

“BEFORE YOU BUY THAT PUPPY”

The decision to buy a puppy should be given as much care and thought as you would buying a new car, new home or having a child. Approximately 130,000 dogs are destroyed in pounds each year – most of these dogs are destroyed for simple behavioural problems which could be prevented. Owning a dog requires commitment and is a big responsibility.

- **Why own a dog?**

Do you have the time and patience to nurture and train a puppy?

What will a dog contribute to your lifestyle?

Does everyone in the family want a dog?

Dogs cannot be left alone for long periods – who will care for the puppy?

Can you afford food, veterinary bills, boarding, training, grooming?

- **Choose the Right Breed for You and Your Family**

Do your homework! All breeds have inherited behaviours that cannot be changed – working dogs nip heels, terriers like to chase and dig, hounds like to sniff. Research to breed – seek advice from a qualified dog trainer, contact breed clubs, use the internet.

Many pure bred dogs may inherit medical conditions such as hip dysplasia, eye and joint diseases. Responsible breeders will provide information regarding these conditions and breed from healthy animals that have been tested. Treating inherited diseases is costly. Check that parents have been tested and view the results.

- **Buying a Puppy**

Meet the mother and if possible, the father. Are they friendly confident dogs? Are they happy around you and your children? Do they behave well in the breeder's home?

Look at the whole litter, not just the puppy for sale - are they healthy and well cared for? Have they been wormed, met children or heard household appliances? Inspect their usual living space - is it clean, safe, comfortable? If you don't like what you see, walk away.

Choose a puppy like a partner - for temperament as well as looks! Do you want a pushy boisterous puppy? Shy pups may be nervous. Aim for a temperament somewhere in the middle.

- **Puppy Comes Home**

Puppies can, and should, commence training between 8 and 12 weeks of age. Many puppy owners are disappointed to discover that at sixteen weeks, their pup is too old for puppy school. Paw Behaviour Puppy Schools are held in Hastings, Frankston and Patterson Lakes.

If you need advice on choosing a puppy or would like to book into puppy school, call Paw Behaviour on 9776 1571 or 0414 637 568. Jennifer Wilcox at Paw Behaviour is a qualified behavioural dog trainer. Delta Society Australia's Instructors Course is a Certificate IV in Dog Behavioural Training and the only certificate IV level pet dog training course in Australia accredited within the Australian Quality Training Framework.