

GOOD DOG! Kids Teach Kids About Dog Behavior and Training

by
Evelyn Pang and Hilary Louie

So who are these “kids,” Evelyn and Hilary, and how did they come to write this extraordinary book about dog behavior and training? Many of you will not be surprised to know that a caring, generous and creative professional named Lynn Loar is responsible for this endeavor. In 2002, Evelyn and Hilary were nine years old. They participated in SHIP (Strategic Humane Intervention Project), an AAT program that Lynn was conducting in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco. The girls asked Lynn if they could do a project for extra credit and Lynn saw this as an opportunity to develop dog training materials aimed at children.

Hilary and Evelyn were very busy, attending both regular school and two extra hours of Chinese school daily. But Lynn recognized their interest, talent and commitment and the three of them embarked on their first project, a brochure for kids that described clicker training. Meeting with Lynn every Tuesday in a bakery across the street from the Chinese school, the girls created a second brochure for kids on teaching specific skills to dogs with a clicker. Then, they translated both brochures into Chinese (all the brochures, including a Spanish translation, are available at www.thepryorfoundation.org). With Lynn’s guidance, they next developed a clicker training glossary.

By now, three years had passed and Lynn said “You have half a book. Would you like to write a whole book?” They certainly did. So, for two more years they met weekly with Lynn and researched and wrote about calming signals and safety around dogs. Evelyn illustrated the key points and made a dazzling drawing for the book’s cover. Lynn negotiated a book contract with Dogwise Publishing and here you have the final product – a first-of-its-kind book written by kids for kids. Let me restate that last sentence: this is a book written by kids for everyone, regardless of age. You will be impressed by:

- The simplicity and clarity of their writing about use of the clicker and training techniques.
- Their wonderful examples of calming signals used by people as well as dogs.
- Their emphasis on gentleness, empathy and safety.
- Their highly readable glossary of terms noted in the text by a little dog paw print.
- Their “Test your knowledge” sections at the end of each chapter. Try taking the tests before you read the book.
- The amazingly expressive drawings that capture the essence of the text.

So Evelyn and Hilary have published their first book at the age of 14. Lynn has tried to convey the significance of the book being listed in the Library of Congress. Hilary and Evelyn believe that proof of success is to be listed on Amazon.com. Lynn is resigned to the fact that she and the girls represent different generations. Their common goal is that each young author will one day attend the college of her choice. With Lynn as their agent, I have no doubt that will happen.