



We're on **BABY WATCH!**

When shelter dog Junie Baloonie came to us, she was VERY far along in her pregnancy.

We immediately put out a call for a foster home and until one came along, we got Junie comfortable and kept a close eye on her. Junie quickly became a staff favorite so the shelter became abuzz with excitement when news came from her foster home that she had gone into labor! Go, Junie, go!

1...2...4...7...OMG...10! Ten puppies, total.

We all cheered Junie on along the way, and were so happy that all ten puppies were healthy and chunky! And Junie, well, she looked exhausted but she was in good hands with her foster family.



Letter from the Director

Many of the animals who come into the Fairfax County Animal Shelter require time to heal. They suffer from various ailments and injuries, and we are fortunate to have an amazing medical team and highly trained staff to provide exceptional care for them. Yet, some of these animals have invisible wounds too and healing those is much more complicated. I've spent most of my career working in animal welfare, working for greater protections for wildlife, farm animals, and companion animals and have been amazed by the intelligence and complexity of emotion displayed by all these animals.

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to interview Barbara King an emerita professor of anthropology at the College of William and Mary and author of several books, including *How Animals Grieve* and *Personalities on the Plate: The Lives and Minds of Animals We Eat*. Professor King has written and spoken extensively about animal emotion and grief, including the highly publicized story from 2018 about Tahlequah, an orca whale, who carried her stillborn calf for 17 days around the Salish Sea. Tahlequah's story is one of many that Professor King has documented regarding animals struggling to cope with difficult emotions – not unlike humans. While it is important not to anthropomorphize animal emotion, it is critical to recognize that animals do have emotions. And as we work to heal their bodies, we must also provide the compassion and patience for animals to heal their spirits too.

— Reasa D. Currier,
Director, Fairfax County Department of Animal Sheltering

Today
Through
Valentine's
Day!

**NAME
YOUR
OWN
ADOPTION FEE**
& Adopt Your Valentine



Our Instinct to Love Dogs

According to new **research**, toddlers as young as two have an innate affection for dogs. They act on impulse - helping them reach a treat or toy when the animals show interest, scientists said.

Dr. Rachna Reddy, of Duke University and a lead author of the study, said: "These findings lend support to our hypothesis that children's early-developing proclivities for goal-reading and pro-sociality extend beyond humans to other animals."

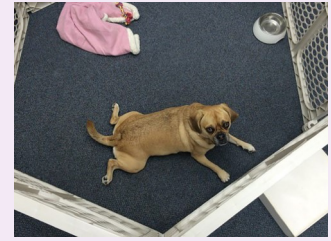
Her team recruited 97 two and three year-olds in Michigan to take part in a series of experiments with three friendly dogs - Fiona, Henry and Seymour. Participants gave them out-of-reach treats and toys in half - or 50 percent - of all events where dogs attempted to access these items themselves.

When given the option to provide dogs with items that the dog ignored, children only provided the undesired objects on 26% of occasions, which is half the frequency that they provided the dogs desired objects at. Researchers found that nearly one of every two children had dogs at home, and the children who had dogs in their home had an increased likelihood of giving dogs objects. Other factors associated with higher incidences of children sharing items were when a dog was highly engaged, and when the object was food rather than a toy.



Reddy said: "From several perspectives, children's proclivities to attribute desires and goals to dogs during real-life, in-person interactions is unsurprising.

"However, we observed as early as two years of age, children behave in ways showing they are not only able to read the goal-directed behavior of another animal but can and do employ that knowledge to help an animal reach its own goal."



Fiona, one of the dogs used in the experiment.

Dogs and children have a lot in common with each other. They can form strong bonds due to the time they spend together. Both a puppy and a baby share the common interest of playing and exploring their surroundings.

If a dog and child have grown up together, they can become inseparable. The relationship they build can be physically and psychologically beneficial for both parties. Babies also experience genuine happiness in the presence of dogs. Studies have identified a rise in levels of the feel-good chemicals serotonin and dopamine.

Reddy added: "In addition to informing us about childhood helping, these early child behaviors may have important evolutionary significance." •

Article adapted from "Toddlers as young as 2 have an instinctive love of dogs," which appeared first on Talker.

How to Show Your Pet Some Extra Love

Don't forget to show your pets the same love they give you every day on Valentine's Day. Chocolate, e-cards, and flowers won't work, so what will? Here are 3 easy things you can do to make your pet feel loved every day.

1 Play more games.

Playing games is an effective stress reliever for you and provides your pets with both mental and physical benefits. To keep your pet from getting bored, find a few activities such as fetch, hide-and-seek and scent games that you enjoy playing together.

2 Learn a new language.

Our pets are constantly communicating with us through their body language, but sometimes we don't understand what they're saying. To learn more, we recommend the books *On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals* by Turid Rugaas and anything by Pam Johnson-Bennett for cats.

3 Pay attention to what he wants to do.

Does your pup indicate through his body language that he really doesn't enjoy wrestling with other dogs? If so, avoid the dog park. Instead, try to find things that he loves doing and work those activities into your schedule. For example, if your dog loves to dig, make him a sand pit out of a kiddie pool. If your cat loves going outside, consider leash-training her or building a cattery so she can enjoy the outdoors safely.

GREAT NEWS!

653 DAYS IN OUR CARE

2 FOSTER HOMES

24 & OUTFITS later



our cat with the longest stay has been adopted!



Congratulations, Elsa!

