

## **"My dog runs away from me!"**

That is the way it appears, but truly is probably not what is happening. Yes, your dog may be running, but not particularly "away." In most cases he/she simply will not come back when you want. And "when you want" may be critical for the dog's safety.

Don't get confused by "fixes" you may watch on television or the internet. Dog training is like building a house. But, instead, you are building a relationship. First the foundation is needed, then the sides go up, and lastly the roof goes on. The roof is usually that the dog comes when called. There are "foundation" and "sides up" exercises that must be in place so the come (or roof) has a support system.

Next, every owner must determine what motivates his/her dog. What does he REALLY like—tennis balls, squeaky toys, tug toys, playing with you, food (pieces of cheese or hot dogs vs. dog treats)??? Every dog is different and each has different motivators. Somehow you have to make yourself, or whatever you have, better than everything else out there. Find something that your dog cannot resist and that will break through all the external distractions that may be driving him/her.

Start inside the house, calling the dog to you and reinforcing when he/she does so using the best motivator you can find. Practice inside the house until you isolate what he/she gets excited about EVERY time and what loses his attention after a couple of times. Don't be inhibited, be flamboyant and excited with your dog.

For behavior modification assistance, contact the Humane Society's Pet Behavior Help Line, 388-3331, Ext. 19, or [www.hsvb.org](http://www.hsvb.org) (Pet Behavior downloads).

The Humane Society offers three Puppy & Dog Training Classes each week—Wednesday at 11AM, Thursday at 7PM and Saturday at 1 PM. The class is a 6-week session; each once-a-week class is about 1 hour. For information contact Connie at 772-388-3331, Ext. 19.