



SECRETS TO RAISING A PUPPY

The AbsoluteDogs Way



Beyond Puppyhood

 absolute-dogs.com

 facebook.com/absolutedogs/

BEYOND PUPPYHOOD INTO ADOLESCENCE

Your puppy will grow and mature (way too fast!) and suddenly that goofy, adorable quirky puppy is no longer that small little version of what they will become...

Their puppy behaviours begin to fade (goodbye biting!) and in turn your puppy becomes a teenager that presents a completely different set of problems.

Some may still be residual from puppyhood, others will be because of the hormones and changes happening in your puppy's body and brain, and even more so, will be age related that just comes with the territory of having a teenager around 6-7 months of age up until 2 years of age (3 years with larger breeds).

TEENAGERS

Yes! A teenager will be in your home. Interestingly enough, recent studies have shown that puppies going into adolescence begin to have a reduced attachment (relationship) with their owner. If you reflect on your teenage years, this may sound familiar.

In addition, they show an increased responsiveness and attachment (relationship) to others.

Suddenly their responses to behaviours they were really awesome at will start to dwindle. This isn't because they're

being difficult or disobedient. In fact, they hardly can help themselves as their body and brains change.

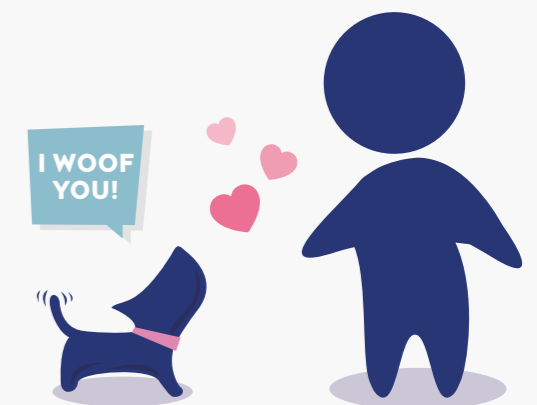
With games-based training this is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the benefits of playing games vs. traditional training methods.

Games allow you to create a no pressure solution for your teenage puppy, growing them through games that focus on concepts rather than behaviours.

Rather than focusing on growing their behaviour repertoire, this is the time to focus on the relationship, having fun, while still providing clear expectations and boundaries through management, targeted games that encourage growth of specific concepts, and support when they need it during any "blips" that might occur.

RELATIONSHIP

Your relationship should be your priority. When your puppy has become a teenager, you may need to ramp up on management to combat the natural dent that forms in your relationship. All of the foundation that you've layered onto your puppy prior to this age will help to support your puppy during this time.



Relationship can be boosted through considering your relationship bank account and focusing on pouring as many positive interactions in as possible.

What a deposit and what a withdrawal is will very much vary from dog to dog, but punishment is always a withdrawal and providing your puppy with clear, positive feedback when they are making

great decisions is always a deposit.

There will be times that your patience is tested, that you will feel frustrated and may even consider that you may not be the best match for your puppy at this time. It does get really hard in some cases because puppyhood is already trying and a lot of hard work. It flows naturally into the teenager phase just as things start getting easier and becomes a little more difficult.

As the best owner for your puppy, it's important that you have a support system to help you through this time. This is why we are here, to help and guide you. If ever you need help on determining how to move forward, what may help to grow your relationship with your puppy whilst in adolescence, our team is always standing by ready to assist at ask@absolute-dogs.com.

ADOLESCENT STRUGGLES MAY INCLUDE...

DIFFICULTY IN DISENGAGING

Your puppy that may have been demonstrating progress in being able to disengage from the world around them may struggle with disengaging now. Disengagement is a powerful and TOP concept for adolescent dogs, so we recommend focusing on games that will top up this concept. Focusing on Disengagement through no pressure, relationship-focused games rather than avidly pointing out your adolescent's mistakes can help to avoid damage to the relationship... and will prepare your puppy for the adolescent blips that naturally occur.



BLIPS: WHAT ARE THEY?

Blips are periods in time where your puppy/adolescent may develop fear responses that become more overt... And those fear responses may be directed toward things that may have not been obvious concerns prior or were concerns but now the behaviour response has increased. This can be in the form of barking, lunging, growling, etc. on lead, for example.

It varies with every dog and those that are more optimistic and confident may have a very small, almost unnoticeable blip vs. a puppy that is naturally more pessimistic or has difficulty disengaging. It's not always a fear response, sometimes it grows from frustration and excitement that they have a hard time regulating.

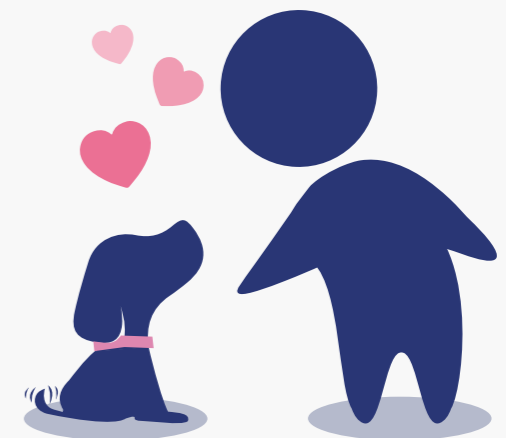
WHAT CAN YOU DO IN TRAINING TO SUPPORT YOUR TEENAGER?

FOCUS ON POSITIVE INTERACTIONS

This is the time to minimise withdrawals from your relationship bank account with your puppy as any withdrawals can increase or escalate undesirable behaviour.

It may be that some of the management strategies you provided your puppy when they were younger get repeated during this time in their life to reduce their rehearsal of teenage behaviours.

Your puppy may suddenly get a little wilder in their behaviour,



including counter surfing, barking at dogs or people on walks, pulling excessively (far more than ever) on the lead, and appearing as if their selective hearing leans more toward not hearing than actually listening to any cues you might be giving.

If you recall being a teenager, much of the emotion and frustration that you felt wasn't really within your control. In fact, as much as we all may have liked to have felt more in control, what really helped us through being a teenager was often someone that provided us with unpressured support. That may not have come from a parental figure; and often we'd seek it elsewhere anyway, to find security, to feel normal.

Your puppy is undergoing a lot of changes during that 7-12-month period (and sometimes longer) and it is so incredibly important to their long-term success (and yours) that the relationship be the focus. The goal would be minimising their rehearsal through careful management (setting up the environment so that they can't do those undesirable behaviours via crates, ex-pens, gates, etc) and to play games that focus on concepts that will give them the necessary skills to navigate adolescence.

AVOID PRESSURING YOUR DOG IN THE SITUATION

It's very easy to want to CURB what's happening, to want to push it back and mold it into something recognizable and enjoyable. Sometimes we go about it the wrong way, thinking that punishment or corrections are effective in completely reducing a behaviour. Logically, it makes sense. If a behaviour isn't desirable, make it go away.



However, during this time frame (and any time frame) the only

thing that is accomplished through punishment or intimidation is damage to the relationship. It's normal to want to correct behaviours. It's normal to want to FIX behaviours.

However, during this time is where there's pushback when you push, if that makes sense, from a behaviour perspective.

To come out on the other side of this teenage phase, growing relationship is how you'll get on the other side with an adult dog that is ready and willing to go on as many adventures as you want because they just want to be with you, because you're their best friend.

Pressure can escalate behaviour. We even can recognize this from a human perspective. Now, this is psychology. By no means are we saying that dogs are humans. In many cases though, behaviour is behaviour and how it functions remains the same. Dogs and humans learn very much in the same way. Positive reinforcement encourages an increase in the behaviour you want to see. At this time, your puppy is struggling, so what is the best way to support them when they have less responsiveness to YOU?

GROW CONCEPTS, NOT BEHAVIOURS

Focus on the concepts that your adolescent dog needs, instead of growing the number of behaviours they can do. Focus on what you have already accomplished and play games that help reshape their brain and that provides them with the cognitive support they developmentally need.



BLIP SUPPORT: THE CONCEPTS THAT WILL HELP YOUR ADOLESCENT

OPTIMISM

Sometimes it's all about recognizing the struggle and taking a step back. What was easy for your puppy just weeks ago may be something they're struggling with now. Focus on growing their optimism through games that empower them and that give them easy, easy wins. Optimism is a concept that can really encourage stronger disengagement, so any wins that get you closer to a more optimistic adolescent will help them to disengage when they really need to... You have control of that magic through games. Isn't that amazing?



NON-EVENTS

This is the time frame where nonevent training is even MORE key. What is non-event training? It is going into any situation with the expectation that whatever occurs is cool, but none of your dog's business. How can you communicate that effectively? When any distraction occurs, reward your dog.

If they are struggling, back up! Increase distance and also be aware that sometimes it's just too much and getting out of dodge is not something to be ashamed of... In fact, it just means that you have games that you can focus on to help your dog grow. That's it... Every time something happens, and it feels like failure, see it as an opportunity to learn how to support your teenage dog in an improved way.

It is absolutely normal to have to backtrack during this time

frame and go to easier environments to set your puppy up for success. It isn't backsliding... It's supporting them in the best way possible. It's taking a step forward by taking a step back. It's temporary and it's part of supporting them on their developmental journey. You've got this! Before you know it, the easy will transform from beginner level to advanced level environments... and you'll be doing it at a pace that is comfortable for your individual puppy.

REWARD EXPERIENCES

During adolescence and because of the reduced relationship that naturally occurs, something that can really grow your relationship and your value is by getting creative in providing a fun, engaging reward experience that suits your puppy.

You were really interesting before and now, during this teenage phase, your puppy will now be distracted and enticed by a lot more in the world. Just by creating a different reward experience through food games, toy games, and more, you can actually compete WELL against what the world has to offer.

You don't have to make a fool of yourself (though honestly, it's really fun to just have fun with it) to be perceived as important to your puppy. You just have to pour what resources you have into growing that relationship. It doesn't take hours a day to accomplish this. It's important that just as much as you shouldn't put a lot of pressure on your puppy during this phase, that you shouldn't put a lot of pressure on yourself.

Sometimes, the best thing you can do, is just breathe and have fun. If it doesn't feel fun, maybe it's just not the right thing at this moment. That means tweaking the training games you play to feel fun and successful, while still addressing the concepts your puppy needs most.

YOU'RE THE **BEST** DOG OWNER FOR YOUR DOG

Most rehomes are dog's right in the middle of adolescence. We want to assure you, if your puppy hasn't reached adolescence, that it's really not as bad as it sounds... For some puppies they'd never dream of pulling on the lead or jumping on the counter. It doesn't mean that they're better behaved... it just means that they struggle less with certain concepts. It just wouldn't have been a choice for them in the first place --- and sometimes that has nothing to do with training, and it's their baseline.

However, this resource is primarily for those owners with puppies that will make those choices and as long as you support them through puppyhood and into adolescence with clear expectations and boundaries, as well as adapting the training experience and plan for them by adjusting the games you play and the concepts you focus on, it can be an improved experience.

Having a community to support you on your journey can be helpful beyond measure. Our 25 Day Sexier than a Squirrel Challenge community is amazing and it's definitely one to take a look at to support you on your journey, pre-adolescence, during adolescence, and post-adolescence.

Our aim for this resource is that you have a better understanding of WHY your puppy struggles and to give you insight on what we have found through the successes of thousands of dogs by achieving long-lasting, real-life results through games. You can empower yourself as a dog owner.

You can have that dog owning dream you want to have... And there might be some hurdles along the way, and there might be some frustrating moments where you ask, "What have I gotten myself into?"...

Just know that your puppy is lucky to have you on their side and that you'll get through all of those struggles that come with raising a dog from puppyhood into adulthood. The journey is never ending, and it is an incredible journey that will teach you things you never knew were possible. It is all about the relationship between you and your dog and games are the foundation upon which that relationship can be built.

THE TOP SECRET TO **RAISING A PUPPY** THE ABSOLUTEDOGS WAY ...

Embrace being a **gamechanger** to win the **game of "Life" with a Puppy.**





 **Absolute Dogs.**