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## For Pet Parents and Pet Professionals

**Animal Behavior Associates Newsletter November 10, 2004, Volume II Issue 11**

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**[Dog Piece: A Novel Way to Socialize Your Puppy](#)**



Most dog professionals now agree that socialization of young puppies is important, and can have positive effects on adult behavior. Just what constitutes adequate socialization for

**Dear Suzanne,**

ABA has had a VERY busy month launching new products, presenting at conferences, adding new people, and of course our Australia trip. In this issue we report on some of our activities, including things we've seen and learned that will benefit you. We also wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving.

### • **[Cat Piece: The Nature of Cats](#)**

Suzanne delivered a presentation "Cat Behavior 101 for Dog Trainers" at the APDT ([Association of Pet Dog Trainers](#)) September conference in Denver. We weren't sure how interested dog trainers would be in cat behavior, but the enthusiastic response let us know they are indeed!



In her talk, Suzanne gave the audience 10 important characteristics of cats to help participants better understand the basic nature of cats. The rest of the presentation focused on how this understanding could be used to introduce cats to each other and to dogs (something which was definitely of interest to dog trainers!), and how to create an environment that meets the needs of both single and multiple cats.

young dogs is unknown and needs to be researched. Most of us have our own ideas about things that will help socialize dogs and there are many books and training programs that express those ideas (see for example our new book [Raising a Behaviorally Healthy Puppy](#)). We learned about an interesting and novel socialization program on our recent trip to Australia. Two experienced trainers, Kathy Romer and Corrine Bozsoky have created [The P.E.T. Academy](#) (P.E.T. stands for Puppy Education and Training) just outside of Sydney, Australia.

The Academy is a 10-day training and socialization program that occurs in a day-care setting. Corrine and Kathy take in six to eight puppies that are between 6 and 22 weeks of age. These puppies are dropped off in the morning by their owners and spend the day at the Academy facility, which is on Kathy's home property. They receive a series of training sessions that help them learn basic obedience commands, crate training, bite inhibition, and acceptance of handling and grooming.

During the day, appropriate housetraining (toilet training) is facilitated, and the puppies receive exposure to a variety of things and experiences that the average companion dog would be exposed to, such as vacuum cleaners, dishwashers, stairways, and different surfaces to walk on.

The socialization experiences include interaction and play with the other puppies, interactions with Corrine and Kathy's pets and trips in the car. By providing the day-care environment for the Academy, the puppies are exposed to things much more quickly and at an earlier age than most puppies who would be sitting at home alone while their owners are at work. As Kathy and Corrine point out "While our clients are at work, we are their eyes, ears and voices".

Here is a sampling of the characteristics Suzanne discussed:

**1. Cats are very sensitive to their interpersonal space.** Personal space can be thought of as a bubble of area around their bodies that cats consider their own. The bubble moves when the cat does, making personal space different from territory. Cats may become threatening if their personal space is invaded too quickly, especially individuals they aren't very familiar with. This is a common reason for threats and fighting during introductions of new pets to the family.

**2. Cats often do not have strict social hierarchies.** When cats live together, it's often not clear who is in the dominant role in the relationship. Because cats usually don't live in highly structured groups, they don't always have well defined social roles. Instead, cats tend to allocate resources by sharing them. For example, one cat may have priority access to a window perch in the morning hours, while another has so in the afternoon.

**3. Cats are subtle in their display of friendly, or affiliative behaviors.** Dogs are enthusiastic in their display of friendly behaviors. They jump on us, grovel, lick us, whine, bark, cry and carry on. A friendly greeting from a cat may be a restrained rubbing up against our legs, and a meow. Cats tend not to throw themselves on us the way dogs do. Similarly their friendly and attachment behaviors with each other are also more restrained. For cats, resting in bodily contact with each other may be as friendly as it gets.

**4. Once aroused into threatening behaviors, cats can remain so for quite a long time.** Those who work in veterinary clinics or animal shelters know that once cats become upset by being around other animals in the facility, they maintain these upset reactions sometimes for hours. This makes cats very difficult to handle, because they require quite a bit of calm down time to recover from these frightening events.

Intrigued? If so, you can hear the rest of Suzanne's lecture and more through your personal computer or CD player. Expanded

The owners come to the facility on several evenings to help them learn how to handle and train their dogs and how to continue the socialization throughout their dogs' lives. One advantage of the Academy concept is that the puppies can receive intensive experiences that are hard for most working owners to provide during the most sensitive period for socialization. With the small class sizes, Corrine and Kathy can provide special attention to the puppies and alert owners to potential problems that they may see during classes.

The P.E.T. Academy concept has a lot of potential to help busy puppy parents provide quality socialization for their young puppies. The P.E.T. Academy has only been operating for just a few months. It will be very interesting to see how their graduates compare to other dogs receiving different socialization experiences. For more information about the P.E.T. Academy, go to their website [www.ThePetAcademy.com](http://www.ThePetAcademy.com)

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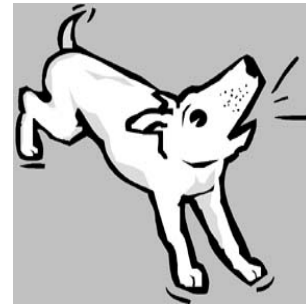
## Quick Links...

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content from her APDT lecture is contained in two of our new products - [Helping Cats Co-Exist, and Creating a Cat Friendly Environment](#) - available in both CD-Rom and audio format. The audio disks (wav files) can be played in any CD player - including your computer. The CD-Rom is a narrated Power Point presentation that is playable on any Windows PC, a Power Point program is not required. You can hear a web-version of a sample from the Cat Friendly program in Real audio format by opening "http://easylink.playstream.com/shetts/cdsa mplemixed.rm" in your Real audio player. If you don't have a Real audio player go to [www.real.com](http://www.real.com) and download a free player.

## • Our Piece: Your Neighbor's Barking Dog

As most people know, barking dogs are a significant problem in many communities. While animal control agencies, veterinarians, trainers and behaviorists all try to help the owners of barking dogs, but as we were recently reminded, there is little to help the neighbors of the barking dogs.



At a recent book show, many people looked at our [Help! I'm Barking and I Can't Be Quiet](#) book and then asked us "It's my neighbor's dog that's barking - do you have anything to help me?"

Many neighbors are at a loss as to what they can do to deal with a neighborhood barking dog. Sometimes the barking dog isn't the real reason for the conflict between neighbors, but is a convenient excuse. In other cases the barking problem creates more ill-will and disruption in the neighborhood.

So what can you do if you are bothered by a barking dog? The first step is to document when, where and how the dog is creating the nuisance. It will make you feel like you are doing something positive and the information is useful whether it is used to help the dog owner know what is going on or if it is used in

a written complaint to animal control authorities. Simply stating that the dog "Barks all the time" isn't helpful.

Try to keep a log of what the dog is doing (he may not be barking - he could be howling or whining), when during the day it occurs, how long each incident lasts and what else is going on at the time of the barking. For example, the dog could be barking at the mail delivery person or at the noise from other dogs barking. If you can see the dog, also make notes of his body postures. Is his tail up or down? What about his ears? Is he showing his teeth in between barks? Does he look friendly, fearful, or threatening?

As your second step, share this information with the dog's owners. Sometimes dog owners honestly don't know their dog is a nuisance. If their dog's behavior is brought to their attention, responsible owners should be willing to take steps to correct the problem. In other cases the owners do know, but they don't consider it a problem or they just don't care.

Because direct confrontations with owners of barking dogs can be uncomfortable and could make the neighborhood conflict worse, a letter to the neighbor may be a good strategy in some situations. Letting your neighbors know how you feel without personally attacking them is a helpful approach. Include the information from your barking log. If there are several of you in the neighborhood who are upset by the problem, all of you can go together in writing the letter. If you don't feel comfortable signing your names, it could be signed "Six of your neighbors".

Third, if contacting the owner hasn't been helpful or if you are afraid to contact the owner directly, you can contact your local animal control agency to contact the dog owner about the problem. Sometimes smaller communities have no animal control agency, but a police department or sheriff's department may handle these complaints.

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Different communities have different laws about what constitutes nuisance barking. In some neighborhoods, at least two neighbors must sign a complaint, or the animal control officer must be able to observe the problem

barking.

Try to maintain a reasonable attitude. It's not realistic to expect a dog to be silent. Barking is one way dog's communicate, and its normal, acceptable behavior, to a degree. Canine noise must be tolerated just like other sources of neighborhood noise, from children to motorcycles.

Also, don't expect an immediate solution to the problem. You and the animal control agency may have to do some work before complaints can be lodged and acted upon. Even responsible owners will need some time to seek professional help, determine what's motivating the behavior so they can choose the best course of action, and make changes in theirs or the dog's routine. Behaviors can't be changed overnight. The neighborhood can always consider making a gift of our [Help! I'm Barking](#) book to the offending dog's owners! Maybe consider it an early Christmas present!

### • **What's New at ABA**

ABA has been quite busy this past month. On top of attending the APDT conference in Denver and Australia, we have also launched our two new books, and 8 new CD's. All of these products are now available on our website, either on our new [Pet Behavior Wellness](#) page or on our [Products for Pet Owners](#), [Products for Professionals](#) pages.



Our audio CD's are playable on any CD player, including on your computer. Our CD-Roms are narrated Power Point presentations, playable on any PC with Windows 95 or later. Unless otherwise indicated, titles are available in both formats. Choose from [Introducing Your Dog to Your New Baby](#) (CD only), [Helping Cats Co-Exist](#), [Creating a Cat Friendly Environment](#), [Understanding Canine Conflict](#), [Understanding Dogs That Eat Poop](#) (Coprophagia), and [Chaos at the Door](#) (audio only).

In addition, our popular [Fundamentals of Canine Behavior](#) and [Fundamentals of Animal Learning](#) are now available on a 4 CD set,

complete with class notes.

Our two pet parenting books - [Help! I'm Barking and I Can't Be Quiet](#), and [Raising a Behaviorally Healthy Puppy](#) - are also available. All of these products, along with our booklets, are available at affordable quantity discount prices to make it easy for you to add them to your business or facility's resource offerings.

We could spend hours talking about our wonderful two weeks in Australia! We did a 3-day workshop for APDT Australia, and then took 10 days to see some of the country.

APDT Australia is an amazing group - very dedicated, educated, organized, and just overall a joy to work with. Australia is a wonderful country - and we only saw a tiny piece of it. For you geography buffs, we were in Coff's Harbour, Cairns, and Sydney all on the east coast of the country. After a touch of bad weather the first few days, we had glorious sunny days for our sightseeing, snorkeling, biking, hiking, parasailing and shopping! As you can see, Dan even got a chance to try his hand at the aboriginal skill of spear throwing.

But now it's back to work, and catching up on Coral's training. We wish you a happy Thanksgiving!