

Behavioral Scoring in Puppy Raising

Walk & Talks

Helen West

Canine Behavior Specialist - Guiding Eyes for the Blind

BCL Consultant - International Working Dog Registry

hwest@guidingeyes.org, helen.west@iwdr.org

Agenda

- What is a walk and talk and what do they look like?
- Who does them and why are they helpful?
- When and where should you conduct them?



- One on one meeting in a real life situation.
- Not a standardized test
- Observe the dog and the raiser in real life situation
- More flexible because of variety of where puppy raisers live
- Held at key points during the puppy's development
- Lasts about 30 minutes to an hour
- It should incorporate experiences to enable the supervisor to score a Behavior Checklist

What is a Walk & Talk and what do they look like?



Who does Walk and Talks and Why are they helpful?

- Puppy Supervisor
- Experienced BCL scorer

Why conduct Walk and Talks

Benefits for Raiser

- One on one time with puppy supervisor
- Ability to ask questions, or for help with challenges
- Learning opportunity outside classroom setting to improve skills
- Ability to see puppy supervisor work with their pup

Benefits for Puppy Supervisor

- See dog and raiser outside of the classroom
- One on one time with raiser
- Help raiser understand dog body language
- Study influence of raiser on dog

Why conduct Walk and Talks

Benefits for The Dog

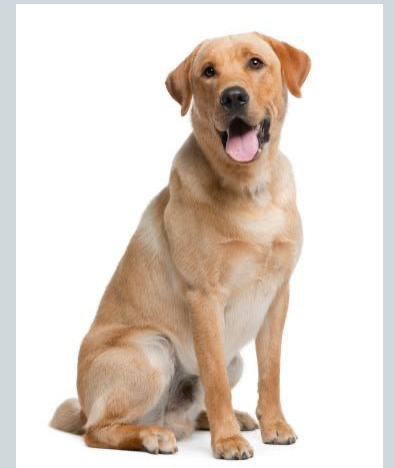
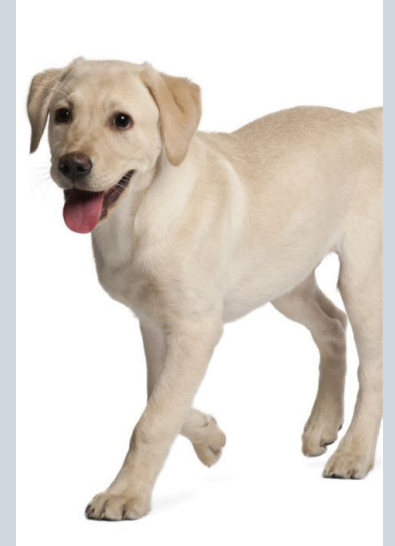
- Ability to work with a more experienced handler, get clear communication and support.
- Opportunity for dog to work through any behaviors they struggle with

Benefits for The Organization

- Regular Behavior Checklists showing dog's progress.
- Provide more data for EBVs or general overview of the Program
- Opportunities to improve the skills of the raiser, and potentially increase the dog's chance of success
- Opportunity to review the teaching styles and skills of the puppy supervisor

When and where should you conduct walk and talks?

- 4, 8, 13 months ideally or 2 weeks either side of those ages
 - 4 months gives early picture of effect of raising since foundational BCL at 8 weeks
 - 8 months prior to or in the beginning of adolescence
 - 13 months many times after a heat, more mature, post adolescence, final look before training



Where can they be done?

- Somewhere appropriate for the age of the pup that gives opportunities to score a behavior checklist
 - Mall, town center, strip mall, Large store or shops, hardware store
- Somewhere appropriate for what the pup can handle
 - You may have to pare down the session due to the capabilities of the pup
- Indoors or outdoors
 - Either can be used but both is ideal



Other considerations

- Before the Walk and talk, ask raiser to fill out a Raiser Survey
 - raiser can list challenges or questions they are having
 - raiser can give feedback on their experience as a raiser with your organization
 - collects any other information you would like prior to the W&T
- During the W&T ask raiser specific questions in relation to the BCL items
- After the W&T provide written feedback to the raiser about what they are doing well and 2 to 3 areas to work on

What we have learned over the years?



- Relationship matters, especially;
 - Clear communication, use of verbal praise and touch for connection
 - Importance of repeated positive experiences with time to process things, to build confidence and time to resolve stress after events
 - Stress can impact both physical and psychological development so health and behavior, especially when it is chronic.
 - Teaching raisers to recognize stress and giving them the tools to help the dogs to manage this.
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- Can provide a lot more data and insight to your program
- Focus on breeding and genetics for highly heritable traits like Body and Harness sensitivity.
- Focus on the environmental impact on the puppy during the raising period for less heritable traits like
 - Distraction
 - House manners
 - Environmental soundness, noise, novel objects etc

Any Questions?