

## **Body Language**

Like people, each puppy has their own personality and may react differently when faced with new stimuli; if attentive, you will be able to learn to “read” the puppy’s body language in those situations. To ensure a successful exposure to a new environment or stimulus, it is necessary that you watch the puppy and observe for beginning signs that they may be tired, overstimulated, fearful, or stressed.

During class, we will discuss body language and small signs that may present if the puppy is overstimulated or stressed. If the puppy starts to display any of the following signs, it is time to take a step back from the exposure and reevaluate the situation.

- Rapid head turning, panting, or repeated lip licking may indicate the puppy is over stimulated by the environment and may be experiencing a higher level of stress.
- The head and face tell a lot about the puppy’s state of mind. Wide eyes, ears back or pinned, and tight lips with the corners pulled back may equal stress.
- Walking or standing with the body low to the ground may indicate fearfulness.
- The tightness at which the puppy is holding their muscles. Muscles trembling would indicate extreme stress or fear.
- Be familiar with how the puppy normally carries their tail. A tail that is carried low, or tucked between the legs commonly indicates submissiveness, fear, or stress.
- Sudden disinterest in normal treats/toys/food may indicate stress.
- Exaggerated yawns may indicate overstimulation or stress.
- Sweating through pads—leaving sweaty paw prints on the floor—may indicate stress.

Ideally, the puppy should be loose, relaxed, and happy in all situations. Knowing the puppy’s natural state will allow you to observe changes in body language easily and quickly, and will help prevent an overly stressful/frightening experience from making a lasting impression.



## **Playful or Relaxed**

These body signals mean that the puppy is at ease in their surrounding environments. Your goal is to keep the puppy in this range at all times.



## **Shy or Nervous**

Watch for these signals at all times but especially when out in public. If your foster puppy is exhibiting these signs, contact your obedience trainer for assistance.



## **Fearful or Aggressive**

Your foster puppy should never be pushed to the point of exhibiting these signs. If you do see any of these signals, contact your obedience trainer immediately.

# DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"  
look away/head turn



STRESSED  
yawn



STRESSED  
nose lick



"PEACE!"  
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"  
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE!"  
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED  
scratching



STRESS RELEASE  
shake off



RELAXED  
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"  
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE  
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE!"  
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG!"  
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"  
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"  
play bow



"READY!"  
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME!"



CURIOUS  
head tilt



HAPPY  
(or hot)



OVERJOYED  
wiggly



"MMMM...."



"I LOVE YOU,  
DON'T STOP"