



## Inclusive Interview with *Barking With Bianca*

**A**s a seasoned trainer and behaviourist, Bianca has extensive experience in addressing behavioural issues and providing support to dog owners.

We had the privilege to interview her and get some insights on what life is like with a doggy daycare.

### **The Collective Today: Can you tell me about your background and what inspired you to start a doggy daycare?**

**Bianca:** I started daycare to assist the dogs of the local area for the dogs to be able to have interactive play time but also for behavioural reasons as I was getting a lot of inquiries about teaching dogs to play in a relaxed but controlled environment. As a trainer and a behaviourist, I experience of alot of owners asking about the benefits of social play and how it can help. Our daycare has grown in many ways and continues to grow and now even has a waiting list of up to twelve months for programs.

### **The Collective Today: Can you tell me about your background and what inspired you to start a doggy daycare?**

**Bianca:** All dogs are assessed to ensure that they are a suitable match for the daycare program. The program is designed for the dogs to have safe interactions and enjoy quality dog time with other dogs doing dog things.

Some dogs enjoy digging, some dogs enjoy interacting with toys and equipment, Some dogs enjoy just sitting and soaking up the sun and others are just happy to chip by my side.

The main part of the daycare is the close supervision, personalised training and interactions that are provided by myself. This allows me to be able to have a close watch incase something escalates.

### **The Collective Today: What is a typical day like for the dogs at your daycare?**

**Bianca:** A typical day is picking up all the dogs nice and early, then arriving at the training

centre or an open enclosed space specifically for dogs, then safety takes them into the space allowing them to run, jump and play and interact as a group, water is supplied for them and treats can be supplied depending on the day.

Each day is a little different depending on what is happening on the day, we can be learning training skills, or new games then allowing them to have free time or free interactions with other dogs. When it's time to pack up, I normally pack up toys and equipment, then load them all in the trailer ready to be dropped back to their homes. Most of the dogs will then sleep the entire way back until they are dropped off.

### **The Collective Today: How do you assess new dogs for suitability to join your daycare?**

**Bianca:** All dogs receive an assessment and a meet and greet, during this time, I set up an interactive session with the dog to see how the dog reacts and behaviours. I may need to do more than one assessment to be sure it's the right fit. Also, it's very important that all dogs that attend are desexed for control purposes it's important that owner know the importance of desexing and why it is available through vet practices.

### **The Collective Today: What are your policies regarding vaccinations, flea and tick prevention, and other health-related matters?**

**Bianca:** All dogs must be fully vaccinated before starting in the program, I receive a copy of the vaccination records for record purposes. I also remind all the owners to keep their dog's vaccinations up to date as diseases can be spread easily and quickly. All vet practices will send out reminders for pet owners to keep them safe and up to date.

Dogs are also groomed and cleaned by owners making it safe for them to come along to daycare. It's important to help with the control of fleas and ticks when they are groomed.

**The Collective Today: How do you handle behavioural issues that may arise during the day?**

**Bianca:** Behavioural issues are recorded and owners are told straight away of an occurrence has arisen. I then look at supporting the owners through this period. The support can be through training and talking through what needs to unfold and then a behavioural plan as well, looking at what area we can work on to help the dog settle.

**The Collective Today: Can you share any success stories or memorable experiences from your time running the daycare?**

**Bianca:** I had one dog come to me who was very unsure about dogs and being around dogs and people. She was a rescue but wasn't aggressive, just really unsure. I met her one afternoon and she was happy to come and say hello and meet me.

She lived with another dog and the other dog was very easygoing and accepting of her. She came into the program for daycare and started off with a smaller group she was very unsure and just did her own thing. She never came close to me or came to take treats from me in the beginning, but was happy to know where I was and happy to come along.

After a couple of weeks of just working with her and getting her comfortable and confident, she was confident enough to work her way up to be in socialising amongst a bigger group of



dogs, she became comfortable interacting with over 14 dogs and was happy.

Once she got her confidence up, she interacted with other dogs, she didn't bark and was happy to even be separated from the other dog she lived with to come out and play and was so happy to.

She then became confident enough to take treats from me and even was confident enough to join in with games and play on the play equipment too. The transformation was just amazing, and I was so proud to be able to say, I helped her through her journey to become a stronger confident dog.

**The Collective Today: How do you maintain a clean and safe environment for the dogs?**

**Bianca:** The environments are scanned regularly, making sure there are no items that can cause harm, toys are cleaned and washed regularly to assist with the spread of diseases, and water bowls are emptied regularly and rinsed to prevent the spread. If a toy has been damaged in some way, it is disposed of straight away and replaced.

I picked up straight away after the dogs to prevent the spread of parvo.

**The Collective Today: What are your long-term goals for your doggy daycare?**

**Bianca:** Long-term goals for daycare, looking more into interactive excursions with the dogs, beach days, river days, scent classes, and interactive excursions for the dogs to explore. Building up the dogs' recall to be able to go out freely and walk and not have them run off.

**The Collective Today: What do you enjoy most about running a doggy daycare and training center, and what challenges have you faced along the way?**

**Bianca:** I really enjoyed seeing the transformation of the dogs and seeing how they grow and develop.

Most of the dogs come to me when they are puppies; to complete training and to learn new skills, then they continue into daycare to support with their skills as they grow.

I love seeing dogs that come to me with behavioural issues and then over the issue because I work with them closely, and calmly and help their families through the journey, I do a lot of communicating with the families as well as some can be unsure and have questions to ask, I really enjoy helping people and their pups.

The challenge I find is some dogs can be more tricky to work with, but I give it a go and see if I can assist, if not I Work the best I can with that family and give them as much support as possible.

**The Collective Today: How do you see your business evolving in the future, and are there any new services or programs you plan to introduce?**

**Bianca:** I currently support mental health services to show how interactions with dogs can assist in helping us improve our mental health. Dogs can help put a smile on someone's face, they can help transform a person in many ways.

We currently support charities by volunteering in different facilities such as nursing homes, schools, and preschools to assist in mental health, we have also supported firefighters and police officers to assist with mental health awareness. I currently assist in educating people and their pets and helping children to understand how to interact with dogs in safe practices.

I would like to grow this further in the future. And would also like to take it internationally as well. And looking into performing at dog expos and shows.



**Bianca Santucci**

As a seasoned trainer and behaviourist, Bianca has extensive experience in addressing behavioral issues and providing support to dog owners.

