



Taking the Bite Out



Even if adopted at eight to ten weeks, pups need to continue their bite inhibition lessons. The best way for the human teacher to do this is to imitate the puppy's littermates. When a pup bites hard, say "OUCH!" in a loud, high pitched squeak and remove yourself from the pup's reach for a few minutes. Then return to puppy play. Each time the pup bites to hard, repeat the lesson.

After several repetitions the pup's bite will begin to soften. You can then repeat the lesson at *gradually* decreasing levels of bite intensity until the pup learns not to bite at all. If you try and extinguish bite behavior all at once, you will frustrate your puppy's natural biting behavior, and fail at the task. At the same time you are softening the bite, you can also redirect the puppy's biting toward acceptable chew items.

***It is virtually impossible for small children to respond properly and consistently to puppy biting, which is why many shelters and responsible breeders discourage families with young children from adopting young puppies.**