

About Karen Damiani

Karen's current major focus is 'Empathy Education & Training' (EET), an education consultancy that specialises in Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) programs for children from a background of homelessness, violence or abuse. The children's programs are designed to specifically address the harm that violence and trauma brings to children. EET also provides adult education and training in AAT in areas such as program development, animal training, evaluation and management as well as product development and environment design. Karen's extensive background in designing, establishing and coordinating AAT programs for organisations such as Delta Society Australia and Menzies Inc gives her substantial experience in this field of work. (www.animal-assisted-therapy.com)

Karen also continues to work in the field of dog behaviour, training and management conducting seminars, workshops and lectures and also consultancy in this field. With more than fifteen years of experience in her specialty area of dog behaviour and aggression Karen designed and established the first 12 week 'Shelter Dog Rehabilitation Course' in Australia. More than 200 staff, volunteers and members of the public participated in the course in its three years of operation. Conducted at the RSPCA Peninsula branch, the course raised participants' education and skill levels while assisting thousands of shelter dogs.

Karen has conducted lectures, seminars or workshops for

- Melbourne University as a guest speaker each year
- SPCA New Zealand in the area of animal assisted therapy and shelter dog rehabilitation.
- Animal Control officers in NSW and Victoria on dog aggression awareness, management and work safety strategies.
- RSPCA shelters, lecturing and providing staff training in behaviour, rehabilitation, aggression and management of shelter dogs.
- Delta Society Australia's 'Canine Good Citizen Instructors' course' (certificate IV in Dog Behavioural Training)
- Delta Society Australia's Pet Partner Program providing training seminars for volunteers over a number of years in many states of Australia.
- Public seminars in the areas of dog training and behaviour.

Publications

- Co-author for a children's book 'Can I Pat that Dog?' published by Harper Collins and designed to raise awareness and reduce risk of dog bites to children. This book is currently being translated into Korean.
- Co author of Delta 'Dog Safe' an early primary school harm reduction program designed to provide education to reduce the risk of dog bites to children. This program is currently being incorporated into the NSW government 'SPOT' program to be introduced into primary schools across NSW.
- Research published on Thunderstorm Phobic dogs co-authored by N Dodman et al Tufts University appearing in the AAHA (American Animal Hospital Association) in July 2001.
- A dog behaviour and training resource web page 'Australian Canine Current Events'. www.k9events.com. (Currently owned by Pat Robards)

