

Photo 4: *These two littermates are learning early puppy socialization by play fighting.*

Raising my first puppy post-college while working full time, proved quite stressful for me. Fortunately, it was fall and the weather was cool, so during the first few weeks, because I felt guilty about leaving her all day, I simply put her crate in my car, and used my morning and lunch breaks to let her out in the parking lot and play with her for a few minutes. I felt better knowing that I could check on her a couple of times during the day.

Once a young puppy is sleeping through the night, he will more than likely stay clean during the same amount of time during the day. The self control of puppies varies, but almost all puppies are sleeping through the night by the age of three months. The older puppy's self-control is usually great enough that he can be left for eight or nine hours in the crate. But keep in mind that long confinements are likely to present other mental and physical difficulties. Crate or no crate, any dog consistently denied the companionship he needs is going to be a lonely pet and may still find ways – destructive ways – to express anxiety, boredom and stress.

Chewing

A small puppy comes to your home having learned to play with his littermates by chewing on them (photo 4). Your puppy is going to chew on you. It is inevitable, and it does not mean that he is a bad or aggressive puppy. He is simply trying to play with you the same way he played with his littermates. Unfortunately, his needle sharp teeth hurt, so you will want to stop him from biting you as quickly as possible.

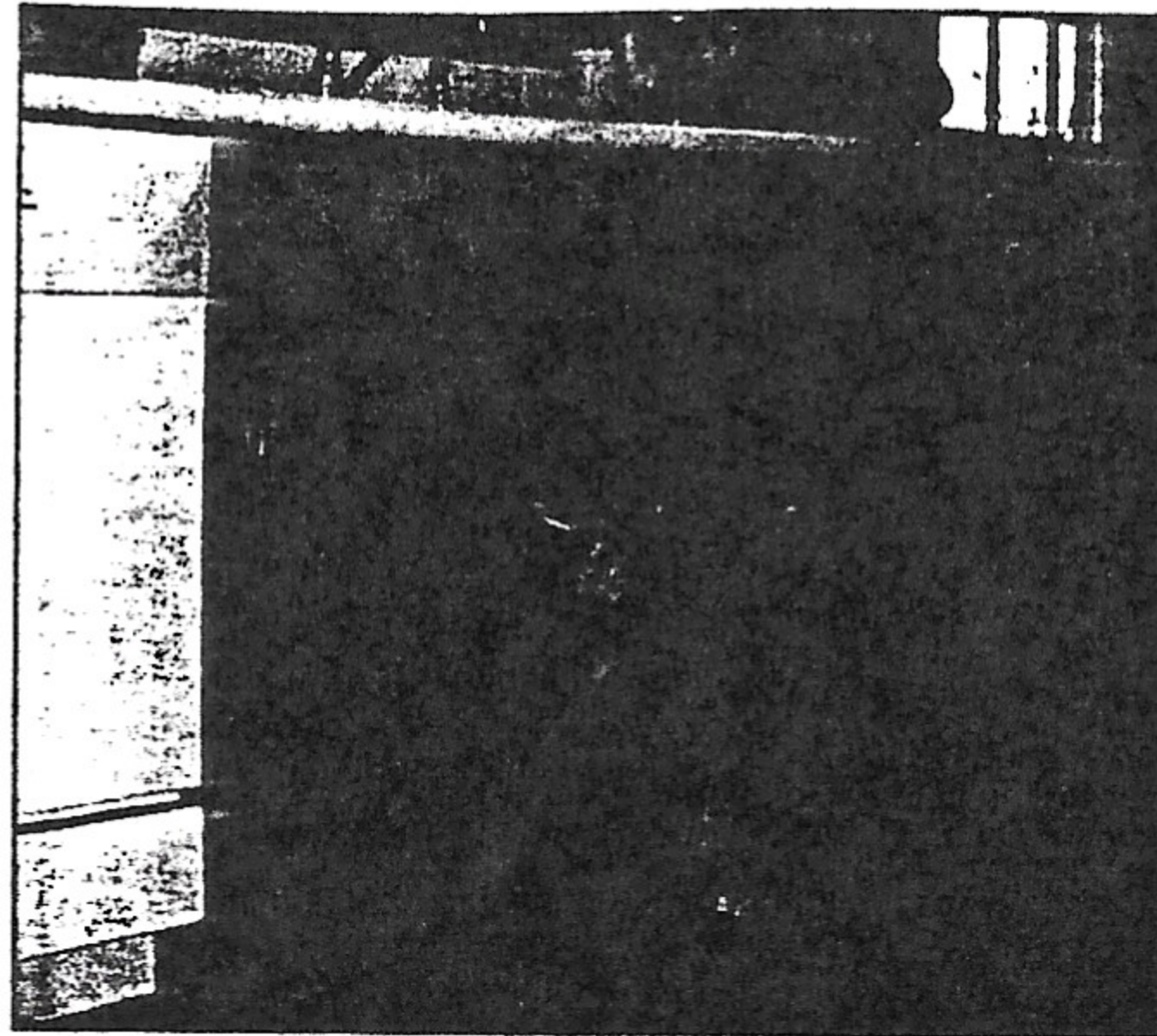


Photo 5: *When your puppy bites you, make an exclamation of pain and give him a shake.*

When your puppy bites you, make an exclamation of pain and give him a shake. You are mimicking what his littermates did to him when he bit them too hard. You are biting him back, but you don't need to use your mouth to do so. It doesn't matter where you grab him. Young puppies have a lot of loose skin and you can grab him anywhere as you let him know that he hurt you. He should back away and look startled at your response. Your correction should be quick, and then it's over and you can continue playing with him as you were before he bit you (photo 5).

If you have a young child that you fear your puppy will hurt, encourage your child to play with the puppy with a toy so that the puppy has something to focus on besides the child's clothes or hands.

It is also inevitable that your

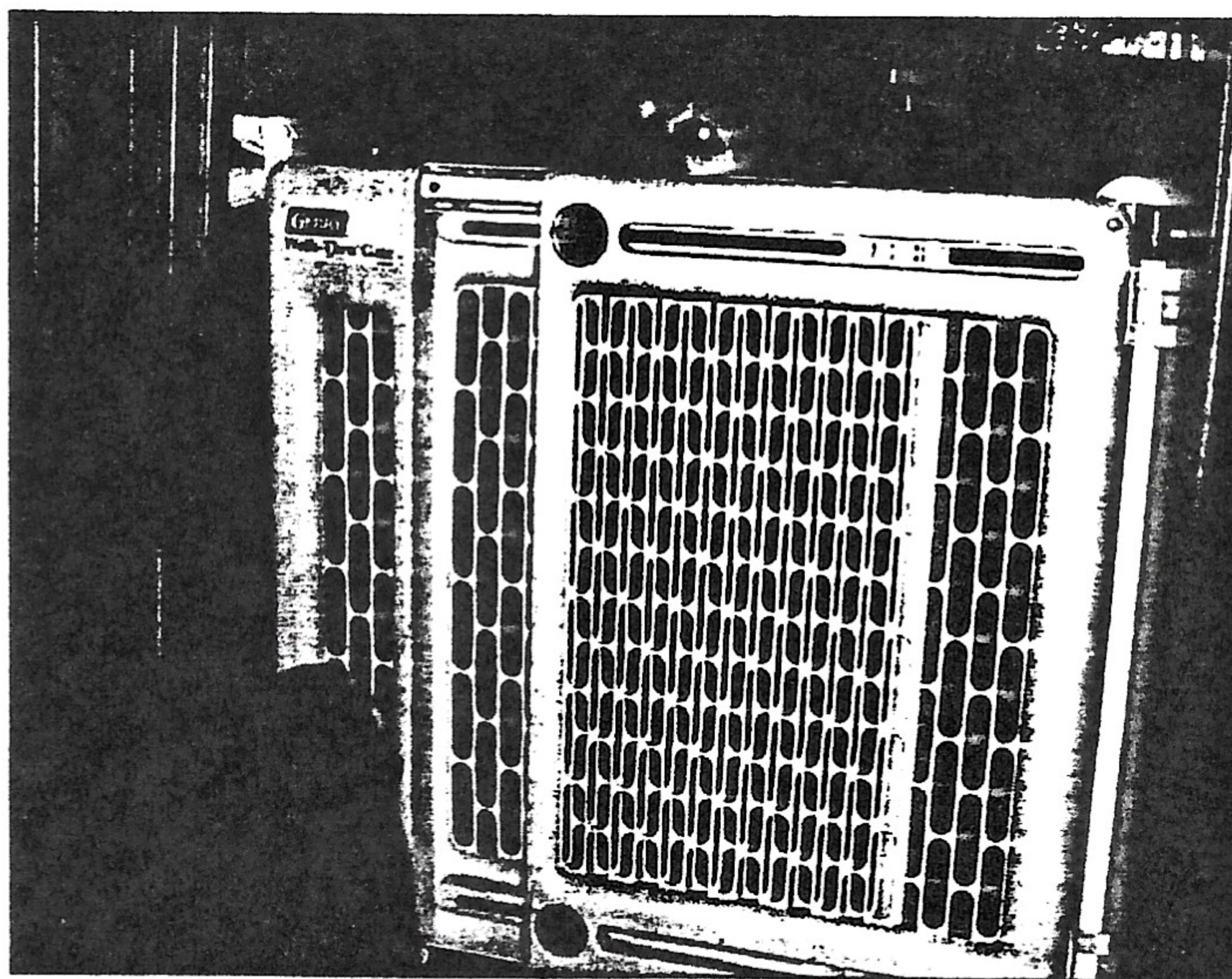


Photo 6: *Introduce the new puppy to your older dog by using a babygate. A seven- to-nine-week-old puppy of any breed is so small that it can be hurt by an older dog, even in play.*

young puppy will want to chew on your shoes, the table legs and anything else that is at his eye level. When he does, simply remove the object, or move your puppy and give him a toy of his own. At this age you are wasting your time by scolding him. He is simply too young to care or to understand what your displeasure is about.

Introducing Your Puppy to Other Dogs

If you already have a dog, don't be in a hurry to introduce your puppy to your older dog. This can happen gradually over the next few weeks or even months. A seven- to-nine-week-old puppy of any breed is so small that it can be hurt by an older dog, even in play. However, if your older dog decides to discipline the puppy, there is a good chance the puppy can be seriously hurt. Let your older dog get to know the puppy by visiting with one another through a baby gate or crate. You have a whole lifetime to let them grow accustomed to one another. It doesn't need to happen in the first few days (photo 6).

Vaccinations and Vet Visits

Your puppy needs a series of "puppy shots" that start when he is six weeks old and end when he is four months old and able to have his first Rabies vaccine. Even if your puppy has already had his first vaccine, call your veterinarian as soon as you get him

home and find out when he wants you to bring him in for his first visit. Be sure to follow his guidelines for his needed boosters.

Remember, the above guidelines are for the first two weeks that you have your new puppy. The next article will give you information about the next stage of his development, nine to 12 weeks.

