



CENTER FOR  
**Shelter Dogs**

A PROGRAM OF THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON

## **FEAR OF PEOPLE**

Your new dog has shown fears of some people. Fear of people is very common in dogs who have not grown up with certain types of people. For instance, dogs that have not grown up around children may be afraid of children. Dogs who have only lived with women, may be afraid of men.

Dogs who are afraid of people may look away, put their tails down, hide, cower and even tremble when they see some people. Some may even growl and bark. If the person they are afraid of reaches out to pet them they may snap or nip.

Dogs who are afraid of people tend to be very friendly to the people they know. By following these guidelines, you will be able to get your new dog to be less afraid of new people. As a result, you will be on your way to a safe and long-lasting relationship.

- Have all new people sit whenever possible. Then have the person toss or hand a **DELICIOUS** treat to your dog.
  - Ask all new people not to look directly into your dog's eyes.
  - Ask all new people **NOT TO PET YOUR DOG** unless he or she approaches them and asks to be petted.
  - If your dog likes to play, give a favorite toy to the new person. Have the person throw the toy to get your dog to play.
  - **DON'T PUSH YOUR DOG!** Forcing a fearful dog to accept people before being ready, can result in increasing the dog's fear and worse, end up with the dog snapping at or biting the person.
  - Don't take your dog to places where there are many people you can't control (parties, parades, ballgames). Most likely your dog will be more afraid and neither you nor your dog will be able to have good time.
- ❖ Many people may tell you that your dog just needs to be "socialized". However, the best time for socialization is between the ages of 3 and 16 weeks. Unfortunately, this time has long passed. You can still "socialize" your dog but now since your dog has become fearful, the socialization must be done slowly and carefully.