



Breed-Specific Legislation

Position:

Calgary Humane Society does not support the banning of any breed of dog and opposes labeling any specific breed as inherently aggressive, vicious or dangerous.

Calgary Humane Society takes the position that each dog must be regarded as an individual and assessed on its specific behaviours. Calgary Humane Society maintains that rather than breed-specific bans, the required deterrents to dog aggression are responsible breeding, responsible homing, responsible and humane training, and responsible pet ownership.

Rationale:

- Research indicates that the breed of dog is not an important indicator of whether that dog might be involved in an aggressive incident, nor of whether that animal will pose a danger to the community.
- Many dog bites go unreported. The media publicizes a dog biting incident, or a dog attack when the dog is of the so-called “bully breeds” such as Pit Bulls, Rottweiler’s or Presa Canarios, and this publicity may be followed by public calls for breed-specific legislation. The statistics on dog bites and the particulars of aggressive dog incidents do not provide foundation for such legislation.
- An individual dog’s temperament and proclivity toward aggressive or dangerous behaviour is determined by a number of factors: breeding (genetics), training, socialization, health, breeding status (unneutered or unspayed, pregnant or just having given birth, or in heat), and its treatment by a guardian or owner.
- Research indicates that the primary or foundational causes for dog attacks are:
 - Chained dog.
 - Loose or roaming dogs.
 - Leaving dogs reproductively intact.
 - Failure to provide adequate and appropriate humane training, socialization and daily companionship and exercise.
 - Multiple-dog households in which owners either are ignorant about, or do not care about, the behavioural dynamics that can result when dogs “pack”.

Over 1966-2005, 65% of human fatalities from dog attacks in the USA were the result of an attack by a single dog. However, in 87% of these cases, these single-dog attacks occurred in a residence that housed multiple dogs, or in situations where multiple dogs were nearby. During the same time period, 35% of fatal dog attacks involved more than one dog attacking. Karen Delise (2007), *The Pit Bull Placebo: the Media, Myths, and Politics of Canine Aggression*, Ramsey, NJ: Anubusi Publishing, pp. 165-166.