

Authentic Canine Training
Behaviour Consultation Follow-Up

Consultation Date: [REDACTED]

Dog:

[REDACTED], a 1 ½ year old neutered male, Shepherd/Cane Corso.

Adopted from [REDACTED] as a puppy.

Behaviour Concerns:

Aggression & reactivity toward people.

Dog reactivity is also present, but not the primary concern of this consultation.

Bite History:

3 bites within approx. 2 month time period, most recent one reported to CRD:

1. Adult reaching hand toward face - bite to hand. Level 2 - made contact, no injury
 - a. Adult was instructed not to pet dog, but ignored instruction.
 - b. Adult is known to the family, but not enough time spent with [REDACTED] for him to consider this person "safe".
2. Child pushing past [REDACTED] in narrow quarters while he was being physically restrained by owner - bite to chest. Level 2 - surface marks, no puncture.
 - a. Child is known to the family, but not enough time spent with [REDACTED] for him to consider this child "safe".
3. Child passing by house on the street, [REDACTED] escaped through open front door - bite to upper thigh. CRD labeled as level 2, though based on photo, I would label it a level 4.
 - a. "Ian Dunbar Bite Scale Level 4: One to four punctures from a single bite with at least one puncture deeper than half the length of the dog's canine teeth. May also have deep bruising around the wound (dog held on for N seconds and bore down) or lacerations in both directions (dog held on and shook its head from side to side)." <https://www.dunbaracademy.com/pages/dadd-bite-scale>



Steps Necessary to Keep [REDACTED] in the Home Safely:

- Vet Behaviour assessment
 - On-going behaviour medication to reduce overall anxiety and responses to triggers.
- Basket muzzle and harness with double leash attachment
 - Always when [REDACTED] is outside the home
 - Recommended for when indoors, as well.
- Minimum of two barriers between [REDACTED] and people outside his “safe” list. Along with basket muzzle, this may include:
 - Fencing around yard
 - Gate at front porch
 - Self-closing front door
 - Harness & leash attached with double leash attachment
 - Separation from house guests with crate, muzzle, enclosed in a locked room.
- Behaviour modification is an option, but strict safety protocols would need to take place in the process, and ethical barriers prevent the involvement of children in a desensitization & counter conditioning program.

Behavioural Euthenasia (BE):

- BE is appropriately used when a pet poses a significant and unmanageable risk toward themselves, humans, or other animals.
- When aggression is happening in the home toward immediate family members, this tends to feel more complex to manage safely on a daily basis.
- When a dog behaves well toward family members, and the problem behaviours are only outside the family, this can feel easier to manage on a daily basis, but still poses significant concerns, as detailed above.
 - Additionally, public safety is not only an ethical concern, but also a legal issue.
- Below are some helpful links to navigate the thought process of if or when BE is the appropriate action to take:
 - <https://www.dogsinthepark.ca/blog/2020/8/22/i-dont-think-i-can-do-this-anymore>
 - <https://www.k9ofmine.com/when-should-aggressive-dog-be-euthanized/>
 - <https://www.losinglulu.com/>



Considering the Ultimate Goal:

- If you continue to work with [REDACTED], what life do you envision for him and your family?
 - Rehabilitation to a point of being considered “safe” around strangers is a complex idea, as testing these triggers can pose safety and ethical issues.
 - Will having a dog walker and a daycare always be accessible and ethical for [REDACTED] to attend?
 - Does lifelong management with the above recommendations feel realistic to maintain? Consider a potential lifespan of 10-15 years.
 - How can you prevent the risk of ‘management fails’?
 - With children and guests in home who may not follow directions?
 - What will yours and your family’s quality of life be like in maintaining this management process?
 - What will [REDACTED]’s quality of life be like under this tight management?

Health Considerations:

Dealing with on-going unknown allergies, possibly environmental.

- Health issues can affect outward behaviour and have the potential to increase symptoms of reactivity and aggression.
- If these health issues are likely to come to a quick resolution, then we can observe behavioural changes within the healthy dog.
- However, if, like many allergy cases, there is potential to have prolonged health issues related to allergies, it is unknown to what extent that this would play into [REDACTED]’s behaviour.
- Consult for further information on this topic with Vet and/or Vet Behaviourist

Other Considerations:

- Age: At 1 ½ years old, [REDACTED] is still in an adolescent developmental stage of life, and breed-specific traits often intensify beyond this age. While behaviour-modification would aim to lessen the impact of these traits, he is acting on breed-specific genetics that are wired to cause suspicion toward strangers and protectiveness over family.
- What happens if a new staff member joins his dog daycare, or a maintenance person comes for the day?
- What happens if a child approaches while with his dog walker?



- Location of bites, detailed in bite history above, are concerning, as a level 4 bite to a chest could cause significant damage
 - What if a toddler was standing at his face height?
- Children in home; While not currently an observable risk, an inherent risk still exists.
 - What happens when the children want friends to come over to play?
 - What happens when the children are older and potentially home alone with the dog.
 - What if they want to have a friend over while parents are not home?

Conclusion:

There is no easy answer about what your next step should be with [REDACTED]. I recommend taking time to think over all of these considerations and be honest amongst yourselves about what feels right to you at this moment. If you would like to begin moving forward managing his behaviour, I strongly recommend seeking out a Vet Behaviourist immediately, along with installing the management strategies discussed to prevent his access to strangers. My services remain available to you, as needed, throughout this process, and you have my full support in however you wish to proceed. I recognize you are dealing with a circumstance that no dog owner ever wishes to be faced with, and I empathize deeply for you as you navigate this situation.

Kelsey Cullen, CTC FFCP

