

A NOTE FROM CAMP

Camp K-9

"Let 'em play while you're away"

Rx: Take Two Days of Camp & Call Me in the Morning

Those of you out there with happy, well-adjusted dogs please go home and hug them? As many of you may noticed, my dogs all have various neuroses, ranging from OCD to phobias, but the one thing I can say is that at least they don't have separation anxiety! Separation Anxiety (SA) is a specific anxiety disorder that causes the pet to become distressed while separated from the owner. An estimated 15% of dogs may have SA, and rescued dogs are predisposed. The condition is very complex, and is worsened by the reaction from the family, and is progressive, usually leading to anxiety before the owner even leaves the house.

As SA escalates, dogs begin to learn "departure cues"—the little things we tend to do routinely before leav-

ing. For example, SA dogs will often pace, pant, whine, or drool when their parents pick up the car keys or put on their coat. Once alone, SA dogs often potty in the house, howl or cry, and become destructive. This can be a very frustrating problem for owners of SA dogs. The pre-departure anxiety displayed by the dog can make people feel guilty for leaving. Owners themselves develop anxiety, constantly agonizing about what they will find when they return home. Dogs may feed off their owner's anxiety, resulting in a self-perpetuating cycle. People may feel trapped and unable to safely leave their beloved pet at home.

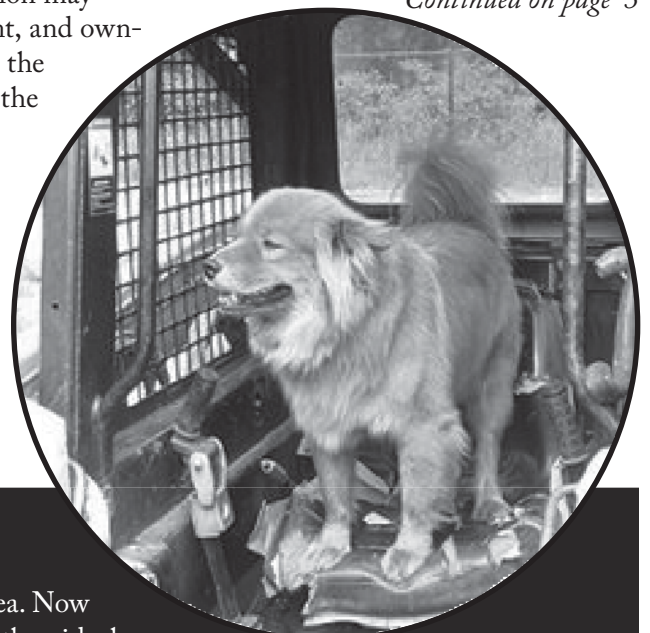
Furthermore, the destruction may cause anger and resentment, and owners feel the need to punish the animal, only exacerbating the

problem. And to top it all off, confining to a crate or room only exacerbates the issue, and can result in injury to the animal.

As vets, we can help guide people with behavior modification techniques, and in some cases medications to help with anxiety. But what's a person to do in the meantime while working and behavior and waiting for drugs to work. For some, daycare can be their salvation! One such dog is Oliver, and 8-year-old Newfoundland, Mix, who has suffered from SA his entire life. As a puppy, Oliver and his mother and littermates were set on fire. Oliver was the only survivor, and

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"He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion." *unknown*



This is Rufus running the back hoe.

Come visit our new addition of 2,500 square feet of indoor play area. Now your dogs can run and play inside when the weather outside is less than ideal.

Indianapolis' Top dogs

1. Labrador Retriever
2. German Shepherd
3. Dachshund
4. Yorkshire Terrier
5. Golden Retriever
6. Boxer
7. Bulldog
8. Poodle
9. Doberman Pinscher
10. Shih Tzu

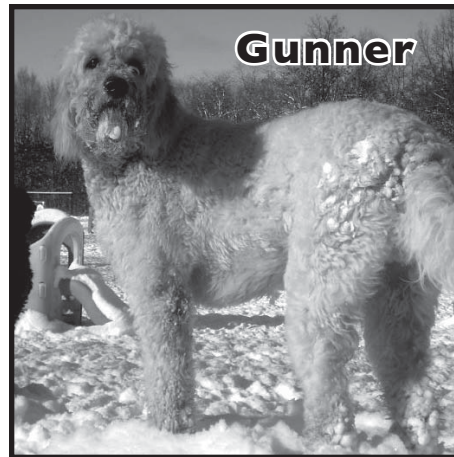
Chicago's Top Dogs

1. Labrador Retriever
2. German Shepherd Dog
3. Yorkshire Terrier
4. Boxer
5. Golden Retriever
6. Rottweiler
7. Doberman Pinscher
8. Bulldog
9. Pug
10. Vizsla

Brightest Dogs

1. Border Collie
2. Poodle
3. German Shepherd
4. Golden Retriever
5. Doberman Pinscher
6. Shetland Sheepdog
7. Labrador Retriever
8. Papillon
9. Rottweiler
10. Australian Cattle Dog

MEET THE CAMPERS!



A year-old Goldendoodle, Gunner comes to Camp twice a week. Gunner has a habit of finding any mud puddle and putting his whole body in it. Gunner was in our "dirtiest dog" contest.



Here is the reason for Camp K-9. Mac is lucky enough to be owned by Al Candler and got the idea for Camp while living in Florida and taking his dog to a similar establishment. From there it snowballed into what is now Camp K-9. Thanks, Mac, for finding "Big Al" and having a great place for all of the four-legged friends to play.



River is a Portuguese water dog. Most people think she is a poodle. River has blossomed at Camp. She was a very scared little girl on her first day. Watch her run in to Camp now.



Here he is having a great time with his friend River. Shadow has more energy than he know what to do with it. Just ask his mom and dad. Shadow comes twice a week—and if it was up to dad he'd be here every day—and has a great time. He goes home tired and both mom and dad love that.

Rx Continued from page 1

still bears the burn scars today. His new mom, Lexy, adopted him and felt so bad about the horrors he endured she lavished him with love—so much that Oliver became dependant upon her and could not stand to be without her. Luckily she worked from home, so dealing with his SA took a backseat. Things came to a head when Lexy and Oliver moved to Indiana and Lexy was no longer at home all day. When Lexy would get ready to leave, Oliver would become increasingly nervous, and while alone would defecate beside Lexy's bed, destroy wood molding and windows, and dig up doors. If confined, he would attack the door, destroying it and injuring his paws and mouth.

When I first saw Oliver, Lexy was rarely leaving the house, too concerned that he would injure himself. As all owners of SA dogs find out, Lexy found the problem escalating. The more time she spent at home, the harder it was to leave. We immediately began implementing important behavior modification, and I recommended Camp K9. At his first visit, the staff had to hold on to Oliver while he struggled to follow Lexy as she left him. While Oliver panicked at first, once he got back with the other dogs he had a blast. The same thing happened at the next two visits, but by the fourth time, Oliver couldn't wait to leave Mom behind as he ran away to play with his Camp friends.

Daycare offers several benefits for treating SA. First, it gets the animal out of the house, providing mental stimulation. Second, it allows for more exercise, burning some of that nervous energy. This makes dogs easier to work with at home when working on behavior. Specifically, dogs with SA frequently follow owners from room to room, sticking to them like glue. Dogs who are tired from a day of play may be less likely to feel the need to get up each time, making it easier to teach the dog "relax" while the owner moves about the house. Third, and most important,

it's FUN!!!! Play, and the emotions that accompany it, are very powerful feelings, overriding fear and anxiety. While praise, attention, and food are excellent motivators for rewards, nothing overrides the chemical reaction produced in the brain by anxiety like fun playtime. Furthermore, not only does the animal have fun, but it has fun **WITHOUT** the owner. This is critical. The goal in treating SA is to build independence so that the dog can function without the owners constant presence.

The final benefit of daycare is relief for weary owners. When Lexy left Oliver at Camp and saw how much fun it was, a weight was lifted. When she has to go out, she can leave Oliver at Camp and know he's not hurting himself (or her house). The relief she feels has lessened her own anxiety, bringing her closer to Oliver, and she no longer feels hopeless.

Since working diligently on his behavior at home and getting him out of the house, quality of life has improved greatly for both Lexy and Oliver. Oliver no longer defecates nor is he destructive when left alone at home. According to Lexy, what is most gratifying is that Oliver is a **HAPPY DOG** and not so consumed with anxiety, and now he actually enjoys his life.

****Please note:** Daycare is only **ONE** tool used to treat separation anxiety. A full behavior modification plan recommended by a veterinarian or behaviorist is required to appropriately access each individual situation. While Oliver and Lexy have come a long way, it is important to remember that treating separation anxiety is a life long commitment—you must continually work at it, as it easily regresses.

*Mariah Covey, DVM
Kryder Veterinary Clinic*



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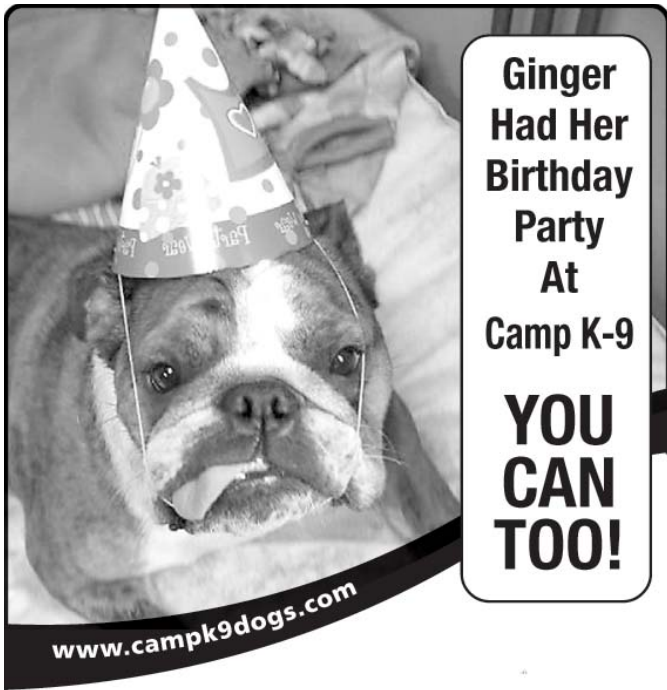
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Ask a Camp Counselor...we tried it first. It works!!!





**Ginger
Had Her
Birthday
Party
At
Camp K-9**

**YOU
CAN
TOO!**

New Camp Activities

Basic Obedience Clicker Training

Come and learn to sit, down, stand, stay, recall, loose leash walking, problem solving skills and many other fun tricks and games to play with your dog. This class is for dogs of ANY age! Monday nights 7pm – 8pm.

2008 Class Dates

April 7 – May 5

June 2 – June 30

August 4 – September 8

(no class September 1)



**Linda's Camp K-9
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Mishawaka, IN 46545**

**(574) 256-CAMP (2267)
www.CampK9dogs.com**

