal trainer. She's certified as a Trick Dog Instructor through *Do More With Your Dogs*, an AKC CGC evaluator, member candidate of International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants and Control Unleashed Instructor Training. Jenny is a member of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers. Her dogs are titled and train in a variety of dog sports. Jenny enjoys training "practical" dog behaviors, such as *skijoring, retrieve and deliver, find, alert, and backyard games that don't take a whole lot of training equipment, and that offer fun exercise, and practice of useful skills.* At one time, Jenny had a career as a singer/songwriter/storyteller, although hard of hearing now she has trained four of her dogs to perform hearing alerts, and Search and Rescue alerts. Jenny loves to continue her education and regularly attends seminars, workshops, and competes in rally, agility, trick dog and other events to challenge and test her growth as a trainer. After raising her family on an island off the coast of Maine, Jenny and her husband moved to Freeport; in 2016-2017 they sailed 2,800 miles with two dogs aboard *Magus*, from Maine through the Bahamas.

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Fisher, Nimbus and Jeter taking turns getting treats while Si (background) chooses to sit out.

Bringing Home Baby: *The challenges of integrating a new puppy with 2 cats and a blind dog*

By Tori Ganino, CDDBC, CPDT KA

I knew it would be challenging when I decided to bring a puppy into our home. Not just because of the typical puppy chewing, potty training, and crate training, but because my priority was, and still is, the comfort of our resident cats and dogs during the integration process. As a dog behavior consultant, I work with many owners who bring new dogs into their homes while hoping a bond will be instantly created with the resident pets.

What seems like play to some owners (chasing the cat who now only enters the room when the puppy is sleeping, chewing on the older dog who jumps onto the couch so the puppy cannot reach him) are actually stressful interactions. There are so many things you can do to keep your home a comfortable place for all your pets and keep them all safe. I'm going to describe the changes I made to help integrate my new puppy into the household. They started long before I got him.

Resident pets

Before diving into the processes and training I have put in place, let me introduce you to the resident pets in my home. Si is a nine-year-old cat with stomach cancer. While he is thriving, I cannot overemphasize the importance of keeping his stress levels low, as stress can lead to vomiting flare-ups. Nimbus is an eight-month-old cat that arrived in our home four months ago. Jeter is a blind 12-year-old terrier mix who is indifferent to other dogs. All three are nervous and require slow introductions and training with any new person or animal.

I made changes in our home before Fisher, our eight-week-old Golden Retriever, arrived. First, I set up a crate and attached an exercise pen to the walls around it, giving Fisher room to explore while not being forced to stay in his crate if the other pets needed a break from him.



Si comfortable enough to sit on the floor near Fisher.

Second, I bought baby gates to block access to the upstairs, kitchen, and training room. The baby gates allowed our cats, Si and Nimbus, to jump over and retreat to an area where Fisher could not reach them. The upstairs is currently a designated safe space only for the other pets. Third, I placed a crate in the living room and attached a sturdy exercise pen to it. This was the foundation for separation training so that Fisher could understand it is okay to be away from us. Finally, I attached a tether to the outside of the exercise pen. This would be used as a “time out” area when Fisher needed a break due to nipping or other behaviors that I did not want to continue and were unable to be redirected at the time. The crate and exercise pen are areas that I want Fisher to enjoy relaxing in and they are never used as a punishment.

Introductions

Training began the moment Fisher walked into our home. This is because every interaction with your dog is a learning experience, even when they are not in a formal training session. I wanted to start out very clear in my expectations for Fisher: Nimbus, Si, and Jeter were not to be chased or pestered to play. That might sound harsh, but I would be providing Fisher with other dogs that did want to play with him so he could have an appropriate outlet for his natural behavior. Nimbus might want to play and cuddle with him in the future, but not right now.

Consistency was key. If I were to sometimes allow Fisher to chase the other pets and other times not, what I was trying to communicate to Fisher would become muddled. While I did not let Fisher chase them on purpose, it did happen a couple of times and the pets gave him appropriate corrections. It was still my job to teach him what to do instead. I began rewarding him for doing anything that I liked every time I saw him do it. I caught him being good. Links are below to my YouTube videos where I demonstrate exactly what I mean.

I did not discipline Fisher for focusing on Nimbus or chewing on the couch. Instead, I directed him to a more appropriate activity. The other pets were offered chicken treats to help build a positive association with Fisher’s presence. While unsure of Fisher, Nimbus is highly food motivated. As a result, when I was tossing treats to Fisher in the portable exercise pen for relaxing, Nimbus jumped



Jeter and Fisher relax on the dog bed together. Jeter has played tug with Fisher, his first time playing with another dog.

inside to grab some. The task of relaxing became exponentially more difficult for Fisher as a result, as the opportunity to chase Nimbus presented itself. I immediately increased my rate of reinforcement by tossing treats more quickly to Fisher. Instead of a treat every few minutes, Fisher was getting a treat every few seconds.

Increasing the rate of reinforcement when such things happen will help Fisher develop a strong foundation to build upon. Just like a building, a behavior will crumble without a strong foundation. I will reduce the rate of reinforcement once Fisher understands what I am asking of him and is able to be successful.

Building behaviors

Managing the environment and catching Fisher being good were only two pieces of the behavior puzzle. I also needed to teach Fisher what I wanted him to do instead of pestering the other pets: relax on his bed and disengage from them.

I brought out Fisher’s training bed only when I knew I would be able to work with him. I started out by reinforcing Fisher with a treat for sitting, a behavior that he regularly offered. Then I placed the treats on the bed to encourage him to go into the down position and stay there. I practiced walking away and returning to Fisher with a treat before he got up to follow me. After multiple repetitions, I gave him the release cue and encouraged him to get up.

If Fisher walked back towards the bed to investigate, I put a treat on it. If he sat or lay on the bed, he would get a “jackpot” of multiple treats. By reinforcing these behaviors, I was teaching Fisher that he could get my attention, and he could get treats, simply by interacting with his bed. Once the strong foundation was built, I would then start reducing the rate of reinforcement.

Jeter, Nimbus, and Si were allowed access to the room when Fisher and I were training only when I was confident he was able to handle the extra distractions. I then implemented an activity called “click the trigger.” Anytime Fisher looked at one of the other pets (a trigger) I would immediately mark him for looking by saying “yes” and placing a treat on the bed. During non-formal training sessions as described above, Fisher was learning so I was still catching him



Fisher and Jeter play on the ground.



Fisher and Si relax on the dog bed.

being good. If I was unable to actively supervise Fisher, I gave him a break in his crate or exercise pen.

Interactions with other pets

Si, the more cautious of the other three pets, started to investigate Fisher during calm moments. First from above, which is where cats tend to observe and relax, then from ground level. The fact that Si was looking away while keeping an ear toward Fisher meant that we were on the right track to helping Si become comfortable. Si joined Fisher and me during a training session and we took the opportunity to work on the pets taking turns. This activity began to teach Fisher that he can see the cat next to him, he can see the cat get treats, and he does not have to go for the cat or the treats. He can get reinforced just for remaining in place.

As show in a video linked below, Fisher gets up 22 seconds into the video because my rate of reinforcement (how many treats are given in a certain length of time) was not high enough for such a difficult task. I simply encouraged him back into the down position and reinforced him again before ending the activity. As the other pets became comfortable with Fisher, they began to initiate interactions and relax in his presence. Nimbus used the safety of the baby gate to invite Fisher to play, Jeter moved closer towards Fisher during some naps, and Si napped peacefully on the couch. If Fisher's puppy behaviors became pushy or overwhelming, I removed Fisher from the situation and the other pet was given a treat. The treat was to help the pet create a good association with Fisher's behavior: "When Fisher paws my back, I get a treat. It's not so bad when Fisher paws me."

Group activities

Fisher, Jeter, Nimbus, and Si were introduced to group activities when I was confident there would not be conflict between them. I did not force any of the pets to participate and they could leave whenever they wanted to. We started with a structured activity where they took turns getting treats. The goals were to teach them not to be pushy and not to take food when it was being handed to another pet. The less structured activity turned out to be their favorite. I had originally set up an enrichment area for Fisher to interact with novel items and build his problem-solving

skills. The other three pets quickly joined in. I scattered treats in, under, and around paper bags, jugs, and boxes. None of the pets previously showed signs of guarding food or items so I welcomed the opportunity for everyone to participate and bond.

Fast forward 3 months

While Fisher has only been in our home for a short time, his relationship with Jeter, Si, and Nimbus continues to grow in the right direction. Not only have Jeter and Fisher have been caught relaxing on the dog bed together, but they played tug for the first time. This is a huge accomplishment seeing that I have never seen Jeter play with another dog. Fisher works hard on resisting the urge to chase Si and Nimbus while they relax in his presence. I still have work ahead as we follow our training plan, teach proper behaviors, and foster their relationships.



Tori Ganino is a Certified Dog Behavior Consultant through the IAABC, Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge Assessed through the CCPDT, and a member of the International Companion Animal Network (ICAN). She owns Calling All Dogs located in Batavia, New York, where she teaches group classes and private lessons for obedience and behavior modification. You can find out more about Tori at her website www.CallingAllDogsNY.com and her YouTube channel, Tori Ganino (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbOVOMLDLSAESB1CC4ngiQg/videos>).

VIDEO LINKS:

<https://youtu.be/oGSgSMkW43Y>

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Socialization vs Behavior Modification

When one ends, the other likely begins, so start early with your puppy's exposure to a variety of experiences

By Tori Ganino, CDBC, CPDT KA

I knew it would be challenging when I decided I work with owners who are frustrated with their dogs' behaviors. Their barking at other dogs, growling at people, or chasing anything with wheels has become unmanageable and embarrassing. They think the solution to the problem is that their dogs "need more socialization" in these situations and they are contacting me because they need me to provide them with opportunities to do so. What I then inform them is something that owners do not want to hear: Their dogs are no longer in the socialization stage; they need strategically designed behavior modification. These are two different things.

Socialization vs. behavior modification

Socialization is the exposure of a young dog to a variety of people, animals, sounds, and situations in a manner that does not cause fear. The goal is for the dog to be comfortable and learn that the world is a wonderful place. With socialization, you are helping your puppy build great associations with something that he is indifferent toward. For puppy owners, the question becomes, "How do I make sure that my puppy grows into a social adult that I can take anywhere?"

With behavior modification, you are working on changing your dog's emotions to do something that he already does not like. For owners of adolescent and adult dogs (6 months and older), the question is "How do I make my dog stop behaving badly so we do not have to worry about him biting?" Behavior modification is needed when a dog already has determined the situation is one that causes discomfort. His reaction may be barking, lunging, cowering, avoidance, or biting. Simply throwing a dog into a situation where any of these responses are produced will only exacerbate his feelings the world is a scary place.

Proper socialization

First, we will look at puppies that are between 8 and 16 weeks old. During this time of their lives, puppies' brains are more accepting of new experiences. After 16 weeks, puppies begin to become wary of experiences they were not exposed to previously. This is a natural part of development for any animal. The puppies' survival instincts kick in to protect them from situations that might be dangerous.

◀ Fisher's body language was carefully evaluated to ensure that riding in the cart at the pet store did not cause him to become nervous. He was heavily reinforced with treats as we moved.

It is important to note that while a young puppy will not yet have all necessary vaccinations, the risk of waiting to socialize him until the vaccination series is complete at 16 weeks far outweighs the benefits of waiting until fully vaccinated. As stated by the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior, "The primary and most important time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life. During this time puppies should be exposed to as many new people, animals, stimuli, and environments as can be achieved safely and without causing overstimulation manifested as excessive fear, withdrawal or avoidance behavior. For this reason, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated."

If you socialize your puppy before he has all his vaccinations, as the AVSAB recommends, however, you'll need to put some safety protocols in place.

- Have your puppy go potty while still on your property.
- Pick a location for your outing that is not overly crowded. Pick a quiet time of day as well.
- Carry him from the car to the new location. He can also observe new places from the car.
- Take a blanket on your trips outside of your home to act as a barrier between your puppy and the environment underneath his paws. It can be placed on the ground where your puppy will be relaxing, or in a shopping cart where he will ride.
- Make trips short so your puppy ends the activity wanting to do more instead of feeling worn out or overwhelmed.

When Fisher visited our garage for the first time, he was encouraged to enter at his own pace and we did not try to lure him in with food. Once inside, he was reinforced with a treat and we showed him that he could leave. Going back inside was his choice. Also, schedule play dates with dogs that are up-to-date on their vaccinations and have a good social history. Socializing your puppy with just your other dog at home is not enough. What your puppy experiences, however positive or negative the experiences are, and what he does not have the opportunity to experience, will have a huge impact on his behavior for the rest of his life. Starting with the breeder, and continuing with the owner, the puppy either builds relationships with the environment that contribute to a behaviorally healthy adult or toward a fearful/aggressive adult.

Let's consider the commonly used piggy bank analogy. Each time your puppy has a good experience with a person, place, sound, animal, etc., you are depositing a coin into his emotional piggy bank. Each time your dog has a fearful or upsetting experience, a coin is withdrawn from your dog's emotional piggy bank. The more coins that are deposited from a variety of situations, the better prepared your puppy is for when an upsetting experience

occurs. Simple exposure is not enough. To make sure that you are adding a coin into your puppy's emotional piggy bank instead of withdrawing, you need to pair each experience with good emotions. The easiest way to do this is with special treats. Here are the steps to take:

- Have your dog at a distance away, or a sound on a low enough volume, where your puppy does not show any signs of fear or nervousness. (Refer to the free online Deciphering Your Dog course to learn more about reading your puppy's body language.)
- Let your dog see or hear a stimulus.
- Praise and reinforce with treats.
- Stop when the stimulus is gone.

An example of this pairing activity was when I took Fisher to Home Depot and he heard a cart going by. Not only was I depositing a coin in his emotionally piggy bank, but Fisher was learning that he does not have to chase the shopping cart. If he had been nervous or fearful of the cart, a coin would have been withdrawn from his emotional piggy bank. Sound sensitivity is a common problem among dogs. My husband, Rich, and I took Fisher to Rich's job, where he heard random noises and was reinforced for it. Socialization should not end once your puppy reaches 16 weeks of age. It should continue regularly for at least the first year of life.

What your puppy experiences, however positive or negative the experiences are, and what he does not have the opportunity to experience, will have a huge impact on his behavior for the rest of his life. Starting with the breeder, and continuing with the owner, the puppy either builds relationships with the environment that contribute to a behaviorally healthy adult or toward a fearful/aggressive adult.

Behavior modification sessions

Behavior modification is generally done when a dog is older than 16 weeks of age and finds situations, sounds, people, animals, etc., to be aversive. Your dog may display its discomfort by barking, lunging, crying, cowering, retreating, or refusing to take food. By placing your dog in situations that evoke these feelings and reactions, you are not helping your dog to "get over it" by showing him that nothing bad will happen. To your dog, something bad is already happening.

Using spiders in an analogy might help you put your dog's emotions into perspective. My fear of spiders started when I was a child. I



Fisher hanging out with Baxter, a 6-year-old Aussie.

saw the movie *Arachnophobia* and even though I was not harmed, the bad experience has stuck with me for life. During a laboratory midterm exam for my college Invertebrate Zoology class, I found myself face-to-face with a live tarantula. The tarantula was contained in a plastic container but being forced to sit near it instantly caused my anxiety to rise. I was experiencing “flooding,” which is what your dog experiences when he is exposed to stimuli that he finds aversive and can’t escape. Your dog’s emotional piggy bank is running low on funds and without a solid “balance” of emotional currency, he is losing trust in the situation and in you to keep him safe.

Behavior modification sessions are like socialization sessions with one main exception: The dog already has negative feelings about things in the world. With a puppy who is not fearful, you are usually starting out with neutral responses and moving towards positive. If the dog is already afraid, he can learn to feel comfortable about the stimulus, but it takes additional time, effort, and it is easier to be accidentally set back and have a bite occur.

Below is a general outline of a beginner behavior modification session for a dog that barks and lunges at the sight and sounds of another dog.

- Keep your dog feeling safe by starting out enough distance away from the other dog so your dog is not showing any signs of stress (Check out the *Deciphering Your Dog* course to learn more). For one dog this distance might be 20 yards while for another dog it could be more than 100 yards.
- If you can, have a friend bring their dog to a training session. This “decoy” dog should be calm, stationary, and facing away from your dog. It might be easier to start off with a realistic stuffed dog because you can control its movements.

- When your dog sees the decoy dog (or hears it) praise and feed some of his favorite treats. These treats have to be extra special and only given when around other dogs. You are pairing the decoy dog with the endorphins, the “feel-good hormone” which is released when your dog eats.
- Remove the decoy from view and stop reinforcing your dog.
- Carefully controlling your dog’s environment so that he is not exposed to other dogs unless during a structured training session is crucial to the behavior modification process.

The above is a general outline. There is not a cookie-cutter approach to changing your dog’s emotions, and each dog will need modifications to its individual training plan to ensure that he progresses. I highly recommend practicing behavior modification under the guidance of a certified dog behavior consultant.

There’s No Such Thing as Blank Slate

Helping a puppy turn into a well-mannered adult starts with proper socialization. The critical period of socialization is from 8-to-16 weeks and it is crucial for owners to take advantage of the opportunity. This stage in development is a time that a puppy can never get back, and bad experiences can create lifelong negative associations requiring behavior modification. Puppies are not blank slates. Their genetic background is a contributing factor in how they will respond to their environment and the socialization work that their owners implement. Some puppies will naturally be cautious while others will be resilient. If you would like help with your puppy or have a dog that is exhibiting signs of fear or aggression, find a trainer/behavior consultant near you.



Tori Ganino is a Certified Dog Behavior Consultant through the IAABC, Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge Assessed through the CCPDT, and a member of the International Companion Animal Network (ICAN). She owns *Calling All Dogs* located in Batavia, New York, where she teaches group classes and private lessons for obedience and behavior modification. You can find out more about Tori at her website www.CallingAllDogsNY.com and her YouTube channel, *Tori Ganino* (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbOVOMLDLSAESB1CC4ngiQg/videos>).

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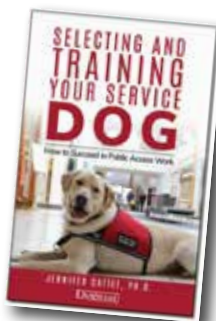
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Allie Bender & Emily Strong

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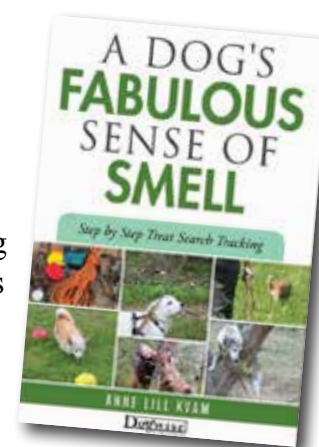
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Lawsuit Woes

What to do if you find yourself in litigation

By Melissa McMath Hatfield, M.S., CBCC-KA, CDBC

You just received “the phone call,” the one we all dread and try to head off with training, education, and our yearly insurance premiums paid in full. But still, you or your organization is being sued. Or, you have been asked to testify as an expert witness in your field of study or experience. Either situation will involve attorneys and possibly testifying in court. What to do and how to handle this stressful event? Regardless of the type of case, ALL cases go through a similar process. Although the public thinks there are too many frivolous lawsuits, most conflicts or disagreements do not reach the courtroom, so take heart—the odds of being in the witness chair are slim. But, if you do find yourself in the hot seat, it is good to know how the process works.

Once a civil lawsuit has been filed, one of the first steps in the litigation process is a deposition, the discovery phase of the trial,

that allows the attorneys for each side to find out what happened and question the parties or witnesses involved. After the depositions have been completed, the litigants will more than likely go through the next phase, which is mediation, to see if both parties can reach an agreement. Mediation can be court ordered or voluntary. If this phase is unsuccessful, the case will be scheduled for trial. However, most cases settle or get dismissed, with only a minority making it to the courtroom. No matter if the case involves a minor incident or involves million-dollar damages, the process is the same.

Litigation regarding dog bites, however, is on the rise. Below are some statistics of four states, their rankings, and the number of lawsuits filed. The states are ranked by the amount of money awarded per claim.

Rank	State	Number of Claims
#5	Arkansas	137
#6	Oklahoma	229
#7	Hawaii	62
#8	California	2,396

The average dog bite claim for 2019 was \$43,653 with 17,856 claims totaling \$802 million (source: <https://quotewizard.com/news/posts/dog-bite-claims-by-state>). If you find that you are one of these statistics, then it is important to understand the different categories of witnesses, in which you may find yourself.

- The plaintiff—the person bringing the lawsuit who has the burden of proof. This burden is not, “beyond a shadow of a doubt” but only a “preponderance of the evidence.” In other words, the plaintiff has to tip the scale of justice by only 51 percent in their favor to “prove” their case.
- The defendant—the person being sued. It could be the owner, the veterinarian, the trainer, a boarding facility, the property owner, etc. or any combination.
- The eyewitness—which is self-explanatory.
- The expert witness—Some people are under the misconception that the expert witness is an “advocate” for the side that has hired them. Not so. An expert reviews the history of the case and takes the case only if they feel that they can legitimately support their theories and withstand cross-examination. The expert is a person hired by one party whom the attorney feels can contribute information to help the fact finder understand the facts of the case. If one party has hired an expert, then they had better be prepared that the other side will have one as well.

How to testify as a plaintiff

The plaintiff is the injured party suing the owner of the dog(s), a veterinarian, a boarding facility, a trainer, or anyone they feel is responsible for causing them harm. They can seek monetary compensation for their damages, which may include medical expenses for dog or human, property damages, or mental anguish. The plaintiff has the burden of proof, not the defendant. However, they may have some responsibility for their own damages; if so,

how negligent were they? Be prepared for the defense attorney to put the plaintiff on the defensive during cross-examination for his possible role in the incident. Both parties' attorneys will be pointing fingers of blame at their opposition.

For example

- Was the plaintiff trespassing?
- Was he provoking or teasing the dog?
- Did he try to pet the dog without asking permission?
- Did running and screaming cause a prey drive attack?
- Did the plaintiff intervene in a dogfight?

Remember, as the plaintiff, you were there; you witnessed the incident firsthand, and the attorneys did not. Do not backtrack on something you feel strongly about. For example, if you generally felt surprised or afraid, don't let the attorney influence your answer. You know what you know, and they have to accept it. Keep this foremost in your mind as it will give you confidence.

How to testify as a defendant

If you are the defendant in the trial, remember the following:

- Was there a history of aggressive or reactive behaviors regarding the dog(s) in question? If not, focus on the dog's excellent training and temperament or the plaintiff's negligence.
- Had the dog(s) been properly socialized, trained, managed, and supervised appropriately? Who can substantiate this?
- Do not let the opposing attorney put words in your mouth or make you doubt yourself. Remember your key points and stick to them!
- If you don't understand, ask them to repeat or clarify.
- If you don't know, you don't know. Don't be afraid to say so.
- If you don't remember, say so. Don't answer if you really don't remember.
- Is there a chance for better management, supervision, training, or rehabilitation for the dog(s) in question in the future?
- Do not become argumentative or defensive. If answering the question is going to harm your case, it's better to answer quickly and not draw attention to your avoidance. Your attorney will be able to clean up any mess through a redirect examination.

How to testify and prepare as an expert witness

If you are asked to testify as an expert, then the following can be a checklist in preparing for this process. A case can involve something as simple as neighbors feuding over a barking dog or as tragic as a bite to a child's face; again, the rules for the process are the same. The goal of the expert witness is to assist the trier of the facts, i.e., a jury or jury, in understanding the key issues of the case as they relate to the dog(s) and its behavior.

- First, the potential expert will have to be qualified in the courtroom by their party's attorney and accepted as an expert

witness by the judge. They will be questioned in the witness stand throughout this process.

- Expert witnesses come from varied backgrounds and are examined by attorneys for both the plaintiff and defense and possibly the judge.
- The expert witness may be qualified based on their academic, scientific, specialized training, or extensive practical experience relative to the specific issues of the case.
- The attorney for the party for whom the expert has been hired will question them about their education, training, certifications, licenses, experience, professional membership, publications, and presentations.
- After this questioning, the attorney will ask the judge to accept them as an expert.
- Then, the opposing attorney will either accept or disagree. If they disagree, they will conduct a cross-examination of the potential expert witness to discredit their qualifications. Don't worry—if this happens the potential expert's attorney has the opportunity to clarify their answers and resubmit them to the judge to be accepted as an expert.
- If the judge accepts that they are sufficiently qualified to give expert testimony, they will then be sworn in.

Functional analysis and the report

As an expert, the first thing you will need to do is to conduct a functional analysis, which is a recognized tool in the scientific community. This will include the ABC's and be the basis of the report and testimony.

- What history do you have of the incident; dogs, victims, witnesses? A thorough description of the incident (i.e., type of aggression: offensive, defensive, warning or no warning/ type of injuries etc.)
- Obtain the dog's background and basic information (breed, age, sex, if neutered or spayed, name of rescue, date of adoption, etc.), including the following:
 - o Medical
 - o Social
 - o Past behavior regarding similar incidents
 - o Bite history
 - o Triggers
 - o Training and type
 - o History of the human-canine relationship
 - o Personal observation
 - o Eyewitness reports
 - o Medical records
 - o Police report
 - o Animal control report
- Interview the dog's caretakers or anyone who has had contact with the dog(s), such as the neighbors and any professionals, i.e., the veterinarian, vet tech, dog sitter, shelter, rescue,

If you are asked to testify as an expert, then the following can be a checklist in preparing for this process. A case can involve something as simple as neighbors feuding over a barking dog or as tragic as a bite to a child's face; again, the rules for the process are the same. The goal of the expert witness is to assist the trier of the facts, i.e., a jury or jury, in understanding the key issues of the case as they relate to the dog(s) and its behavior.

groomer, etc. These opinions and observations can be included in the history section of the report.

- If this is a first offense, focus on the history of the dog rather than focusing on the incident. If there was a prior history of aggression, focus on the positives such as the owner's ability to manage and rehabilitate.
- The expert witness should conduct a one-on-one evaluation of the dog(s) as that will carry more weight with the judge or jury, than just basing the testimony on the accident report and witness statements.
- There is no better fodder for an attorney during cross-examination than to have an expert who has not personally evaluated the party, i.e., the dog(s) in question.
- If possible, administer a standardized and accepted temperament test, such as SAFER or Sternberg's Assess-A-Pet. A test that is accepted across the profession gives the expert the support of a third-party authoritative source.
- Administering a temperament test more than once would be ideal. Although you will never know the dog's emotional state at the time of the incident, administering multiple temperament tests will give you information over a given period of time regarding both the dog's temperament and his personality. If the results are consistently positive, that will bode well for the dog.
- If the trainer or behavior consultant feels it is safe, they can take the dog to a public location. Is he emotionally balanced or fearful? Could he handle the stress of a new situation, or did the outing have to be cut short?
- This type of information can prove invaluable in helping the judge or jury understand if the dog(s) is emotionally balanced, manageable and or trainable. This can help the fact finder have confidence to find in favor of the dog(s). After all, that is the ultimate question: "is this dog safe?"
- If deemed safe, and if permitted by the shelter or court, taking the dog to the original location or to one that is similar can prove to be a useful tool for the expert in supporting his or her opinion, especially if videotaped.

Before you testify, ask yourself if you would feel comfortable working with this animal in a class or private training session? Would you be comfortable taking this dog to a public area? Would you walk this dog in a park around other dogs and children? If not, why? Can the dog(s) be managed? Are the owners capable of management, rehabilitation, training, and supervision; what is their level of commitment? Remember, no matter the particulars of the case in which you are asked to testify, or which side has engaged your services, both sides are working for the overall welfare of the dog(s) and the safety of the community.

Preparing your testimony as an expert witness

How to handle direct examination

- You will be asked to testify and commit to an opinion based on your experience and education, as well as any testing or observations of the dog(s) you've been called in to testify about. This is where your report will come in. It will be subject to both direct and cross-examination.
- Remember to have clear criteria; i.e., what are your three main points and stick to them!
- The expert should never say anything that cannot be backed up by an authoritative third party. In other words, once an opinion has been given, both attorneys' will question how do they know and why?
- Even though an expert is testifying for one side their focus should be on the facts; with the goal being as objective and professional as possible.

How to handle cross-examination

- The opposing attorney conducts a cross-examination after your attorney has completed the direct examination.
- This can be the most stressful part of your testimony. If you are prepared with a thorough functional analysis under your belt and have a solid report with third-party authorities, you should be fine.
- Do not be defensive or argumentative! Remember, you are the expert, not the attorney! You have an understanding of the facts that the attorney does not. But you must be humble and professional, answering the questions without reservation.

- Do not look to your attorney for help!
- Do NOT avoid answering questions that will hurt your side. Go ahead and answer them. Your attorney will have a chance to clarify any questions that you were asked during cross. This is called redirect.
- The opposing attorney will be looking for hesitations in your testimony, so be prepared and absolutely sure before you answer. Besides, you will get grilled to a pulp on cross if the attorney senses any hesitancy.
- If you are under cross-examination as an expert, be ready for hypothetical questions. For example, “Isn’t it possible that if these dogs got out, they could harm a child?” or “We don’t really know what these dogs will do, do we?” Be willing to readily agree regarding obvious questions. However, if you rely on a recognized authority, the dog(s) history and your observations, you can give an informed and justified opinion.
- Under cross-examination, you may feel pushed to give a definite, categorical opinion one way or another; remember to stay objective and stick to the facts.

Know the difference between testifying in a deposition vs. testifying in court

Being deposed and testifying in court require two different strategies. The witness needs to be prepared on how to handle these very different scenarios.

- The first thing you’ll be asked to do is to give a deposition, which is a fact-finding mission for both sides. It is given under oath with both parties present, along with their attorneys and a court stenographer, but with no judge present. It is generally done in one of the attorney’s offices and in an informal atmosphere.
- Because of this, be careful not to let the other side make you feel too safe or too comfortable. Remember, their goal is to get as much information as possible to discredit you and your side of the case later in court. Whatever you say can and will most likely be used against you in open court.
- Don’t be defensive or argumentative; just answer the questions as succinctly as possible. The time to elaborate on your answers is in open court. Let me repeat that, the time to elaborate on your answers is in open court but be succinct in your answers during a deposition.
- Be open about answering the questions, but don’t give away the farm! It’s up to the attorney to figure out which questions to ask; don’t help him out.
- Be aware of being asked two questions in one. Listen carefully, and if you are asked this type of question, respond “I will be happy to answer that; let’s take the first question first.” Think about your answers, as they most likely will come back to haunt you.
- Make sure you understand the questions, and if you are unsure, ask the attorney to repeat or clarify.

- You should always give honest answers (you are under oath!) but keep them short and concise.
- Don’t volunteer information. Telling the story should be saved for the actual courtroom testimony for the judge or jury.
- Your attorney will schedule a witness preparation session regarding the kinds of questions you may face during examination.

On the day

Once the court date arrives, you will be sequestered in a small room outside the courtroom. These are the witness rooms. Courtrooms are open to the general public, so you can bring a friend or family member as support when you testify. They won’t be able to accompany you to the witness room, but they can watch your testimony and be there for you afterward. Be prepared to bring your own coffee and something to read, as there may be a long wait. Dress as if you are going to a place of worship or business meeting, i.e., your attire should be conservative and professional.

From the moment you leave your car, you are not allowed to talk with anyone—they don’t want you to even say good morning in passing, as that person might be a potential juror. Upon arriving, the bailiff for the designated courtroom will direct you to a witness room; be sure to tell them if you are testifying for the plaintiff or the defendant. Then you wait.

Whether you are a plaintiff, the defendant, an expert or eyewitness, you will have your attorney there to guide you. Stay focused on your three key points, be prepared, and remember you know more about dogs than anyone else in the courtroom!



Melissa McMath Hatfield, MS, CBCC-KA, CDBC, earned a master’s in counseling psychology and is a retired licensed psychological examiner. She owns McMath Trial Consultants (www.mcmathtrailconsultants.com) where she has assisted attorneys for 43 years in jury profiling, jury selection and witness preparation in high profile cases. Melissa has been an APDT conference speaker and her articles are featured often in APDT’s *Chronicle of the Dog*. Those articles have received numerous nominations in the Dog Writers Association of America’s writing competition. Currently, she has a private behavior consulting practice where her main focus is performing temperament assessments and behavior evaluations of dogs who are exhibiting mental health issues

If Asked to Testify in Court, Remember You Are the Expert

Benjamin Bennink, M.S., CDBC, CPDT-KA

Providing expert testimony to the legal system is one of the most impactful actions a professional dog trainer can undertake. It can feel overwhelming if it's your first time; I'm going to share what I've learned through my experiences so that if you're called to provide expert testimony you are less likely to feel overwhelmed.

The first thing to understand is your audience and the expected format. The overwhelming majority of the time, your expert testimony will take the form of a written letter to the court in question. It is less likely, but possible, that you may end up taking the stand to provide in-person testimony in a case. In both cases, you'll want to have the same information but understand how to present it best. In-person, you'll organize what you have to say around the questions you'll be asked. In writing, you'll be able to plan exactly what you have to say. I recommend you write out your testimony as a letter regardless of how you'll be expected to present it, as that will help you organize your thoughts and fully understand the information you'll present.

Establish who you are. In a sentence or two, explain your credentials and why you are qualified to speak on this case. Do you have personal experience with the dog and the training it received, or are you a neutral third party with expertise relevant to the case?

Include any relationship you have with the dog's owners, how you've gathered the pertinent data, as well as any relevant degrees and certifications you possess.

Restate the facts. The court likely already has this information, but you should state the facts of the case as you know them in your letter. Include dates and times but refrain from offering your opinion in this section. Save your personal thoughts for the end. This is also the time to include relevant assessments. Most of the time when we are called to testify, it involves bite cases, so outline each incident. An example may read, "On Jan. 3, 2021, while Mary Sue was walking in her neighborhood, Fido pulled hard enough to break his collar and ran at Mary Sue while barking. When Fido came upon her, Mary Sue raised an arm and Fido jumped at it, delivering a level 3 bite." If there are multiple incidents in question, describe them all. This shows the court that you're aware of the details of the case and forms the basis for the opinion you'll present. It's unlikely you'll be asked to provide incident summaries during in-person verbal testimony, but if you've prepared ahead of time in writing it will organize your thoughts.

Present your opinions. This is what the court wants from you, and it's where you make conclusions based on the facts you've

outlined (or that have been presented). Reference the incidents as necessary while you outline what action you feel is called for based on those facts. Explain the professional jargon at this stage as well, including defining any rated bites. In your assessment, consider the circumstances, number of incidents, bite severity, size of the dog, and owner compliance as applicable. A Chihuahua delivering a level 3 bite is a very different case than a Mastiff doing the same; a dog delivering even a level 4 bite under extreme duress is different from one that is completely unprovoked; a repeated history of similar incidents is different from a single event; and an owner implementing proper management that momentarily failed is different from an owner taking no steps at all to manage the dog. Make your recommendations broad. It's better to say that your recommendations are "working with a certified behavior consultant or veterinary behaviorist to develop a plan to desensitize and counter-condition the dog's reactions to triggers while also training bite inhibition" than to say, "Fido needs a six-week training program with me to overcome these issues."

The most difficult cases are when we need to recommend euthanasia. In every instance, it's a good idea to have a trusted colleague look over what you've written, but during those times you're recommending euthanasia this becomes an important part of your self-care as well. It can also be appropriate to seek professional counseling yourself if you are feeling guilt, because even the right recommendations can come with an emotional weight that we need to work through.

Once you've drafted your statements and had someone look over them, all that's left is to put it all on your formal letterhead and sign it before sending it out in the case of a letter. In the case of spoken testimony, read through your statements multiple times to be confident in your responses. Remember that there's a reason you're being asked to weigh in, you're the expert. You can do it.



Benjamin Bennink, M.S., CDBC, CPDT-KA, has been a Certified Professional Dog Trainer since 2012 and a Certified Dog Behavior Consultant since 2018. In December 2019 he earned a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology, and in December 2020, a master's degree in biology, focusing on the influences of neurobiology on reinforcement learning and behavior. He is also a professional premium member of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) and has served on the APDT's Education Committee, Membership Task Force, Legislative Task Force, and Ethics Committee. On Jan. 1, 2020, he began service for his one-year elected term on the APDT Board of Directors. He was then unanimously elected to the executive path on the Board, serving as secretary/treasurer in 2021 and vice chair in 2022. He is committed to excellence in training and utilizes the most up-to-date methods in the industry to provide clients with convenient and effective solutions to create a more harmonious home with their dogs.

APDT Job Bank

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Food Safety Protocols for Home Kitchens

Treat blends for reusable food tubes and pouches you can make yourself

By Brandy Barker



Dog trainers and pet parents alike frequently use food tubes and pouches to treat their dogs on the go. It takes less multi-tasking to let a dog lick from a pouch or tube than to dig for treats stuck in pockets. Plus, if you squeeze the food tube or pouch gently, you can limit non-meal calories. If you or your pet-parent clients are interested in creating recipes for food tubes or pouches for training sessions or promote do-it-yourself blends for on-the-go containers via social media, it is imperative one must understand food safety fundamentals, especially in the summer months.

Bacteria love warm temperatures

While you should always consider food safety when using human foods frequently used for dog treats above 41 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius), like cream cheese or liverwurst, bacteria growth and the risk for foodborne illness increase exponentially between 70 degrees Fahrenheit and 125 degrees Fahrenheit (21 degrees Celsius and 50 degrees Celsius). The risk becomes more significant when you add dirt and debris from walks, the dog's saliva, specks of dried-on food in the container, or any dust or dog hair from your own home.

Cream cheese is typically safe outside the refrigerator for up to two hours. However, when the temperature is 90 degrees

Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) or higher, you must discard the product within one hour. It is imperative to track the product opening time and date, and every minute the food is stored or used above 41 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius). Remember, always cut the time in half when using the product above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius). Carefully following the product's time and temperature rules lowers the risk of listeria or salmonella growth.

The Three-Day Rule Doesn't Apply to Home Kitchens.

A common misconception for do-it-yourself treat makers is following the best-by date or use-within rules on commercially prepared product labels. Well-run commercial kitchens are dedicated spaces with food safety-trained staff. Business owners who care use incredibly diligent practices developed by food scientists with double and triple-check systems every step of the way. The kitchen staff wears freshly laundered or disposable hairnets and masks, no nail polish or jewelry (both can end up in the product) and take precautions to keep clothes unsoiled and lint-free and nails trimmed and cleaned. The above may seem obvious, but well-planned and regulated kitchens follow those practices because every speck of dirt, dust, dander, and hair can affect food microbiology, rendering it less safe, especially in higher temperatures.

It is nearly impossible for home kitchens to remove environmental specks that adversely affect the food's recommended time and temperature allowance. Heating the product in the pouch or tube itself adds another layer of bacteria-killing safety. The product itself, not the water, needs to be at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius). Before heating the pouch or tube itself, review the manufacturer's instructions to verify the container can withstand at least 175 degrees Fahrenheit (79.4 degrees Celsius) for 10 minutes without melting (a good starting-off point to assure your recipe reaches bacteria-killing internal temperature). Double-check that once sealed, water cannot get into the tube or pouch.

If you are making treats in your kitchen or promoting do-it-yourself blends, you will increase the safety of the products by practicing diligent personal hygiene practices. By cleaning and sterilizing every surface, including the floor, before you begin and keeping the work area clear of other food or drinks (they spill), you further prevent bacteria growth during preparation. And while dogs licking from the spoon makes a popular social media reel, even dishwashers leave food traces behind, so it is best if pets stay in another room after you clean and sterilize the kitchen and prepare treats.

Every Speck of Everything Matters

Think about what you do in your kitchen every day. Walking through the kitchen with your shoes on can track dirt and fragments from the yard, garage, or sidewalk. Or, maybe your dogs go outside through the kitchen. They bring particles on their fur and paws when they come back in, possibly even pathogenic microbes from construction, vermin, or other outside sources. Or, perhaps, you use reusable coffee pods or prepare raw diets. One particle of coffee ground in your food tube or pouch recipe can cause gastronomic distress. And one fleck of raw meat or juice poses serious health risks when used outside, for long durations, and in warm weather.

If you leave your dishes to dry near the sink, dishwater, hand washing water, and other food particles could splash onto drying dishes. And, if your reusable pouches and tubes remain wet during preparation and storage, the water can become a breeding ground for bacteria, often known as a biofilm.

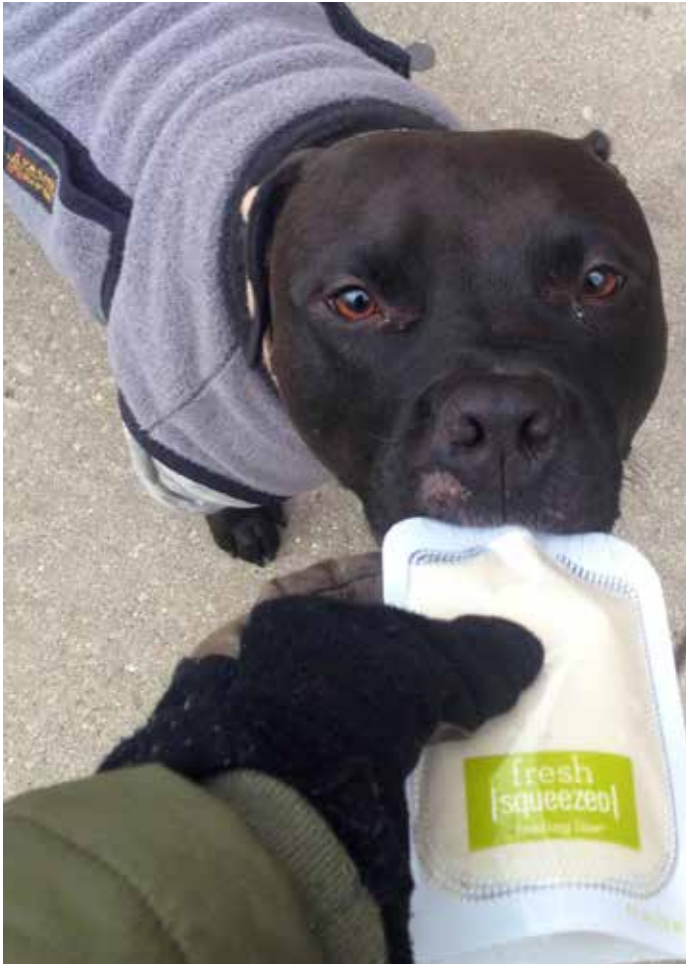
Ways to Make Your Home Kitchen Safe for Food Preparation

Your kitchen cleaning and preparation processes are imperative. Here are a few ways to ensure that your product is as safe as possible, even in a home kitchen.

- Move small appliances from your workspace. Crumbs hide under and behind air fryers, microwaves, and toasters.
- Inspect appliances closely. Food processor blades can break, leaving sharp and dangerous parts in the food you prepare. Food may get trapped in crevices and mold if you cannot take your food processor work bowl apart for cleaning.
- If your spatula, knife, and cutting board were cleaned in your dishwasher, clean and sterilize them again. Pre-preparation cleaning prevents particles from the food you consume every day from ending up in your blends. Plus, it allows you to look over your utensils. Bits of spatula come off over time, no matter what the material. And bacteria can hide and grow in slits of cutting boards.
- Dedicate one section of your kitchen to food preparation and always keep food away from the sink. You will prevent inadvertently splashing hand washing water onto the food.
- Clean and sterilize your pouches, leaving plenty of time to dry in areas where debris or food particles will not end up on or in them. After cleaning the pouches or tubes with dish soap, use hot water between 180 degrees Fahrenheit (82 degrees Celsius) and 199 degrees Fahrenheit (93 degrees Celsius) for at least 30 seconds to sterilize them. The container itself must be at least 160 degrees Fahrenheit (71 degrees Celsius) to kill potentially harmful microorganisms.

Use Heat to Make the Product Safer

As mentioned above, there are strict guidelines on how long untreated cream cheese, liverwurst, blended fish, deli meat, or hot dogs are safe for consumption in weather warmer than 41 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius), cutting the time in half for every minute the treats are stored or used at or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius). Any speck of dust, debris, saliva,



A pooch enjoying properly prepared snack.

other food, hair, fur, etc., can reduce the time it is safe to use the blends you are creating. One way to help make your treats as safe as possible within the food's recommended time and temperature parameters is to heat the product multiple times.

After blending your recipe, pour the contents into a hot water jacketed kettle or double boiler. To kill potential bacteria in the product from the manufacturer or the environment, heat your recipes to 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius) for at least 10 minutes. Stir the product well multiple times before taking the temperature. To confirm your product reached a bacteria-killing temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius) and not 164 degrees Fahrenheit (73 degrees Celsius), take the temperature at least three different times. Remember that the center of your recipe is furthest from the heat source and usually the coolest. Hence, taking the temperature in the center of your product is a great way to ensure the entire batch has reached a bacteria-killing temperature. Additionally, you will need to calibrate your thermometer regularly to ensure accurate temperature readings.

It is nearly impossible for home kitchens to remove environmental specks that adversely affect the food's recommended time and temperature allowance. Heating the product in the pouch or tube

itself adds another layer of bacteria-killing safety. The product itself, not the water, needs to be at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius). Before heating the pouch or tube itself, review the manufacturer's instructions to verify the container can withstand at least 175 degrees Fahrenheit (79.4 degrees Celsius) for 10 minutes without melting (a good starting-off point to assure your recipe reaches bacteria-killing internal temperature). Double-check that once sealed, water cannot get into the tube or pouch.

Using a sous vide rather than a pot or double boiler allows you to keep the water temperature from rising to the boiling point, which may negatively impact the integrity of the pouch or tube itself. The only way to confirm sterilization is if the tube or pouch is completely submerged underwater for 10 minutes, you can use sous vide weights or kitchen utensils. Just make sure not to use anything sharp that can poke a hole in your pouches or tubes.

After you have submersed the pouches or tubes for at least 10 minutes, it is imperative to check the internal temperature is 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius) or higher in a couple of test pouches. Do not open all of them as air affects the sterility of the contents. If the product's internal temperature does not reach 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius), you will need to repeat the process, adjusting your sous vide temperature. Next, you need quickly cool the product from an internal temperature of 135° F (135 degrees Celsius) to 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 degrees Celsius) in two hours or less and from 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 degrees Celsius) to 41 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius) in four hours or less. Even small pouches and tubes take time to cool, especially sealed, so placing the containers in a cool water bath can assure they reach safe temperatures within the proper timeframe.

Making dog treats safe for use in warm weather is a significant endeavor. Start with a pristine kitchen. Use diligent food safety and bacteria-killing practices. Consistently reevaluate your food preparation processes. Doing all of the above will help ensure your treats are not just high-value but also harmless.



Brandi Barker was a professional full-time dog trainer before launching Bark Pouch™ dog treats. She uses a six-step sterilization and treatment process (developed by food scientists) to assure her fresh, human-grade treats are safe at any temperature. All five Bark Pouch™ recipes are registered and in good standing with the FDA and Department of Agriculture. The ingredients are FDA and AAFCO approved. Brandi is ServSafe certified in Food Safety, makes every pouch in her dedicated, pristine commercial kitchen, and plans to offer food safety classes for dog trainers soon.

The Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) supports a Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) approach to behavior modification and training.

What is LIMA?

LIMA requires that trainers and behavior consultants use the “least intrusive, minimally aversive technique likely to succeed in achieving a training (or behavior change) objective with minimal risk of producing aversive side effects.” LIMA also incorporates a competence criterion, requiring that trainers and behavior consultants be adequately trained and skilled in order to ensure that the least intrusive and aversive procedure is in fact used.

To download the complete white paper outlining APDT’s position on this issue, go to <https://apdt.com/about/position-statements/>



Solutions for Classroom Challenges

Voices from the Training Community

By Jamie McKay, CPDT-KSA



Ask 10 trainers a question and you'll get 10 different answers! If you have a suggestion for a topic to be covered in this series, please email jamiemckay@optonline.net.

This challenge was suggested by Jamie McKay, CPDT KSA of Harrison, New York:

When I began teaching group puppy classes every owner was given a "scavenger hunt" list. The list included suggestions of people, places and things to expose their puppies to. The highest score got a prize at the last class and those who got the lowest got a pack of poop bags. I've since changed my way of thinking about socialization. I now stress exposure to new things in a way that keeps the puppy feeling safe and happy. Quality over quantity! I am fortunate enough teach in a space that has a variety of equipment I can introduce to puppies while observing their body language and coaching their owners. What do other trainers do when their classroom space doesn't allow for or have stored equipment/objects to introduce to puppies. Looking for "novel" ideas for "novel" experiences.

Kristina Carpenter
Rock Hill Head Trainer
www.noleashneeded.com

I love to use plastic water bottles with puppies. They crunch, you can put small treats in them, you can drop them, roll them, toss them and in general after all that abuse you can recycle them at the end of the day. I do call it when puppies have crushed them down and started getting sharp points or it looks like they may chew pieces off.

Other favorites:

- Old socks stuffed with paper or water bottles
- Skateboards (sounds, movement)
- Soccer ball (motion, mouthing)
- Mirror(s) (reflection)
- Plastic cup/low feeder bowl
- Traffic/sport cones (hide food, mark skills)
- Park benches/picnic tables (place/climb, leave it)
- Playground equipment (if no kids are using) (place/ climb, new texture, new height, movements, recall)

Cynthia Drinkwine CPDT-KA
<https://www.playfulpupdogtraining.com/>

I like to use a vacuum cleaner. You can model gradually adding difficulty by first introducing a stationary vacuum at a distance and gradually working up to a real-life vacuuming scenario. You can also introduce puppies to a broom, modeling how to prevent it from becoming a toy.

Donna Kesten
sotcdogtraining.org – sotcdogtraining.org

I include 15-to-20 minutes in each Puppy training session for some sort of surface or sport training such as walking on a supported teeter, paws up on over turned bowls, wobble board, walking over a low ladder laying on the floor and tunnels etc. We search for treats in a pile of cut noodles and teach push with light weight balls the size of a soccer ball. I try and get a representative from each sport we offer in the club (Obedience, Rally Obedience, Nose Work, Agility and Tricks) to come in and do a 10-minute demo. This allows new owners to see the possibilities.

Barbara Miller, CPDT-KA, KPA CTP, CNWI
Fear Free Certified Trainer
(bksdogtraining.com)

I have been teaching young puppy classes for the past seven years in my small facility. COVID has markedly changed what we can do,

but I always encourage young children to come to class with their parents. I emphasize how helpful this is for the pups. So many young pups don't get exposed to kids early, this is a great opportunity to change that. I keep a small trike and scooter in the classroom and if the kids are interested let them do a drive by (safe distance) while pet parents sprinkle cookies on the ground. It gives great feedback to families on which pups need more help, and it gives me an opportunity to talk about "Be a Tree" and bite prevention. Then their homework is to sit in a park near a playground. Let their dogs tell them how comfortable they are with active kids nearby. Let them decide what their choice will be for the inevitable "may I pet your dog" questions.

The kids seem to enjoy being part of the class and who doesn't giggle at a scooter with blinking lights on the wheels?

Ronda Warywoda CPDT-KA, UW-AAB
<http://www.29k9.net/>

I'm always looking for new things to introduce in my group puppy classes. When space is limited, I use different noises on my phone with a blue tooth speaker. It can be the sound of cars, motorcycles, thunder etc. I make sure they don't line up in the same order so that the pups are next to a different team each session. I've also invited friends wearing uniforms and motorcycle helmets to visit our classes. I have an umbrella and remote-control toy car that I bring in the next-to-last class.

Sydney Bleicher KPA CTP, Fear Free Certified Professional,
TAGteach level 1
ultimatepuppy.com/freshpuppy.ca

I specialize in early education with a strong focus on socialization, prevention, and enrichment. My coaching is a blend of virtual and in person/in public, so... there is no formal classroom. Puppy level 1 consists of four classes with one of them being in person/in public. For the first class we meet virtually. We discuss body posture and how to actively create positive associations with exploration of novel things. Together we create some experiences for the pup to explore. If the pup isn't interested, we talk about it and modify. We use things that everyone has around their house including but not limited to:

- Baking trays
- Trash bags on top of books and making noise with the trash bag
- Blow dryer
- Wooden spoon (that can turn the baking tray into a wobble board) to make noise with on the baking tray
- Broom
- Tarps
- Kids wearing masks or playing musical instruments
- I have even had one family put on a full concert/dance party.

During one session we meet in person/in public in a quiet park (not unleashed dog park). Puppy is on a long line and there are quiet places to retreat to for a more reserved pup (including the student's car if we need it). We explore rocks, grass, kids playground, hills, dirt

and listen to sounds of cars and trains (from a distance) and planes. Anything the environment offers us that day.

I often play a version of Leslie McDevitt's LATTE (Look At That, Then Enrichment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bf40ai9LCy8>) where I put out 3-5 different enrichment toys for the pup to access food from and combine this with some environment exploration. I particularly love this for pups who may be less confident. It has been my experience with pups that appear uncomfortable, given the opportunity to focus on accessing food from toys, it helps them decompress and become more curious and comfortable with things going on in the environment.

Resources that I use...(these are available for free to any trainer who wants them):

- A socialization checklist (https://ultimatepuppy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ultimatepuppy_social_schedule_NEW.pdf) as a resource for people with a strong emphasis on it being inspiration rather than 'check all the things'.
- A socialization field trip worksheet (https://ultimatepuppy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ultimatepuppy_fieldtrip_worksheet_sept_2020.pdf) that I use as 'homework' in the first class.

I encourage folks to be strategic and I've experienced that using a worksheet gets students thinking more critically and carefully about their work. I also give my puppy students a copy of "Lili Chin's Doggie Language." Love this book!

Jamie McKay CPDT KSA
jamiemckay@optonline.net
www.McKay9.com

I teach group classes for a club and have access to a variety of equipment. It affords me the opportunity to set up scenarios where I can coach handlers on how to recognize their puppy's comfort level by understanding their body language as well as what to do when their puppy exhibits concern about something. I have off leash interactions depending upon the class makeup and discuss which play behaviors are appropriate. If available, a calm older dog that is comfortable with puppies will be brought in for a short meet and greet.

For instructors who don't have access to equipment there are many items that are portable and can easily be brought to class. I teach a tricks class and obtain many props from discount stores. I have a small handheld sound button toy and/or I can use my phone to record and play different sounds or music on. I have small wobble boards and skateboards for exposure to objects that move. You can improvise a hand-made wobble board from a large piece of heavy-duty cardboard under which a ball placed inside a sock is stapled or otherwise attached to the bottom. Alternatively, place a pillow under it. If the movement is scary for the puppies, objects can be held in place.

A large rectangular or square cardboard box can be used as a short tunnel by leaving the ends open. A cat tunnel will work for some of the smaller pups. A hula hoop can be held securely while the

pups walk or run through it. It should not be held off the ground. A cardboard box or a fold up heavy-duty vinyl or plastic kiddie pool can be climbed in. To make it more exciting (or challenging) fill with plastic balls or empty water bottles! A portable folding step stool or lightweight mobility step stool can work as a puppy platform. During one class, I introduce obstacles and in another class it might be medical equipment. Another class will feature a short straight tunnel. In all classes I introduce different sounds. I don't want to overwhelm the pups with too much at once.

I was able to obtain some wool from a freshly shorn sheep and the pups are very interested in smelling it.

Fellow students can carry a bag, wear different hats, sunglasses, and masks. A cane can be folded up and brought to class. A rolling suitcase or shopping cart can be used as an object that moves and a person pushing an object simulating a baby stroller or a walker. A portable crate can be used to discuss crate training as well as introducing pups to a crate that's unfamiliar. Crate pans can be a surface to walk on. A large trash bag can be a surface to walk on or gently shook out like a noisy object in the wind. A small umbrella can be opened and closed. Most facilities have a vacuum and pups can be slowly and carefully exposed to the noise and then some movement.

I talk about opportunities to expose their pups to new experiences outside of class. It's popular to take pups to stores that allow them but

sometimes the combination of noise, moving objects, crowds can be a bit much. For pups that might take a little while to warm up to new experiences exposure can be modified by having the pup watch things from the parking lot while sitting in a car. Sitting on a bench in the park and watching things from a distance can also be a way to expose a pup to seeing and hearing different people and dogs. Depending upon the season I'll also talk about exposing pups to different weather as not all owners have their pups eliminate outside (some toy breeds use potty pads or litter). If owners have a ceiling fan but it's not being used due to the time of year, I ask them to put it on so the puppy experiences it. The puppy could be exposed to the sound of a blow dryer especially if one will be used for their grooming.

Socialization is about quality not quantity. It's important to create and ensure good experiences for their puppies without overwhelming them. Owners may need guidance and support so that their puppies are kept feeling safe, secure and happy.

Jamie McKay, CPDT-KSA, gained her early experience at the Humane Society of Westchester teaching safe handling skills to volunteers to enhance the adoptability of shelter dogs. Jamie teaches group classes at Port Chester Obedience Training Club in New York. She is a Canine Good Citizen evaluator and competes in agility and rally obedience. Jamie and her husband, Stephen, CPDT-KSA, own McKay9 Dog Training, LLC.

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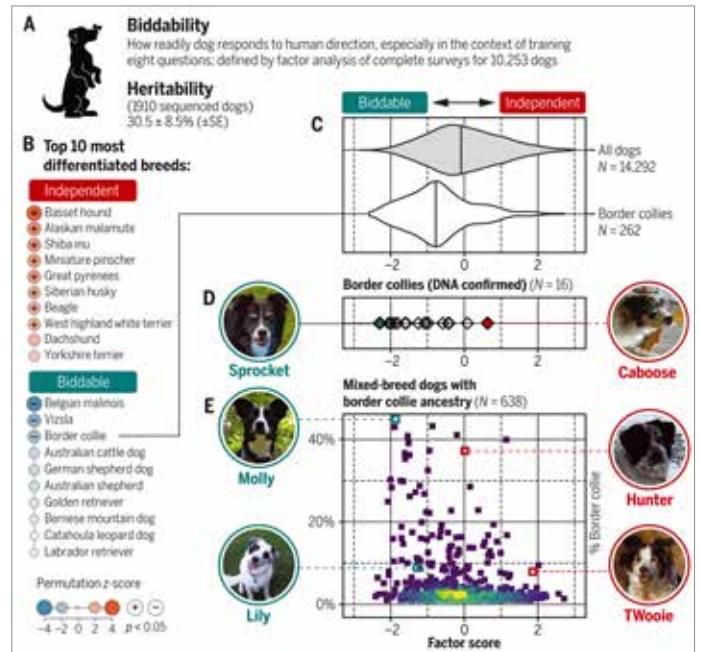
Dog breeds may be similar in physicality, but not personality

I've watched hundreds of videos of Golden Retrievers being, well, Golden Retrievers: wagging tail, goofy grin, stuffed animal/ball/leash in mouth, begging for food and/or attention with a nudge with a cold, wet nose. We nod in collective agreement that these behaviors define what we love about Golden Retrievers, so therefore, if you get a Golden Retriever, your pooch will likely have these characteristics.

Or do they? A study published at the end of April in *Science* magazine, "Ancestry-inclusive dog genomics challenges popular breed stereotypes" (<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abk0639>) suggests we might need to slow our roll with that thought. The authors, all 16 of them, sequenced the DNA of more than 2,000 purebred and mixed-breed dogs. That data, along with owner surveys, were used to plot genes associated with behavioral and physical traits. According to the report, "physical traits that distinguished one breed from another were more consistent, yet behavior proved trickier to predict – even among dogs of the same breed. The main behavior – how well dogs respond to human direction – seemed to be inherited among dogs of the same breed, yet that biddability varied significantly among individual dogs."

The authors of the study created a website — Darwin's Ark (darwinsark.org) — as an open data resource for collecting owner-reported phenotypes and genetic data and has invited dog owners to enroll their pets. The owners of nearly 18,400 dogs were surveyed, with 49 percent purebred. The DNA was sequenced for 2,155 dogs, which determined most behavioral traits are heritable, "but behavior only subtly (9 percent) differentiates breeds. As for how easily a dog may be provoked by frightening or uncomfortable stimuli, breed is almost uninformative," the report stated.

The authors also used dogs of mixed breed ancestry to test the genetic effect of breed ancestry on behavior and compared that to the survey responses from purebred dog



(A) Biddability is among eight behavioral factors defined from surveys. SE, standard error. (B) Dogs in some breeds tend to score unusually high or low for this factor compared with dogs overall. (C and D) Border collies score lower on average for biddability (vertical line at median) but vary widely (C), including genetically confirmed border collies (D). (E) In mixed-breed dogs, border collie ancestry has a small genetic effect on biddability.

owners. "For some traits, such as biddability and Border Collie ancestry, we confirm a genetic effect of breed that aligns with survey responses. For others, like human sociability and Labrador Retriever ancestry, we found no significant effect."

The report also found 11 regions that are "significantly associated with behavior, such as howling frequency and human sociability and 136 suggestive regions. Regions associated with aesthetic traits are unusually differentiated in breeds, consistent with a history of selection, but those associated with behavior are not."

The report concluded: "In our ancestrally diverse cohort, we show that behavioral characteristics ascribed to modern breeds are polygenic, environmentally influenced, and found, at varying prevalence, in all breeds. We propose that behaviors perceived as characteristic of modern breeds derive from thousands of years of polygenic adaptation that predates breed formation, with modern breeds distinguished primarily by aesthetic traits. By embracing the full diversity of dogs—including purebred dogs, mixed-breed dogs, purpose-bred working dogs, and village dogs—we can fully realize dogs' long-recognized potential as a natural model for genetic discovery." — The editor

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