



Dangerous Dogs: Education and Legislation

AVC Community Workshop Series

Nov. 29, 2016





Speakers

- Dr. Alice Crook – Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre, AVC upei.ca/awc ; acrook@upei.ca
- Jenna Lane – AVC class of 2019
- Chelsea Tuff-Hopkie – AVC class of 2019
- Dr. Shauna Richards – Atlantic Veterinary College; srichards@upei.ca
- Marla Somersall – PEI Humane Society peihumanesociety.com/
- Donna Marie – PEI Humane Society



Overview

- Dog bites: issue of public concern and safety
- Legislation
 - Problems associated with legislation that bans specific breeds (BSL)
 - Alternative approach: dangerous dog legislation
 - Impact on dogs & humane societies
- Education
 - Identifying dangerous dogs
 - Risk factors for dog bites



Montreal bylaw re “pit-bull-type dogs”

- Would prohibit new “pit bull-type dogs” and place severe restrictions on existing dogs (*under judicial review*)
 - At Oct. 3, illegal to acquire new p-b-t dog; existing dogs must be muzzled and on 1.25 m leash
 - Current owners: special permit required by Dec. 31 (\$150); if not obtained, dog is forbidden and could be euthanized
- Montreal SPCA challenging bylaw:
 - Discriminatory, unenforceable, penalizes all pit bull type dogs regardless of behaviour
- Quebec Superior Court allowed a *stay* pending SPCA legal challenge
- City appealing stay – arguments Nov. 25 (*decision pending*)



Montreal animal control bylaw Oct. 3, 2016

- All dogs and cats
 - Must be licenced
 - Must be sterilized and microchipped (end of 2019)
 - Maximum of 4 pets/home (including 2 dogs, or 3 with special permit)



Ontario “pit bull” legislation (March 2005)

- Since 2005, illegal to own, train, breed, transfer, import, train to fight, or abandon a pit bull
- “Grandfathered” or restricted pit bulls born prior to August 2005 must be in compliance with multiple regulations, including muzzle and short leash when not on owner’s enclosed property
- Strict restrictions on bringing pit bulls into Ontario
- Have separate dangerous dog legislation



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Problem common to breed specific legislation

- What is a “pit-bull-type” dog?
 - Montreal & Ontario: American Staffordshire terriers, Staffordshire bull terriers and American pit bull terriers, any mixed breed dogs with those breeds, or any dog with similar physical characteristics
- Montreal: not clear who will decide if a dog is a pit-bull-type, or whether an owner can appeal
- Ontario: appeal committee



Alternative approach

- Focus on:
 - Legislation that addresses *dangerous or vicious dogs*, instead of a particular breed
 - Education about canine behaviour and communication – to prevent dog bites
- Evidence-based position of the veterinary profession and humane organizations



“The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) supports dangerous dog legislation provided that it is not discriminatory of a specific breed. This legislation should be directed at fostering the safety and protection of the general public from dogs classified as “dangerous” or “vicious”. The CVMA encourages and supports a community approach to dog bite prevention, including responsible breeding, training, pet selection and pet ownership as well as education on animals in the community.”



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Other organizations similar re BSL

- AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association)
- CDC (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)
- CFHS (Canadian Federation of Humane Societies)
- ASPCA
- *No evidence that BSL makes communities safer for people or dogs*



Factors that contribute to the risk and severity of dog bites

- Human factors, eg. young children, lack of supervision, lack of understanding of dog behaviour & communication
- Animal factors, eg. size, temperament, painful conditions, training & socialization
- Environmental factors, eg. +/- dog control & enforcement, tethering of dog, “community dogs”



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CVMA: Preventing dog aggressive incidents

- Education
 - dog bite prevention, responsible ownership & breeding, training, socialization
 - canine behaviour: calming signs by dogs, warning signs
 - Identifying “vicious” or inappropriately aggressive dogs
- Recommendation: provinces or municipalities considering dangerous or vicious dog legislation consult Model Municipal Bylaws (National Companion Animal Coalition)

canadianveterinarians.net/documents/sample-municipal-bylaw-regulating-the-keeping-and-controlling-of-companion-animals



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Dangerous Dog Legislation

- Legislation defines what a dangerous dog is and the implications of owning such a dog
- Every jurisdiction in Canada and the U.S. has dangerous dog provisions in their laws



Current definition of “dangerous dog”

- The definition of dangerous dog varies among jurisdictions
- In some jurisdictions it is a dog whose behavior poses a threat to public safety, whether or the behavior is aggressive in nature
- In some jurisdictions it is a dog who bites a human or a domestic animal on public property
- In some jurisdictions it is a dog who bites a human or domestic animal when unprovoked on property other than the owner’s property



Classifying a dog as dangerous

- Laws classifying a dog as dangerous differ from one jurisdiction to the next
- “Dangerousness” of a dog can be a political and controversial topic



Model Municipal Bylaws: Dangerous dog

- Any individual dog that:
 - (i) kills a domestic animal without provocation while off the owner's property
 - (ii) bites or injures a human being or domestic animal without provocation, on public or private property
 - (iii) that is attack trained
 - (iv) that is kept for the purpose of security or protection of persons or property, whether residential, commercial or industrial
 - (v) that has shown the disposition or tendency to be threatening or aggressive



Model Municipal Bylaw: Owning a dangerous dog

Owners of a dangerous dog must comply:

- license the dog with the municipality, spay or neuter the dog, muzzle the dog on public property, keep the dog on a 1 meter leash in public, keep dog secure when the owner is not home, have appropriate signage on the owner's property, have a policy of liability in the amount of at least \$500,000
- Comply with any inquiries from the municipality about the dog

Any dog deemed dangerous is not adoptable and must be humanely euthanized in the event the owner cannot or will not comply with any of the provisions in the law



Images from
dog breed info



So... what is a pit bull?

“A dog of any several breeds or a real or apparent hybrid of one or more of these breeds”

- Merriam-Webster dictionary



“Pit bull” type dogs

Includes...

- American Staffordshire Terrier
- American Pit Bull Terrier
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier
- Bull Terrier

AND any hybrids or mixes between above breeds



Images adapted from dog
breed info center





Features of a “pitbull” type dog

- 35-60 cm
- 22-78lbs
- Square heads
- Wide chest
- Muscular



Interesting facts of pit bull type dogs

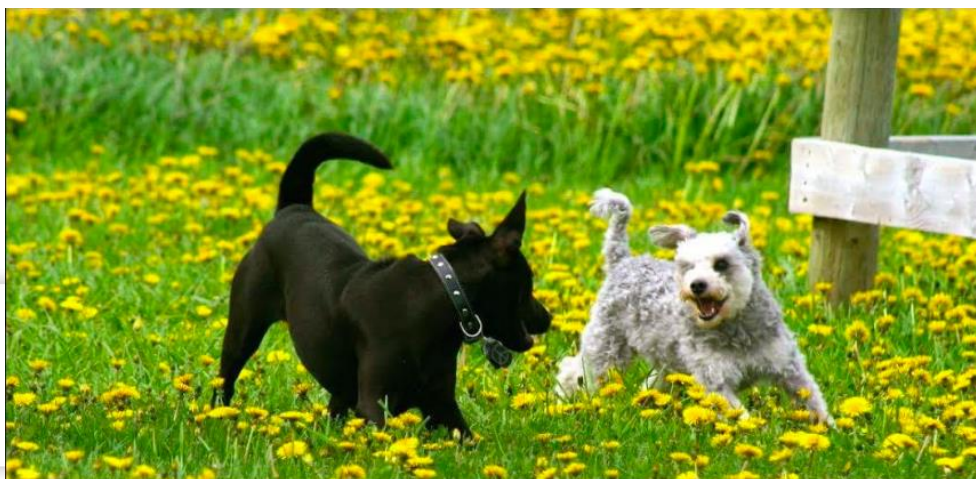
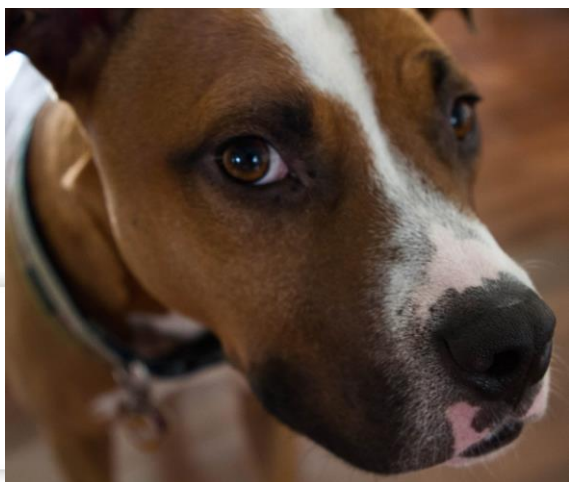
- Do not have a locking jaw
- Originally known as nursemaids or nannydogs
- Score exceptionally well on the American Temperament Test
- Bite force is exceptionally **weak** in a study conducted by National Geographic



Dangerous Dogs: Education vs. Legislation

Scientific Research – Focus on Canada

Dr. Shauna Richards





Fatal Dog Attacks in Canada, 1990-2007

Raghavan, M. 2008. Canadian Veterinary Journal, 49(6): 577-581



- Search of media reports from Canadian Newsstand Database
- 28 fatalities from dog bite injuries
- Average of 1-2 death/year
- Owned dogs
- Known dogs
- Un-neutered
- Residential locations
- Unsupervised children and dogs
- Rural/remote areas, including aboriginal reserves in prairies

Table 1

Dogs implicated in the 28 newspaper reports on fatal attacks in Canada, 1990–2007

	Number ^a (%) of 28 fatalities
Number of dogs implicated in victim's death	
1	9 (32.1)
2–3	6 (21.4)
4–6	8 (28.6)
8	4 (14.3)
Multiple dogs; number not reported	1 (3.6)
Domestication, socialization of dogs ^b	
Owned	25 (89.3)
Pet, farm, or yard dogs	19 (67.9)
Guard dogs	1 (3.6)
Sled dogs	7 (25.0)
Wild or stray dogs roaming in packs	6 (21.4)
Owned dogs' familiarity with victims ^{b, c}	
Belonged to or temporarily housed with victim's family	10 (35.7)
Belonged to relative, friend, or neighbor of victim's family	8 (28.6)
Unrelated	8 (28.6)
Unknown/not reported	1 (3.6)



Can Vet J

Can Vet J

Owned dogs' access to victim^{b,c}

Restrained ^d on property; unsupervised victim in dogs' area	8 (28.6)
Unrestrained on property	7 (25.0)
Restrained ^d off property; unsupervised victim in dogs' area	2 (7.1)
Unrestrained off property; wandering in packs	6 (21.4)
Unknown/not reported	3 (10.7)

Owned dogs' history of aggression^{b,c}

Towards people	5 (17.9)
Towards animals	2 (7.1)
No history	4 (14.3)
Unknown/not reported	14 (50.0)

Breeds (total numbers) of dogs implicated

Reports quoting dog owner or knowledgeable authority ($n = 48$)	16 (57.1)
American Staffordshire terrier (<u>2</u>)	1 (3.6)
Husky, Labrador (<u>8</u>); husky, Siberian (<u>2</u>)	3 (10.7)
Rottweiler (<u>7</u>)	3 (10.7)
"Sled dog" (<u>22</u>)	4 (14.3)
Rottweiler-German shepherd crossbreed (<u>1</u>)	1 (3.6)
Other ^e (<u>6</u>)	6 (21.4)
Reports not quoting dog owner or knowledgeable authority ^f (<u>14</u>) ^g	7 (25.0)
Mixed breed/breed not specified (> 34)	7 (25.0)



Compare Canadian Results With a Similar Study Done in the U.S.A. on Fatal Dog Bites

Patronek, G., et al. 2013. Co-occurrence of potentially preventable factors in 256 dog bite-related fatalities in the United States (2000-2009). JAVMA. 243(12): 1726-36.



- Victim Factors:
 - No able bodied person
- Dog/Owner Factors:
 - Dog isolated from

Four or more of these factors occurred
in 80.5% of Deaths

dog appropriately (77%)

of dog (21%)



- Breed Reporting

- Media ID of dog breed differed in 31% of reports (124/401 dogs)
- Media + animal control ID differed 40.2% of the time (139/346 dogs)
- Valid breed ID occurred for only 18% of fatal bites (45/246 bites)



Olsen et al., University of
Florida



Table 1: Examples of staff breed designations and genetic breed designations for several study dogs










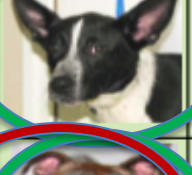
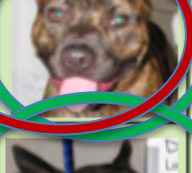
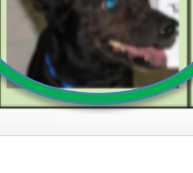
Dog	Photo	Staff 1	Staff 2	Staff 3	Vet	DNA breed
Dog 7		Lab/ Am. Staff	Am. Staff/ Lab	Am. Staff/ Lab	Pit Bull/ Lab	
Dog 8		Boxer/ Lab	Am. Staff/ Chow	Boxer/ Lab	Am. Staff/ Greyhound	
Dog 9		Am. Staff	Am. Staff Mix	Pit Bull	Am. Pit Bull Terrier	
Dog 11		Aust. Cattle Dog/ Border Collie	Catahoula/ Lab	Border Collie/ Aust. Cattle Dog	Border Collie/ Aust. Cattle Dog	
Dog 59		Pit Bull Mix	Pit Bull	Am. Pit Bull Terrier Mix	Pit Bull Mix	
Dog 62		Jack Russell Terrier/ Hound	Basenji/ Lab	Shar-Pei/ Rat Terrier	Chihuahua Mix	



Table 1: Examples of staff breed designations and genetic breed designations for several study dogs

Dog	Photo	Staff 1	Staff 2	Staff 3	Vet	DNA breed
Dog 1		Lab/ Am. Staff	Am. Staff/ Lab	Am. Staff/ Lab	Pit Bull/ Lab	Irish Water Spaniel 25%; Siberian Husky, 25%; Boston Terrier, 25%
Dog 3		Boxer/ Lab	Am. Staff/ Chow	Boxer/ Lab	Am. Staff/ Greyhound	Boxer, 25%; Alaskan Malamute, 25%
Dog 5		Am. Staff	Am. Staff Mix	Pit Bull	Am. Pit Bull Terrier	Am. Bulldog, 50%; Am. Staff, 50%
Dog 11		Aust. Cattle Dog/ Border Collie	Catahoula/ Lab	Border Collie/ Aust. Cattle Dog	Border Collie/ Aust. Cattle Dog	Aust. Cattle Dog, 25%; Am. Staff, 25%
Dog 59		Pit Bull Mix	Pit Bull	Am. Pit Bull Terrier Mix	Pit Bull Mix	Am. Bulldog, 50%; Am. Staff, 50%
Dog 62		Jack Russell Terrier/ Hound	Basenji/ Lab	Shar-Pei/ Rat Terrier	Chihuahua Mix	Chow, 25%; Am. Staff, 25%; Siberian Husky, 25%

Olson et al, University of Florida



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Review of Scientific Literature by the American Veterinary Medical Association





- **Aggressive Breeds:**

- Small to medium sized dogs such as collies, toy breeds, and spaniels
- Small dogs less likely to inflict serious injury to healthy adults

- **Pit Bull Types**

- Controlled studies have not identified this breed as disproportionately dangerous

Toy Breeds



www.dog-breeds-expert.com



American Pit Bull Terrier



American Staffordshire Terrier



Staffordshire Bull Terrier

PitBullTraining.net



Animal Control Measures and their Relationship to the Reported Incidence of Dog Bites in Urban Canadian Municipalities

Clarke, N.M., & Fraser, D. 2013. Canadian Veterinary Journal, 54:145-149.



- 36 municipalities
- 4-75% of dogs were licensed
- 0.1 – 8.3 tickets were written for every 10,000 people
- 0 – 9 bites reported for every 10,000 people
- Atlantic Canada results
- 5% of dogs licensed
- 0.9 tickets for every 10,000 people
- 1.5 bites reported for every 10,000 people



- Dog bites were reported at higher rates with higher ticketing, licensing, staffing and budget
- Municipalities with very active ticketing reported lower bite rates



Getty, Getty



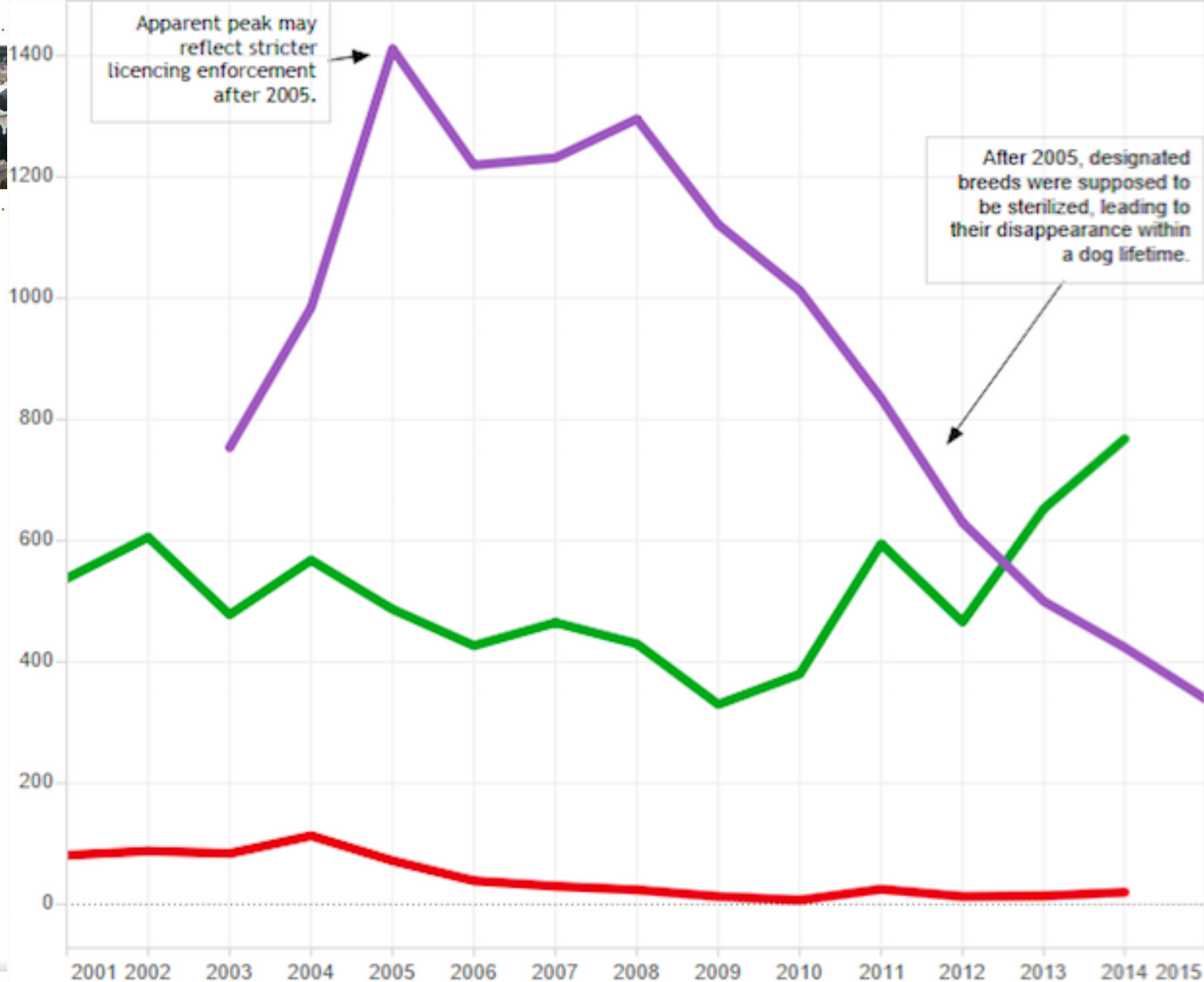
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**Municipalities with and without
Breed Specific Legislation did not
differ in reported bite rates**





- Bites by legal pit bulls
- Legal pit bulls
- Total bites

In 2005, Ontario placed severe restrictions on four breeds: pit bull terriers, American Staffordshire terriers, Staffordshire bull terriers and American pit bull terriers, measures often referred to as a 'pit bull ban'. In this graph, 'legal pit bulls' mean these four breeds. Not all data available for all years. ...



- Reported dog bites only represent a small fraction of all dog bites
- The rate of 1.9 bites/10,000 people is likely only 1% of the total bites occurring



PRLOG



Summary

- Dog Bites occur because of multiple factors
 - But reasons are mainly related to human factors in the situation and (lack of) dog training
- Dog Breed and BSL do not change the risk of dog bites



PEI Humane Society

Dangerous Dog Enforcement PEI

Comparing dangerous dog and breed specific
legislation

Reducing risk of bites and aggression



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Enforcement of Legislation

RCMP

City Police Forces

Department of Agriculture Inspectors

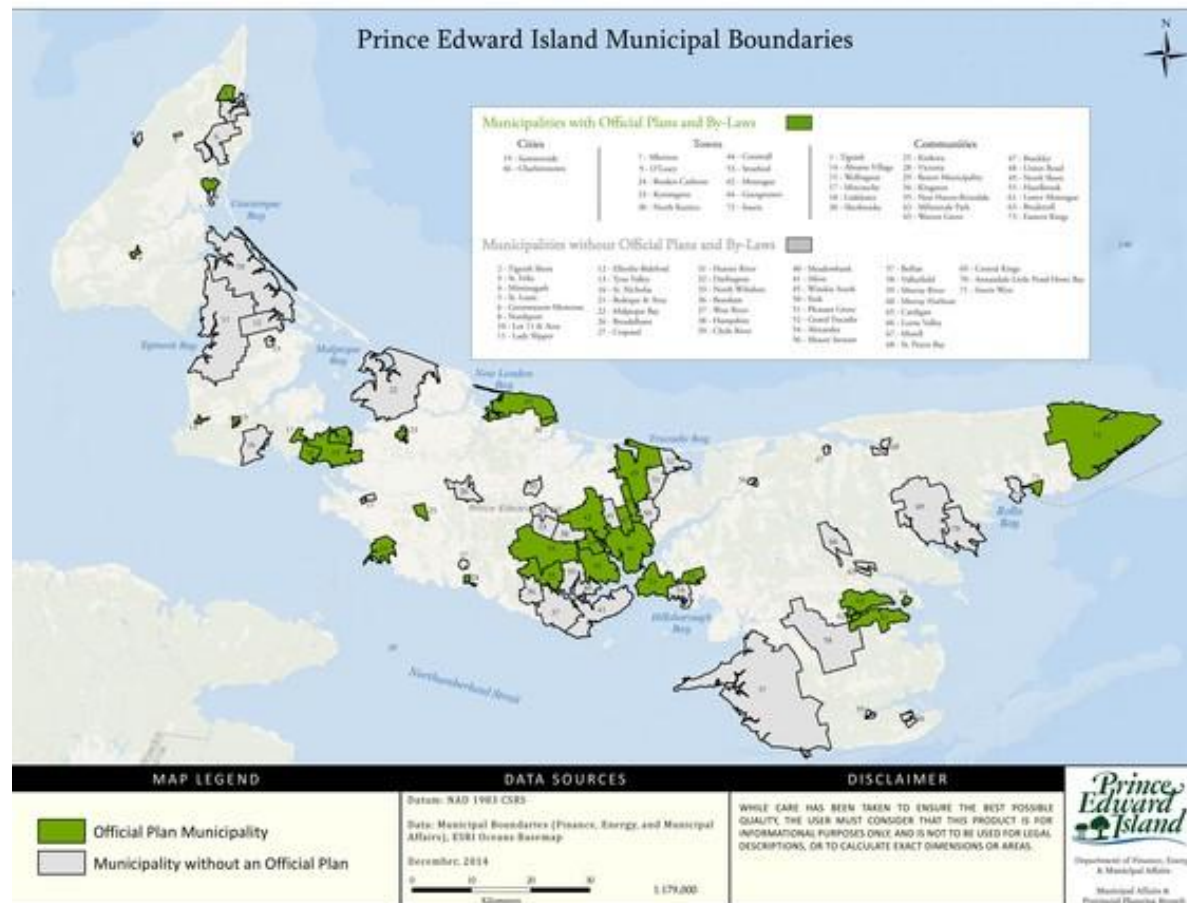
Bylaw Officers

PEI Humane Society





The PEI Humane Society
enforces
Part II of The Dog Act
regarding
Dangerous Dog
in collaboration with
Police Services
across the island





Dangerous Dog and Dog Bite Enforcement

- Dog Act
 - Dog Licensing
 - Dogs at large in unincorporated provincial areas
 - Dangerous dogs
- Department of Health and Wellness
 - Investigate bites where the skin is broken
 - Quarantine dogs for rabies watch and report results



Dangerous Dog Legislation or Breed Specific Legislation

- Defines dangerous dog by behaviour and risk to people and animals
 - May be more costly and difficult to enforce
 - Focus on the risk posed by any breed and owner responsibility
 - Does not discriminate against responsible owners
 - Will refer to euthanasia, but also considers circumstances and alternatives
- Bans breeds because of type or characteristics
 - Assumes breed or breed type is the cause of aggression
 - A breed ban may seem easier to enforce
 - Designates a particular breed as dangerous, regardless of socialization or training
 - Does not control dangerous dogs of any other breed
 - Often requires euthanasia of banned dogs



How do we define dangerous?

- Each of us has a different idea of what a dangerous dog is.
- Animal Protection Officers rely on definitions as set out in legislation being enforced



Section 16 (1) of the PEI Dog Act

16.(1) A peace officer or an enforcement officer may commence a proceeding in the Provincial Court against an owner of a dog if the peace officer or enforcement officer as the case may be, believes on reasonable grounds, that

- (a) the dog has bitten or attacked a person or a domestic animal; or
- (b) the dog has behaved in a manner that poses a menace to the safety of persons or domestic animals.



Our Experience



Dog bites are preventable.

- Proper socialization, training and care for any dog reduces the likelihood of aggression
- Fear and anxiety are often labelled aggression
- Many bites are accidental or as a result of fear, protectiveness, frustration, pain or possessiveness
- Understanding animal behaviour is key to preventing bites





Tips for Owners

- Socialization – introduce dogs to new situations, people and animals
- Use proper restraints – walk on leash, fenced area on your property
- Know your dog's limits - avoid stressful situations
- Use training that positively reinforces desired behaviour



Understand calming signals

- When dogs are not comfortable in a situation, they give calming signals to other dogs or to people
- A person or a poorly socialized dog may not recognize or respond appropriately
- Examples: turning away the head, blinking, licking lips, yawning, sniffing the ground, turning whole body (if turning head didn't work), lying down (belly to ground)



Behaviour Signs of Distress

- Agitation, pacing, running around
- Barking or Whimpering
- Body positions such as cringing, turning away
- Becoming very still and rigid
- Guttural bark that sounds threatening
- Lunging forward or charging
- Mouthing, without applying significant pressure
- “Muzzle punch” (the dog literally punches the person with her nose)
- Growling, Showing teeth or Snarling
- Quick nip that leaves no mark



Key points

- Legislation that targets specific breeds is not an effective way to address dog aggression
- Instead, provinces or municipalities should consider *dangerous dog legislation* (eg. Model Municipal Bylaws¹)
- *Education* is key for dog owners & community members on proper socialization & training of dogs, and on bite prevention

¹canadianveterinarians.net/documents/sample-municipal-bylaw-regulating-the-keeping-and-controlling-of-companion-animals



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