

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

In late August 2004, just a few days before a 'pit bull' attack that made headline news, a young child was attacked by a dog and required over 140 stitches to their head and face in London, Ontario. The dog involved in the attack was not on the media's 'hot list' of dog breeds but was a popular 'family-oriented' breed. This particular attack - and many others like it - was never reported in the media.

The result is that the public has been misled about the danger of certain dog breeds. Which is why we must look to experts for reliable guidance.

Experts on this topic all agree. Breed specific bans are stop-gap measures that do not address the real problem: irresponsible ownership. We need to collect relevant information on all dog bites in Canada, and we need to make people accountable for their dogs.



The experts agree. Breed bans are stop-gap measures that do not work in the long run.

"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 problem will continue as bad owners switch to another 'tough' breed that will be just as dangerous.

Breed bans miss dangerous dogs from other breeds. This can cause people to act irresponsibly based on a false sense of a security when around other breeds.

Breed specific bans punish responsible owners and model canine citizens. Breed bans don't work and they are a very harsh punishment for responsible owners.

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.