

### A Pup's Tale: Factors Predicting Success in Dog-Owner Relationships

#### Breeder Practices and Experiences

(Ethics Approval Number: HEC21006)

*The following researchers will be conducting the study:*

Role	Name	Organisation
Principal Investigator	Prof. Pauleen Bennett	Department of Psychology and Counselling, La Trobe University Bendigo
Associate Investigator	Dr. Tiffani Howell	Department of Psychology and Counselling, La Trobe University Bendigo
Associate Investigator	Dr. Matthew Ruby	Department of Psychology and Counselling, La Trobe University Albury-Wodonga
Student Investigator	Jessica Dawson	Department of Psychology and Counselling, La Trobe University Bendigo
<b>Research funder</b>	This research received in-kind support from La Trobe University.	

#### 1. What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a project investigating long term predictors of success in human-dog relationships. It is widely believed that the first few months of a puppy's life, part of which is spent with the breeder, are highly influential on the development of later temperament, behaviour, and their relationship with their eventual owner(s). Despite this, very little is known about the way puppies are bred and raised prior to going to their new homes. Likewise, little information exists regarding how these homes are selected and the impact such processes may have on later outcomes for dogs and owners.

To answer these questions, in this first phase of the project we are conducting a study investigating the ways in which dog breeders breed, raise, and home their puppies. In the later phases of the project, we will be tracking puppies over the first few years of life to see how factors in their early life, such as experiences with their breeder, shape their temperament, behaviour, and their relationship with their owner. If you are interested in participating in these later phases, you will be given the opportunity to receive information about how you can participate at the completion of this study.

#### 2. Do I have to participate?

Being part of this study is voluntary. If you want to be part of the study, we ask that you read the information below carefully. You can read the information below and decide at the end if you do not want to participate. If you decide not to participate this won't affect your relationship with La Trobe University.

#### 3. Who is being asked to participate?

We are asking for participants who:

- identify as dog breeders;
- have bred a litter in the last twelve months;
- are above the age of 18 years; and
- are proficient in written English.

#### 4. What will I be asked to do?

If you want to take part in this study, we will ask you to provide consent at the bottom of this page by clicking "I agree, start questionnaire". You will then be taken to an online questionnaire that will ask questions regarding your dog breeding practices. It will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete.

If you would like to receive information regarding how you can participate in the later phases of this project, you will be able to provide your contact details at the end of the questionnaire. However, if you would prefer that your responses

remain entirely anonymous, you can complete this survey only and choose not to provide any identifying information, including your email address.

**5. What are the benefits?**

By taking part in this study, you will improve understanding of how dogs are bred, raised, and homed by their breeders. We hope that the results of this questionnaire will inform the development of evidence-based policy promoting ideal dog breeding practices, to improve dog welfare and the human-dog relationship.

**6. What are the risks?**

With any study there are (1) risks we know about, (2) risks we don't know about, and (3) risks we don't expect. There may be a risk for minor negative emotions or psychological discomfort due to some questions on the survey. If you experience something that you aren't sure about, please contact us immediately so we can discuss the best way to manage your concerns.

Name/Organisation	Position	Telephone	Email
Prof. Pauleen Bennett	Principal Investigator	+61 3 5444 7460	puptales@latrobe.edu.au

Please note that the Principal Investigator, Professor Pauleen Bennett, and the student investigator, Jessica Dawson, both breed dogs as a hobby and are current members of Dogs Victoria.

Your responses will be collected, stored, and reported in ways that will protect your identity, as detailed below.

**7. What will happen to information about me?**

By clicking on the 'I agree, start questionnaire' button, this tells us you want to take part in the study. Information provided by you may be included in a thesis, presentation and published in journals.

We will **collect, store, and publish** information about you in ways that will not reveal who you are. If you provide your email address to participate in the subsequent phases of the project, your data will be linked via your email address until the study is completed. When the study is completed, we will collate your linked data via a unique identifier and remove your email address from all associated documents and data prior to analyses. We will **keep** your information for at least five (5) years after the project is completed and may either keep it indefinitely or destroy it after this time. While we retain your data, it may be used by members of our research group for other related studies. Upon completion of the study, the **fully anonymous data set may be posted to a data repository, such as the Open Science Framework.**

The storage, transfer and destruction of your data will be undertaken in accordance with the [Research Data Management Policy](#)

The personal information you provide will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws. Subject to any exceptions in relevant laws, you have the right to access and correct your personal information by contacting the research team.

**8. Will I hear about the results of the study?**

You can request to know about the results of the study by email. You can click a box at the end of the survey and provide an email address for this purpose.

**9. What if I change my mind?**

If you no longer want to complete the questionnaire, simply close the web browser. You can withdraw at any time prior to submission. If you provide an email address at the end of the questionnaire, you may email the research team (puptales@latrobe.edu.au) to have your responses withdrawn within four (4) weeks of completing the questionnaire. If you do not provide your email address at the end of the questionnaire, your participation cannot be withdrawn as we are unable to link who you are with your responses.

Your decision to withdraw at any point will not affect your relationship with La Trobe University or any other organisation.

**10. Who can I contact for questions or if I want more information?**

If you would like to speak to us, please use the contact details below:

<b>Name/Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Pauleen Bennett	Principal Supervisor	+61 3 5444 7460	<a href="mailto:puptales@latrobe.edu.au">puptales@latrobe.edu.au</a>

**11. What if I have a complaint?**

If you have a complaint about any part of this study, please contact:

<b>Ethics Reference Number</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Email</b>
HEC21006	Senior Research Ethics Officer	+61 3 9479 1443	<a href="mailto:humanethics@latrobe.edu.au">humanethics@latrobe.edu.au</a>