



PROUDLY PRESENT

March 20-22
2026

FROM START TO FINISH

Success in Aggression and Separation Anxiety Cases

Michael Shikashio (CDBC) and **Dr Moira Hechenleitner** (DVM, CSAT)

Sydney Masonic Centre, Level 24/66 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000



Hurry
Reserve your
place today!

PROGRAM NOTES

Michael Shikashio (CDBC)



Beyond the bite: Working with dog aggression

Keeping it simple is key to understanding aggressive behaviour. In this session, Mike will explore the many reasons dogs may display aggression and share the straightforward concepts and techniques he uses to achieve positive outcomes in aggression cases.

He'll also dive into the emotions that influence dog aggression—what they look like, why they matter, and how they guide our approach. You'll see videos of dogs displaying body language, behaviours, and physiological signs that reveal their underlying emotions, along with practical strategies for helping clients and their dogs.

From emotions to underlying medical factors to the wide range of motivations behind behaviour, we'll take an in-depth look at aggression and learn how to best support dogs and their guardians.

Safety first: Management in aggression cases

Safety is the top priority when working with dogs who have a history of aggression—for the handler, the public, and the dog. In this session, Mike will share practical, effective management strategies and tools to reduce risk and create a safe working environment in any aggression case.

We'll cover the essential safety considerations to put in place before beginning any behaviour modification plan, including environmental setup and secure handling protocols, as well as the strategic use of equipment such as muzzles, barriers, and leashes. You'll learn how to match the right tools to each unique case, ensuring you have layers of protection that support both safety and progress.

Through real-world examples and video demonstrations, Mike will highlight proactive management techniques that not only prevent incidents but also set dogs and their handlers up for success. Whether you're working in a client's home, a shelter, or a public space, this session will give you the confidence to manage even the most challenging aggression cases with skill and foresight.

Prognosis and realistic goal setting in aggression cases

One of the most critical aspects of working on an aggression case is guiding clients and adopters toward a clear, realistic understanding of what success might look like for their unique situation. In this session, Mike will

walk you through how to assess and communicate a prognosis that sets achievable goals, while balancing the needs of the dog, the household, and safety considerations.

We'll explore the many factors that influence prognosis, including the dog's history, environment, triggers, behaviour patterns, and responsiveness to intervention. You'll learn how to frame realistic expectations in a way that empowers clients, keeps them engaged in the process, and fosters long-term management and improvement.

This approach not only supports better outcomes for dogs and their people but also helps prevent burnout and compassion fatigue for trainers, shelter staff, and other professionals working with challenging behaviour cases. By the end of this session, you'll have practical strategies for blending empathy with honesty, ensuring you can deliver assessments that are both hopeful and grounded in reality.

Tried and true: Behaviour change strategies in aggression cases that don't bite

Creativity and ingenuity in training and behaviour change strategies have been wonderful aspects of the dog training community, especially when addressing aggression. Throughout the years, numerous excellent protocols have emerged, ranging from the "ATs" such as LAT, BAT, CAT, and RAT to more traditional techniques such as desensitisation and counterconditioning. With such a wide array of options available, it can be challenging to determine the most suitable protocol for your specific case and which approach will yield the most effective results.

Join aggression specialist Michael Shikashio as he shares his personal experiences with a variety of techniques and highlights those he considers "tried and true."

Let's play behaviour consultant: Solving dog-to-human aggression cases

Step into the role of a behaviour consultant and get ready to put your problem-solving skills to the test in an exciting, interactive session with Mike. You'll gain valuable insights into the intricacies of dog-to-human aggression and, through real-life case studies, analyse these complex issues in depth.

Attendees will actively collaborate with Mike, working through every critical step in addressing aggression cases—from the initial history-taking process for a thorough understanding, to safety protocols and effective management strategies, and finally, the implementation of behaviour change techniques. This engaging session will equip you with the knowledge and skills to confidently handle a wide range of aggressive behaviours.

Let's play behaviour consultant: Solving dog-to-dog aggression cases

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AggressiveDog.com

Dr Moira Hechenleitner (DVM, CSAT)

The truth about separation-related behaviours

The term separation-related behaviours (SRBs) has gained popularity in recent years, yet it's still often used interchangeably with separation anxiety—a mix-up that can lead to confusion and ineffective treatment.

In this talk, Moira will clarify the difference between SRBs—the unwanted behaviours dogs may show when left alone—and true separation anxiety, which is driven by a persistent stress response that does not improve with repeated exposure.

Through real-life video examples, you'll explore the diverse range of underlying causes behind SRBs. Some may be rooted primarily in anxiety, while others arise from different emotional or environmental factors. Understanding these distinctions is the first step toward selecting the right path forward for each individual dog.

Home alone horrors: Assessing separation anxiety

When a dog struggles alone, the behaviours you see are only the tip of the iceberg. This session shows you how to uncover what's beneath the surface. Building on the distinction between separation-related behaviours (SRBs) and true separation anxiety, Moira walks you through a clear assessment process designed to identify the real driver of the behaviour.

You'll learn how to combine context, thorough background history, and direct observation to piece together an accurate picture of what's happening. We'll explore what to ask (life stage, environment, recent changes, health considerations, learning history), what to watch for during the assessment, and how to interpret these findings without jumping to conclusions.

We'll also cover the practical side of setting up an assessment—whether live or recorded—including how to position cameras for the clearest view, what details to capture, and how to ensure your observations are complete and objective. By the end, you'll have a repeatable, real-world framework for distinguishing anxiety-driven distress from other look-alike behaviours, giving you the clarity needed to plan the next steps effectively.

The three pillars of separation anxiety training: An integrative approach

Once a thorough assessment confirms separation anxiety, the real work begins—designing a training plan that addresses not only the behaviour, but the dog's overall well-being. In this talk, Moira will guide you through the three essential pillars of an effective, integrative separation anxiety plan:

- Suspension of Absences: Why preventing your dog from being left alone outside of training sessions is a non-negotiable foundation.
- Systematic Desensitisation Training: A gradual, step-by-step approach to increasing absence tolerance.
- Medical Support: Veterinary collaboration, health care, and behaviour medication when appropriate.

You'll also see how these pillars fit together in an integrative framework—one that treats the dog as a whole being, not just a "separation anxiety case." With help from a "village" of support—owners, vets, other trainers, and SA specialists—this approach turns an overwhelming challenge into a structured, compassionate path to success.

Separation anxiety demystified: Real stories, false fixes, and keys to prognosis

Separation anxiety advice is everywhere—but not all of it works. In this talk, Moira separates fact from fiction, tackling some of the most persistent myths about treating separation anxiety and explaining why these "quick fixes" often fall short.



You'll also explore what really shapes prognosis: factors within the dog's world, their health, learning style, and co-existing behaviour challenges, as well as the realities of the human side—time, resources, and emotional bandwidth.

The session wraps up with real-life case studies that follow each dog's journey from initial assessment through training, setbacks, and breakthroughs. You'll see how evidence-based strategies and thoughtful decision-making can lead to meaningful progress, even in the most challenging cases.

Practice time! Solving separation-related behaviour cases

Step into the role of a separation anxiety specialist and put your assessment and training-planning skills to the test in this interactive, two-part session with Moira. Through detailed mock cases based on real-life scenarios, you'll work alongside Moira to untangle the complexities of separation-related behaviours.

Attendees will actively collaborate to identify underlying causes, interpret case histories, and decide on next steps—whether it's ruling in separation anxiety, pinpointing another driver, or mapping out an initial plan. Together, you'll navigate the decision-making process from first observations to training strategy, learning how to think critically, stay flexible, and problem-solve in real time.

By the end, you'll walk away with sharper skills, fresh insights, and the confidence to tackle SRB cases with clarity and precision.



TIMETABLE

Friday, 20 March 2026

9:00 AM	Michael Shikashio Beyond the bite: Working with dog aggression
10:30 AM	Morning Break
11:00 AM	Dr Moira Hechenleitner The truth about separation-related behaviours
1:00 PM	Lunch Break
2:00 PM	Michael Shikashio Safety first! Management in aggression cases
3:00 PM	Afternoon Break
3:30 PM	Dr Moira Hechenleitner Home alone horrors: Assessing separation anxiety
5:00 PM	Close

Saturday, 21 March 2026

9:00 AM	Dr Moira Hechenleitner The three pillars of separation anxiety training: An integrative approach
10:30 AM	Morning Break
11:00 AM	Michael Shikashio Prognosis and realistic goal setting in aggression cases
1:00 PM	Lunch Break
2:00 PM	Dr Moira Hechenleitner Separation anxiety demystified: Real stories, false fixes, and keys to prognosis
3:00 PM	Afternoon Break
3:30 PM	Michael Shikashio Tried and true: Behaviour change strategies in aggression cases that don't bite
5:00 PM	Close

Sunday, 22 March 2026

9:00 AM	Michael Shikashio Let's play behaviour consultant! Solving dog-to-human aggression cases
10:30 AM	Morning Break
11:00 AM	Dr Moira Hechenleitner Practice time! Solving separation-related behaviour cases
1:00 PM	Lunch Break
2:00 PM	Michael Shikashio Let's play behaviour consultant! Solving dog-to-dog aggression cases
3:00 PM	Afternoon Break
3:30 PM	Dr Moira Hechenleitner Practice time! Solving separation-related behaviour cases
5:00 PM	Close

TICKETS

Don't miss out!

Register and secure your place for this masterclass in dog aggression and separation anxiety with two of the world's renowned dog trainers and educators. Hurry, this event will sell out quickly!

Pricing

- **Early Bird Ticket** (purchase before 21 February and save) — **\$555.00***
- **Regular Ticket** (on sale from 22 February) — **\$655.00***



Scan or click the QR for further information and to purchase your ticket.

*plus processing fees



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- 2-minute presentation on Day 3
- Registration for 1 person
- 2 table exhibitor's stall
- Place up to 2 items in delegate's satchels
- Logo displayed on the main screen

Sponsorship bookings

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