



Canine Body Language

Objective: Assist staff in assessing dog playstyles to improve safety and enjoyment in your play yards!

Content: This lunch and learn is designed to facilitate discussion among your team on the appropriate and inappropriate playstyles seen in the videos. You and the team will view short videos of dogs at play. After each clip, the participants will write down their observations and then a short group discussion will take place. This activity is designed to be completed as a group activity but can also be modified to be an individual activity.

Prior to Lunch & Learn Session:

- In preparation for leading the group discussion, the leader should view the videos and make notes on the playstyles and video dialog.
- Determine how the video will be viewed during the meeting.
- Collect enough pens and paper for each team member to be able to write notes.

During Lunch & Learn Session:

- Open with your thoughts on why assessing play styles and identifying body language proactively in the play yard is critical to safety and fun for the dogs.
- Each video has three repetitions of the same clip. The first is in normal speed, the second is in slow motion and the third is in slow motion with captions.
- Play the first video clip (there is no audio with any of the videos):
<https://www.thedoggurus.com/canine-body-language-videos/>
- Pause after the first clip at normal speed and have your team write down their answers to the questions at the end of the clip. The questions in the video are:
 - What type of playstyles did you see?
 - What good body language did you see?
 - What body language concerns you?
- Engage the team and discuss their thoughts.
- Resume playback and pause after the second clip (which is in slow motion). Did any of their original answers change?
- Finish with the third clip which will provide insight from The Dog Gurus on the behaviors seen in the videos.

Supporting Education Articles/Tools: The articles listed and linked below provide additional information on the topic and can be introduced either before or after the meeting:

Canine Body Language Videos

<https://www.thedoggurus.com/canine-body-language-videos/>

Problem Behavior Management Guide

<http://thedoggurus.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Problem-Behavior-Management-Guide.pdf>

Green, Yellow or Red, oh My!

<https://www.thedoggurus.com/green-yellow-red-oh/>

If you loved this exercise and are interested in implementing a formal staff training program on dog body language, click below to learn more about Knowing Dogs!

<https://www.thedoggurus.com/knowning-dogs-staff-training/>