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Puppy socialization affect behaviour.

Taken from Amy Greenwood Burford adba@adba.cc

With APBT ... either you know or you don't.

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The goal of early puppy socialization is to establish behaviour.

A properly socialized puppy is well adjusted to all people in the household and home environment and as such **makes a good companion, working dog and watchdog.**

It is neither frightened by nor aggressive towards anyone or anything would it normally meet in day to day living.

Looking at the positive effects of early socialization of puppies between 6 – 18 weeks up to 18 months of age – **with the new owner.**

Research and practical experience relating to positional changes, exercises and socialization for the pups in the first weeks of life 3 – 6 weeks at the breeder and 6 – 18 weeks – most important with the new owner, will make **all the difference**.

Puppy growth and development in relation to actual follow-up and testing these adult dogs as these dogs then completed socializing and after training and became working and performance ability dogs and or just house pet dog prove worth.

The hypothesis was that pups that received proper kennel and home socialization early and possible professional after training and were required to adapt to stressors (position changes and exercises) would develop better intelligence, attachments to people and physical strength and coordination than the control group that was left alone with their dam and after weaning kennelled with or without s litter mate in taken away period from the mother between 6 - 18 weeks, with little handling.

By seven weeks of age, puppies need to have eaten from seven different food dishes, been exposed to seven different areas of the house and yard, and walked on seven different surfaces or levels. Pups that have been socialized in a calm and safe manner in the kennel or home prior to 7 weeks of age will develop confidence and easily become accepting of any strange things.

Canines have four mechanisms for coping and interacting with their environment - **fight, flight, submit and ignore**.

The fight or flight strategy is based in the dog's instinctual responses and then ... the ignore and submit strategy are learned response based on training and socialization.

A dog that has been adequately socialized from the whelping stage situation to six months of age, **is able** to generalize, a valuable learning tool.

An example of this would be that once a dog had been socialized to accept a six year old child as OK, the dog could then accept all six year old children as OK.

Without this ability to generalize, then each six year old child the dog would come in contact with would have to be checked out before being accepted.

Dogs that have been isolated in a kennel environment and received little socialization prior to reaching six months of age, **does not develop the ability to generalize**.

This can hamper the dog's ability to adapt to their environment and learn for the rest of their life.

Early socialization and training should be positive, with calm and assertive leadership from the trainer or owner and every people exposure.

Pups should be given earned affection, the right way.

No stroking, kisses or hugs.

To a dog these primate based behaviours send confusing messages.

Firm pats, and vocal praise such as 'good dog', can be given for behaviour you want to see repeated.

Bad behaviour, or behaviour that you do not want to see repeated should be corrected with firm no! Or ignored.

Dogs want to please their owner and master and will quickly learn which behaviours will get the desired response from you.

When a dog is not trained or trained with dominant forceful methods, they will begin to regard children and others as inferiors and below themselves in the pecking order.

The dog will express their position with aggressive behaviours.

A dog will pass on to their inferiors what they has received from their owner/trainer.

Some of the dominant training methods include the alpha / master roll, the chin slap, the ear piercing whistle, the hard jerk, the string up and hanging and the scruff shake.

Any training method using any of these techniques or any others associated with pain or punishment can have detrimental effects and should **NOT** be used.

These training methods have been credited with the development of dogs that respond to threats with what can be termed a critical reaction.

These are dogs that turn from friendly to aggressive and back to friendly again, in response to threats or unstable energy.

Over permissive, owners giving inappropriate unearned affection, with periods of attempts to dominate with pain and punishments leads to confusion and frustration and the *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* phenomenon.

When a pup is seen as a member of the family and is not given limits or boundaries and is allowed to self-train, their teachers become self-gratification and survival, and their instinctual responses will dominant – the fight or flight response.

This conditions the dog to become fearful or aggressive.

A pup needs to be treated as a dog and their canine needs of adequate feed and water, shelter, health care needs and adequate human exposure, exercise addressed first.

The pup's emotional needs, to give them a sense of security, will be met by having their owner assume the position of master under any and all circumstances.

Territorial and psychological boundaries in the household need to be set.

Family members should all know and be consistent with the house rules for the puppy.

Ensure the puppy's feeling of importance and satisfaction by giving them the opportunity to repay their owner by serving and pleasing.

Let the pup earn your and other human interaction praise.

Praise should be short, simple, and sincere without gushing or too much emotion.

The psychological needs of the pup can be met by establishing with your dog a system of communication with consistent commands and word, which they can adapt to and understand, teach them consistent behavioural standards to enable them to better cope with their environment.

With proper early puppy socialization the pup will confuse a 'holiday' from the house rules, and will not become confused and insecure dealing with inconsistency.

Provide training in a pleasant and straight forward way based on the concepts of mutual respect and trust.

Puppy socialization should cover most of the experiences that your dog will encounter in his adult life.

Trips in the car in a crate or safety harness will be essential when traveling or taking them to the Vet.

Bathing, crate or dog / safety place training, walking in given safe chosen area, meeting or greeting the mailman or meter reader.

If your dog will be shown in conformation, weight pulling, agility or obedience events get them out to club fun shows, and club functions.

Socialization around children should be done very carefully more so if you do not have children in your immediate household.

Dogs can get into trouble if they have not been positively socialized to children of all ages before they are six months of age.

The reason is that children smell, respond and act differently than adults.

Their intensity is different from adults and often times it is unstable or erratic in nature.

Calm, self-confident children should be selected to expose your puppies to.

The children should call the puppies to them for petting and interactions and not hunt the puppy.

Instruct a child not to kiss or hug and to avoid picking up the puppies, chasing, or playing tug of war.

A fun game for children to play with your pup is 'hide and seek'.

Allow the child to hide and have the puppy find.

At all times, adult supervision is required during these play sessions or socialization times with children.

Dogs are not born with the knowledge of how to treat children and many children can and do become rough or play too hard with some pups.

If at any time, the play is not fun for the child or the puppy, or becomes out of control, it needs to stop and the puppy put away.

Canine behaviourists have been studying early socialization and working with dogs whose socialization has been less than ideal a buzzy kennel and not enough attention etc.

With many of these dogs, their behaviours and ability to learn appear to be quite deficient.

The dog may exhibit distrust or even extreme fear of social contact and will appear to have behavioural disabilities.

Some dogs suffering from inadequate socialized during puppy stage can and will regain some balance through intense remedial socialization, but they will never reach the full potential they could have, if adequately socialized from the start.