



## Dog Behavior Sample Documents

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## Sample Dog Behavior Email

Here is a sample email – the items in **red** should be edited and updated depending on the various circumstances that you encounter.

Dear **NAME**,

Thank you for reaching out to St. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center! We are pleased to offer assistance with your **canine** companion!

As discussed, I've (**attached a document OR included a web link**) that will provide you with information to understand your pet's behavior and what you can do about it. Keep in mind, the primary goal in working with any behavior problem is to practice safe management. That means your goal should be to keep your pet, people and other animals safe while you work to address the behavior concern, build your dog's confidence, and expand their world.

**(insert sample paragraph from below)**

Please take a look at the (**attached document OR link**) and let me know how things are going. I plan to touch base with you in **a few days** to ensure things are going smoothly and to see if there is anything else we can do to assist you. Remember, training and behavior change is a process and practicing safe management is the best way to ensure your dog is adjusting to the changes in his routine and the new house rules.

If you are struggling implementing anything we discussed, or if anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Best regards,

### Examples / Sample Paragraphs:

- **Resource Guarding**
  - Since your dog is growling or attempting to bite when you take objects from him, try to avoid situations that result in your dog displaying these behaviors. Instead, keep the floor free of potentially stolen items and/or use doors, crates, and baby gates to keep your dog from cluttered areas. When you provide your dog with very special items like chews, stuffed Kongs, and bones, provide them in a safe area (like a crate) until your dog has finished with them. If your dog takes something he shouldn't have, or you need to remove an item from him, focus on trading your dog for something better than what he has rather than simply taking away his item. Our goal is for your dog to learn that you are a kind, benevolent pet parent that doesn't take things away without offering something better in return. Ultimately,

- **Dogs in Home Not Getting Along**
  - Since your two dogs aren't getting along, it's safest to keep your dogs separate from one another for the time being. Use crates, baby gates, leashes, and doors to keep both of your dogs safe while you are working to find a behavior professional who is equipped to meet you and your dogs and assess what is going on. That means separate play time, separate feeding areas, and walking your dogs separately, also. Right now, it's imperative that you prevent your dogs from getting into any more fights; the more often they fight, the more their relationship with each other will suffer.
- **Aggression to Strangers**
  - For now, it's important to keep your dog away from unfamiliar people while you are working to have a behavior professional assess the underlying reason for your dog's aggressive behavior. That means if you're going to have guests over your home, put your dog in a crate away from foot traffic, or in a separate room with a door with something fun to do (a chewy, a stuffed Kong, etc.). While out for a walk, do not allow people to approach your dog. Sometimes you'll need to tell people that your dog can't visit today because they are still in training, and other times you may need to hold your hand up with your palm facing people like a stop sign while asking them not to approach.
- **Fearful of People**
  - When people enter your home, ask them to completely ignore your dog. Ask them not to look at or talk to your dog, even if she becomes brave enough to approach and sniff them. You can ask people to sit on their hands so they don't reach for her – it seems silly, but it can be helpful in preventing people from reaching forward when your dog isn't ready to be touched. Allowing your dog to move away from unfamiliar people on a walk will also help your dog recognize that they do have a choice in who to interact with, and it will help build their confidence in you; your dog will begin to understand that you aren't going to force him to approach someone he isn't quite ready to approach.
- **Housetraining**
  - Prevention is the best course of action when teaching your dog or puppy to eliminate outside, whether you are training a new puppy or working with a dog who has been having accidents in the home already. It is imperative that your dog eliminates outside as often as possible and makes as few mistakes inside as possible. The way to accomplish this is to set a food, water, and walk schedule, in addition to setting up your home up in such a way that your dog is not unattended unless he is safely contained. In the early stages, take your pup out as frequently as possible so you increase the chance of him being successful. Remember, eliminating makes your dog feel better so you have to make sure you provide your dog with something very special (like a special tasty morsel) immediately following outdoor elimination.



## Reactive Behavior Sample

In order to help your pet make progress with training and to help you understand what Reactivity means, we'd like to share some information about the behavior. Whether your dog is newly adopted or you've had him for some time now, it's important to note that sometimes, behavior such as reactivity can occur in certain environments but may not surface in other environments. Additionally, it's important to note that your dog can be reactive to a number of different things (called "stimuli"), including other dogs, bicycles, skateboards, cars, and even things like other people, moving leaves, and noises.

### Definition

Reactivity is a term we use to describe the behavior that some dogs display in response to certain stimuli; reactive behavior can include growling, barking, or lunging. Dogs display reactive behavior for a number of reasons. Some dogs are reactive because they may be fearful. Others are reactive because they may not have received proper socialization early on. Dogs can be reactive to specific stimuli such as another dog, a stranger, certain sounds, or even objects in motion (bicycles, cars, skateboards).

### Prevention

Here are some general tips:

- If your dog is reactive, make sure that you take treats with you on a walk so you can distract him and/or do some training while on walks.
- Maintain an appropriate distance with your dog. For example, if your dog reacts to bicyclists, you will want to keep some distance between your dog and bicyclists. Try to keep a distance such that your dog is not reacting. If your dog is showing reactive behavior (barking, lunging), then increase your distance.
- Consider using a head halter (such as a Gentle Leader) for walking; this type of equipment gives you more control.

### How We Can Help

St. Hubert's offers several ways to help you and your dog get off to a good start. We offer a free one-hour consultation appointment with any of our behavior counselor/trainers. This can be used to give you one-on-one consultation on the behavior and a protocol to help you manage the behavior. We also offer a discount on your first round of training classes. We highly recommend signing up for a round of classes to help you and your dog learn to communicate with each other effectively. Our humane methods of reward-based training, fair leadership and simple kindness are renown around the country and lead to more than 4,000 canine diplomas awarded annually. To schedule an appointment with someone from our Behavior Team, please



call 973-377-0116. To view our class offerings, please visit our website: [www.sthuberts.org](http://www.sthuberts.org) and click on the Pet Training tab to see a menu of courses.

## Preventing Resource Guarding Sample

First and foremost, what exactly is “Resource Guarding” and why do dogs do it? “Resource Guarding” is a behavior displayed by dogs that involves them protecting their “stuff” (also known as a resource) from being taken away. A resource can be anything that your dog wants at that particular moment in time and does not want to give up for whatever reason – sometimes a resource is a favorite toy or a pizza crust that was dropped on the floor, and other times it can be a stolen item like a tissue or a sock! When a dog guards something, he might stiffen, growl, snap, or even bite when a person tries to take the item away.

No matter how much you love your dog, you may encounter a situation in which your dog thinks that he has to guard what he perceives to be a valuable object such as food, toys or other items.

Resource guarding is a common problem, but the good news is that behavior like this is both modifiable and preventable. Here are some easy tips to avoid problems and ensure you protect your relationship with your dog.

- Dog-proof your home to reduce the number of episodes in which your dog “steals” things that he shouldn’t have. Do not chase him since you may very well be causing a guarding problem. With each rescued Barbie™ doll, and with every snatched shoe, your dog will learn that you feel that what he has is valuable. What starts as an innocent game of chase can turn into a competition for a non-valuable item. He may even learn to run with, hide, and even guard his found treasures. Set up baby gates to keep him out of untidy areas. Teach the family that leaving things out will possibly result in lost items.
- When you first bring your new dog home, it is important to teach him that you are a giver and not a taker. It’s more important to build your dog’s trust in you, than it is to show him that you can take things away from him. Give your dog a Kong™ toy with a small amount of food in it. Every time he finishes his Kong, pick it up, add more good “stuff” and give it back to him. This is a great way to teach your dog that he can trust you around important things. You will be your dog’s hero.
- Teaching a dog to trust you around his food bowl does not include repeatedly taking the bowl away. It’s more important to teach your dog that when he is eating, he can expect people to walk up, reach down, and toss a piece of food into his bowl. Make sure the food that you toss into the bowl is way more valuable than the food in his bowl. You only need to do 2-3 food tosses per meal, and the rest he can eat in peace. There is no need to do this during each mealtime.
- If your dog has the opportunity to take an item that he shouldn’t have, quickly evaluate whether or not it is truly an emergency. A paper towel or a dish cloth may not be worth tackling the dog over. Remember that when you take things away all the time, you actually confirm for your dog the idea that you really do want his “stuff.” While it’s

understandable that you need to take some things away, make sure that non-issue items are treated with less urgency.

- Retrieving a non-issue item may be as simple as being calm and unemotional. If you smile, crouch down, and say “What on earth do you have?” your dog may just bring you the item. It’s easy enough to take away the paper towel and replace it with a more fun item. A squeaky stuffed toy that you play a little tug with may be better than that old paper towel anyway.
- There will be times that you absolutely must take something away immediately. Most dogs will not have a problem having the occasional \$10 bill or ball point pen taken out of his mouth. But whenever you can, outsmart your dog. Grab a leash, go to the back door, or toss a ball. The trick is to do these things without ever allowing the dog to know that you noticed what he had. For example, you wouldn’t want look directly at the dog, go for the item and ask him to trade for a treat if he doesn’t comply. Instead, you might “accidentally” drop a piece of food on the floor. When his back is turned, you can pick up the item.

In summary, your dog will learn that it is okay to give things to you as long as you build trust and avoid being excessively grabby. Building trust is the cornerstone of leadership. For more information about dog behavior or to sign up for classes please visit our website at [www.sthuberts.org](http://www.sthuberts.org).

## Out for a Walk Sample

Taking a walk with a dog, be it your own dog or a shelter dog, can be a fun and rewarding experience. Walking the dog should be an enjoyable experience, a shared activity between you and the dog. It is an opportunity for you to spend time with your dog, enjoy the outdoors, and take in the sights, scents, and sounds around you. For shelter dogs, taking a walk is a much needed break from kennel life and can help reduce stress and boredom. There are many benefits - for both you and the dog - to taking walks together!



### **Bonding**

Walking together is a great way to bond with a dog. If your dog is new to you and your family, taking him for a walk is an excellent way to start building a relationship together. Walking is a structured activity you can do together. Observing and interacting with your dog on the walk will help you learn a lot about your dog’s personality. Does he like to sniff? Does he investigate? Does he enjoy meeting new people? Does he like meeting other dogs? Is he comfortable around traffic? Does he walk politely on leash or does he need more training? These are just some of the things you will learn as you take walks together.





### **Socialization**

You will provide your dog with many opportunities to socialize each and every time you take him for a walk. Socialization does not just mean visiting with other dogs. Socialization includes exposing your dog to new and familiar people, dogs, places, activities, and stimuli. A dog that goes for walks regularly in both familiar and new locations will be better acclimated to different types of people, situations, and places. He is less likely to be fearful when encountering someone or something new if he has had lots of positive experiences with you in new situations.

### **Mental and Physical Exercise**

Walking your dog provides much needed mental and physical exercise. If you incorporate a little training into your walk, as well as varying *where* you take your dog for walks, the different scents, sights, and sounds will be much needed mental stimulation for your dog. Of course, walking is great physical exercise. Make sure to keep your dog's walks in accordance with his activity level, physical condition, and age. In addition, remember that weather will have an impact on the length and pace of your walks.

To keep things interesting, try new routes with each walk. Or take your dog to a different park or location. Don't fall into a rut by being predictable. Change your pace or direction to keep your dog on his toes - he'll definitely start paying attention more if he doesn't quite know where you are going.

### **Training**

You can train your dog while you walk, teaching and reinforcing basic behaviors such as loose leash walking, heel, sit, wait, stay, and find it. If your dog has learned these commands at home or in class, try practicing them on your walk to 'proof' them amid distractions. Take your dog's meal and some treats with you on your walk. Even if you are not planning to actively train during your walk, taking along some treats is always a good idea! You will be prepared to reward your dog for an especially good behavior. Example: your dog picks up something really gross such as a dead animal or a piece of trash on the side walk and you ask him to release it; when he releases it, you want to be ready to reward him for such good behavior by delivering several yummy treats in a row.

### **Equipment**

There are so many different types of walking equipment on the market today. Your dog should wear a collar with an identification tag in case your leash should slip from your hand. A microchip is an excellent form of identification in the event that your dog slips his collar. Choose a collar type that is appropriate for your dog. Flat buckle collars should be fitted so that your dog cannot back out of the collar. To test the fit of a flat buckle collar, you should only be able to fit two fingers under the collar. Another way to test for proper fit is to stand facing your dog and pull the collar towards you; if you can pull it over your dog's ears, he can back out of it. Head halters and front-clip harnesses are useful tools while your dog is learning how to walk politely on a leash. Martingales are great for dogs who tend to slip their collars. Remember that no tool or piece of equipment will train your dog to walk properly! Equipment can aid you AS you train your dog the behaviors you would like to see during the walk. Lastly, always take poop bags with you to clean up after your dog - it's the law in most places, and it's the responsible dog owner thing to do!

### **Set the tone for your walk**

Before you even go out the door, you are laying the groundwork for your walk. If you let the dog jump around, grab the leash, bark at you, or barrel through doorways before you leave the

house, your walk will probably be marked with similar inappropriate behaviors. Wait for calm behavior before clipping the leash on. Wait for a sit at the door - even better, wait until your dog offers a sit and some eye contact! Practice walking with a loose leash as you exit your house. Have your dog 'wait' as you descend stairs. Doing so will reinforce the idea that the walk is a process, a connected activity between you and your dog. Your dog should not make a bee line ahead of you; you are not just the thing with thumbs that gets him out the door.

Be fair to your dog, too! Taking a walk is your time together - don't spend this time chatting away on your cell phone or tuned into your headphones. Devote this time to your dog, talk to him, observe him, and interact with your environment together.

## Mental Stimulation for your Dog Sample

We have all heard that "A tired dog is a good dog!" But what does that really mean? Should you take your dog running or hiking for several miles a day? Should you play tug or fetch with your dog until he is exhausted? While it is true that many dogs would benefit from more physical exercise, it is important to note that mental exercise and stimulation is just as important for helping your dog relax and become a well-behaved member of your family!



What is mental stimulation and what does that mean, exactly? Remember back in school when you sat at a desk for approximately 7 hours and came home completely exhausted? You didn't run for several miles but you were certainly ready for a nap! That's because your brain was tired; your brain worked all day processing what you were learning. You may have been doing mathematical calculations, discussing literature, drawing conclusions, and engaging in meaningful conversation. Your brain requires fuel to function (in the form of food, vitamins, and minerals) just like your body's muscles. When your brain uses fuel, it leaves you mentally tired and it's important that we help our dogs use their brains so they feel mentally tired in addition to providing our dogs with plenty of physical exercise.

What does that mean in terms of our dogs? Have you ever taken your dog for a 6 mile walk only to return home and have your dog bouncing off the walls ready to play after a 20 minute nap? If so, then it's time to explore more ways of providing your dog with mental stimulation so we can get their brain working harder than their body.

It's important to note the importance of a combination of mental exercise / stimulation and physical exercise. Although additional physical exercise can be beneficial for many of our canine companions, mixing things up and adding mental stimulation to your dog's routine helps to ensure that your dog becomes physically and mentally tired. If you only increase physical exercise, you could be increasing your dog's stamina so they are primed for more physical exercise rather than actually tiring your dog out!





There are several ways to provide more mental stimulation for your dog. This list and these descriptions are just some of the possible options available to you; talk to your friends and family who have pets, search the internet, and get creative to come up with other ways of giving your dog mental stimulation.

1. **Basic Obedience or Advanced Training Classes:** It's no surprise that this is first on the list. If you haven't taken your dog to a basic training class, then get going! Training your dog is a lot of fun. It builds the bond between you and your dog and also helps to teach your dog to reliably respond to your requests. This means you have a dog who is mentally more tired and a dog who wants to respond to you – that's a win-win! Don't forget to practice what you learn at home, on walks, and in every environment you go to with your dog!
2. **"Puzzle Toys," "Treat Dispensing Toys," or "Work-to-Eat" toys:** Rather than providing your dog with a bowl full of kibble that's inhaled in less than a minute, provide your dog's food in a toy that requires him to think and maneuver in order to get the kibble out. There are a variety of toys out there now that are specifically made to help your dog use his brain while eating. Some options are a Kong stuffed with a mixture of kibble and canned food, or these items meant for dry kibble only: Kong Wobbler, Omega Paw Tricky Treat Ball, Busy Buddy Tug-A-Jug, Buster Food Cube, Busy Buddy Kibble Nibble, Busy Buddy Magic Mushroom, and the IQ Treat Ball. Outward Hound and Ethical Pet are two additional companies that make a variety of slow feeding dog bowls and puzzle toys that will keep your dog's food lasting longer. When your dog has to work for his food, it takes him longer to eat and he has to think in order to accomplish his goal, which results in a dog who is more mentally tired!
3. **Nosework Games:** Use your dog's natural sniffing ability to keep his brain active! Teach your dog the words "Find it!" by saying the words and then tossing the food on the floor. Once you say "Find it!" and your dog starts searching for the food on the floor BEFORE you've tossed it, you know your dog understands what the words mean. Once your dog understands the game, try putting a treat or a couple of pieces of kibble in a cardboard box or other similar container and tell your dog to "Find it!" At first, make it easy for your dog to search so your dog enjoys the game. Then branch out and get creative. Put treats underneath boxes, hide old cereal or pasta boxes under chairs, the dining room table, or behind furniture and get your dog to search for the items!
4. **Teach Tricks:** There are lots of books out there that describe how you can teach your dog to shake paws, spin, jump through hula hoops, clean up his toys, etc. Be careful here – look specifically for a book that uses rewards-based training so you are rewarding your dog with nice things when he learns something new! Reinforcement-based training is the best way to build and maintain your relationship with your dog and teaching your dog tricks is a fun way to mentally tire out your dog.
5. **Mix Play and Training:** Remember all of those basic obedience cues your dog learned in classes? Remember to use them occasionally and reinforce them with things your dog loves! For instance, does your dog love to play fetch? Ask him to sit and stay before throwing his favorite ball! Or does your dog like to play tug? Have him sit and wait before you tell him to "take it!" It doesn't matter what you ask your dog to do before you throw the ball, as long as you ask for

something and they comply! This can also help teach your dog to calm himself down and think in the midst of playing so he doesn't get too rowdy!

Remember, your goal here is to mix both mental and physical exercise so you have a tired dog so get creative! Not only will your dog become more tired and relaxed, "training" becomes a fun activity that you and your dog do together!

## Houstraining Your New Dog Sample

Dogs can be trained not to eliminate in the house because they naturally develop preferences for eliminating in certain places or on certain surfaces like grass. Dogs will not typically eliminate where they sleep, eat and spend most of their time. This is very useful in houstraining dogs. When you houstrain your dog, make use of this ability to learn when and where to eliminate. If you don't actively teach them where to eliminate, they will develop their own preferences, which may be very undesirable, such as the living room rug. If your adult dog is soiling in the house, you must retrain him to prefer a new location to eliminate – OUTDOORS! You want to reinforce acceptable behavior, and minimize the opportunities for unacceptable behavior. Punishing unacceptable behavior does not work when houstraining dogs.

Adult dogs can typically hold their waste for 6 to 8 hours during the day and 8 to 10 hours overnight. These are averages and individual dogs may be able to hold their elimination longer or shorter than this. You should learn the physical limits of your dog and not exceed them. It is not fair to expect your dog to hold her elimination longer than she is physically able.



Houstraining takes time and a commitment from the family to do it right. Dogs don't just train themselves, although some train easier than others. Everyone in the household must be willing to help – taking the dog out at all hours, supervising the dog so accidents don't happen, and cleaning up when they do. It may take several weeks to months to get a dog reliably houstrained. If you are consistent and patient in following the rules suggested below, you should be very successful in houstraining your dog with a minimum of distress to you or to her.

- ✓ Use a crate! Think of your dog's crate as his babysitter. When you cannot supervise your dog, you can feel comfortable knowing that he is safe and your house is safe. Crates can be used to prevent dogs from having opportunities to house soil, be destructive, or annoy family members at inappropriate times. They can also provide your dog with a safe place where he can go to be away from others, like small children who may annoy him. Crating may prevent a behavior from occurring, but does not train the dog not to do it when given the opportunity. If crating time is excessive, your dog may not have sufficient time for

✓



exercise and social interaction with family members. Without this time, other problems may be created such as fearfulness of people and new things.

- ✓ Try to be consistent in your routines with your dog. Dogs do best when they have an established routine for feeding, play, naps and elimination. We recommend getting your dog on a strict routine by taking him out to relieve himself as soon as he is done eating. Scheduling regular meals can make it easier for you to guess when the dog needs to eliminate and then you can take her to the appropriate spot for elimination.
- ✓ Reward good behavior. Take the dog to the place where you want her to eliminate at times when she most likely needs to go – first thing in the morning after waking up, after each meal, after naps, after play, after chewing on a bone, before bed time. When taking the dog out, say “OUT” or a word or phrase of your choice. Immediately take her on lead to the spot where she should eliminate. Stand with her and tell her “Do your business” or “Go potty.” When she eliminates, praise her lavishly but quietly and give her a tasty tidbit. It is very important that you reward her for going in the appropriate place. This is how she learns her preferences. When she is done, take her indoors by saying “IN.” This routine teaches her that “OUT” means elimination only, and as soon as she is done she goes “IN.” Wait a few minutes and then take her out to play or for a walk by using a different word or phrase, such as “Want to go play?” or “Want to go for a walk?” Allowing your dog to go out on her own will never teach her that the behavior of eliminating outdoors is what you would like her to continue doing. No one was there to reinforce it.
- ✓ Manage! Manage! Manage! You must supervise your dog at all times. This can easily be done by keeping her with you by leashing her to your belt or to your chair, or putting up baby gates or closing doors to keep her in sight. Letting her run free, unsupervised is an invitation to disaster. If she has frequent accidents in the house, she may begin to develop preferences for those locations which will make it harder for her to learn where she should eliminate. Think about a 2 year old toddler. You probably wouldn't leave her in the kitchen without diapers when you went to take a shower. Isn't that what the crib or playpen is for? Use your crate or small room when you cannot watch your dog.
- ✓ If your dog must be left for long periods of time, we recommend hiring a local pet sitter or responsible child to come in and take your dog out to relieve himself. Forcing your dog to urinate and defecate in his crate by leaving him for long periods will not help the process.
- ✓ Never punish after the fact. Dogs will have some accidents no matter how good a job you do in training her. **If she is caught in the act**, actually squatting to eliminate, don't yell at her, hit her or kick her. Simply pick her up and tell her in a neutral tone of voice, “OUT”, carry her to the appropriate place and let her finish eliminating. Yelling, hitting, making loud noises or other punishments don't help with housetraining and seem to cause fears that can actually disrupt the housetraining process. **If she wasn't caught in the act**, don't yell, hit her or do any other punishment, like sticking her nose in her mess. This is totally ineffective and only teaches the dog to mistrust you. She will not make the connection between the behavior that produced the mess (squatting and eliminating) and the punishment delivered minutes or

hours later. At best the dog punished after the fact will learn to avoid messes and become fearful of the owners. Even if you find the mess just a few seconds after it happened, taking the dog outside will not help. Simply clean up the mess and try to supervise her more carefully. If you feel the need to roll up a newspaper to “spank” the dog, we suggest you roll it up and hit yourself over the head for not keeping an eye on your dog.

- ✓ Clean any soiled area with a good enzymatic cleaner. Dogs will be attracted back to soiled areas by the smell, so it is a good idea to eliminate the odors. The most effective ways to get rid of the odors is with enzymatic cleaners that are available at any pet store near you. Sometimes white distilled vinegar can help to dilute odors. Avoid cleaning agents containing ammonia. This actually smells like waste and may attract the dog back to eliminate.
- ✓ Gradually offer more freedom. As your dog has fewer accidents and eliminates in the proper place more frequently, gradually give her more freedom in the house. This should be done gradually over a few weeks. There shouldn't be a sudden transition from constant supervision to none. If your dog has an accident when you are giving her more freedom, go back to more supervision for a while, then transition slowly to more freedom again later.

## Hand Targeting Sample

Targeting is used to teach your dog to touch their nose to your palm, and then eventually other people's hands. You want this to turn into a fun game that your dog enjoys.

First and foremost, we need to teach your dog that the word “Yes!” means he's about to get rewarded. Grab a handful of small, soft treats (whatever your dog really enjoys!) and keep them in one hand. Say “Yes!”, then give your dog a treat. Do this several times in a row, until you say “Yes!” and your dog automatically turns his head towards your hand. Then switch hands and repeat until your dog begins to look towards your other hand for the treat when you say, “Yes!”

### Step 1:

- Have some small treats in one hand behind your back. Your target hand will be empty.
- Present the target hand (a flat open palm) to the side of your body and 6 inches from your dog. Do not touch the dog with your hand. The dog should reach his nose forward to sniff or investigate the hand. Just as the dog's nose touches your hand, mark it with “Yes!” and reward with a treat from behind your back. At the same time, move the target hand away.
- Repeat this process several times throughout the day and in as many different locations and situations as possible. Also switch the target hand every few repetitions. You don't want to teach the dog to only touch one hand. The dog should consistently touch the target hand. Be sure to reward every time.
- If the dog is having a hard time touching your hand, rub your yummy treat on your target hand so it smells like something your dog will want to sniff.

- Do not move forward with the next step until your dog is actively touching your hand with his nose! This is very important.

### Step 2:

- Now that the dog is consistently touching the target hand when presented, begin to add a verbal cue.
- Say "Say hi" and then present the target hand. If the dog touches the hand, mark it with "Yes!" and reward with a treat from behind your back. It's important that you say the cue first and then present the target hand. It's important for your dog to make the connection that the verbal cue is the signal to touch the target hand.

### Step 3:

- Now that the dog is consistently moving to and touching the target hand when cued, begin to have your dog touch another familiar person's hand.
- Say "Say hi" and point to someone who has his/her hand out in the target position. If necessary, encourage the dog.
- If the dog touches the presented hand, mark with "Yes!" and reward. Remember that YOU reward the dog, not the person who they're "saying hi" to!
- Have everyone in the family practice this.

It's important to make sure that you do NOT have your dog touch stranger's hands until you have spoken to your trainer or behavior counselor. It can put your dog into a very scary situation that he or she isn't ready for and ultimately set your training back!

## Giving Your Dog More Freedom in Your Household Sample



If your dog is not yet reliable in your house, he should always be under your supervision. He should be in the same room with you. If you are in the kitchen, he should be in the kitchen; if you are in the bedroom, he should be in the bedroom, etc. This way you can immediately react to good or bad behavior at the very moment it occurs. If you are in the kitchen and he is in the bedroom tearing up the pillows, he is learning that chewing on pillows is okay when you are not around. If your dog does not naturally follow you from room to room you may need to put up gates or close doors for a while - not to keep your dog away from you but to keep him with you. Your dog should be under

someone's watchful eye at all times, unless he is confined to an area where he is safe. When you are not home or not able to pay attention to your dog, he should be crated. The crate serves as a babysitter when you cannot be there to watch him. When your dog is in the crate he is safe and your house is safe from him. Please note that excessively long periods of time in a crate are not humane, nor will it teach your dog how to behave.



It's very hard to give a general "rule of thumb" as to when a dog is ready for more freedom. Certainly, she must be well housetrained, and eliminating consistently outside (except of course when she is ill). Some dogs remain destructive when alone until they are 2 years of age, others can be trusted at a year or less.

Start with very brief absences with the dog isolated to one or two rooms. With very little preparation, walk out the door and leave just long enough to pick up your mail or a quart of milk from the store. Be sure to dog-proof the house before walking out the door, careful not to leave enticing items within easy reach. You may also want to booby-trap things like the trash with something like a "Snappy Trainer". If your 5-minute absence results in any misbehavior, try a shorter absence. If, after several attempts, you come home to a mess, perhaps your dog is not yet mature enough to be left alone loose in the house. It's also possible that your dog may be displaying separation anxiety behavior which crating is only masking. If you feel your dog is anxious when you leave her alone, we recommend that you call our office for an appointment with our behavior counselors to help you sort things out. However, if your brief absences are successful, gradually lengthen them. Avoid pushing your luck – don't jump from your dog being well behaved for an hour to leaving her free all day! Continue working up to longer absences on a gradual basis.

## Crate Training Your Dog Sample



The crate or kennel is a valuable management tool to help train dogs and adult dogs. It can be used to prevent dogs from having opportunities to house soil, be destructive, or annoy family members at inappropriate times. They can also provide your dog with a safe place where he can go to be away from others, like small children that may annoy him. However crates are too often used as substitutes for, instead of as adjuncts to, proper training. Crating may prevent a behavior from occurring, but does not train the dog not to do it when given the opportunity. If crating time is excessive, your dog may not have sufficient time for exercise and social interaction with family members. Without this time, other problems may be created such as fearfulness of people and new things.

For a crate to be useful to you, you must train your dog to use it. The dog must think about the crate as a pleasant place, and be comfortable when left there. This cannot be done by just putting the dog in the crate and "letting him get used to it". You must acclimate your dog to the crate in a gradual way that is pleasant for him.



## Acclimating a Dog to a Crate

When selecting a crate for your dog, get one that allows the dog to stand up, turn around and lie down comfortably but not much more. If you have a larger crate, consider placing dividers in it to make it smaller. If the dog has too much room, it may not effectively inhibit elimination behavior. It is very important that the dog's initial experiences with a crate be pleasant. Allow the dog to explore the crate. Toss toys and tidbits inside to encourage the dog to enter. Feed the dog in the crate at least some of the time. When your dog will enter and exit the crate willingly, without reluctance, close the door for a few seconds or a minute and remain sitting close to the crate. Do not try to push this first confinement period to see how long he will tolerate it. Let the dog out and ignore him. Release from confinement should not result in a "big deal", as this will make it more likely the dog will view being in the crate as less pleasant compared to being out of it. Take a break for a few minutes, and repeat the exercise again. Slowly increase the time your dog is in the crate with the door shut. If at any time the dog becomes agitated or fearful - whining, whimpering, yelping, barking or trying to escape - wait until he has momentarily stopped showing his distressed behavior then let him out. The next confinement should be shorter than the one that distressed him. Don't force the dog to be in the crate when he is distressed. You may want to work up to practicing when the family is eating dinner. Crating the dog during your dinner time prevents pestering and prevents the dog from getting into things because nobody is supervising him. Getting to this point may take several days. Sometimes placing the dog's favorite blanket in the crate will make it more pleasant to him. If he doesn't have a favorite blanket, placing an old shirt or dirty towel that has your scent on it into the crate may make it more familiar. Alternatively, the item could be draped over the crate rather than put inside it. Recognize that the dog may destroy the item, so don't place anything in or near the crate that you aren't prepared to lose.

In the meantime, the dog can begin sleeping in the crate at night. It is **crucial** that the crate be located near or preferably in the bedroom so someone can hear him when he cries to be let outside. Dogs should be crated close to the family in order to prevent crating from being perceived as social isolation. Some adult dogs who have no previous experience with a crate may become agitated and fearful if crated for too long. Being able to observe the dog while he is crated overnight will prevent the dog from being trapped in the crate and becoming increasingly upset.

Once your dog is comfortably sleeping in the crate at night, she can be left alone during the day for short time periods while crated. The first few absences should be less than 30 minutes. It's not a bad idea to leave a tape recorder on at first so you will know if your dog is howling or barking. This behavior is a sign of fear or anxiety, and means that your dog is not calm in the crate. Perhaps you tried to do too much too soon, or maybe the dog had a previous bad experience in the crate. Try crating for shorter time periods.

If things go well, gradually increase the duration you are gone, but intersperse brief absences with longer ones. Continue to crate your dog for a few minutes each day when you are home, so that crating does not always predict that you are leaving. You can leave your dog with a chew or interactive toy, or Kong when she is crated while alone.



## How Long a Dog Should be Crated?

Dogs should never be left crated for longer than they can control their bladder or bowels. For young dogs, this may mean no more than a few hours at a time. Geriatric dogs also need to eliminate more frequently than they did as young adults. Many, but not all, young mature dogs may be able to be crated for an entire workday without a break. It is preferable however to give them a break if at all possible.

Young dogs especially need a lot of time for play, exercise and time with you. After being crated all day, they are ready to rock and roll when you arrive home from work, tired and wanting to relax. This is part of owning a dog!! If you aren't willing to spend time playing with your dog or taking her for a walk, then you might want to reconsider whether a dog fits with your lifestyle. Don't allow yourself to get into the following trap.

Your dog, after being crated all day, is rambunctious and unruly when you arrive home. You find this annoying, and put her back in the crate. You try releasing her a little later, and she is even worse than before because she is even more in need of exercise and play time.

## Retraining Adult Dogs

Retraining an adult dog is similar to training a young dog. All of the same rules apply. You must be consistent with the dog, reward good behavior, make accidents difficult, never punish after the fact, clean soiled areas and gradually reduce supervision. The major differences are that adult dogs can usually hold their waste longer than younger dogs, they usually learn quicker than younger dogs and they may already have preferences that may need to be overcome and changed. Dogs from shelters, from other homes or even those that move with their families to a new home may take a few days or weeks to learn where they are supposed to eliminate even if they were housetrained previously. Never assume that any dog in a new environment is housetrained. By following the rules for housetraining from the beginning, you can avoid future problems.

## When is a Crate Not Appropriate?

Dogs who display signs of separation anxiety almost always become worse the more they are confined.

### Manifestations of separation anxiety are:

- ✓ House soiling, destructiveness or vocalizing within the first 30 minutes after your departure
- ✓ Undesirable behaviors that occur *consistently* when the dog is alone and occur *only* when the dog is alone. Thus, the dog who steals food from the counter, gets in the trash, or tears up a book every now and then is probably not a separation anxiety problem
- ✓ Destructive behavior that is often directed at window coverings, door and window moldings, floor coverings in front of doors, or items with the owner's scent such as personal belongings, the TV remote or the couch cushions

- ✓ Following the owner from room to room, not wanting to be left in a room alone
- ✓ Frantic greetings upon the owner's return.

If your dog doesn't seem to have a problem with separation anxiety, but does not tolerate crating, it may be due to other types of fears or anxieties. Dogs who have noise phobias, such as fear of thunder, often become very frantic if home alone in a crate when a storm occurs.

### Signs that your dog has not been calm while crate include:



- ✓ Damage to the crate from escape attempts
- ✓ Damage to surrounding objects, that the pup has been able to reach through the bars of a wire crate
- ✓ Wet chest fur from drooling or salivating or pools of saliva on the crate floor
- ✓ Urination or defecation in the crate
- ✓ The dog moving the crate from one location to another
- ✓ Excessive barking or howling recorded on audiotape

If you think your dog may have separation anxiety problems, or other fear related problems, you should seek the help of a professional in the field of animal behavior.

## Bringing Your New Dog Home Sample

Congratulations on adopting a new pet! Whether your new dog is a puppy or an adult, the following suggestions will help him transition smoothly into your home. At St. Hubert's, we believe in setting you and your dog up for success!

### The Right Stuff

First, make sure you have the necessary supplies. These can include food and water bowls, a crate, a leash, a collar, an ID tag, food, training treats, grooming tools, healthy chew items, and toys. The crate can be a wire or plastic type, and should be large enough for your dog to stand up fully inside, as well as be able to turn around in. Try to choose healthy training treats that are soft and moist so you can reward your dog often during training as he learns new skills.





When choosing toys, select a variety of toy items and try some with different textures: plush toys, balls, squeaky toys, interactive/treat-dispensers, and tug toys.

### **Gradually Expand Freedom Over Time**

One way to help your dog establish good household manners is by setting up his environment for success. We recommend limiting your dog's space initially, and then gradually expanding it as he learns your routine and practices good manners. Limiting his space can include doing things such as closing off certain rooms, using baby gates, crating him when you are not able to directly supervise, and using a leash while helping him learn where he is allowed. Letting your new dog wear and drag a leash in the house will give you a quick way to capture him before he makes a mistake in his house manners. You can also have a dog wear a collar and leash inside so that you can tether him to you while he is learning the household rules. For example, if you want him to learn that he can be in the kitchen with you while you do chores, tethering him to you can help prevent him from surfing the counters or getting into the trash. It's much easier to start off limiting space and gradually give your dog more freedom as he demonstrates success, than to start off giving him too much freedom and too many opportunities to make errors such as house soiling or chewing a valuable item!

### **Establish a Schedule for Potty Breaks**

Puppies will need to go out more frequently than an adult dog. An average 'rule of thumb' is that your puppy can 'hold it' about as long (in hours) as his age in months plus one. For example, a two month old puppy can go about three hours without a potty break. Keep in mind, however, that anything that stimulates his immature system may cause him to have to relieve himself. So, good opportunities to take him out for a relief break can include: after he eats, when he wakes up, as soon as you remove him from the crate, after playtime, etc. Adult dogs adopted from a shelter may or may not be housebroken; since we often do not know what training the dogs have had prior to arriving in a shelter, we should not assume that an adult dog is house trained. Taking your adult dog out at regularly scheduled times will help him acclimate to your routine and time schedule. Having scheduled feeding times will also help facilitate getting your dog on a regular potty schedule. If you free feed, i.e., leave the bowl down and full all the time, it is harder to control your dog's elimination habits because you can't be sure when and how often he is eating

### **Preventative Versus Punitive**

Most problem behaviors that owners commonly struggle with - destructive chewing, barking, digging, and counter surfing - can be prevented by giving your dog a combination of mental and physical exercise. Providing appropriate mental and physical exercise and providing appropriate outlets for normal, natural dog behaviors will go a long way in preventing problems. In fact, by giving opportunities to engage in appropriate behavior and by rewarding those behaviors, you find that you will not have to correct or punish your dog often. Example: remove valuable items from your dog's reach that he might want to chew, and also make sure that you provide him with appropriate options such as a stuffed Kong, a chew bone, or bully stick.

### **Have Some Class!**

We strongly encourage you to enroll in an obedience training class with your dog. Training helps you as the owner to establish a bond with your new friend. In addition to teaching valuable skills such as coming when called, sit, stay, leash manners, etc., you will build a good working relationship with your dog.

## Fearful Behavior Sample

Whether you have a new furry addition to your family, or a pet who has been with you for some time, it's important to be able to recognize signals that your dog is fearful of someone or something. If you've had your dog for a while, you are probably able to identify certain situations that will make your dog feel afraid. If your dog is new to you, you may still be learning to read the signals and understand what is causing your dog's fear. If your newly adopted dog is showing fearful behavior, it's important to remember that sometimes, fearful behavior will manifest in a shelter environment but may not surface in a stable home environment and other times, behavior seen in the shelter may carry over to the new home.

### Definition of Fearful Behavior

Dogs display fearful behavior for a number of reasons. Some dogs are predisposed to having a fearful personality. Others may be fearful due to improper, or lack of, early socialization. Some dogs may have fearful behavior due to a prior traumatic experience. In many cases, a combination of these factors can result in a dog who displays fearful behavior. A dog may demonstrate fearful behavior in response to certain situations or people, i.e., the behavior can be context specific, or a dog may demonstrate fearful behavior in all situations, i.e., it may be more generalized.

### Examples of Signals that a Dog May Display Out of Fear



- Avoidance (moving away from the person, object, or situation)
- Averting eye contact
- Tail tucked underneath belly
- Slow movement or 'freezing'
- Displacement behaviors such as lip-licking or yawning
- Dilated pupils
- Trembling
- Flattening his body to the ground
- Panting or pacing
- Refusal to accept food/treat

### Here are some general tips:

- Give your dog some space. Do not force a fearful dog to interact; instead, let the dog make the choice to interact when he feels comfortable.
- Do not allow family members, guests, or strangers to rush up to or pressure your dog to interact; many fearful dogs do best if they are politely ignored.
- Try to keep your movements slow and predictable.
- Use a soft, pleasing tone of voice.





- Use gentle, non-threatening body language when interacting with a dog who is displaying fearful behavior. Stand sideways instead of 'head-on' and avoid direct eye contact. If possible, turn sideways and kneel down while turning your eyes slightly away from the dog.
- Do not engage in body language that may be perceived as threatening such as direct eye contact, reaching into the dog's space, putting hands over the dog's head or neck, looming or standing over the dog.
- Always keep your dog on leash when outdoors. A martingale-style collar can be beneficial as a dog can slip out of it if he gets startled or spooked by a noise or something in the environment.
- Even if you have a fenced yard, it may be helpful to take the dog out on a leash or long line in the yard so you can gently guide the dog to and from your home.

## Prevention

The single most important way to help prevent your dog from displaying fearful behavior is to commit to early and continued positive socialization. If you have a new puppy, take your puppy out and make every experience positive – a puppy kindergarten class is the best place to get started on the right foot. Remember, whether the experience is positive or not is determined by how your dog feels, not by what we think of the interaction! If you have just adopted an adult dog, get to know your dog and build a relationship with him in a basic obedience class. Allow your dog time to acclimate to your home and pay attention to what his body language is saying. If your dog is afraid of something, do not force an interaction; that can make the fear worse.

## How We Can Help

St. Hubert's offers several ways to help you and your dog get off to a good start. We offer private consultations with our behavior counselors and trainers, where we can give you information regarding your dog's behavior and can offer you protocols to help you manage the behavior. We also offer basic training classes, and we highly recommend signing up for a round of classes to help you and your dog learn to communicate with each other effectively and to help your dog build confidence. Our humane methods of reward-based training, fair leadership and simple kindness are renown around the country and lead to more than 4,000 canine diplomas awarded annually. To schedule an appointment with someone from our Behavior Team, please call 973-377-0116. To view our class offerings, please visit our website: [www.sthuberts.org](http://www.sthuberts.org) and click on the Pet Training tab to see a menu of courses.



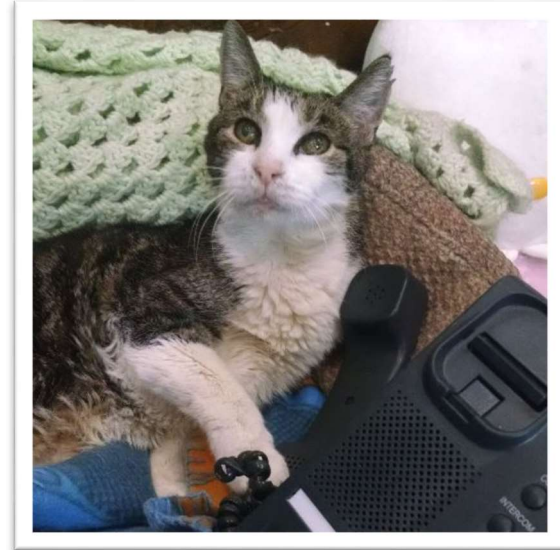
## When to Reach Out? Sample

### When to Reach Out?

#### It is never too early to seek help

When a pet has a sudden change of behavior it is often a cry for help. **They are trying to communicate in the best way they know how.** What appears to us as 'spiteful' or 'out of the blue' misbehaving is actually your pet attempting to let you know that something is wrong.

In most cases, when dealing with behavior, it is easier to change a behavior the earlier it is caught. While long standing issues can still be resolved, it can often take a longer time frame. Many times, loving pet parents deal with inappropriate behavior from their pets for years before the problem is too much to handle. Calling at the first sign of concern and having a better understanding of why your pet is doing something can make a difference in how the issue is approached and thus how quickly it is resolved.



*Call us, because they can't!*

#### How to reach us

**Call or e-mail us for free behavioral guidance and assistance with other services.**

Phone: (973) 377-2253

Email: [helpline@sthuberts.org](mailto:helpline@sthuberts.org)

**Visit us on the web for information on behavior, low cost vet care, missing pets information and more!**

Facebook: [facebook.com/StHubertsPetRetention](https://www.facebook.com/StHubertsPetRetention)

Resources, Missing Pet and Behavior Information: [sthuberts.org/pethelpline](http://sthuberts.org/pethelpline)