



Behavioral Vaccination for Your Puppy: Sharing is Good

A **Behavioral vaccination** is early training (< 6 months) that helps your puppy build his confidence and develop resistance against behavior problems down the road. And, behavioral vaccinations not only help prevent problems like stranger aggression and separation anxiety, they also help your puppy become a delightful companion you can be proud of.

Why Is It Important?

Dogs like to grab hold of things they shouldn't have, so it's important that we're able to take inappropriate objects away. Dogs also like to lie down with a chewie without being disturbed or worrying that someone is going to take their chewie away. If you don't vaccinate your puppy against growling or snapping at you when you get too close to a favorite toy or chewable, you can end up with a dog that has possession aggression.

Why Sharing Doesn't Come Naturally...

Predators that easily give up resources (like food and shelter) don't last long in the wild. It's normal for them to become aggressive when something or someone tries to take their valuables away. It's unusual for them to give up valuable resources without protest or at the very least try to run off and hide whatever it is.

Behavioral Vaccination Training

*If at any point your puppy growls, snaps or bites at you when practicing any of these exercises, stop what you're doing and contact your OS Certified Trainer™ or CPDT Trainer right away.

- Teach your puppy to drop items like toys when asked and progress to his favorite things.
- Trade out something your puppy has for something even better. Sometimes give him the original item back and sometimes keep it.
- Never chase your puppy down and force him to let go of something he has in his mouth.
- If in a pinch, create a Hansel-and-Gretel trail of treats away from the object your puppy is being possessive about.

