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Tethering and Anti-Tethering Laws

We ran across an interesting new anti-tethering law in Wichita Kansas. The ordinance prevents dog owners from keeping animals chained for more than an hour at a time or more than three hours per day.

Through a little online research we found that almost 50 cities have ordinances regarding tethering. To view the list, and examples of anti-tethering ordinances go to <http://www.helpinganimals.com/a-tether.html>.

Just to clarify, the type of tethering these laws address is tying a dog outside, unattended. Other types of tethering are sometimes used as training techniques. For example a leash can be used to "tether" a dog to the owner as a means of indoor supervision. To prevent housesoiling or the dog jumping up on the owner's bed, we've recommended using a leash, as an alternative to a crate, to keep a dog on his bed overnight (with sufficient room to turn around and comfortably adjust body position) as long as the dog is sleeping in the same room with the owner.

The article in the **Wichita Eagle** lists a number of reasons, provided by the [Humane Society of the U.S.](#) why tethering or chaining a dog is a bad thing. Obvious ones include the dangers of entanglement and strangulation. From a behavioral perspective, unsupervised tethering can create significant frustration for dogs. It's like being on leash for an extended time, and never being able to get to all the things you see and hear.

Some bite statistics show a correlation between bite likelihood and whether a dog is chained. There's no way to

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Our Piece

Using Time-Outs To Discourage Unwanted Behavior

It's common for pet owners to resort to positive punishment - the delivery of some unpleasant thing - to stop an unwanted behavior. The [Gentle Spray citronella anti-bark collar](#), [SSSCat](#) or [Snappy Trainer](#) deterrent devices are examples of positive punishers. These remote punishers are probably the best type to use when this approach is warranted.

However, an alternative technique is negative punishment. This involves taking away the reward for unwanted behavior.

A time-out is an example of negative punishment. Many parents are familiar with the idea of the time-out. If a child draws on the living room walls with crayon, she is sent to her room for some period of time. In this case the child is removed from the opportunity to play and be with the family. We assume that being socially isolated is aversive to the child and therefore punishing. Time-outs can also be used with companion animals.

A dog that paws at her owner to get attention could be put in a small bathroom or laundry room for two minutes as a negative punishment. Time-outs can be effective if certain requirements are met.

First, the time-out area must be barren and not leave the animal anything to do. If the dog can play with the toilet paper roll while in the bathroom, it will not be an effective punishment.

know whether this reflects increased opportunities for contact between people and chained dogs (as compared to those behind a fence), whether chaining actually promotes aggressive behavior, or both. We do know that dogs with threatening and aggressive problems are usually worse on leash than off.

The HSUS also states that tethered dogs rarely receive sufficient care. While we've all seen cases in which this is true, we've also had clients who've resorted to tethering their dogs in the yard to prevent them from digging out of, chewing through, or jumping over fences. These dogs are otherwise receiving sufficient care, but have escape problems. There may be a qualitative difference between dogs who are chained as a primary means of containment and those who are chained or tied within a fenced area.

It can be very difficult to prevent a motivated dog from getting out of a fence that would be adequate for the majority of dogs. For these dogs, escaping is often a manifestation of a separation anxiety or other fear-based problem such as a thunderphobia. When dogs are panicked, they will tolerate pain to get out of where they are.

Putting substantial energy into creating an escape-proof yard for these dogs is often wasted effort. We've seen yards that resembled obstacle courses but the dogs were still finding a way out. A more successful approach is to identify what the dog is afraid of and help him overcome his fears.

[Click here](#) to view articles about fears and phobias on our website. If you want to view excerpts from the articles in the **Wichita Eagle**, go to www.kansas.com and search on articles on tethering. There is a fee to download entire articles.

Cat Piece

Crazy Kitten

Question:

My eight month old kitten is wreaking havoc in my house. He's torn up 3 shower curtains, slides down the banister, climbs into the fireplace, and opens drawers and cabinets. He gets into the trash and jumps up on a shelf to knock off plants. I love him but he's driving me crazy. Spray bottles and time-outs don't work.

We know your kitten's behavior is extremely annoying but at the same time we couldn't help but laugh at his escapades. Our 11 year old cat Buffett was pretty wild when he was a kitten, and would push items off shelves just for the joy of seeing them fall.

Kittens are some of the most playful creatures on earth. You'll need to take extra time to meet this little guy's need to play. Find both interactive toys - such as a cat dancer with a feather that you can use to entice him to jump high in the air

Second, timing is critical. The pet must be put in the time-out immediately after starting the unwanted behavior. Delays of even a few seconds can ruin the effectiveness of the time-out.

Third, the punishment must be delivered consistently. Every time your cat scratches the furniture, she must go in a time-out. This may not always be practical.

Fourth, don't make the time-out too long. Only 30 seconds to two minutes are needed for the animal to learn. Longer time-outs may actually interfere with learning.

Finally, all punishment works best if your pet is given another behavior to do to take the place of the unwanted behavior. Teaching your dog to sit quietly in front of you to get attention or providing a more desirable scratching object for your cat and rewarding her for using it can make the learning from a time-out more effective.

Pets don't need to be put in a room to be put on a time-out. For a cat that meows to get fed, you can simply leave the room until he is quiet, then return and feed him. This is a time-out because by meowing, the cat loses the opportunity to be fed.

Time-outs and negative punishment can't always be used to stop unwanted behavior. If you can't identify a rewarding thing to take away, or if you can't control your pet's access to the reward, negative punishment won't work.

On the good side, negative punishment doesn't cause animals to become fearful or aggressive as often as some types of positive punishment.

To learn more about how to create good behavior in your pets, take our [Just Behave](#) or [What Your Cat Wants You to Know](#) telecourses.

What's New at ABA

Dr. Hetts on CBS in February

Suzanne was interviewed by the Denver CBS News Service for an upcoming story on behavior problems in dogs. CBS in New York will feed this story to all their local affiliates for possible airing the week

and probably turn somersaults - and toys that he can amuse himself with.

A cat puzzle box is a good play-alone toy. It's a short cardboard box with cut-outs on the top and inside you can place a ball or other small object. Your kitten will have fun swatting at the ball through the cut-outs. He'll really have to work to get the toy out of the box.

He might also like a battery-operated toy such as the Panic Mouse that changes directions when it hits an obstacle. I can see your kitten chasing this all over your house. All of these toys are available at most major pet stores or on-line catalogs.

In addition to making sure you've given him plenty to do, you'll also need to "booby-trap" the trash, drawers, etc. Our article on Time-Outs in this newsletter lists two booby traps that would be good for you - the [Snappy Trainer](#) and [SSSCat](#).

Your spray bottle hasn't worked because it's unlikely you can spray him quickly enough or consistently. The remote punishers can accomplish these goals. And if you are chasing him around the house with the spray bottle, he may think that's a great game. YAHOO!! Check the Time-Out article to see if you are using this technique correctly.

If he was an only kitty, acquiring another kitten might be an option. The two could then play with each other rather than everything else in your house. However, because you also mention you already have two other adult cats, adding a fourth will create cat-introduction issues.

To gain a bit of perspective, videotape your kitten. When he's in his golden years as our Buffett is, you'll love being able to watch that video and remember his younger days fondly, even if they don't seem that way now.

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of February 6, 2004 (sweeps week!). It will be up to each local CBS station to decide whether or not to air the story and when.

If you'd like to see the piece, you might want to give your local CBS affiliate a call and encourage them to show it in your city. We don't know exactly what parts of Suzanne's interview the story will include - other people were interviewed for the piece as well. If you see it - give us your feedback, as we don't know whether or not it will air in Denver!

About Our Services

Our first [Becoming a Great Dog Training Instructor](#) telecourse, taught by our friend and colleague Ms. Pia Silvani begins January 22, 2004. This is sure to be a great class - Pia's a great speaker and good at sharing what she's learned from years of teaching classes. view the [course outline](#), which you can also access from our website. [CCPDT](#) CEU's for this course have been applied for and should be available by completion of the course.

We are proud to announce that our [Fundamentals of Animal Learning](#) and [Fundamentals of Canine Behavior](#) telecourses have been approved by [CCPDT](#) for continuing education credits. View the course outlines for [Ethology](#), and or [Learning](#).

We'll again be offering our [Managing Chaos at the Door](#) free telecourse on February 5, 2004. You'll learn how to control your canines when the doorbell rings, and how to curb your dog's territorial reactions.

To register, send us an email to ezine@AnimalBehaviorAssociates.com with your name and email address. We'll send you the phone number and access code. Class size is limited so get your name in TODAY!

By February 9, 2004, you'll be able to access our free [Creating a Cat-Friendly Litterbox](#) teleclass directly from our website via streaming REAL audio. If you aren't familiar with streaming audio, be sure and try this course, because in the future our Fundamentals courses will be available in this format as well (these will remain fee-based courses however). Make yourself a note to visit our website on February 9!

The "Litterbox" class explains in detail the features of litterboxes that are important to cats that you must get right if your cat is going to use the box reliably.

A Big FYI - With all the new anti-spam changes ISP's have made, to ensure that you will continue to receive this newsletter, you should add our **ezine@AnimalBehaviorAssociates.com** address to your address book or "safe list". This is especially important for AOL users. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you can easily unsubscribe by clicking on **Manage Your Subscription** at the end of this newsletter.

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