

AUDITORY ENRICHMENT REDUCES STRESS IN KENNELLED DOGS

A kennel or a confined environment can be very stressful for dogs and stress has both short-term and long-term effects on health and lifespan.^{1,2,3,4} Reducing stress in dogs, therefore, has a direct effect on their welfare and this can be done using auditory enrichment.^{1,2,5}

HOW IS THE EFFECT OF REDUCED STRESS OBSERVED?



Decrease in the frequency and duration of stress behaviors:

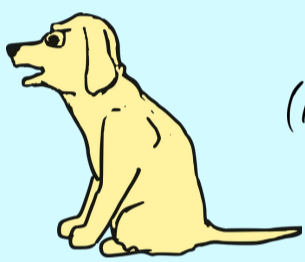
Activity and vocalization are often used to distinguish between stress behaviours and relaxed behaviours.^{1,2,4,5}

– Increased vocalization and increased levels of walking, sitting and standing are indicative of stress.^{1,2,5}

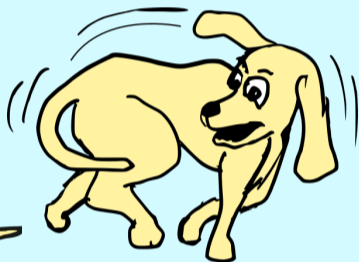
Snout licking, paw lifting lowered posture, body shaking, increased salivation, panting and the development of stereotypies are also indicators of stress.^{6,7,8}



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Increased Vocalization



Increased Activity



Panting



Body shaking



Lowered posture

WHAT TYPES OF AUDITORY ENRICHMENT ARE MOST EFFECTIVE?



Classical music has most notably been found to reduce stress, resulting in more time sitting, lying down, and sleeping and less time vocalizing.^{1,2,3}

– 'The best of Beethoven' album and songs by Strauss and by Bach have been used as well as randomly selected songs from classical albums and Spotify generated playlists.^{1,2,4}

Soft Rock and Reggae music have also been associated with decreases in stress.⁴

– Spotify generated playlists.⁴



Audiobooks also have a beneficial effect on the behaviour of kennelled dogs.⁵

– Clear and strong enunciation with steady pace and tempo when compared to normal human conversation.⁵

– 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' (C.S. Lewis) used as it is popular and appropriate for all ages and therefore appropriate for a range of environments.⁵ Other audiobooks could be used based on these criteria.



HOW TO IMPLEMENT AUDITORY ENRICHMENT?

- Display music/sound evenly throughout kennels if in shelter setting.^{3,4}
- Using speakers if supervised or PA system.
- Set volume to approximate volume of human conversation.⁵
- Ensure different types of songs or audio are being played in order to avoid habituation which occurs within two days.³



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