

The DogSmith Dog Safety 101



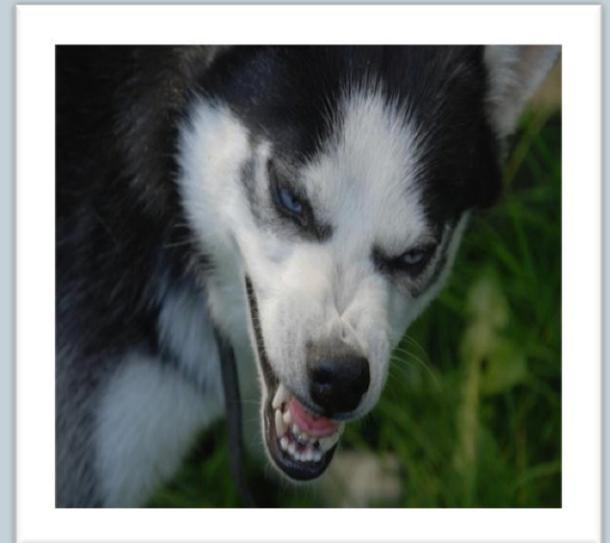
A DOGSMITH COMMUNITY OUTREACH PRESENTATION

Sponsored by The DogSmith. www.DogSmith.com 1-888-Dog-Smith (364-7648)
Copyright 2012

Do Dogs Bite ?



- Dogs almost never kill people
 - A child is more likely to die choking on a balloon or falling off a swing
 - Most dog bites are at “Band Aid” level
 - Dogs do get irritated with us
 - ✦ They growl
 - ✦ They snarl
 - ✦ They bark
 - ✦ They snap



Dog Bite Facts – Cultural Phobia



- Chance of being killed by a dog 1 in 18 million
 - You are twice as likely to win the Jackpot
 - Five times more likely to be struck by lightning

Rare Fatal Injuries to Children

Dogs 10

Balloons 11

Playgrounds 15

Buckets 22

Family Members 826

Studies based on
research from the
CDC

Dogs Bite but Balloons &
Slippers are more dangerous
(Bradley 2008).

Why Do Dogs Bite?



- **Because**

- We ignore their body language – calming signals, signs of stress and signs telling us to give them space
- They bark and we ignore them
- They bark, whine or show signs to encourage space between us and them and we continue moving toward them
- They have no other option – *they cannot write to their senator*



Dogs Bite



- **Because**
 - They are scared
 - They are aroused because of fear
 - They anticipate an unpleasant experience
 - We display signs of aggression
 - All of their finely tuned canine language has no effect and the perceived threat to the dog is not removed



Dog Talk 101



- 100% of the time dogs are sending off signals.
 - They use body language and verbal sounds to communicate to us
 - Most of this language is misunderstood
 - Dogs spend their entire life trying to avoid conflict, communicating to us that they either want us to approach or back off
 - Dogs are not naturally aggressive – *They are the most successful animal on this planet if you use numbers as the gauge. They have survived because of their ability to solve conflict*



Affiliate Signals



- Distance “decreasing signals”
 - Dogs approach in an arc – never head on
 - Dogs sniff, paw, yawn, slight bounce or bow
 - Relaxed body
 - Ears down
 - All the dogs movement is relaxed, body parts are relaxed



Agonistic Signals



“Distance Increasing” signals

- Includes acts of escape, threat defense, attack
- Stiff Body
- Posturing
- Leaning forward, Weight over front legs
- Growling, Barking, hackles Raised
- Tail alert



Canine Cutoff Behavior



- Cutoff Signals are used to reduce conflict.
- It is a compromise strategy
- Serves to temporarily break off sensory contact reducing the level of threat
- Call a draw – walk away



Canine Cutoff Signals



- Very slow movements
- Yawning
- Sniffing the ground
- Licking of the lips
- Turning the eyes and head away slowly
- Turning the body away



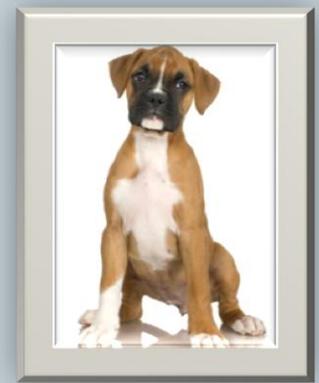
Canines understand these signals and we can use them to show we are no threat if a dog is nervous or stressed

How To Handle Aggressive Signals



- Aggression is an emotional behavior
- You cannot modify, solve or address aggressive behavior using aggression
- Aggression escalates Aggression
- Aggression is an emotional response and needs to be counter conditioned

“Where knowledge ends violence begins”



Handling Aggressive Signals



- If a dog is displaying aggressive signals
 - They want to create distance
 - DO NOT
 - ✦ Scold the dog
 - ✦ Stare at the dog
 - ✦ Scream
 - ✦ Shout
 - ✦ Corner the dog
 - ✦ Put yourself in a frontal position

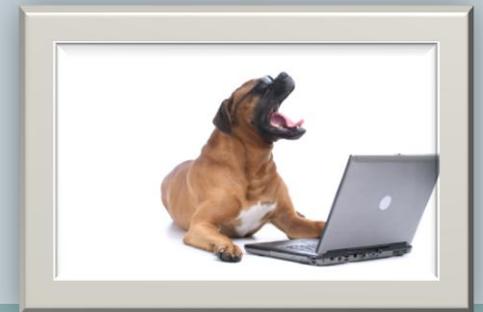
Note, safety always comes first. Then contact a certified and professional dog behavior consultant



If faced With An Aggressive Dog DO:



- Stand still and cross your arms
- Keep an eye on the dog – from the side
- When the threat is removed move away slowly without turning your back on the dog
- Hum gently a soft tune as you move away
- Move very slowly so you do not trigger an attack
- Get and read a copy of The DogSmith Dog Safety worksheet



Problematic Human Communication



- Many humans create dogs that are hand shy, anti-social, nervous or scared around people
- Because
 - They hard stare at them
 - Scowl
 - Yell and scold
 - Approach a nervous dog head on
 - Lean over a dog
 - Hit or correct in a physical way
 - Intimidate and create fear



Working Around a Nervous Dog



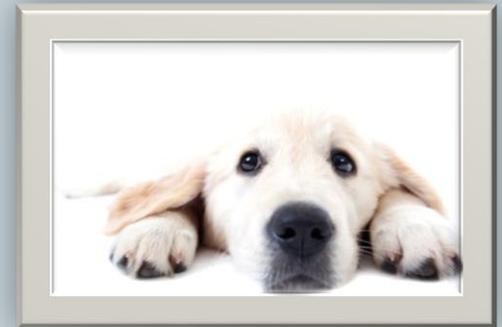
- Soft eye contact (side ways)
- Warm smile (sideways)
- Speak in a slow warm and friendly manner
- Allow the dog to approach you
- Turn to the side it encourages the dog to move into you



Learning Theory 101



- If your presence in a dogs area brings about unpleasant events (perceived by the dog)
 - Stress or fear due to your behavior around the dog then your arrival will predict unpleasant things beginning
 - The dog soon works on the prediction of your arrival and you will see an escalation in their behavior
 - ✦ Whether that is a fearful behavior or an aggressive behavior



Last Thought



- If your presence in a dog's area is non threatening, pleasant or neutral the dog will learn that your arrival brings about no change in its environment or something pleasant

Behavior & Consequence predicts future behavior



Parting Words From Niki Tudge – DogSmith Founder



- After 12 years as a Dog Trainer and Animal Behavior Counselor I have never been bitten by an animal.
- I have worked with fearful dogs, happy dogs and aggressive dogs .
- I have managed and operated Humane Societies and Animal Shelters
 - Avoid being bitten, avoid stressing your four legged customers.
 - Communicate to them using their language and you will see the results