



# Command Dog Training School

## INFORMATIONAL FLYER # 3

### CANINE AGGRESSION

Dog aggression is any behaviour meant to intimidate or harm a person or another animal. Growling, baring teeth, snarling, snapping and biting are all aggressive behaviours. Although aggressive behaviours are normal for dogs, they're generally unacceptable to humans. From a dog's perspective, there's always a reason for aggressive behaviour. Because humans and dogs have different communication systems, misunderstandings can occur between the two species. A person may intend to be friendly, but a dog may perceive that person's behaviour as threatening or intimidating. Dogs aren't schizophrenic, psychotic, crazy, or necessarily "vicious," when displaying aggressive behaviour.

A dominant-aggressive dog is an overbearing bully. Such dogs are overconfident and tend to behave like tyrants. Their goal is to be the top dog in all situations, especially within their own families. Dominant aggression is many times seen when a dog perceives that his place in the pack hierarchy is being threatened. This can refer to his place in the "family" or in just the "dog pack" if there are two or more dogs in the household. It usually occurs when there is a change in the living environment of the dog in question, such as getting a new puppy, moving, someone moving out of or into the house, or a change in working schedules, and/or where the dog spends his time. Establishing yourself as pack-leader through obedience training and not treating your dog in an anthropomorphic manner will help overcome such problems.

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