



HUMANE SOCIETY OF BROWARD COUNTY

Puppy Beginner Class

Handout #3

Play Biting and Rough Play

Most mouthing and play biting in puppies and juvenile dogs is normal play behavior. Completely eliminating this type of behavior is unrealistic. However modifying it to appropriate levels and redirecting it to appropriate outlets is a very important part of training your companion pet. If left unchecked this behavior can quickly get out of control and that once cute little puppy tugging at your pants leg is now a fifty pound dog playfully biting at anything that moves. Set your ground rules early and ensure everyone in the family is interacting appropriately and playing the right games with your new pet.

- Mouthing or play biting is normal puppy behavior. Puppies learn to inhibit their bite through social interaction.
- When your puppy bites you, yelp “OW” and walk away.
- Come back and pet your puppy as long as he keeps his teeth off of you.
- Repeat this consistently each time you feel your puppy’s teeth. He will soon learn that you will only stay and play if he is gentle.

Please see the behavior modification handout for complete Play Biting training and instructions or you can visit our web site at www.humanebroward.com .

Developing Bite Inhibition

“Good bite inhibition does not mean that your dog will never snap, lunge, nip or bite. Good bite inhibition means that should the dog snap and lunge, his teeth will seldom make skin contact and should the dog’s teeth ever make skin contact, the inhibited bite will cause little, if any, damage.” (Quoting; Dr. Ian Dunbar, from his book “After You Get Your Puppy”.)

- Playing with other puppies teaches your puppy to inhibit his bite. When he bites another puppy too hard, the puppy yelps and stops playing.
- When your puppy play bites you too hard, yelp “OW” and walk away.
- Gradually expect the contact of teeth to become gentler with training and redirecting.
- Phase out teeth touching skin altogether.
- Puppy play bites when you pet him, give him an appropriate chew toy to bite on instead and hold toy with your left hand while you pet him with your right hand.

Chewing

Destructive chewing is number one on the hit list when it comes to problems with destructive behaviors. There are others, but inappropriate chewing probably out numbers them all! Chewing is a normal behavior for a dog (like most destructive behaviors). Chewing to a dog is like reading a good book is to us. It is relaxing and a good way to spend some downtime. Dogs will engage in destructive behaviors for a variety of reasons and in order to deal with the behavior you must first determine why your dog is being destructive. Some reasons may be:

- Bored
- Stressed or anxious
- Teething
- Normal exploratory behaviors

Supervision and redirection are the two tools you will use most to control this behavior.

Please see the behavior modification handout for complete Destructive Behavior training and instructions or you can visit our web site at www.humanebroward.com .

Jumping Up

Overly aroused greeting behaviors are very common in puppies and juvenile dogs and this behavior can often follow them into adulthood if not corrected. It's cute when they are little puppies but when they grow up to become 60lb dogs the cuteness wears off and becomes bruises, scratches and ruined clothes from dirty paws. As owners we inadvertently encourage this behavior by occasionally allowing jumping up or reaching out to pet or even pushing our dogs away when they are jumping up. It is up to us to eliminate any reinforcement of this behavior in order to control and prevent it.

- Jumping up to greet is bad doggy manners
- Teach your puppy to sit instead, by greeting him only when he sits
- If he jumps up, turn your back and ignore him
- Use a treat to get him to sit and then give him all the attention he craves

Please see the behavior modification handout for complete Jumping Up training and instructions or you can visit our web site at www.humanebroward.com