



SACRAMENTO SPCA

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OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Puppies

1. It is very important for puppies to learn appropriate play behavior with other dogs. It is critically important that they learn in an environment that is positive and successful for the puppy.
2. If your puppy lets other dogs know that he/she wants to be left alone and those signals are ignored, a puppy will learn that escalating and becoming more aggressive or becoming afraid of other dogs are his/her only options. This will not teach the puppy the appropriate skills in how to interact with other dogs.
3. Any dog younger than six months of age (and even up to one year of age) needs to have a controlled, positive environment in which to learn play and interactive skills with other dogs. Any experiences the dog has that first few months of his/her life will create a lifelong imprint, and will determine much of how that dog will respond in the future.

Size Does Matter

1. Any small breed dog or puppy is at much higher risk for injury from larger dogs.
2. Small breed dogs and puppies are sometimes viewed by larger dogs as 'prey' and the response from larger dogs may be to want to chase, nip, or even bite/kill the small dog.
3. Larger dogs need to be appropriate when interacting with dogs that are smaller. They should be 'gentle giants' when interacting with other dogs. If they are pushy or dominant in their behavior they can injure a smaller dog.

Breed Tendencies

1. Herding Breeds (Border Collies, Australian Shepherds, Queensland Heelers, German Shepherds) will have a tendency to want to chase and nip at other dogs while they are moving. This instinct is very strong in some of these dogs. Most of these dogs will not bite hard enough to injure other dogs, but the other dogs may not appreciate this behavior.
2. Terriers have a big dog attitude and can often be pushy with other dogs. As long as they are playing appropriately and not bullying other dogs they can remain in the play area. Terriers usually do not tolerate other dogs being pushy with them and will sometimes escalate into snarling and lunging to be left alone.
3. Retrievers generally play pretty well with other dogs. However, many of them have 'bad boundaries' and will bump and slam into other dogs, which is really a sign of disrespect for the other dog's personal space. Many other dogs (terriers especially) will not appreciate this and may let a retriever know that this is unacceptable. Luckily, most retrievers will get the message and back off, but if they don't these dogs fall into the 'pushy' dogs category and need to be monitored more closely for appropriate or inappropriate behavior traits.