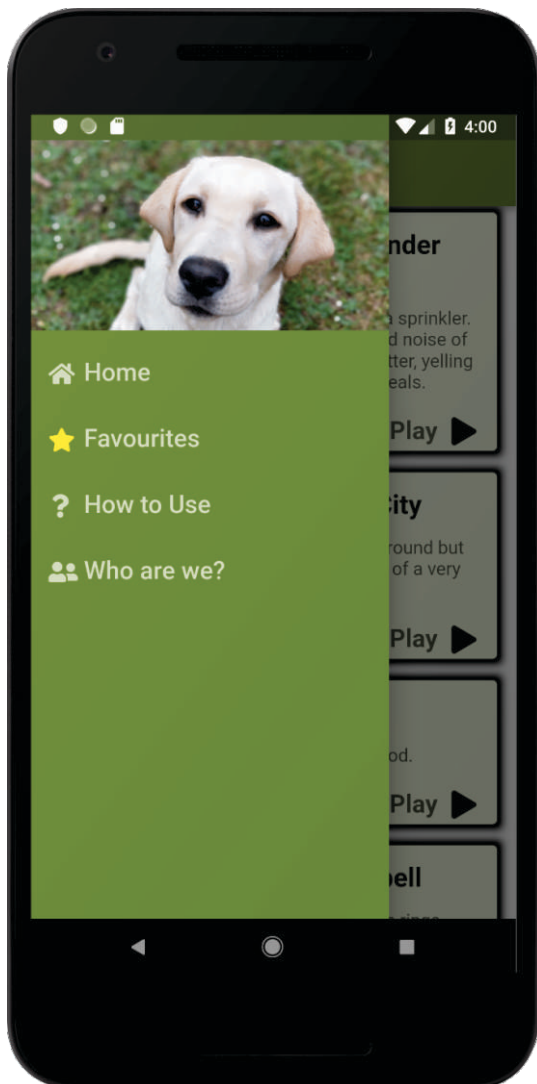




Every dog deserves
to be a Brave Puppy!



Brave Puppy is a sound socialisation/training aide, available on Android & IOS, that you can use to train your dog not to be scared or excited of certain sounds. If your dog is scared of thunder, fireworks, lawnmowers or even blenders, Brave Puppy can help them build resilience.



ABOUT BRAVE PUPPY

Blessed with a pair of beautiful Labradors, Kasi & Luna, we faced two significant challenges. Luna was overly sensitive to sounds, and Kasi was hyper-excited by them. Both problems were the inspiration for Brave Puppy.

We used Brave Puppy with little Luna to expose her to as many 'scary' sounds as we could; starting at a low volume and gradually increasing the volume until the sounds became normal, and no big deal. Luna is now a happy, confident girl who doesn't react even during our app testing phase (lot's of new sounds with each update).

Kasi, on the other hand, was particularly excited by the sound of children. Training exercises or walking calmly on the lead were impossible near children's playgrounds or schools. Again we used Brave Puppy to play these sounds in a 'calm' environment to reduce her immense excitement when hearing these sounds. She no longer reacts but she does look for the 'crying baby' hoping to soothe it with a toy.

Powerful Features



Curated Sounds

85+ expertly curated sounds to assist your dog.



Favourites List

Pin the sounds you are working with so you can easily find them.



Supports Charity

10% of ALL revenues go directly to the Blind Foundation NZ.



Bluetooth Access

Compatible with Bluetooth speakers for biggest impact.



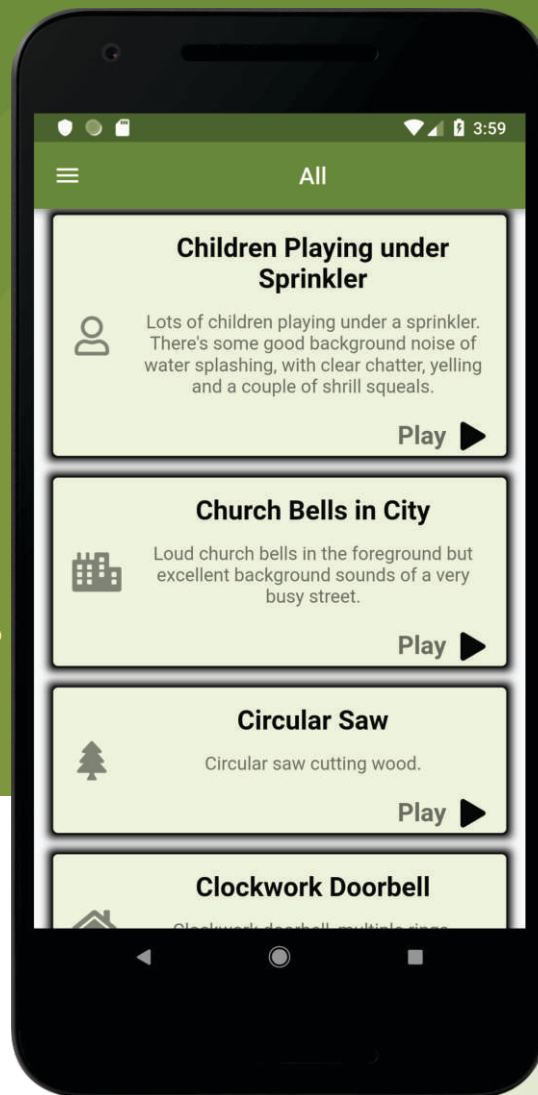
Family Library

Multiple Users? No probs. Brave Puppy is family library ready.



Responsive Developer

We are active in adding new sounds and features. Look out for the record your own sounds update.



Available on
amazon appstore

Available on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google Play

Erika Alacs talks about her new app that helps train puppies or older dogs to not be scared of certain sounds

Erika Alacs and her partner Phoenix have developed the Brave Puppy app, under the aegis of their bootstrapped app development business Risen Solutions. Their app helps puppies or older dogs to not be scared or excited by certain sounds like thunder, fireworks, children, falling object, etc. After observing that there wasn't any effective solution in the market, they decided to create their own application that will also help their two dogs, Kasi and Luna.

Brave Puppy is available in free and premium versions. The free app comes with 25 common sounds that trigger dogs while the premium version comes with 88 sounds, and is available for \$1.99 USD. Moreover, 10% gross revenues generated from the app will be donated to the Blind Foundation NZ, that works towards training guide dogs for the blind people and those with other disabilities.

We got in touch with Erika Alacs to discuss more about the possibilities of her new app.

Interviewer: Tell us something about your background?

Erika: I've always had a passion and interest in all animals from a very young age. When I was growing up we always had a small zoo at our house with at least a couple of dogs, a few cats, rabbits, birds and an occasional lizard or other critter that I found injured in the garden and was caring for. You could say I was obsessed with animals and still am! It led me to study wildlife biology at university where I earned my PhD in genetics of turtles. I enjoyed the science but missed the hands on working with animals which led me to working in dog kennels in Queensland and Western Australia. I loved caring for up to 96 dogs of all different breeds, mixed breeds, rescue dogs, sizes and personalities! I also now have a Certificate in Dog Training and Behavior from the National Dog Trainers Federation in Australia. All animals, especially dogs have a special place in my heart...they seem to know it too because everywhere I go dogs seem to be naturally drawn to me which makes me very happy!

Interviewer: What inspired you to develop the Brave Puppy app?

Erika: My hubby Phoenix and I have two beautiful Labradors, Kasi who is nearly 2 and Luna who is almost 1. Kasi is pretty bullet-proof though she does get excited by certain sounds, particularly children; however Luna was a different dog entirely. She is a much more sensitive dog and was quite frightened of many household sounds such as the blender, vacuum, etc. We

needed a tool to be able to train Luna to be comfortable with these sounds and weren't able to find one with the sounds or functionality we needed. As a result, we developed Brave Puppy. Luna is now a calm, confident dog who is relaxed even during our alpha testing process... lots of new sounds to test her on! We were so happy with how much Brave Puppy helped Luna that we thought we needed to share this app...it can help so many other dogs that have noise phobias too!

Interviewer: What is the negative impact of certain sounds that trigger dogs?

Erika: Dogs that react to sounds can develop full blown phobias which can even lead to damaging behaviors. I've seen normally well-behaved dogs chew their way through doors when left outside for an hour while their owners went shopping. Why? There was construction nearby and the poor dog was terrified of the sounds of the nail gun, hammer and drill. Its anxiety and fear was through the roof so it was seeking refuge in a safe place inside the house. Other dogs can develop such bad noise phobias and anxiety that they are medicated especially as they may self-mutilate by biting and chewing themselves to get relief. The problem is we can't control when these sounds occur and how loud they are so we can't effectively help our dogs. For example, fireworks and thunder are the two of the biggest culprits for dogs freaking out and escaping their yard.

Interviewer: How will it help the dogs and their owners?

Erika: Ignoring a fear won't make it go away BUT if you expose yourself to the fear in a controlled way you can overcome it. For example, imagine that you are terrified of spiders. Your friend offers to help you overcome your fear. She'll give you \$100 if you look at a tiny 2 cm spider for 2 minutes and reassure you while you do it. You agree and because you feel so good that you earnt \$100 in 2 minutes that spider is not looking so scary after all. Next time your friend ups the ante with a 5cm spider and you get another \$100. Then she ups the ante again and so on and so forth until eventually you are sitting next to a tarantula! And yes it does work...your clever friend has used a process called desensitization which is using baby steps of a small spider to a big spider and the positive reinforcement of money to help overcome your fear.

Brave Puppy does exactly the same thing with your dog. For example, let's imagine your dog is scared of thunder. You want to help your dog so you begin by playing the thunder sounds on Brave Puppy app at the lowest volume (which is the same as the tiniest spider). Then you be your dog's friend and reassure it by talking soothing to it and give it treats and play (since its hard for a dog to spend \$100). Once your dog feels comfortable at the lowest volume you can then up the ante by increasing the volume one notch and so on and so forth. Eventually your dog will hear a loud crack of thunder when that storm rolls in at 2am and just go right back to sleep.

Interviewer: Will this app be helpful to professional dog trainers and puppy raisers?

Erika: Absolutely! Professional trainers all use desensitization methods to help dogs overcome their noise phobias. Professional trainers and breeders also recognize the importance of sound socialization for puppies to prevent noise phobias developing in the first place. The better breeders already play sounds to puppies whilst they are still with their mother so the puppies grow up thinking the sound is normal and hence don't develop noise phobias. We are working with a number of professional trainers and service organizations (like guide dogs) to ensure that they have the tools that they need to socialize their pups and that these sounds are both realistic and useful. For example, the last update of Brave Puppy added an additional 20 sounds recommended by professional dog trainers as sounds that they regularly deal with; and we have approximately another 20 sounds on our roadmap. We are also personally reaching out to as many guide dog and service organizations as we can find to offer them our premium app for free.

Interviewer: Is the app only useful for working on fears, or can it help with excitement too?

Erika: No, the app is really good at working with over-excited dogs too. As mentioned earlier, our older Labrador Kasi displays the true 'chocolate lab' characteristics of being way overexcited. She was particularly excited when she heard children playing and would become almost uncontrollable... she just wanted to go play with the children too. In this case we used some of the children's playground sounds in Brave Puppy to train Kasi to be calm when she heard children playing. It has worked really well though she does still react to the sound of the crying baby by searching the house with a toy in her mouth to give to the baby.

Interviewer: Will you be coming up with more apps in the future?

Erika: We are currently working on an awesome new update of Brave Puppy that will take the available sounds to well over 100, and will add some new functionality such as custom playlists and the ability to record your own sounds. We are also planning on incorporating some 'unusual' sounds such as elephants and tigers... sounds really silly but you would be surprised at how many dogs are exposed to these sounds through TV. We are also currently working on a special edition called Brave Puppy Breeder, which is designed to be run on a portable device such as a Raspberry Pi, Amazon Alexa or Google Home, and which is specifically designed to meet the needs of service dog breeding centres and private breeders. This device will allow these locations to have very fine control of what sounds are played, when they are played, how often, etc. All very important to ensure that our dogs of the future get the best start in life that they can.

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Media Assets

(Click image to open link)

