



Annual Review of Cases 1998

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Breakdown of cases submitted

	Dogs		Cats	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Number seen	777	474	50	36
% seen	62	38	57	43
% Neutered	55	64	98	100
Number of problems	1230	707	60	36
% of problems	64	36	52	48

Average number of problems per dog - 1.55 (1.58 per male and 1.49 per female)

MOST COMMON BREEDS REFERRED

Male dog breeds

Crossbreeds
 German Shepherd Dogs
 Border Collie
 Springer Spaniel
 Labrador
 Jack Russell Terrier / West Highland White/
 Golden Retriever
 Cocker Spaniel
 Staffordshire Bull Terrier
 Schnauzer (all types)

Female dog breeds

Crossbreeds
 German Shepherd Dogs
 Border Collie
 Labrador
 Springer Spaniel / Boxer
 Golden Retriever

 Jack Russell Terrier
 West Highland White
 Staffordshire Bull Terrier / Springer Spaniel

Cat breeds

Domestic Short Hair

Burmese

Siamese

Persian

CANINE CASES**Key to Graph**

AP Aggression towards people. Possible causes include fear or status.

AD Aggression towards dogs. Possible causes include fear or rank.

SP Separation Problems - occur when separated from the owners.

AS Attention seeking behaviours. e.g. barking whilst on telephone.

F Fearful and phobic behaviour to auditory or visual stimuli

RB Repetitive behaviours. e.g. tail chasing.

Ch Inappropriate chase behaviour. e.g. towards vehicles or joggers.

HT House training problems.

T Training problems e.g. poor recall.

O Others. e.g. Escapology, Coprophagy and mounting.

Car Problems during travel.

Socialisation and Environmental Conditioning

The early experience of all animals has a profound influence on their later development. Adequate socialisation and environmental conditioning should be introduced as soon as possible, and maintained throughout the first year of life.

Socialisation is the process of introducing a variety of people and animals. Environmental conditioning (also called *Habituation*) is the process of introducing unusual environmental stimuli such as traffic, household noises and bad weather.

In previous years we have considered the importance of adequate socialisation in terms of its effect on behaviour problems. In 1995 we found that fear aggression towards other dogs and strangers, separation problems caused by fear, and phobic behaviours were

more likely to occur in dogs that had not been adequately stimulated during their first year of life. We found that these problems were more likely to occur in dogs that had been reared in a kennel or kennel-type environment from birth.

This year we decided to look at the most common behaviour problems and percentage of dogs referred with these problems that, in the counsellors opinion had been well socialised during the first year of life.

Problem	Percentage
Status Aggression towards owners	59.6
Attention Seeking Behaviours	55.8
Separation anxiety	52
Fears and phobias	47.5
Separation problems due to fear	42.9
Fear aggression towards people	39.7
Fear aggression towards other dogs	36.2

As may have been predicted, behavioural problems associated with confidence feature more highly in well-socialised animals whereas problems due to fear and anxiety feature less strongly.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITHIN THE HOME (CANINE CASES)

Profile of owners	% of cases
One male and one female	44.4
One owner (male or female)	19.2
One male and one female and children under 18 years	18.6
One male and one female and one child under 18 years	15.3
Others	11.7

Mixture of males <i>and</i> females over 18 years	8.5
Two same sex owners (males or females)	5.7

The most common owners of the dogs referred for this Review are one male and one female within the home. The second most common profile was one male or female owner. The third profile was a family comprising of a male and female and children under 18 years of age.

Considering the situation of one male and one female, we found that the most likely behaviour problem to be referred was fear aggression towards dogs and fear aggression towards people encountered outside the home. Of these cases we found that approximately one quarter of them had had a canine companion during the first year of life. These dogs were also more likely to be the only dogs in the home at the time of referral.

Dogs within the second profile of one male or female owner were most likely to display status aggression if they were with a male and fear aggression towards other dogs if they were with a female. In both cases approximately 60% had been castrated and the counsellor considered 55% as having been adequately socialised. These dogs were most likely to be the only dogs in the home and approximately 30% had had a canine companion during the first year of life.

With the family unit of one male, one female and children under 18 years of age, status related aggression was found to be the most common problem referred. Of these dogs, 76% were the only dog in the home, only 15% had a companion during their first year of life and 65% were considered as being well socialised.

OTHER DOGS WITHIN THE HOME

In last year's Annual Review of Cases we looked at the referral of behaviour problems with regards to the number of dogs within the home. This year we have expanded on this to consider whether or not the dog also had a canine companion during the first year of life.

Of the 1251 canine problems considered for this report 387 (30%) were known to have had a canine companion during their first year of life. Of these dogs, 201 (52%) were living with one other dog when they were referred to a behaviour counsellor. This would probably be expected due to the continuing existence of the dog that was the companion during the first year of life or owner preference.

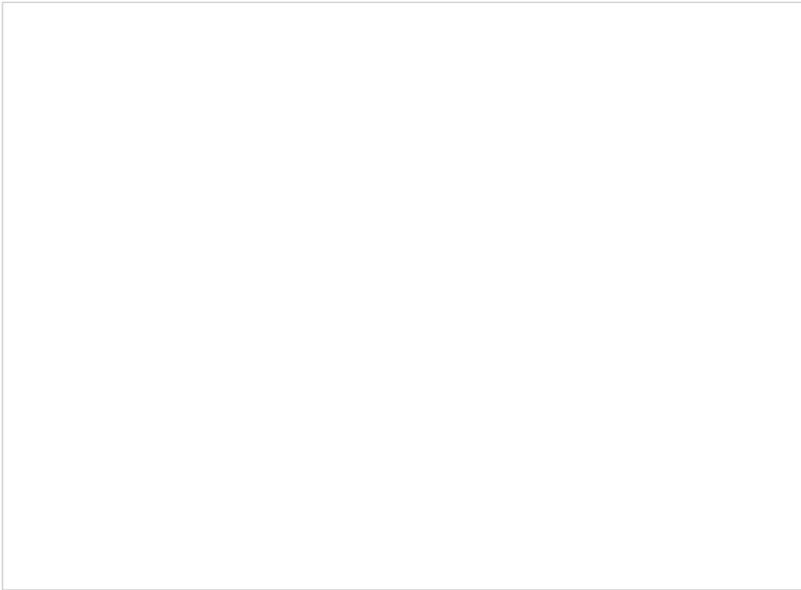
Of the 864 remaining dogs (70%) who did not have a canine companion during the first year of life or were not known to have had a canine companion during this time, 680 (79%) were living as the only dog within the home when they were referred.

The two problems of most interest to this section are fear aggression towards other dogs and aggression between dogs in the same home. The dogs that displayed fear aggression towards other dogs were found to be less likely to have been socialised or to have had a canine companion during their first year of life than the others that were referred for aggression towards another dog in the home.

In the first graph, the most important factor apparent in fear aggression towards other

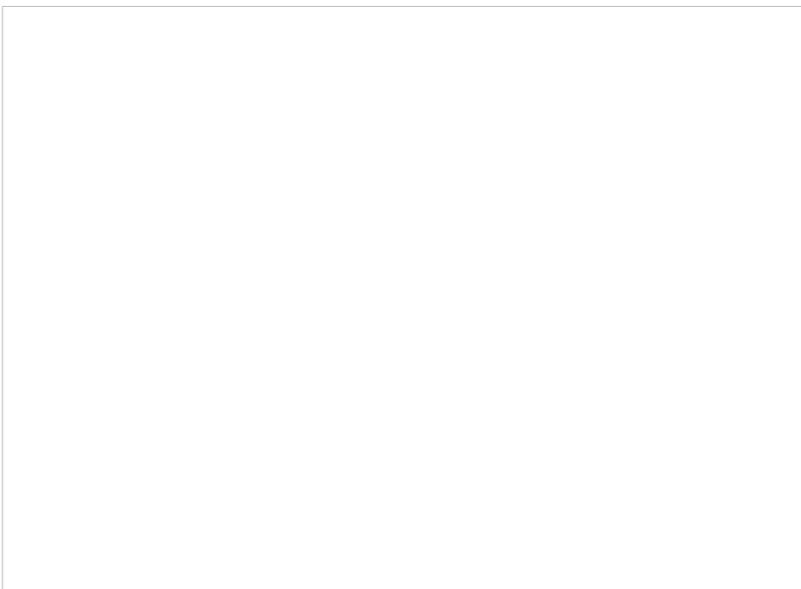
canines is the pet behaviour counsellor's assessment of socialisation. The presence of another dog during the first year of life does not appear to be as important although these two can be linked.

Fear Aggression towards canines - only canine in home



In the second graph, it appears that it is more likely that a dog that has lived with another dog will be aggressive to another dog it has lived with especially if it can be considered as having been well socialised.

Aggression between canines in the same home - two canines in home



Adequate socialisation with other canines needs to extend beyond one dog encountered within the home. Young dogs need to encounter several dogs of differing breeds to be able to adapt varying sizes and colours adequately.

Living with another dog within the first year of life is not a good enough substitute for adequate socialisation.

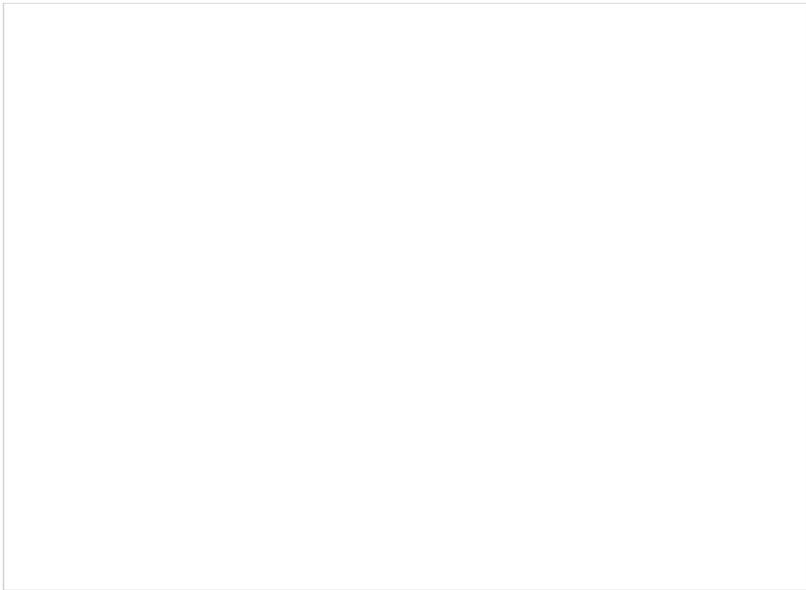
**AGE WHEN REFERRED AND BEHAVIOUR PROBLEM RECORDED
CANINE**

AGE	MOST LIKELY BEHAVIOUR PROBLEM (in order of occurrence)
0 - 6 m	Attention seeking behaviours Fear aggression to people encountered out of home Play-biting
6m - 1 year	Fear aggression to people encountered out of home Attention seeking behaviours Status related aggression
1 - 2 years	Status related aggression Fear aggression to people encountered out of home Fear aggression towards other dogs
2 - 3 years	Fear aggression towards other dogs Fear aggression to people encountered out of home Territorial Aggression
3 - 6 years	Fear aggression towards other dogs Fear aggression to people encountered out of home Aggression between same sex dogs in family
6 - 8 years	Separation Problem (over-attachment on owner) Status related aggression Fear aggression towards other dogs
Over 8 years	Separation Problem (over-attachment on owner) Aggression between same sex dogs in family Fear aggression towards people encountered out of home

REFERRAL OF SEPARATION PROBLEMS DUE TO OVER-ATTACHMENT

1998 saw the launch of two psychotropic drugs designed to provide support for the treatment of behaviour problems. One particular drug received a high level of media interest due to its use in cases of separation anxiety. Separation anxiety is a separation problem caused by the dog's over-attachment upon its owner and its subsequent inability to cope when left alone.

The graph below displays the differences between the referral of cases during 1997 as compared with 1998. In each year approximately 8% of the total number of problems considered were those associated with separation anxiety.

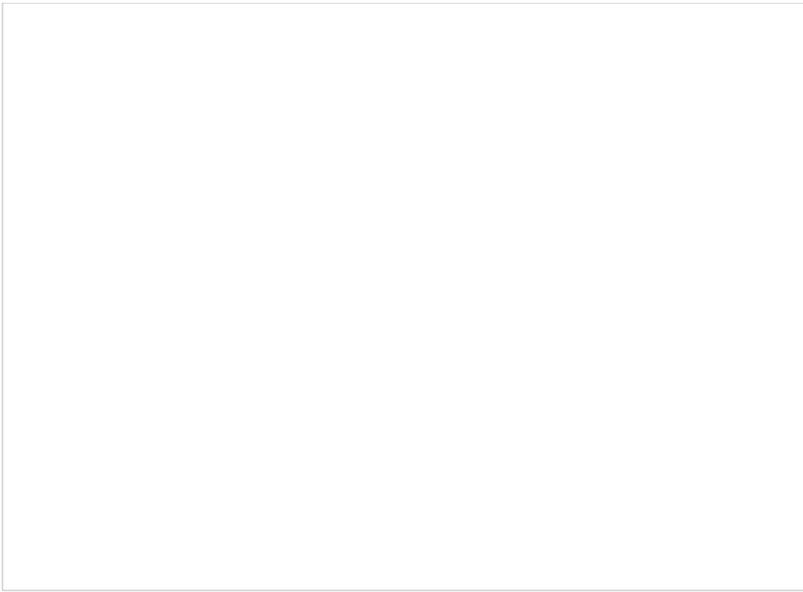


Both 1997 and 1998 follow a similar pattern of referral in that there is a dip in cases after February, a rise as summer approaches and another decrease during the holiday months.

SUMMARY OF CANINE CASES

- The most common behavioural problem referred during 1998 is aggression towards people.
- Problems caused by fear - such as fear aggression, specific separation problems and phobias - tend to be linked with what was, in the counsellor's opinion, a lack of socialisation during the first year of life.
- The most common owner profile was one male and one female. Second was one owner, male or female. Third was a family unit of one male, one female and children under 18 years of age.
- Living with another dog during the first year of life does not replace the need for adequate socialisation with dogs of varying sizes and status.
- Dogs referred to a pet behaviour counsellor before they were 1 year old were more likely to have problematic attention-seeking behaviours than at any other age.
- Fear aggression towards people was the most commonly referred problem in dogs of all age groups except between 6 and 8 years of age.
- A separation problem (due to over-attachment on owner) is more likely to be referred in dogs over 6 years of age

Feline Cases



Key to Graph

- IM Indoor Marking. Includes spraying, middening or scratching
- AC Aggression towards cats. Possible causes include territory or social.
- HT House training problems
- AP Aggression towards people. Possible causes include fear.
- O Others. e.g. avoidance behaviour
- AS Attention seeking behaviours
- F Fearful and phobic behaviour to auditory and visual stimuli
- P Pica
- BP Bonding problems. e.g. over attachment.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITHIN THE HOME (FELINE CASES)

Profile of owners	Number of cases
One male and one female	50
One owner (male or female)	12
Two same sex owners (males or females)	7

Mixture of males <i>and</i> females over 18 years	6
Others	5
One male and one female and children under 18 years	4
One male and one female and one child under 18 years	2

The most common owners of the cats referred for this Review are similar to the results for dog owners. The most common profile is one male and one female, the second most common is one male or female owner and the third, which differs from the dogs, is two same sex owners.

Considering the profile of one male and one female, we found that the most likely behaviour problem that the cat was referred with was spraying. These cats were neutered in 84% of cases. They were most likely to be one of two within the home and 44% had a feline companion during the first year of life.

Cats within the second most common profile of one male or female owner were most likely to display aggression towards the other cat in the home if the owner was male and territorial aggression or spraying if the owner was female. Cats belonging to single men that were referred with a behaviour problem was always neutered, had a companion at the time of referral and had a companion during the first year of life. The cats belonging to the single women were again, always neutered but were the only cat in the home and none had a feline companion during the first year of life. These numbers are too low to draw any relevant conclusions from.

Within the third unit of two same sex owners, 85% of the cases referred were two males. Of these cases the most common problem was spraying urine within the home. All these cats had been neutered, there were two cats in the home at the time of referral and 85% had a companion during the first year of life.

OTHER CATS IN HOME

Of the 86 feline problems referred for this report, 47 (55%) were known to have had a canine companion during their first year of life. Of these cats, 43 (91%) were living with at least one other cat at the time of referral.

Of the 39 remaining cats (45%) who did not have a feline companion during the first year of life or were not known to have had a feline companion, 25 (64%) were living with at least one other cat at the time of referral.

The problem of most interest to this section is social aggression between cats in the home.

Social aggression towards other cats in the home

AGE WHEN REFERRED AND BEHAVIOUR PROBLEM RECORDED

AGE	MOST LIKELY BEHAVIOUR PROBLEM (in order of occurrence)
0 - 1 year	Exaggerated play (e.g. using aggression) Predatory behaviour Petting / biting syndrome
1 - 2 years	Spraying House training problems Territorial aggression towards other cats
2 - 3 years	Spraying Social aggression within the home House training problems
3 - 6 years	Spraying Social aggression within the home House training problems
6 - 8 years	Spraying Social aggression within the home House training problems
Over 8 years	Social aggression within the home House training problems

SUMMARY OF FELINE CASES

- The most common behaviour problem referred was indoor marking. The most likely form of indoor marking was spraying.
- Cats referred for behaviour treatment that belonged to one male or female owner were always neutered.
- Cats referred for behaviour treatment during their first year of life were likely to be showing problematic behaviours associated with learned aggression, predatory behaviour and petting / biting syndrome.

- Spraying was the most common behaviour problem to be referred in cats who were between 1 and 8 years when referred.