

# Breed Specific Laws are NOT the Solution: Demand Dog Laws that will *Actually* Work

When a dog bites or attacks there is a person who helped make that situation possible. Perhaps it is an owner who purposely bought a dog to use as a weapon. Or maybe it is an irresponsible owner who didn't adequately train and control their pet. It could be that children were left with a dog in an unsupervised situation. The worst dog owners try to intentionally bring out aggressive, dangerous behavior in their dogs.

The fact is that any dog - big or small - can bite. Of all dog bites, approximately half are inflicted by crossbreeds and mutts. Which is why it is imperative to pass generic laws that affect all dogs. That is the only way to protect citizens of our communities.

## What is the solution? Generic laws that enforce responsible dog ownership.

"The whole idea of banning certain breeds is just ridiculous."

- Dr. Tim Zaharchuk, President, The Ontario Veterinary Medical Association.

"Breed bans are a reactionary measure. They should not be used as a quick fix."

- Emile Therien, The Canadian Safety Council

"Dangerous dogs can exist in every breed and cross-breed. In fact, any dog can be raised to be aggressive."

- Susan Lavictoire, The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association

**Breed specific bans are a short-term solution.** The owners who want to own a 'tough' dog will switch to another breed that will be just as dangerous as the breed that was banned.

**Breed bans miss dangerous dogs that do not fall into the narrow breed target.** The fact is that dangerous dogs exist in all breed and cross-breeds.

**Breed specific bans punish responsible owners and model canine citizens.** Meanwhile, the irresponsible or criminal owner will switch to another breed, so that the problem still continues.

## American Pit Bull Terriers can be one of the most heroic canines in the dog world.

Tony- and Emmy-winning actor Ken Howard's life was saved by his APBT Shadow. While waiting for a kidney transplant Howard collapsed in his second floor bathroom. Had his dog, outside with his wife at the time, not alerted the wife to his collapse the actor may have bled to death.

### **Weela's Story: Ken-L Ration's Dog Hero of the Year (1993)**

Weela, whose first owner had dumped her in an alley to die when she was less than four weeks old, was rescued by the Watkins family. At the time they had no idea that this APBT would later act to save their son's life.

One day their eleven year old son Gary was absorbed in chasing lizards in the garden. Weela raced over and plowed into the boy, knocking him over. The mother, who saw the whole incident, remembers being surprised because Weela always played kindly with children. Her surprise turned to horror when she saw a rattlesnake sink its fangs into Weela's face. Weela, who had somehow sensed the snake's presence from across the yard, had raced over to push the boy out of striking range.

Weela survived and would have another chance to demonstrate her courage. After a dam broke on the Tijuana River in January 1993 Weela and her owners often helped bring food to pets of their friends. Over the next month Weela made several trips across the swollen river, pulling 30 to 50 pounds of food to animals stranded on an island.

On one of her return trips she came upon a group of 30 people who were attempting to cross the break waters. Weela stopped the people from crossing at this point, where the waters were deep and currents swift, by barking and running back and forth to block their way. She then led the group to a shallower place upstream where it was safe to cross the river.

**Petey from the Little Rascals TV show was an APBT.**

**Take action! Contact your politicians to demand smart and effective dog laws.**