

# media release

## Make sure you teach that 'old' dog... some tricks

The RSPCA is urging dog owners to train their dogs in an effort to reduce the number of unwanted dogs in the community.

The RSPCA's annual statistics have revealed that the RSPCA last year accepted more than 67,000 dogs into shelters across the country.

RSPCA Australia Scientific Officer, Dr Jade Norris, said too often the RSPCA sees dogs surrendered because of behavioural issues that could have been addressed with adequate, timely and appropriate training and socialisation.

"Dogs that bark excessively or jump up when they're not meant to, aren't bad dogs - there is always a reason behind any behaviour - most dogs just need the opportunity to learn and the RSPCA finds that with the right incentive, they love the learning process," said Dr Norris.

"It's terrible to see so many wonderful dogs coming into RSPCA shelters because they haven't been given this opportunity. Not only will training your dog help take some pressure off our shelters, the mental stimulation will also help to keep your dog happy."

The RSPCA supports reward-based training. This approach to training revolves around positive reinforcement - that is, rewarding behaviour that we like and ignoring unwanted behaviour.

"Reward-based training is an effective and humane way of training dogs and addressing undesirable behaviours. It also positively enhances the relationship between the dog and the handler."

The RSPCA does not support training where punishment is used as a training technique.

"Training that uses punishment or methods that can cause fear or pain to dogs poses serious dog welfare concerns."

"In fact, punishing a dog for 'unwanted' behaviour may increase the dog's underlying fear and anxiety which can actually make the behaviour much worse."

"If you want more information on where to go for dog training in your area, please talk to your local RSPCA," Dr Norris said.

For more information on dog training see the [RSPCA Knowledgebase](#).