



## Keeping 'Trick or Treat' Safe with Pets

Aside from keeping your dogs away from the all-so-delicious but toxic chocolate candies, 'Trick or Treat' season can be challenging for dog owners.

Squealing kids are often a trigger for excitement or anxiety in dogs. It is commonly (Trick or Treat season or not) difficult to keep your dog calm and mannerly when doorbells ring, front doors open, car doors slam shut, etc.

Unless your dog is so obedient that you can guide him to his dog bed where he would stay mannerly while Trick or Treating happens at the front door, using a leash to control your dog while in a highly excitable state is an obvious option. It

eliminates jumping up on people, scaring kids, and ruining flimsy costumes.

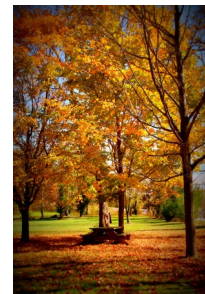
Practice impulse control with your dog by the front door without any distractions first. Use the leash to help you teach your dog what you mean. Increase stimulation and make the scenario more challenging as your dog progresses until you are proficiently ready for the Big Day!

If you are not prepared to work on this when a lot of action happens at the front door, and you know you have a problem with your dog, it is best to remove your dog from the situation altogether. Put your dog in the crate or lock him into a room. Not controlling unruly greetings, barking,

and jumping on people will only reinforce these bad behaviors. Thus, putting your dog up is realistic damage control for that moment.

That's not to say the problem has gone away. Keeping your dog safe will simply disallow another bad experience and you can work on the problem when you do have the time.

Happy and Safe Trick or Treating!



## An Ode to Our Dogs!



Life with our canines is always too short. It's important to remember to have FUN with your dog!

Throw that stick, toss that ball, give that rub, pet him up!

Enjoy it like it's your last encounter. Make it count more than your last interaction. It's so worth it!

Don't be mad, try to laugh

instead. Don't be harsh or unfair. Give manageable solutions instead. Be in the moment with your dog.

Doing this makes us one step more human, I believe.

*(dedicated to Pitu, my soul dog who left me this year. He inspired this Ode and is deeply missed.)*

## Physical Praise - The Forgotten Reinforcer

Physical Praise is a reinforcer we tend to forget. We all pet our dogs plenty but we may not realize that physical praise is actually a *primary reinforcer*. This means it is a very strong (innate) stimulus to the dog, one which does not need to be paired with a function to have meaning because it meets a basic need as is (unlike *secondary reinforcers* such as verbal praise). Toys and food are the other two very common primary reinforcers and we use those a lot more.

It is common that dogs would prefer a toy or food over physical praise in a momentous time where a reward would

be given, however, physical praise counts for the powers it holds!

How many ambitious pet owners amongst us have our dogs offering a behavior perfectly on a casual stroll around the neighborhood but we were not prepared, did not bring food or toys along on the walk, and feel we miss an opportunity to reward.

At all times, under all circumstances, you still have physical praise to give! Pair that with some serious verbal praise and you have a grandly reinforced dog!



## Socialization Saves Lives!

I cannot stress enough the importance of socializing your dog. Puppies have a critical window of up to 16 weeks of age before which your dog should be socialized to as many stimuli as possible.

While meeting other dogs can be part of this early mix, the socialization really refers to anything your dog needs to see to become a robust and confident companion to you: Umbrellas, sliding doors, screaming children, men in hoodies, people wearing sunglasses, loud noises downtown, storm drains, walking over funky surfaces, weird statues, etc.

Doing so as early in your puppy's life as possible will reduce, if not eliminate, problems later when your

dog does see something it is not sure about.

Did you miss the boat if you now have a 7 months old dog with whom you did not take this opportunity early on, or, did you just adopt a 16 months old dog and you feel you missed out?

Socialization continues throughout the dog's life. Any opportunity you give your dog to see something novel will help your dog become more confident. In fact, helping your dog conquer the world through positive interactions with you will not only make your dog a better dog but it also truly improves your bond together.

A dog not properly socialized before 16 weeks of age may take longer to

get over something, but it is never too late.

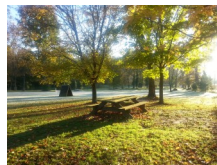
The big problem is to not do it at all! The classic example of a shelter dog is one who is between 1-2 years old with reactivity or aggression issues. These dogs had owners who did not socialize them. They showed all stress signals they possibly could without the owner noticing. Fast forward a year later, and the dog has a bad incident, possibly bites another dog or person. While the owner acts surprised, this incident was in the making for a year without notice.

Socialize your dog, make exploring fun, play "Check It Out". Your dog will value this and be a better companion to you!

## Teaching Not to Jump on People

Dogs get excited and jump up on people. "Off" is a) not good enough in these circumstances and b) a reactive mode because the dog already jumped, got more excited, got rewarded and will listen to you a lot less in this state.

I recommend being more proactive and actually providing the dog a meaningful solution, ie Sit, *before* the dog even takes the opportunity to jump. Yes, the dog *takes* the opportunity because you allow it. This may require the use of a leash in the house when your dinner guests arrive but you will do your dog and your dinner guests a big



favor, and reduce the chance of this obnoxious behavior from happening again. Not only disallow the jumping through use of the leash, but provide your dog the solution before they get stupid (because their excitement of jumping into

social bliss with your friends will override any listening they may be capable of). Put him into a Sit, on leash, possibly with the help of a treat, before the excitement object comes any closer. Once impulse control is accomplished, guests may approach closer and possibly even pet the dog if he remains sitting. Now, to set your dog up for success, you can't just expect your dog to stay

sitting when the biggest reward of all times, dinner guests, come up to him unless your dog is capable of sitting calmly for you under no distractions in your living room. Work on the behavior first. Work on the actual impulse control first without any social bliss approaching and then gradually move towards bigger challenges.

Dogs will do what gets them paid. Simple as that. If payment comes from impulse control and patience on the dog's behalf, they will offer this to you. Be consistent and clear. Practice lots. Eventually, your dog will become conditioned to associate people approaching with the requirement of sitting (because it will result in mega pay). Happy Training!

## Should We Reward Effort?

Dog Training is rarely black and white. While learning, the dog may be correct, and we reward. There will be other moments in which the dog may be incorrect and we either withhold the reward, or go a step further and correct our dog. But what about that fabric that fuels learning, that intangible concept of effort.

Should we communicate anything to our dogs about effort? How important is this to the dog's learning process? How does it make us humans feel when we try very hard to attempt a task, giving everything, but without success, and are acknowledged for trying. Do we care if nothing is said to us?

Innocent mistakes due to the dog's overzealous desire to please us fall into

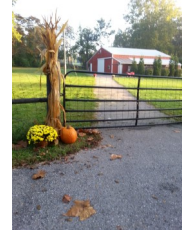
the same category. How do we communicate those mistakes? Is it appropriate to withhold the reward? Is it fair to correct a dog – who usually knows the behavior - for an excitatory mistake?

Look at how you train and communicate with your dog and be mindful of the fact that learning does not only entail marking either a clean cut 'Sit' or not, but attitude, spirit, and effort also matter towards payment. A dog that tries hard deserves to be acknowledged. A dog that makes a mistake because it wants to please us deserves to be acknowledged as well.

There are certainly exceptions and circumstances where we simply need to "get with the program" in order to achieve desired results and thus,

recognition of mistakes and effort no longer applies. However, for the most part, I tend to err on the side of the dog to harness that spirit, to make learning a fun experience, and to avoid squishing the dog's desire to work for me.

Back to the human example, being acknowledged for trying hard makes me want to try equally hard or harder the next time.



## Puppy Development Phases

Puppies go through various phases which are valuable to know about.

**Teething**— At around 3-5 months of age, puppies lose their baby teeth to make room for adult teeth. Gums and mouths are usually very sore. Possibly stay away from hard chew toys and tug of war.

**Fear Phase**—Between 6-8 months of age, puppies will develop fears towards

objects and/or people. This happens despite proper socialization and is a phase which will pass.

Encourage your dog to overcome its fears while not making too big of a deal about the fear objects.

**"Sass" Phase**—This adolescence phase



happens around 12 months of age. Your dog will test your limits and defiantly not listen to you. Insist on your dog doing what you ask. The phase will pass if the dog is properly guided.

**Second Fear Phase**—Not all dogs will go through this. A sudden onset of unexpected fear behaviors will show up again at around 15-18 months of age.

## Pay Them Where You Want Them - Think Vending Machine

Reward presentation is as important as the reward giving itself. When we offer a reward, we will make the dog's learning most efficient when we pay our dogs towards the solution. Holding a treat in your hand high up to entice your dog to sit may accomplish the dog sitting but may also require the dog to get out of the Sit or jump up to get the payment. Instead, offer the reward just above their nose so



they can stay sitting to get paid.

Common problems from incorrect reward presentation include unwanted jumping behavior as well as incorrect, crowding walking next to you, and sideways sitting when you stop walking. Likely, food is offered from the opposite hand of where the dog walks/sits, resulting in these annoying problems.

Dogs will align themselves most efficiently to reach for the reward. When you pay your dog where you want

him, it eliminates some bad habits from developing.

Vending machines have a similar effect on people. We add coins on the top but automatically position ourselves to reach for the soda down below before it even comes out. We go where the payment is. Dogs will do the same. It is up to you how effectively you use this dynamic to your advantage!





## About Us

### APPLIED CANINE BEHAVIORS, LLC

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*“We don’t just train and board dogs; instead, we are trust builders, relationship enablers, effective communications catalysts, and distinguished care providers.”*

www.appliedcaninebehaviors.com  
www.Facebook.com/AppliedCanineBehaviors

Sandra Groschwitz is the owner/trainer at Applied Canine Behaviors, LLC., (ACB), a small training and boarding business located just north of Bloomington, on 5 fenced acres. Sandra has trained companion and competition dogs for 13+ years. She trains and competes with her own German Shepherds in IPO/Schutzhund.

Sandra has rehabbed several shelter dogs, and loves working with aggression and problem behaviors in dogs. She has also trained 4 service dogs. Sandra is available for private lessons and group classes including Basic and Advanced Obedience, Rally Obedience, Puppy Development, Scent Detection/Tracking, and Drive Building workshops. In Kennel Training is another option ACB offers.

Sandra is a very energetic person who enjoys an active relationship between human and dog. She believes in empowering the dog, thus enabling it to flourish to its best potential.



ACB offers many attractive amenities that highlight our premium care approach toward all offered services. When entrusting your canine family member to strangers, whether it is to meet training objectives or board your dog while away, we understand that you expect the safest, cleanest, and most premium training and boarding experience. We feel certain that Applied Canine Behaviors, LLC can provide an ideal offering to you.

For more information, contact Sandra at info@appliedcaninebehaviors.com.

## Your Boarding Jewel in the Country



Dogs boarding at Applied Canine Behaviors, LLC (ACB) receive a lot of benefits which help keep dogs happy, calm and healthy.

- ACB is the only kennel north of Bloomington with easy access off SR37 on your way to Indianapolis International Airport
- ACB offers flexible drop off and pick up times without surcharge for Sundays, Holidays, or late pickups
- The Facility Owner lives on premises, always able to provide care for the dogs.
- All kennels are climate controlled with 15' covered outdoor runs
- Dogs get exercised off leash 4 times per day in a huge all grass fenced area
- ACB provides personalized attention and care for each dog
- Special needs dogs, very young or older dogs, and intact dogs are always welcome.
- Optional services such as scenic walks, dog play time, structured play, baths, as well as training options are also available

