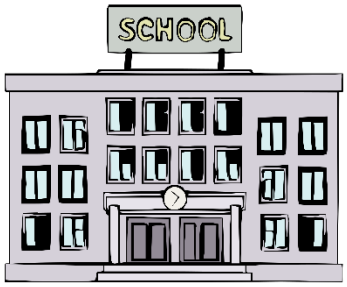
CALLING ALL JUNIORS!



What is the best way to grow the junior engagement in purebred dogs? Tap into a target rich environment, of course!

There is currently a club operating a program on Vancouver Island to promote the world of purebred dogs in local schools and the success on many fronts has been amazing.

- ✓ Increased junior entry
- ✓ Increased event attendance
- ✓ Community engagement
- ✓ Families adding purebred dogs to their homes
- ✓ Increased club membership

Following is an outline of the program:

- Events held from October to May yield best results
- Contact a local school to gauge interest in having a group of students participate
- A pre-assignment for the students could be to become familiar with a particular breed or group of dogs, or perhaps a dog unique to a particular geographical area
- Discover if one of your event judges would be willing to do a 'group chat' with a class of students. For Friday events, when planning the judging schedule, that judge would have a late AM start to judge entries. Make sure you let the judge know the details of the student assignment so they are prepared for questions.
- Students are provided with the judge's bio prior to the visit
- The judge would attend the school for the first class of the Friday morning to chat with the students, answer questions, and talk a bit about CKC events and the junior program

- If the event begins on Saturday, the visit with the judge would take place later Friday afternoon
- If a judge isn't possible, perhaps an exhibitor would be an option
- All participating students would be provided with an invitation to the event on the day junior handling is being held, offering free admission for them and their family.
- Pre-arrange for willing exhibitors with suitable dogs to allow any of the visiting students to participate in the junior handling class being offered at the event

The program on Vancouver Island has been taken a few steps further:

- If the event is happening on a Friday, the class is invited to attend the event that day as a 'field trip' (this is pre-arranged, with waivers being provided to parents ahead of time) while still being invited to return with their family the next day
- A guide is designated to meet the class at a pre-arranged time and place to go over safety rules and basic explanations
- Assign a viewing area
- Pre-arrange for willing exhibitors with suitable dogs to stop by the viewing area to chat with the students about their breed and dog shows
- Any students that choose to continue with Junior Handling going forward become eligible for a scholarship the club offers

This is a program that has value on many fronts, and may be a good candidate for a 'pilot project' with a few clubs that want to test it out. The program easily fits any event type, creating a host of possibilities.

Copyright 2025 © The Canadian Kennel Club™