Open Paw

4 Levels of Training

What is Open Paw?

A method of training used by volunteers and staff on shelter dogs and cats.

This method is being used successfully in the USA in several animal shelters and Katoomba RSPCA.

What will we achieve by using Open Paw?

- Dogs that will sell themselves
- Dogs that will stay in their new homes thereby reducing the number of surrenders.
- The feeling that we are achieving something worthwhile
- Learn how to train dogs using positive reinforcement and be able to use this at home and spread the word.
- Reduce injuries to staff and volunteers

How Does Open Paw Achieve This?

- Training dogs to sell themselves
- Training dogs to be calm.
- Training dogs in basic obedience and doggy manners.
- Reading dog body language.
- Recognising potential behaviour problems.
- Escalating potential behaviour problems

Open Paw Level 1

Level 1 - Sit quietly in the kennel

- Teach the dogs to form positive associations
- Reinforce desirable behaviours.

Open Paw – Level 2

Level 2 – Patiently wait whilst a person enters the kennel and puts their lead on

- Desensitise the dog to people entering and exiting the kennel.
- Desensitise the dog to having a collar and lead put on.

Open Paw – Level 3

Level 3 – Training and handling

- Desensitise the dog to being touched all over
- Train the dog in basic obedience
- Teach dogs not to touch or take food and toys until instructed.
- Teach dogs how to play "Tug of War" according to the rules
- To use play as a reward in training
- To teach dogs how to greet people politely

Open Paw – Level 4

Level 4 – Walking dogs

- Walk dogs outside in the pseudo-real world
- Integrate training with rewards such as sniffing and exploring.