

Dog Aggression by Alan Sheppard

This problem generally requires professional help, however here are a few points regarding this common issue

I don't think aggression is ever cured – it can be improved and managed, and you can improve their reaction to the stimulus.

Look for the prelude to a bite i.e.

- Initial turning of their head away

- Yawning

- Licking Lips

- Staring

- A dog will freeze just before striking – watch for it

A dog has 3 options when scared- freeze, flight or fight – if it can't go into flight it will fight – therefore take it away or avoid these situations until you have seen a behaviourist.

Questions when addressing inter dog aggression -

- Does your dog have ANY friends

- Does your dog get aggressive even if your not there

- Has your dog sent another dog to the vet

Aggression is treatable if it has bitten another dog on the ears or neck. If it has really seriously 'mauled' another dog, or a person it is advisable to seek behaviourist help for their advice or have the dog put down (sad but unfortunate truth with severe cases).

Fixing the aggression is about raising the threshold that a dog will bite. You need to work out what are the triggers – multiple triggers may make things harder.

To fix the problem several areas need to be studied including – what stimulus makes your dog aggressive (no reason to know why), and then what stimulus do they respond to stop it i.e redirection tools including counter conditioning using positive reinforcement.