

Chapter 8

Your role as mentor

The final component to building the bond is the essential role you play as your pup's mentor. We explore what a good bond looks like, what you need to do to achieve it, and, importantly, how you need to *be* to ensure your pup trusts you and bonds with you.

THE NATURE OF A GOOD BOND

So what does a healthy mentor bond with your pup look like? When you create this mentor bond, your pup will stay close to you, look to you for direction, and study you and your behaviour. Your pup will be attuned to what you want, look at your face and eyes, knowing when you are attentive to him. Your pup will have full trust in you, as you will have been proven trustworthy in pup terms. Remember, it is fine to have more than one of the family being the mentor, in fact it is advisable so your pup doesn't grow an overly dependent bond on one person, which can lead to separation distress and ignoring the other family members.

Many behavioural issues stem from poorly established bonds between the pup and the mentor(s), so it is worth putting in the time and effort to establish and maintain a sound, loving relationship.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO AS A MENTOR

Guidance

As discussed earlier, your role is to provide a secure base for your pup, which allows the pup to grow trust, security and love between you. You need to provide your pup with guidance, including exposing him to any stimuli he needs to understand and adjust to, give him reassurance that you have things in hand, and provide him with a sense of safety,



Your role as your pup's mentor is critical. Here is a young Puppy Zen Master click and rewarding the bond gaze. Notice the position of the lure hand.