

# THE ANIMAL CARE CENTER AT GRANVILLE PUPPY KINDERGARTEN MODULE 1

## **TOPICS COVERED**

- A. Development of human as pack leader
- B. Importance of socialization
- C. Dog as a den animal; use of a crate
- D. How to establish leadership
  - 1. Exercises
    - a. Suspension
    - b. Inversion
    - c. Submissive position
- E. Discipline
  - 1. Types of
    - a. Verbal
    - b. Scruff shake
    - c. Muzzle squeeze
    - d. Hand clap
    - e. Bean bag or shaker can
    - f. Jerk on collar
  - 2. Timing of
  - 3. Consistency
  - 4. PRAISE for correct behavior
- F. Mouthing and play biting
- G. Handling exercises
  - 1. Pass puppies
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- H. Vaccinations
- I. Feeding schedule and housebreaking routine
- J. Introduction of buckle collar
- K. Puppy Imprinting—the SIT command

## **INTRODUCTION TO MODULE 1**

Dogs, of course, are descendants of ancient wolves. From the time the first wolf puppy crawled into a man's cave in search of food or an orphaned cub was brought home to be a playmate for human children, mankind has continued to raise the dog as a loyal and loving companion. Raising puppies, like raising children, is not a simple task to be taken lightly. Dogs unfortunately and contrary to popular belief, DO NOT learn by mental telepathy or ESP. It is up to the animal's human "parents" to teach proper and acceptable behaviors in order to mold the animal into a pet who is a joy to own. This initial session will discuss some of the psychology of dog behavior and techniques to channel that behavior into acceptable actions.

## **IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALIZATION**

A puppy between 6 and 16 weeks of age is like a fresh piece of clay--ready to be molded into whatever outside forces teach it. You may think of the pup's brain as a miniature computer--what it learns in this time period, good or bad, will influence it for the rest of its life. It is important, then, to introduce the puppy to as many sights, sounds, and smells as possible in a positive manner to develop a well-rounded, confident companion.

## USE OF THE CRATE

The dog is a den animal, an instinct inherited from its wolf ancestry. The crate, when used properly, is neither cruel or inhumane. It should never be used for punishment, and the puppy should be introduced to it gradually. A crate the size the puppy will need as an adult should be purchased and then partitioned off to accommodate the size of the puppy. Either the fiberglass, airline approved Vari-kennel or the wire type kennel is acceptable, although the wire one with a slide out bottom might be easier to clean. NOTHING should be left in the crate except an acceptable, safe chew toy. A chain training collar should NEVER be left on a crated dog. Placement of the crate by your bed at night will help the new puppy adjust more quickly--it will feel more reassured to hear you breathing, smell you, and sense your presence, and also makes correcting a whining puppy in the middle of the night much easier, as well as taking a very young puppy outside for elimination.

## HUMAN AS PACK LEADER

It is essential that all human members of a family establish pack dominance over the new puppy. Puppies will tend to respect adults more quickly than children and often regard children as pack equals or littermates as children are more apt to roll around on the ground with the puppy. Children (especially younger ones) and dogs of ANY age or size should ALWAYS be supervised when together. Games like tug, especially if the pup is permitted to win, help to assert the pup higher in the pack hierarchy, which is very undesirable. Therefore, games like this, although cute, should be avoided at all cost. There are some exercises which may be used to help establish the human as the pack leader.

**A. SUSPENSION:** If the puppy is small enough, pick him up underneath his front legs with him facing you, lift him off the ground and raise him to eye level. Look him in the eyes, and vary the time from 30 seconds initially to up to 1 1/2 minutes. If the pup is too big to pick up, stand facing the same direction and straddle him behind the front legs. Lock your hands under his chest and lift until his front feet are not touching the ground, for the same period of time as above. Praise the pup in a calm voice if he accepts this position, but if he struggles or protests in any way, give him a mild shake and make an unpleasant "AAACCCKKKK" sound until he stops. Then praise. He must stay completely relaxed in this position and accept being held in this manner.

**B. INVERSION:** For small puppies, support the head behind the back of the neck with one hand and behind his back with the other. Hold the pup off the ground in front of you, much like you would hold a baby. BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL not to drop the pup. For a larger pup, you may hold him across your lap sideways. Again, praise for proper behavior and correct for struggling.

**C. SUBMISSIVE POSITION:** Carefully place the puppy on its side on the floor with his back to you and all four feet facing away from you. Use one hand to steady his neck, only applying pressure if he tries to get up. Use the other to steady his middle, and gradually slide down to scratch or rub his tummy. Ideally, we will want him to raise his hind leg to expose his tummy, a true sign of trust and submission.

## DISCIPLINE

How and when to discipline a puppy is probably one of the most misunderstood and misused concepts in dog training. A dog has limited (if any) ability to reason. Unless he is literally "caught in the act" of an improper behavior (tipping over the bathroom wastebasket and tearing

up the tissues in it), a correction after the fact (even if it is 15 seconds later) is too late. The puppy cannot reason that he is being punished for tipping over the basket--he will assume it is because there is a mess on the floor. Correcting for this will not stop the actual act of tipping the basket--this **MUST BE DONE WHEN THE ACTION OCCURS!** Therefore, the timing of the correction becomes absolutely critical.

Types of correction include:

Verbal--a loud, sharp AACCCKKK or AAGGHH sound that is designed to startle the pup. "No" can also be used as long as it is not OVERUSED.

Scruff shake--firmly grasp the puppy by the loose skin behind his shoulders and give a firm shake. DO NOT pick the animal up off the ground or shake violently as this may cause the same issues as a shaken baby syndrome. An unpleasant sound or a firm "No" should be timed with the shake.

Muzzle squeeze--this type of correction is similar to what a mother dog would do to an unruly pup. Where she would clamp her mouth over the pup's muzzle, we will first grasp the pup behind the ears with one hand (to prevent pulling away) while squeezing the sides of the muzzle against the teeth with the other. The pup will cry and struggle to escape. Keep repeating "No, no, no" in a soft voice and continue to hold and squeeze until the pup stops squirming. Then gently release the muzzle and praise quietly.

Hand clap--this is similar in principle to the verbal correction and is designed to startle the pup.

Bean bag or shaker can--sometimes the misbehavior occurs just out of your immediate reach. An old sock filled with navy beans and sewn shut makes a good homemade bean bag that can be tossed through the air to stop an unwanted behavior. Puppies cannot quite grasp how objects can fly and will be startled by this. A shaker can is an empty soda can with several coins placed inside the opening in the top taped securely shut. It is also tossed to startle a pup (do not hit the animal with it). It is not the best choice for shy or easily frightened, undersocialized puppies.

Jerk on the collar--sometimes, more aggressive puppies require a firmer mode of correction. A strong, quick jerk on the buckle collar (or chain training collar for more persistent pups) accompanied by a sharp "No" is in order.

The **CONSISTENCY** of the discipline must be uniform with every member of the family. One person cannot allow the pup to mouth his or her hands while someone else corrects for it. In other words, if it is wrong behavior, then it is **WRONG ALL THE TIME**.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of PRAISE in training an animal. We as humans are very quick to tell an animal when they are wrong, but we often forget to tell them when they are behaving in a desired manner. Praise may be either physical (petting, food treats) or verbal. Once the discipline has been administered QUICKLY AND FAIRLY and the undesirable behavior stopped, the pup should be praised so it understands that you now approve of how he is behaving.

**ONE FINAL NOTE REGARDING DISCIPLINE: NEVER STRIKE THE PUP WITH YOUR HAND, A NEWSPAPER, OR ANY OTHER OBJECT. HE MAY BECOME HEADSHY OR HANDSHY AND ATTEMPT TO BITE SOMEONE WHO HE PERCEIVES IS "TAKING A SWING" AT HIM.**

## **MOUTHING AND PLAYBITING**

Under no circumstances of any kind is a puppy allowed to mouth your hands or play bite. This may be cute at 8 weeks but may become quite dangerous as the pup matures and begins trying to assert himself in the family “pack.” Toys for the puppy should be very safe—no squeakers that can be chewed out, no rawhide that tastes like your good leather shoes, no small objects or sharp bones. Gumabone type products and kong toys are some of the safest and most entertaining. Each time the puppy tries to mouth your hand or play bite, a muzzle squeeze followed by an appropriate toy is the best option. It is also a good practice to begin removing toys from the pup’s mouth when you desire to again confirm your position as pack leader and as a safety precaution should your puppy pick up an object he shouldn’t have.

## **HANDLING EXERCISES**

It is extremely important to accustom your puppy to having its feet, toes, ears, mouth, tail, and body handled by not only you but by strangers. (Your veterinarian will love you for this!) Examining and handling feet, toes, and ears leads to nail trimming and ear cleaning. Examination of the mouth leads to tooth brushing, and handling of the tail, body, and extremities will facilitate grooming. These exercises should be repeated several times a day.

## **VACCINATION SCHEDULE**

Your veterinarian will recommend a good vaccination schedule for your puppy. It is important that you strictly adhere to this protocol to avoid the heartache and cost of treating a puppy with a life-threatening disease that could have been prevented. Basically, most puppies receive three sets of puppy shots. These are extremely important because the natural immunity from some disease that the pup acquires from its mother is basically ineffective by 6 weeks of age. Vaccinations will include distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parainfluenza, and parvovirus. Rabies is also given at about 4-6 months and yearly thereafter. Other vaccinations may include corona virus and bordatella. Due to the easy transmission and increased number of cases of parvovirus, it is crucial to keep your puppy current on vaccinations not only as a puppy but as an adult as well. Certain breeds of dogs such as Rottweilers and Doberman pinschers seem to be more susceptible to parvovirus and may need to be vaccinated more frequently for it. Bordatella is a vaccination given to your dog to prevent “kennel cough,” a deep, bronchial cough dogs often acquire while being boarded. This vaccine must be given 1-2 weeks before boarding to be effective, not the day you plan to board your dog, so plan accordingly.

## **FEEDING SCHEDULE AND HOUSEBREAKING ROUTINE**

Housebreaking a puppy is not an impossible task, but requires some common sense. To be successful, the pup MUST be on a set feeding schedule. We, as humans, don’t eat continuously all day, and puppies don’t need to either. They cannot be expected to regulate themselves if they eat whenever they please. A young puppy should be offered three meals daily--morning, noon, and evening. What is not eaten in 10-15 minutes should be removed until the next feeding. As the pup becomes a bit older and shows less interest in his food, the midday meal may be eliminated--you do not have to wait until 4 months of age as stated on most dog food bags. You do not necessarily have to feed the quantity of food recommended on the bags as well. A higher quality food (Orijen, Acana, Evo, & California Natural, for example) has less filler--therefore the

pup produces less volume of stool that is firmer and more readily cleaned up. Additionally, puppies may be switched to adult food at about 6 months of age. Dogs should never be given any table scraps for many reasons. The biggest one is that it encourages obesity, which in turn predisposes the dog to diabetes, among other problems. An occasional dog biscuit is acceptable, but remember that these are empty calories as well and can add extra pounds if used in excess. Carrot and apple slices are some of the few "people" foods that can be an acceptable, low calorie treat for your dog.

When beginning the housebreaking process, the young puppy should be taken outside every 2-3 hours. A good rule of thumb is first thing in the morning after waking, again after eating, after play, after a nap, and anytime the pup begins sniffing or circling. The pup must be carried or walked OUT THE SAME DOOR each time to the same spot. Putting the puppy on a light leash will keep him from wandering and help keep him focused on his business as you encourage with "Hurry up." Once the pup has eliminated, praise for this action. The chemicals from the elimination will soak into the ground and the odor will help trigger the pup's actions the next time. It is extremely important to accompany the pup outside to make sure he has eliminated. Sometimes puppies become distracted outside and forget what they are supposed to do. They then remember as soon as they come back into the house and you have an accident to clean up.

Accidents must again be caught in the act. A firm "No--outside" and then taking the pup out to his spot is the best option. Remember to praise for the outdoor elimination. Clean up accidents by blotting the moisture, then using a commercial stain remover for spotting (Carpet Science works well), and finish with an odor remover like Nature's Miracle. NEVER rub the pup's nose in a mistake! Remember, a young puppy physiologically cannot hold his bowel or bladder for more than a couple hours--the muscles are not that developed. Human babies eliminate frequently--so do puppies. DO not expect a young pup to hold himself for 6-8 hours a day--we adults don't even do that!

## **INTRODUCTION OF A BUCKLE COLLAR**

All young puppies need to be fitted with a proper nylon or leather collar WITH identification attached. Puppies usually scratch and dig at a collar at first, but soon learn to accept it. Be sure that it fits snugly enough so that the pup can't get his lower jaw under the collar to chew it. Be aware of the pup's growth and adjust the collar accordingly. It is a good idea not to leave the collar on a puppy when crating it.

## **PUPPY IMPRINTING--THE SIT COMMAND**

It is much easier to teach puppies the basic fundamentals for obedience while they are at a young age. They are much easier to manipulate into positions at 15 pounds than at 50! By teaching the puppy basic sit, down, wait, and stay commands, formal obedience training should be much easier to learn. As discussed earlier, puppies are very impressionable between 6 and 16 weeks, so once they learn these commands, they will remember them for life.

To begin the sit, take a small piece of food treat in your hand. Position yourself next to the standing puppy and hold the treat up above his nose with one hand while you steady him by resting your other hand on his neck. Pleasantly say "Sit" while you emphasize the "t" sound on the end. Use the hand on the pup's neck to slide down his back and gently push his rear down to a sit position as you say the word and hold the treat up. As he tips his nose up for the treat, he will slide back into a sitting position. Reward with the treat as you say "Good sit." Repeat this exercise 4-5 times each session.