



## **Your Dog's "Learning" Center– Why a Training Collar Teaches**

The learning center on the dog is an area that starts from its shoulder blades, goes up around the front of the neck, under the chin, and includes the whole of the muzzle and skull. The pups dam uses her mouth and teeth to provide direction to her pups by 'mouthing' and applying pressure from her teeth in this area. When directing a naughty puppy the dam's teeth will apply more pressure in the learning area, "telling" her pup that the naughty behavior will not be allowed. Mother Nature ensured that this type of teaching will not cause the pup or dog undue pain as there are very few nerve endings in the neck/throat area.

Most of the puppies' life lessons are taught by the mom until the general age of 6-10 weeks. At this age the mother is essentially done and the teaching of life lessons is taken over by the adult and semi-adult dogs in the group. All 'teaching' is generally accomplished by other adults in the group with firm nips in the learning area of the puppy.

The area from the shoulder blades back to the tail is a learning center as well, however 'teaching' teeth are not used in this area. This area is to learn rank– paws on the back, humping, or head over the shoulders by other like-age pups is considered inappropriate communication and will quickly be seen as a challenge. Loud growls, mouthing and pawing ensue until the matter of who is higher ranking has been determined.

If a dog uses its teeth in any other way than gently playing on another dogs back, belly or hind legs/hocks this is a real challenge that is settled by an all out fight. Life lessons are not handed out this way.

In order to communicate our needs and wants to our dogs we must use the same method and area the pups doggy teachers use– the learning center of shoulder to nose. A collar with quick pop and release on the dog's neck quickly teaches the dog to override its impulse to lunge, pull or otherwise make its owner dissatisfied. A pop by collar in this learning center is the easiest manner in which to educate the dog. The dog understands this to be a lesson and will learn.

~ Kimberly Kincaid

