



# Virtual Public Day

## Stressing Out: Preventing and Managing Stress in Animals

July 30, 2022 - Free Event

<https://bit.ly/ABS2022PublicDay>



(CCPDT, IAABC, KPA CEUs available)

# ABSTRACT BOOK

**Animal Behavior Society Virtual Public Day 2022**  
**Stressing Out: Preventing and Managing Stress in Animals**

**August 30, 2022**

The Animal Behavior Society (ABS) is a non-profit, professional organization that is dedicated to promoting and advancing the scientific study of animal behavior. Every year, ABS holds an annual meeting, which consists of a few days of scientific presentations and a Public Day dedicated to bringing applied knowledge to a wider audience.

ABS Public Day is a science-based event that embraces a variety of talks from specialists of different areas within applied ethology (study of animal behavior). ABS Public Day is free and open to all, mainly attracting people who work on training, consulting, animal-assisted interventions, among others. We also strive to involve people that live with domestic animals, such as dogs and cats, and are searching for high-quality accessible and up-to-date information to improve their relationships with their animals.

In 2022, ABS Public Day has a theme of “Stressing Out: Preventing and Managing Stress in Animals”. The event includes nine pre-recorded talks. At the end of the day, speakers and attendees will meet on a live panel for questions and answers.

ABS Public Day holds an interesting, applied and diverse program with people from the Americas (North to South) taking part as organizing committee, speakers and audience.

In this abstract book, you will find information regarding the talks and the speakers as well as the abstract for each presentation. We hope you enjoy!

Best regards,

The Organizing Committee

(Natalia Albuquerque, Janet Cutler, Edith Katsnelson Ilan, Michele Wan)

## **Lies and the Honest People Who Tell Them**

Jennifer Abrams, LVT, MA, ACAAB. Behavior Vets of NYC

Do you sometimes lie to your dog? Pretend you are going to the park but head to the vet instead? Sneak out the back door because your dog panics when you leave? Dangle a treat and then grab them for a nail trim? Most of us have done it at some point, and often with the best of intentions. But these actions have consequences. Misleading information can lead to harmful effects on animals, as it does on people. Being unable to prepare themselves for what is coming next dramatically increases dogs' stress levels. You may mean well, but no one trusts a liar. In this talk we'll discuss the different ways you might be misleading your dog, the benefits of an honest approach, how to give your dog more agency in their own life, and why trustworthy information can temper daily stress and anxiety.

**Keywords:** anxiety, dogs, Human-animal bond (HAB), predictability, trust

## **Dogs who can't see: how a multidimensional world can cause stress**

Natalia de Souza Albuquerque, PhD. University of Sao Paulo

The world is multidimensional. That is, all our different sensory channels are used to explore, evaluate and interpret our surroundings. But what happens when one of these perceptual channels is impaired? Here, I will talk about dogs that cannot see – more specifically, dogs that have lost their vision abruptly. In cases like these, the world becomes a very threatening place and doing even the most usual activities, such as walking around the house or drinking water, turn into stressful situations for a dog. This setting makes both dog and owner stressed, and new handling strategies must be put in place – for instance, not moving the furniture, adding more water sources in the household and always keeping them in the same place, using an appropriate collar, assessing whether going for walks is still positive for the dog, among many others. This management will decrease levels of stress and increase the dog's quality of life. This sort of discussion is important to all people who live and work with dogs and are interested in ensuring that these animals live happy and healthy lives.

**Keywords:** dogs, handling, perception, stress, vision

## **Compulsive disorders in Deaf Dogs: dealing with the issue and avoiding stress.**

Carolina Jardim Barboza, BSc Psychologist, CPDT-KA, LLA Professional. Turma do Focinho

Studies show correlations between vision and/or hearing impairments and compulsive behaviors in dogs; such as excessive licking, shadow/light chasing, spinning, fly snapping, or tail chasing. These behaviors compromise the dogs' well-being, but they happen so that they are able to relieve the stress of their current situation. As a way to minimize or prevent the stress these dogs live in, I will address what can be done on a daily basis regarding management of their environment, how to communicate effectively, and assure a routine that meets their physical and mental needs. We will also discuss the importance of teaching impulse control, independence, relaxation and working on incompatible behaviors to the compulsive ones. A case study will show how the frequency and intensity of the behaviors brought by the hearing impairment were minimized when implementing the strategies mentioned.

**Keywords:** compulsive behaviors, compulsive disorder, deaf dogs, hearing impairment, vision impairment

## **Stress: The Good, the Bad, and the Not Always Ugly**

Melissa McCue-McGrath, CPDT-KA. Muttstuff Media/Bewilderbeasts Podcast

Stress happens to us all, whether two legs or four. Understanding what it is, and what it isn't, can do a lot to improve all of our lives. Although we often think about stress as being a negative part of life, stress is actually vital to the happiness of both people and other mammals. We'll talk about "good stress," or eustress, (your dog going crazy when you get out the leash), and "bad stress," or distress, (you having to deal with your dog going crazy when you get out the leash!). Additionally, we'll discuss how to recognize each, and how understanding this universal phenomenon can improve animal welfare, including your own.

**Keywords:** animals, animal welfare, distress, stress

## **Fearful or friendly? Accurately identifying signs of fear in companion cats and dogs**

Lee Niel, PhD, Associate Professor & Col KL Campbell Chair in Companion Animal Welfare.  
Department of Population Medicine, Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph

Animals are unable to tell us how they feel, so we need to watch them carefully for non-verbal clues about their experiences. While most of us feel like we are pretty good at recognizing when our companion animals are stressed, recent research suggests that this isn't always the case. Many people struggle to identify signs of fear and anxiety in cats and dogs, and to properly rate the severity of their experiences. Unfortunately this means that animals might be unintentionally put into fear-provoking situations, and this can lead to reduced animal welfare and development of serious behavior problems like separation anxiety and aggression. The good news is that people can improve their fear ratings if they know what to look for!

**Keywords:** anxiety, cat, dog, fear

## **Treats make everything better: Training Cats To Reduce Stress**

Julie Posluns, MSc, ACAAB. Cat School

Many owned cats routinely undergo procedures in the home necessary for their health, such as nail trims, brushing and taking medication. Cats unwilling to accept these and other treatments may need restraint, which further increases their fear and stress of the event. Positive reinforcement and conditioning training can help cats become more cooperative in their care by reducing the need for forceful handling. For example, cats can learn to accept paw handling through conditioning, and clicker training can teach them a signal to communicate their readiness for nail trims. The result is a more positive response to treatments and a less stressful experience for the owner and cat. Clicker training also provides enrichment and consistent positive human interaction, reducing the stress of boredom for indoor cats.

**Keywords:** domestic cat, operant training, stress

## **Improving the welfare of captive capuchin monkeys with a science-based approach**

Raiane dos Santos Guidi, MSc. State University of the North of Paraná/ Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte

Capuchin monkeys are heavily trafficked in Brazil and kept as pets, and as a consequence, many individuals become captive animals. Living in an enclosure with strangers is very stressful. Individuals can fight or be deprived of social interactions, and show many behaviors indicative of acute and chronic stress. Without assistance and proper care they can have damage to their physical, mental and emotional health. We can help monkeys with good management, and behavioral science can be a tool for this. If there are signs an animal is stressed, we can assess this with personality tests, questionnaires and behavioral profiles. Knowing the personality of each individual provides us the chance to reduce social and captivity stress, helping in the management of individuals and groups and improving well-being.

**Keywords:** environmental enrichment, personality, primates, social stress

### **Helping Pets Cope with Stress**

Kristina Spaulding, PhD, CAAB. Science Matters Academy of Animal Behavior LLC

Our animals face stress on a regular basis. Too much stress impacts welfare and is a leading factor in many behavior issues including fear, anxiety, and aggression. This talk will address what you can do to reduce stress in your animals - and to help them cope with stressors that we can't avoid. In other words, learn how to foster resilience in your pets. We'll discuss what factors increase stress and how simple interventions like exercise, enrichment, and increased choice can enhance your pet's ability to appropriately respond to challenging experiences in their life. Doing so will reduce the likelihood of behavior issues down the road. At the end of this talk, you will have several additional tools in your toolbox to help your pets be happy, healthy, and easier to live with.

**Keywords:** resilience, stress, well-being