

MARLA TAUSCHER
ATTORNEY AT LAW

14 JAN 17 01:49 PM
CITY CLERK

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments, and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance - that principle is contempt prior to investigation."

--Herbert Spencer

January 16, 2014

HAND DELIVERED

Mark Jomsky
City Clerk
100 N. Garfield Avenue, Room S228
Pasadena, California 91109-7215

Re: Information about Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) and its Effectiveness

Dear Mr. Jomsky:

We have compiled an assortment of documents for your edification on the topic of breed specific legislation and issues related to public safety with respect to dogs in general. The enclosed documents are from a variety of sources, all of which are credible and respected sources for the information they have published. The sources include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), and the National Canine Research Council (NCRC).

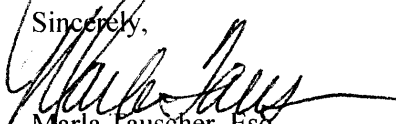
Please note the extensive bibliographies that accompany and support the findings in the enclosed materials and studies. By contrast, below is a statement about the author's sources from the website www.dogsbite.org, on which one of the Pasadena City Councilmembers so heavily relies:

"DogsBite.org contains verifiable information about U.S. citizens killed by dogs including the name and age of each victim, location of attack, dog breed and up to 18 other factors. *Information was gathered through media accounts* that were available at the time of the attack or found through Internet archives, including, but not limited to, Google News Archive and AccessMyLibrary. Each fatality also lists 'source citations,' which links to its related citations."

For more in-depth studies of dog bite fatalities with detailed information about each, please visit: <http://nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/dogbites/dog-bite-related-fatalities/>. We hope that you will read at least some of the materials we have provided prior to consideration of any breed specific legislation.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact me at the number below or Josh Liddy at the number on his business card which is enclosed.

Sincerely,



Marla Tauscher, Esq.

ALL OF THESE DOGS ARE MIXED BREED DOGS

CAN YOU GUESS THE MIX OF BREEDS?

EACH OF THESE DOGS WAS GIVEN A BLOOD-BASED DNA TEST* TO DETERMINE MIX OF BREEDS
ONLY THREE OF THESE DOGS ARE "PIT BULL" MIXES



*Tested with Mars Wisdom Panel™ MX by their owners: www.wisdompanel.com
Significant 50% or more, Some 25%-49%, Distant 12.5%-24%

1. significant Boxer with some Bulldog 2. distant traces of Smooth Fox Terrier 3. significant Chihuahua with some Cocker Spaniel 4. some Rottweiler and Boston Terrier 5. some German Shepherd Dog and distant traces of Affenpinscher 6. some Chinese Shar-Pei and distant traces of Rottweiler 7. some American Staffordshire Terrier and Australian Cattle Dog 8. distant traces of Basset Hound, Dalmatian and Pug 9. significant American Staffordshire Terrier and distant traces of Boxer 10. some German Shepherd Dog and distant traces of Basset Hound, Norwegian Elkhound and Samoyed 11. distant traces of Basset Hound, Dalmatian, Glen of Imaal Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier and Wire Fox Terrier 12. some Rottweiler and distant traces of Clumber Spaniel, German Wirehaired Pointer and Newfoundland 13. some Boston Terrier and distant traces of Bulldog 14. distant traces of Borzoi, Brussels Griffon, Dachshund, English Cocker Spaniel and Samoyed 15. some Boxer and distant traces of Bernese Mountain Dog, Briard, Dalmatian and Welsh Springer Spaniel 16. distant traces of Beagle, Boxer, Bulldog, Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Dalmatian, Mastiff and Whippet

World-wide failure of breed-specific regulation

In the last two decades of the 20th century, communities – even countries – began passing laws that regulated, or banned, dogs based upon their breed or appearance.

These laws break our bond with man’s best friend. Dogs are sometimes seized and killed for no other reason than their appearance. Animal shelters destroy countless thousands or millions of dogs, rather than attempt to place them in loving homes. Pet owners may face the grisly choice of submitting to expensive and onerous requirements, giving up their homes and moving, or turning over a cherished family companion for destruction.

Some governments have stubbornly persisted with such laws, focusing on the dog and its breed, rather than the dog and its relationship with human beings, despite the documented failure of *breed specific legislation* (BSL) to produce the intended outcome, a reduction of dog bite incidents.

Cruel and ineffective

The record of ineffectiveness comes to us from both Europe and North America.

Spain

A study published in the Journal of Veterinary Behavior (2007) showed the Dangerous Animals Act (2000), which targeted a number of breeds of dogs, had no impact on reducing dog related injuries.¹

Italy

In 2009, Italy abolished its breed-specific regulations, which applied to 17 breeds of dogs, in favor of legislation that holds individual dog owners responsible for their dog’s behavior. Italy’s Undersecretary Francesca Martini reported, “The measures adopted in the previous laws had no scientific basis. Dangerous breeds do not exist.”²

Great Britain

A consultation conducted by Britain’s Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) confirmed that public sentiment overwhelmingly favors repeal of the UK’s breed-specific law. 88% of the respondents stated that the current legislation is not effective in protecting the public; and 71% called for repeal.³

In a related development, a bill introduced in 2010 to repeal the breed-specific provisions of the UK's Dangerous Dogs Act has successfully passed its second reading in the House of Lords. Lord Rupert Redesdale's "Dog Control Act" will make individual owners responsible for their dogs' behavior.⁴

Netherlands

Near the end of 2008, the Dutch government repealed a nationwide ban on pit bulls that had continued for 15 years.⁵ The government had commissioned a study of the ban's effectiveness, which had revealed that banning a breed of dogs was not a successful dog bite mitigation strategy. Instead, the researchers recommended better education for children and adults on proper interactions with dogs.⁶

Canada

In Winnipeg, Manitoba, after the city enacted a breed ban in 1990, reports of dog bites actually increased. Though the number has since fallen from those highs, citizens reported roughly the same number of dog bites in 2009 as they did in the year the ban was passed.⁷

The Province of Ontario enacted a breed ban in 2005. In 2010, the Toronto Humane Society surveyed municipalities across the province to see whether or not the law had resulted in a reduction of dog bite incidents. The responding municipalities reported that, despite 5 years of BSL and the destruction of "countless" dogs, there had been no significant decrease in the number of dog bites.⁸

United States

Denver, Colorado enacted a ban in 1989. Thousands of dogs have been seized and killed, some literally snatched from their owners' arms. All of this government-sanctioned animal cruelty has produced no increase in public safety. In fact, Denver's citizens have suffered a higher rate of hospitalizations for dog bite related injuries than neighboring breed-neutral Boulder, which has half the population of Denver.⁹

Miami-Dade County, Florida, also enacted a ban 1989. There has been no significant decrease in dog bite related injuries.¹⁰

Responsible pet ownership: the humane path to community safety

In 2006, Calgary, Alberta, enacted a breed-neutral Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw built on four simple yet important principles: license and provide permanent identification for pets; spay or neuter pets; provide training, socialization, proper diet and medical care for pets; do not allow pets to become a threat or nuisance.¹¹ By educating its citizens to these principles, facilitating

their compliance with them, and backing that up with rigorous enforcement when necessary, Calgary Animal Services has achieved a combined record of compassion for animals and safety for human citizens without equal anywhere in the world. In 2009, 86% of the dogs handled by Animal Services were returned to their owners. Fewer than 5% were euthanized.

Further, in 2009, this city of over 1 million people had reports of only 159 dog bites, of which 101 did not even break the skin. No community in Europe or North American can boast such a record of safety around dogs.¹²

A higher standard for all

There is no scientific evidence that one kind of a dog is more likely to bite or injure a human being than another kind of a dog;¹³ and in no event should dogs be characterized apart from their relationships with human beings. We call on all communities and nations to recognize these fundamental truths; to honor the special relationship between dogs and human beings; to repeal cruel and ineffective breed specific regulations; and to hold all owners to a high standard of humane care, custody and control of all dogs, regardless of breed or type.

¹ B. Rosado et al, "Spanish dangerous animals act: Effect on the epidemiology of dog bites," *Journal of Veterinary Behavior* (2007) 2, 166-174.

² <http://www.iadcro.com/italia.html> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

³ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/dangerous-dogs/101125-dangerous-dogs-responses.pdf> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

⁴ http://www.bva.co.uk/public/documents/Dog_Control_Bill_2010_PR_Second_Reading.pdf (Accessed December 21, 2010)

⁵ http://www.expatica.com/nl/news/local_news/Dutch-Agriculture-Minister-scraps-pit-bull-ban.html (Accessed December 21, 2010)

⁶ Cornelissen, J.M.R., Hopster, H. "Dog bites in The Netherlands: A study of victims, injuries, circumstances and aggressors to support evaluation of breed specific legislation," *The Veterinary Journal* (2009), doi: 10.1016/j.tvjl.2009.10.001.

⁷ <http://www.chrisd.ca/blog/25978/winnipeg-dog-bites-coalition-canada-post-manitoba-hydro-humane-society> (Accessed December 21, 2010);

<http://nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/dog-bites/dog-bites-worldwide/> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

⁸ <http://www.torontosun.com/news/torontoandgta/2010/04/28/13753106.html> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

⁹ <http://www.thedenverdailynews.com/article.php?aID=3473> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

¹⁰ <http://nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/Miami-Dade1.pdf> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

¹¹ <http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/cityclerks/23m2006.pdf> (Accessed December 21, 2010)

¹² Personal correspondence with Bill Bruce, Director of Calgary Animal and Bylaw services.

¹³ B. Beaver et al. "A community approach to dog bite prevention," *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, Vol 218, No. 11, June 11, 2001, pp 1732-1749

Pit Bull Bias in the Media

Animal control officers across the country have told the ASPCA that when they alert the media to a dog attack, news outlets respond that they have no interest in reporting on the incident unless it involved a pit bull. A quantitative study by the National Canine Research Council of dog-bite reportage in a four-day period proves that anti-pit bull bias in the media is more than just a theory—it's a fact.

1. August 18, 2007—A Labrador mix attacked a 70-year-old man, sending him to the hospital in critical condition. Police officers arrived at the scene and the dog was shot after charging the officers.
This incident was reported in one article in the local paper.
2. August 19, 2007—A 16-month-old child received fatal head and neck injuries after being attacked by a mixed-breed dog.
This attack was reported on twice by the local paper.
3. August 20, 2007—A six-year-old boy was hospitalized after having his ear torn off and receiving a severe bite to the head by a medium-sized, mixed-breed dog.
This incident was reported in one article in the local paper.
4. August 21, 2007—A 59-year-old woman was attacked in her home by two pit bulls and was hospitalized with severe, but not fatal, injuries.
This attack was reported in over 230 articles in national and international newspapers, as well as major television news networks including CNN, MSNBC and FOX.

Along with over-reporting, false reporting is a major contributor to the public relations nightmare currently facing pit bulls. There is an emerging tendency for all short-haired, stocky dogs to be called pit bulls—and when a dangerous dog's breed is unknown, the media is not above assuming that the dog involved must have been a pit bull. The National Canine Resource Council terms this phenomenon "Everything is a pit bull, whether it is or not." In the rush to publish, the pit bull label is often inaccurately applied—and even if a correction is later made, the damage is done. Not all media bias is necessarily intentional, but it forms an impression on the public and on legislators nonetheless.

For more information, please visit fataldogattacks.com and nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com.

© 2010 ASPCA. All Rights Reserved.

Share This

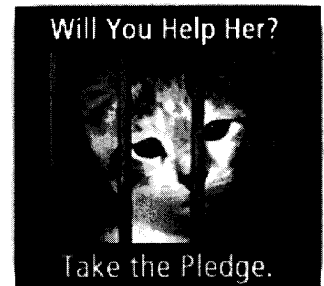
1013

9
tweets

Share

retweet

[Send to a friend](#)





Q: What is breed-specific legislation?

A: Breed-specific legislation (BSL), also referred to as breed-discriminatory legislation (BDL), is a law or ordinance that prohibits or restricts the keeping of dogs of specific breeds, and/or dogs presumed to be mixes of one or more of those breeds. The most drastic form of BSL is a complete ban; but BSL also includes any laws or governmental regulations that impose separate requirements or limitations, including but not limited to: mandatory spay-neuter, mandatory muzzling, special liability insurance requirements, special licensing, property posting requirements, confinement requirements, breed-specific pet limits, sale or transfer notification requirements, and prohibitions in government and military housing. BSL, in all of its forms, results in the destruction of many pet dogs.

Q: What breeds of dogs have been targeted by BSL?

A: Various breeds have been or currently are targeted by BSL. Until the law was repealed in 2009, Italy regulated the keeping of 17 breeds. In the United States, jurisdictions have either banned or put discriminatory restrictions on one or all of the following: American Bulldog, American Staffordshire Terrier, American Pit Bull Terrier, Bull Terrier, Cane Corso, Chihuahua, Chow Chow, Doberman Pinscher, Dogo Argentina, German Shepherd Dog, Miniature Bull Terrier, "Pit bull" (please note that "pit bull" is not a breed of dog), Presa Canario, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Rottweiler, and wolf-hybrids. These ordinances also target dogs suspected of being mixes of one or more of the named breeds.

Q: What position do the leading animal-related organizations take on BSL?

A: All of the following national organizations oppose BSL: American Animal Hospital Association, American Dog Owner's Association, American Humane Association, American Kennel Club, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, American Veterinary Medical Association, Association of Pet Dog Trainers, Best Friends Animal Society, Canadian Kennel Club, Humane Society of the United States, International Association of Canine Professionals, National Animal Control Association, National Animal Interest Alliance, and National Association of Obedience Instructors. In addition, many state and local-level veterinary medical associations and humane organizations oppose BSL.

Q: Aren't certain breeds of dogs more likely to injure or bite than others?

A: No. There is no scientific evidence that one kind of dog is more likely than any other to injure a human being.¹ In fact, there is evidence to the contrary.² A recent survey of the controlled study of dog bites covering 40 years and two continents concluded that no group of dogs should be considered disproportionately dangerous.³

Q: Does BSL reduce dog bites?

A: No. BSL has not succeeded in reducing dog bite-related injuries wherever in the world it has been enacted.

- An analysis published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* explains why BSL does not reduce serious dog bites. The authors calculated the absurdly large numbers of dogs of targeted breeds who would have to be completely removed from a community in order to prevent even one serious dog bite-related injury. For example, in order to prevent a single hospitalization resulting from a dog bite, the authors calculate that a city or town would have to remove more than 100,000 dogs of a targeted group. To prevent a second hospitalization, double that number.⁴
- Denver, CO enacted a breed ban in 1989. Citizens of Denver continue to suffer a higher rate of hospitalization from dog bite-related injuries after the ban, than the citizens of breed-neutral Colorado counties.⁵
- A study published in the *Journal of Veterinary Behavior* (2007), compared medically treated dog bites in Aragon, Spain for 5 years prior to and following enactment of Spain's "Law on the legal treatment of the possession of dangerous animals" (sometimes referred to Spain's Dangerous Animal Act) (2000). The results showed no significant effect in dog bite incidences when comparing before and after enactment of the BSL.⁶
- The Netherlands repealed a 15-year-old breed ban in 2008 after commissioning a study of its effectiveness. The study revealed that BSL was not a successful dog-bite mitigation strategy because it had not resulted in a decrease in dog bites.⁷
- The Province of Ontario in Canada enacted a breed ban in 2005. In 2010, based on a survey of municipalities across the Province, the Toronto Humane Society reported that, despite five years of BSL and the destruction of "countless" dogs, there had been no significant decrease in the number of dog bites.⁸
- Winnipeg, Manitoba enacted a breed ban in 1990. Winnipeg's rate of dog bite-injury hospitalizations is virtually unchanged from that day to this, and remains significantly higher than the rate in breed-neutral, responsible pet ownership Calgary⁹

Q. How costly is it to implement and enforce BSL?

A: BSL is very costly, penalizes responsible pet owners, diverts resources, and is open to challenge.

- Use the Best Friends Fiscal Impact Calculator: <http://bestfriends.guerrillaeconomics.net/> to calculate an estimate of the additional expenses for your community (and you as a taxpayer) that will result from BSL: costs for enforcement, kenneling, euthanasia and litigation, among others.
- Miami-Dade County banned “pit bulls” in 1989. The ban did not reduce dog bites, but has generated litigation costs. Hearing officer proceedings, as well as a circuit court case, have questioned the enforceability of the law.
- The Department of Justice guidelines for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) state that it is contrary to the Act to deny a disabled person equal access to public facilities based upon the presumed breed of their service dog. This has exposed municipalities with BSL to litigation costs when they have attempted to deny such access based the presumed breed of a person’s service dog.

Q: What is the trend in BSL?

A: There is a growing awareness that BSL does not improve community safety and penalizes responsible dog owners and their family companions. Both the Netherlands and Italy have repealed their BSL in recent years. From January 2012-May 2013, three times as many American communities have either considered and rejected a breed-specific ordinance, or repealed an existing one, as have enacted BSL. Massachusetts, Nevada, Connecticut and Rhode Island have recently enacted state laws that prohibit their towns and counties from regulating dogs on the basis of breed. Sixteen states now prohibit BSL. The Obama Administration has announced its opposition to BSL, stating that “research shows that bans on certain types of dogs are largely ineffective and often a waste of public resources.”¹⁰

Q: What is the best way to reduce dog bite-related incidents in a community?

A: Dogs cannot be characterized apart from people. At the heart of any public safety issue involving dogs is the need for responsible pet ownership. Effective laws hold dog owners responsible for the humane care, custody, and control of all dogs regardless of breed or type. Humane communities are safer communities.

Updated 23 October 2013

SOURCES

- ¹ Centers for Disease Control. (2008). *Dog Bite: Fact Sheet*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Dog-Bites/dogbite-factsheet.html>.
- ² Ott, S.A., Schalke, E., von Gaertner, A.M., & Hackbarth, H. (2008). Is There a Difference? Comparison of Golden Retrievers and Dogs Affected by Breed-Specific Legislation Regarding Aggressive Behavior. *Journal of Veterinary Behavior*, (3)3: 134-140.
- ³ American Veterinary Medical Association: Animal Welfare Division. (2012). *Dog Bite Risk and Prevention: The Role of Breed*. Retrieved from: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Backgrounders/Pages/The-Role-of-Breed-in-Dog-Bite-Risk-and-Prevention.aspx>
- ⁴ Patronek, G.J., Slater, M., & Marder, A. (2010). Use of a number-needed-to-ban calculation to illustrate limitations of breed-specific legislation in decreasing the risk of dog bite-related injury.. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 237(7): 788-792.
- ⁵ National Canine Research Council. (2013). *Denver's Breed-Specific Legislation: Brutal, Costly, and Ineffective*. Retrieved from: http://nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/uploaded_files/tinymce/Denver%20BSL%20Brutal,%20Costly,%20and%20Ineffective%20%20Aug%202013.pdf
- ⁶ Rosado, B., García-Belenguer, S., León, M., & Palacio, J. (2007). Spanish dangerous animals act: Effect on the epidemiology of dog bites. *Journal of Veterinary Behavior*, 2(5): 166-174.
- ⁷ Cornelissen, J.,M., & Hopster, H. (2010). Dog bites in the Netherlands: a study of victims, injuries, circumstances and aggressors to support evaluation of breed specific legislation. *Veterinary Journal*, 186(3): 292-298.
- ⁸ Peat, D. (2010, April 28). Pit bull ban fails to reduce dog bites. *The Toronto Sun*. Retrieved from: <http://www.torontosun.com/news/torontoandgta/2010/04/28/13753106.html>
- ⁹ National Canine Research Council. (2012). *Winnipeg, Manitoba Far Behind Calgary in Community Safety*. Retrieved from: http://nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/uploaded_files/tinymce/Winnipeg,%20Manitoba%20far%20behind%20Calgary%20in%20community%20safety_July%209,%202012.pdf
- ¹⁰ The White House. (2013). *Breed-Specific Legislation Is a Bad Idea*. Retrieved from: <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/ban-and-outlaw-breed-specific-legislation-bsl-united-states-america-federal-level/d1WR0qcI>

Not a single dog or human safety expert organization has come out saying breed-specific legislation is effective.
All mainstream and professional animal welfare groups are totally against breed-specific legislation...

American Animal Hospital Association
American Bar Association
American Canine Foundation
American Dog Breeders Association
American Dog Owners Association
American Humane Association
American Kennel Club (AKC)
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)
American Temperament Test Society
American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
American Working Dog Federation
Animal Farm Foundation
Animal Legal Defense Fund
Association of Pet Dog Trainers
Best Friends Animal Society
California Veterinary Medical Association
Coalition for Living Safely with Dogs
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)
International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants
International Association of Canine Professionals
In Defense of Animals
National Animal Control Association
National Animal Interest Alliance
National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors
National Canine Research Council
No Kill Advocacy Center
United Kennel Club (UKC)
United States Department of Justice

2013 breed discrimination year in review

New state laws prohibiting breed-discriminatory legislation:

Connecticut, Nevada, Rhode Island

Municipalities repealing existing breed-discriminatory legislation:

Amesbury, Massachusetts
Boston, Massachusetts
Canton, Massachusetts
Everett, Massachusetts
Haverhill, Massachusetts
Lynn, Massachusetts
Medway, Massachusetts
Rockland, Massachusetts
Whitman, Massachusetts
Winthrop, Massachusetts
Basehor, Kansas
Osawatomie, Kansas
Riverside, Missouri
Annapolis, Missouri
Waunakee, Wisconsin
Darlington, Wisconsin
Bessemer, Pennsylvania
Wooster, Ohio
Orrville, Ohio
Welsh, Louisiana
Newark, Ohio
Bloomer, Wisconsin
Dodge City, Kansas

Municipalities rejecting attempted breed-discriminatory legislation:

Waterloo, Iowa
Camanche, Iowa
Ringstead, Iowa
Baker City, Oregon
Breckenridge, Colorado
Greybull, Wyoming
Watertown, Wisconsin
Rockaway Beach, Missouri
Westwego, Louisiana
Columbus, Nebraska
Great Bend, Kansas
Flint, Michigan
Lansing, Michigan
Royal Oak, Michigan
Broward County, Florida
Bronwood, Georgia

States rejecting attempted breed-discriminatory legislation:

North Carolina, Tennessee, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Massachusetts

There were at least 39 municipalities that have decided to repeal or reject breed-discriminatory legislation. This number is actually much higher than what is listed here. The reason for this is that there are quite a few places that had a proposal or recommendation that was breed-discriminatory that has not been officially rejected, but rather “tabled indefinitely.” Only places that officially rejected a proposal or recommendation were counted. It is also important to note that there have been hundreds of places (at the very least) that amended their dangerous dog laws in 2013. Only a very small minority ever even consider targeting certain breeds or types of dogs.

New municipalities passing breed-discriminatory legislation:

Riverside County, California (mandatory spay/neuter)

Riverside City, California (mandatory spay/neuter)

Dover, Arkansas (ban)

Garland County, Arkansas (confinement)

Murfreesboro, Arkansas (ban)

Livingston County, Kentucky (restrictions)

Clay, Alabama (ban, in litigation)

Bluefield, West Virginia (ban)

Hornbeak, Tennessee (restrictions)

Schuyler, Nebraska (restrictions)

*These 10 passages affect a total of 14 breeds, and their mixes, as well as Wolf hybrids: American Pit Bull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terriers, Staffordshire Terriers, Bull Terriers, Dobermans, Rottweilers, German Shepherds, Akitas, Chows, American Bulldogs, Dogo Argentino, Presa Canario, Cane Corso, American Bandogge.

www.stopbsl.org



Dog Bite: Fact Sheet

Overview

Man and woman's best friend bites more than 4.7 million people a year, and key experts believe that public education can help prevent these bites. The third full week of May is National Dog Bite Prevention Week, and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the United States Postal Service, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are each working to educate Americans about dog bite prevention.

Learn about Rabies: What it is and what you can do about it (<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/qanda/general.html>)

Each year, 800,000 Americans seek medical attention for dog bites; half of these are children. Of those injured, 386,000 require treatment in an emergency department and about 16 die. The rate of dog bite-related injuries is highest for children ages 5 to 9 years, and the rate decreases as children age. Almost two thirds of injuries among children ages four years and younger are to the head or neck region. Injury rates in children are significantly higher for boys than for girls. (See CDC MMWR article (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5226a1.htm>).)

CDC is committed to reducing this public health problem by working with state health departments to establish dog bite prevention programs and by tracking and reporting trends on U.S. dog bite injuries. Dog bites are a largely preventable public health problem, and adults and children can learn to reduce their chances of being bitten.

Things to Consider Before You Get a Dog


- Consult with a professional (e.g., veterinarian, animal behaviorist, or responsible breeder) to learn about suitable breeds of dogs for your household.
- Dogs with histories of aggression are inappropriate in households with children.
- Be sensitive to cues that a child is fearful or apprehensive about a dog and, if so, delay acquiring a dog.
- Spend time with a dog before buying or adopting it. Use caution when bringing a dog into the home of an infant or toddler. Spay/neuter virtually all dogs (this frequently reduces aggressive tendencies).
- Never leave infants or young children alone with any dog.
- Do not play aggressive games with your dog (e.g., wrestling).
- Properly socialize and train any dog entering the household. Teach the dog submissive behaviors (e.g., rolling over to expose abdomen and relinquishing food without growling).
- Immediately seek professional advice (e.g., from veterinarians, animal behaviorists, or responsible breeders) if the dog develops aggressive or undesirable behaviors.



Preventing Dog Bites

Teach children basic safety around dogs and review regularly:

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog.
- Do not run from a dog and scream.
- Remain motionless (e.g., "be still like a tree") when approached by an unfamiliar dog.
- If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (e.g., "be still like a log").
- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.

- Immediately report stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior to an adult.
- Avoid direct eye contact with a dog.
- Do not disturb a dog who is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
- Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.
- If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult.

A CDC study on fatal dog bites lists the breeds involved in fatal attacks over 20 years ([Breeds of dogs involved in fatal human attacks in the United States between 1979 and 1998](#)  ([../images/dogbreeds-a.pdf](#)). It does not identify specific breeds that are most likely to bite or kill, and thus is not appropriate for policy-making decisions related to the topic. Each year, 4.7 million Americans are bitten by dogs. These bites result in approximately 16 fatalities; about 0.0002 percent of the total number of people bitten. These relatively few fatalities offer the only available information about breeds involved in dog bites. There is currently no accurate way to identify the number of dogs of a particular breed, and consequently no measure to determine which breeds are more likely to bite or kill.

Many practical alternatives to breed-specific policies exist and hold promise for preventing dog bites. For prevention ideas and model policies for control of dangerous dogs, please see the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Task Force on Canine Aggression and Human-Canine Interactions: [A community approach to dog bite prevention](#)  (http://www.avma.org/public_health/dogbite/dogbite.pdf)  (<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>). *

NCIPC Programs and Activities


Campaign to Educate Georgians about Dog Bites


NCIPC is funding the Georgia Division of Public Health to conduct a dog bite prevention campaign in Chatham, Bullock, and Effingham counties. During their first year, program staff used the Community Readiness Model to complete a needs assessment. In 2002, a random digit dial telephone survey to assess knowledge, attitudes and behaviors associated with dog bite prevention was conducted. Program staff currently are using educational materials and media outreach to teach children, parents, dog owners, health care providers and other adults about the risk of dog bite-related injuries and about strategies for preventing such injuries. Project staff will evaluate whether the campaign changes people's beliefs and actions about dog bites and reduces the number of dog bite-related injuries occurring in the three counties. Results from this campaign will guide future efforts to prevent dog bites and associated injuries and deaths.

Publications

[Publications on Dog Bites \(/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Dog-Bites/dogbite-pubs.html\)](#)

Other Sites

[American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#) (<http://www.avma.org>)  (<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>) *

[US Postal Service](#) (<http://www.usps.com/communications/community/dogbite.htm>)  (<http://www.cdc.gov/Other/disclaimer.html>) *

Page last reviewed: April 1, 2008
Page last updated: April 1, 2008
Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

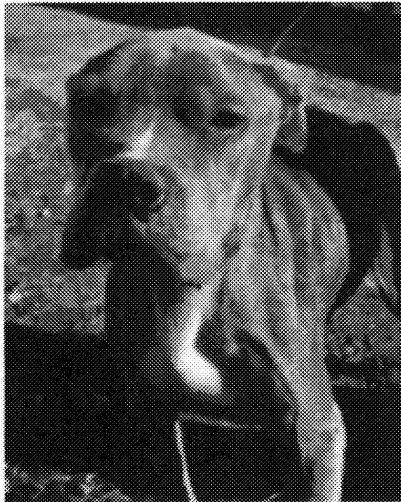
* Links to non-Federal organizations found at this site are provided solely as a service to our users. These links do not constitute an endorsement of these organizations or their programs by CDC or the Federal Government, and none should be inferred. CDC is not responsible for the content of the individual organization Web pages found at these links.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Rd. Atlanta, GA 30333, USA
800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348, New Hours of Operation
8am-8pm ET/Monday-Friday
Closed Holidays - cdcinfo@cdc.gov

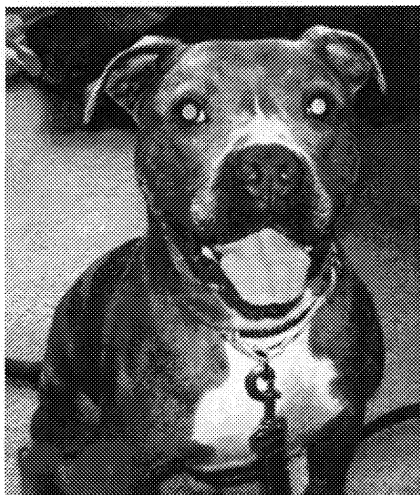


RESIDENT DOG VS. FAMILY DOG WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

All dog owners are responsible for the dogs in their care. Consider the difference between Resident dogs and Family dogs:



Windsor as a Resident dog.



Windsor as a Family dog.

A RESIDENT DOG

Resident dogs are dogs, whether confined within a dwelling or otherwise, whose owners maintain them in ways that isolate them from regular, positive human interactions.

The isolation and lack of exposure to the family unit results in the display of behaviors different from Family dogs.

A FAMILY DOG

Family dogs are dogs whose owners keep them in or near the home and also integrate them into the family unit, so that the dogs learn appropriate behavior through interaction with humans on a regular basis in positive and humane ways.

We will achieve safer, more humane communities when we hold owners of all dogs accountable to high standards of humane care, custody, and control.

Updated January 22, 2013

POTENTIALLY PREVENTABLE HUSBANDRY FACTORS CO-OCCUR IN MOST DOG BITE-RELATED FATALITIES

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY USING A NEW APPROACH

In December, 2013, *The Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA)* published the most comprehensive multifactorial study of dog bite-related fatalities (DBRFs) to be completed since the subject was first studied in the 1970's.¹ It is based on investigative techniques not previously employed in dog bite or DBRF studies and identified a significant co-occurrence of multiple potentially preventable factors.

“This new study and its methodology offer an excellent opportunity for ... anyone concerned with the prevention of dog bite-related injuries, to develop an understanding of the multifactorial nature of both serious and fatal incidents.”

Experts have for decades recommended a range of ownership and husbandry practices to reduce the number of dog bite injuries.² This new *JAVMA* paper confirms the multifaceted approach to dog bite prevention recommended by previous studies, as well as by organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention³ and the American Veterinary Medical Association⁴.

The five authors, two of whom are on the staff of the National Canine Research Council (NCRC),⁵ and one of whom (Dr. Jeffrey Sacks) was lead author on earlier studies of DBRFs, analyzed all the DBRFs known to have occurred during the ten-year period 2000 - 2009. Rather than rely predominantly on information contained in news accounts, as had previous studies of DBRFs, detailed case histories were compiled using reports by homicide detectives and animal control agencies, and interviews with investigators.

The case histories were compiled over a sufficiently long period of time - months or years, depending on the individual case -- for the entire range of available facts

surrounding an incident to come to light. The researchers found that their more extensive sources usually provided first-hand information not reported in the media, and often identified errors of fact that had been reported in the media.

POTENTIALLY PREVENTABLE FACTORS

The researchers identified a striking co-occurrence of multiple, controllable factors: no able-bodied person being present to intervene (87.1%); the victim having no familiar relationship with the dog(s) (85.2%); the dog(s) owner failing to neuter/spay the dog(s) (84.4%); a victim's compromised ability, whether based on age or physical condition, to manage their interactions with the dog(s) (77.4%); the owner keeping dog(s) as resident dog(s), rather than as family pet(s) (76.2%); the owner's prior mismanagement of the dog(s) (37.5%); and the owner's abuse or neglect of dog(s) (21.1%). Four or more of these factors were present in 80.5% of cases; breed was not one of those factors.

The distinction between a resident dog and a family dog was first proposed years ago by NCRC Founder Karen Delise.⁶ 76.2% of the DBRFs in this study involved dogs that were not kept as family pets; rather they were only resident on the property. Dogs are predisposed to form attachments with people, to become dependent on people, and to rely upon their guidance in unfamiliar situations. While it is extremely rare that dogs living as either resident dogs or as family pets ever inflict serious injuries on humans, dogs not afforded the opportunity for regular, positive interaction with people may be more likely, in situations they perceive as stressful or threatening, to behave in ways primarily to protect themselves.

THE STUDY'S FINDINGS ON BREED

The authors of the new JAVMA paper reported that the breed(s) of the dog or dogs could not be reliably identified in more than 80% of cases. News accounts disagreed with each other and/or with animal control reports in a significant number of incidents, casting doubt on the reliability of breed attributions and more generally for using media reports as a primary source of data for scientific studies. In only 45 (18%) of the cases in this study could these researchers make a valid determination that the animal was a member of a distinct, recognized breed. Twenty different breeds, along with two known mixes, were identified in connection with those 45 incidents.

The most widely publicized previous DBRF study⁷ which was based primarily on media reports, qualified the breed identifications obtained in their dataset, pointing out that the identification of a dog's breed may be subjective, and that even experts can disagree as to the breed(s) of a dog whose parentage they do not know. It has been known for decades that the cross-bred offspring of purebred dogs of different breeds often bear little or no resemblance to either their sires or dams.⁸ The previous DBRF study also did not conclude that one kind of dog was more likely to injure a human being than another kind of dog.

Lack of reliable breed identifications is consistent with the findings of Dr. Victoria Voith of Western University^{9,10} and of the Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine.^{11,12} Both Dr. Voith and the Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program conducted surveys¹³ showing that opinions ventured by those working in animal-related fields regarding the breed or breeds in a dog of unknown parentage agreed with breed as detected by DNA analysis less than one-third of the time.¹⁴ Participants in the surveys conducted at both universities frequently disagreed with each other when attempting to identify the breed(s) in the same dog.

90% of the dogs described in the new DBRF study's case files were characterized in at least one media report with a single breed descriptor, potentially implying that the dog was a purebred dog. A distribution heavily weighted toward pure breed is in stark contrast to the findings of population-based studies indicating that ~46% of the dogs in the U.S. are mixed breed.¹⁵ Thus, either the designation of breed in the media reports for the cases under examination was done very loosely, and without regard to possible mixed breed status, or purebred dogs were heavily over-represented. The latter conclusion did not seem likely to these authors, particularly in light of the photographic evidence they were able to obtain. Finally, the news accounts erroneously reported the number of dogs involved in at least 6% of deaths.

The earlier, widely publicized study of DBRFs has been misunderstood, and misused to justify single-factor policy proposals such as breed-specific legislation (BSL), though the authors of that study did not endorse such policies. Failure to produce a reduction in dog bite-related injuries in jurisdictions where it has been imposed^{16,17} has caused the support for BSL to fade in recent years. From January 2012 to May 2013, more than three times as many jurisdictions either repealed BSL or considered and rejected it as enacted it. The House of Delegates of the American Bar Association has passed a resolution urging all state, territorial and local legislative bodies and governmental agencies to repeal any breed discriminatory or breed specific provisions.¹⁸ In August 2013, the White House, citing the views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, published a statement with the headline, "Breed-specific legislation is a bad idea."¹⁹ BSL is also opposed by major national organizations, including the American Veterinary Medical Association, the National Animal Control Association, the Humane Society of the United States, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and Best Friends Animal Society.

UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING HUSBANDRY FACTORS WILL LEAD TO BETTER PREVENTION

The trend in prevention of dog bites continues to shift in favor of multifactorial approaches focusing on improved ownership and husbandry practices, better understanding of dog behavior, education of parents and children regarding safety around dogs, and consistent

enforcement of dangerous dog/reckless owner ordinances in communities. The findings reported in this study support this trend. The authors conclude that the potentially preventable factors co-occurring in more than 80% of the DBRFs in their ten-year case file are best addressed by multifactorial public and private strategies.

Further, they recommend their coding method to improve the quantity and quality of information compiled in future investigations of any dog bite-related injuries, not just DBRFs. This new study and its methodology offer an excellent opportunity for policy makers, physicians, journalists, indeed, anyone concerned with the prevention of dog bite-related injuries, to develop an understanding of the multifactorial nature of both serious and fatal incidents.

December 2013

SOURCES and NOTES:

- ¹ Patronek, G.J., Sacks, J.J., Delise, K.M., Cleary, D.V., & Marder, A.R. (2013). Co-occurrence of potentially preventable factors in 256 dog bite-related fatalities in the United States (2000-2009). *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 243(12), 1726-1736. Retrieved from: <http://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/abs/10.2460/javma.243.12.1726>
- ² American Veterinary Medical Association: Task Force on Canine Aggression and Human-Canine Interactions. (2001). *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 218(11), 1732-1749. Retrieved from: <https://www.avma.org/public/Health/Documents/dogbite.pdf>
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Dog Bites*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Dog-Bites/>
- ⁴ American Veterinary Medical Association. (2013). *Dog Bite Prevention*. Retrieved from: <https://www.avma.org/public/pages/Dog-Bite-Prevention.aspx>
- ⁵ Karen Delise is the Founder and Director of Research. Donald Cleary is Director of Communications and Publications, as well as Treasurer of Animal Farm Foundation, parent organization of NCRC.
- ⁶ Resident dogs are dogs, whether confined within a dwelling or otherwise, whose owners maintain them in ways that isolate them from regular, positive human interactions. Family dogs are dogs whose owners keep them in or near the home and also integrate them into the family unit, so that the dogs learn appropriate behavior through interaction with humans on a regular basis in positive and humane ways. See Resident Dog vs Family Dog: What is the difference?
- ⁷ Sacks, J.J., Sinclair, L., Gilchrist, J., Golab, G.C., & Lockwood, R. (2000). Breeds of dogs involved in fatal human attacks in the United States between 1979 and 1998. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 217(6), 836-840.
- ⁸ Scott, J.P. & Fuller, J.L. (1965). *Genetics and the Social Behavior of the Dog*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- ⁹ Voith, V.L., Ingram, E., Mitsouras, K., & Irizarry, K. (2009). Comparison of adoption agency breed identification and DNA breed identification of dogs. *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, 12(3), 253-262.
- ¹⁰ Voith, V.L., Trevejo, R., Dowling-Guyer, S., Chadik, C., Marder, A., Johnson, V., & Irizarry, K. (2013). Comparison of Visual and DNA Breed Identification of Dogs and Inter-Observer Reliability. *American Journal of Sociological Research*, 3(2), 17-29. Retrieved from: <http://article.sapub.org/10.5923.j.sociology.20130302.02.html>
- ¹¹ Olson, K.R., Levy, J.K., & Norby, B. (2012). *Pit Bull Identification in Animal Shelters*. Retrieved from: <http://www.maddiesfund.org/Documents/Resource%20Library/Incorrect%20Breed%20Identification%20Study%20Poster.pdf>

-
- ¹² Levy, J. & Croy, K. (2013). *Dog Breed Identification: What kind of a dog is that?* Retrieved from: <http://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/library/research-studies/current-studies/dog-breeds/>
- ¹³ NCRC contributed funding to one of the surveys conducted by Western University and one conducted by the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine.
- ¹⁴ DNA analysis of mixed breed dogs is not 100% accurate, nor do the companies offering such tests claim that it is. The accuracy of identification of breed of F1 crosses (offspring of 2 different registered purebreds) is currently reported to be 90%. See: Wisdom Panel™ FAQ's. How accurate is Wisdom Panel™ Professional? Retrieved from: <http://www.wisdompanelpro.com/faq.html>
- ¹⁵ American Veterinary Medical Association. (2012) *U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook: 2012 Edition*. Schaumburg, IL: American Veterinary Medical Association.
- ¹⁶ Raghavan, M., Martens, P.J., Chateau, D. & Burchill, C. (2012). Effectiveness of breed-specific legislation in decreasing the incidence of dog-bite injury hospitalizations in people in the Canadian province of Manitoba. *Injury Prevention, 19*(3) Retrieved from: <http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/early/2012/06/29/injuryprev-2012-040389.full>
- ¹⁷ American Veterinary Medical Association: Animal Welfare Division. (2012). "Welfare Implications of The Role of Breed in Dog Bite Risk and Prevention." Retrieved from: https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Backgrounders/Documents/dog_bite_risk_and_prevention_bgn_d.pdf
- ¹⁸ American Bar Association. (2012). Resolution 100: Adopted by the House of Delegates. Retrieved from: http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/mental_physical_disability/Resolution_100_authcheckdam.pdf
- ¹⁹ The White House. (2013). *Breed-Specific Legislation Is a Bad Idea*. Retrieved from: <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/response/breed-specific-legislation-bad-idea>