



SERIES BIBLE

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based on a concept by Adam Mimmagh

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Format / Genre 11 min. episodes – animation - preschool

Synopsis

Dog Squad! is set in a canine rescue center run by siblings Jilly and Jett Houndly and their dogs, known as the Dog Squad. They're also not just a squad; they're a family! They're always looking out for each other, laughing together, and ready for whatever adventures come their way! The series explores the incredibly diverse world of dogs to help our young audience understand, embrace, and celebrate differences.

Background and Theme

We are at a time in our history when our differences seem more important – and divisive – than what we share in common. One of the most important skills we can teach today's children and the mission of the series is to help them see that, although we may all be different, we can all live happily – and peacefully - together.

And there's no better way to do this than in a series about dogs. Children *love* dogs. Not everyone gets one, it's true, but they can dream! Children are also fascinated by the incredible variety of dogs (800 breeds and counting). Inspired by this universal love of dogs, ***Dog Squad!*** adds a timely preschool curriculum centered squarely on diversity. Through discovering the different dog breeds; their temperaments, where they came from, why they look and act the way they do, their physical and mental traits, our young viewers will also discover that, while we all (people or pup) have unique dispositions and characteristics, we also share an inherent potential to co-exist. ***Dog Squad!*** encourages our audience to discover that with a little love, understanding, and a good tummy tickle or two, we can all learn to live in a happy, peaceful pack.

Characters

Dog Squad! is centered around the home of the Houndly family; Mom, **Sarah**, Dad, **Jeff**, and their two kids, **Jilly** and **Jett**. They live in the town of Barkley Bend and their home has been converted into a canine rescue center, “**The Houndly Home for Homeless Hounds.**” Out of pure dog love, and with the support of their parents, Jilly and Jett have created it to help dogs in need, whether it’s a stray, a lost dog, or a dog that is struggling at home. No doggy problem is too big or small for the Dog Squad!

Jilly and Jett are regular kids, and the Dog Squad are not superheroes - they are humans and dogs with their own individual skills. They are all big-hearted, determined, and altruistic - that's pretty heroic already! The Dog Squad are a real team of underdogs, who are making a difference in their community. They all have their quirks and flaws as a pack, as siblings, as a team. They work together for the common good but their personalities and differences can sometimes get in the way. Whether you’re a dog OR a kid, life has its share of ups and downs.

Mom and dad, while well-meaning and incredibly supportive, wisely stay in the background and let their kids run the show. That’s because Jilly is a true “dog whisperer.” She speaks to dogs and they speak to her (our viewers hear dogs “talk”) in a way that even Jett can’t duplicate.



Jett



Jilly



Despite the fact they're siblings, Jilly and Jett are very different. Jilly is thoughtful, intuitive, and tuned-in, especially to dogs. So much so, that Jilly tends to view the world through canine-colored glasses. Jilly is the glue that keeps the Squad together. She keeps the peace between the pups, and acts as the go-between with the humans they encounter. Jilly has a stubborn streak when it comes to injustice and discrimination. She can sometimes get her back up when confronted with a wrong, which occasionally undermines her good intentions. Jilly would like to be an animal behaviourist one day.

Jett got his name for a reason: his mind (and body) go a million miles an hour. He's bursting with ideas and inspiration, but he doesn't always (OK, rarely) think things through, so his dreams and schemes sometimes end in disaster for the Squad. But other times, his quick thinking and wild creativity are exactly what they need! Yes, he has trouble reading the room and can ruffle some fur. But he also has a goofy, random sense of humor that means you can't stay mad at him for long. Jett is fascinated with technical canine stuff, like breeds, physiology, and the latest Bluetooth dog collars.



The Dog Squad dogs are the other stars of the show. The Houndlys have five: **Basil, Flo, Zaza, Ketus,** and **Vlad**. Each is a different breed (in keeping with our diversity theme) and each has very different personalities and abilities with a distinct and important role to play in the squad.

We're one big yappy family!





Stiff upper
lip shall we?

BASIL

Breed: English Bulldog

Personality: Steady, stoic, attention to detail

Likes: Rules

Dislikes: Not following the rules

“Everyone in line! One bone each! Collars on, please! Rule 12B: Never sniff a moving vehicle!” That’s Basil, the Squad’s self-appointed obedience expert. He lives by his very own ‘Canine Code’ – a set of rigid (and ridiculous) rules for canine conduct. And he’s always rattling off infractions from the code to the other dogs, which they are usually happy to ignore. He’s a stickler for protocol but the team wouldn’t have him any other way.



Forward
MARCH!



FLO

Breed: Canadian Mutt

Personality: Goofy, loving, empathetic

Likes: Having fun, Her friends and her pack

Dislikes: Grooming

Flo is the goofy, shaggy, easily distracted member of the team with a heart of gold, a head like a leaky sponge, and... oh, there was a third thing but she already forgot it and hey there's a squirrel! Incredibly loveable, she loves being in the Squad and provides emotional insight into homeless hounds, often helping the team get to the core of their canine issues



SQUIRREL!!!





ZAZA



Breed: French Poodle

Personality: The Dog Squad's resident rebel

Likes: Dyeing her pompoms, breaking the rules

Dislikes: RULES!

Zaza looks like a pampered, precious poodle, but she is NOT. She's a rebel in frizzy pink fur. A question-everything, do-things-her-own-way firebrand with pom poms. She is fiercely loyal to the pack and the absolute bravest when it comes to facing the unknown, as well as trying new and sometimes unexpected things that often lead to unexpected





KETUS

Breed: American Bloodhound

Personality: A slow moving good 'ol dog with an even slower Southern-drawl

Likes: Napping, drooling

Dislikes: Running

Full name Ketus Beauregard Montgomery Delmont III, Ketus is an experienced Dog Squad member who used to be a Search and Rescue dog until he was retired for sleeping on the job. He's still got the super-sensitive nose, though, and the amazing ability to sleep anywhere, at any time. And he loves to talk about the old days, which often involves lengthy anecdotes about possums.





This is not what
it looks like.

Vlad

Been there chewed that.



Breed: Semi-wolf

Personality: Born to be wild, but more domesticated than he thinks"

Likes: Howling, chewing

Dislikes: Not being able to howl/chew

Rescued from a playground as a pup, Vlad has chosen to believe that he was once a wild wolf, whether or not it's true. He often dispenses wisdom from the wild, but it's usually not so much "wild" as "wildly misinformed". Vlad struggles with domesticity and sees himself as the lone-wolf bad boy of the pack, even if he's not super good at actually being alone, or bad. There's definitely a bit of a wild streak in him, though, which usually means he overreacts to just



I've made a
terrible mistake.
Ouch.



Setting and Tone

Much of the action takes place in and around the Houndly's home. The Squad usually set out into the community to deal with dogs who need help, and there are a few recurring locations, like Barkley Bend Park and the Barkley Bend Animal Shelter.

The Squad's work with dogs doesn't always need to take place out in the community. Missions can happen at home, too; like rehabilitation, or grooming, or socialization. It also gives opportunities to have the compounding problems of running a shelter, say like fleas, or dog kibble spills/shortages, or worse... the dreaded BATH TIME!

The tone is "Wallace and Gromit-meets-Wes Anderson": quirky, heartfelt, and funny with an overall feel of messy mayhem that feels rooted in reality. Our characters are imperfect and "ruff" around the edges, true-to-feel about how people (and dogs) behave and talk. Our viewers should always feel that the characters and dialogue are relatable and reflect their realities, despite the sometimes madcap stories and situations. The pace is unrushed and non-bombastic. The animation will have a warm and furry homemade feel, with lots of visual humour that draws from the natural comedy of dogs: lots of scratching and slobbering, rolling on the rug and chasing their own tails.

Jett wants the Dog Squad missions to have heroic gusto. But in keeping with the tone of the series, our world is very grounded - more of a "real kid" space. It doesn't mean that the Squad doesn't have a command center or sense of hero-style, they'd do what kids would naturally do to play the part and make it more exciting. Instead of a high-tech, slick HQ, or vehicles, they have decorated the family garage to feel more command centre-ish (they call it the "Canine Cave"). But their mission vehicles are their bikes, and their "high tech gear" are tablets and cameras and other things that kids are familiar with. In Jett's imagination, it's all superheroic stuff, and Jilly is happy to play along, if a little more practical.

The Houndly House is a warm family home that just happens to share everything with their extended four-legged family. Life with dogs is truly wonderful. They live freely, they are a constant reminder to be happy, and are honest about their needs. They are also dirty, instinct-driven crazy-makers. Life for Jilly and Jett is often upended by the pack, like Jett wanting to watch an important TV show only to find all the dogs on the couch, or Jilly has just had a shower when a muddy Squad member shakes off right beside her... or even the chaos of a simple doorbell that sets ALL the dogs to barking.

There are recurring characters in Barkley Bend, like **Caretaker Curtis** who takes care of the park, and **Mrs. Kettebee** who runs the local animal shelter. There are others in their network that know of their good work and can offer help, like **Chef Steph** who makes dog biscuits, or **Farmer Finley** who lends a cow for herding practice. More characters to come!

Stories

Regular life with a pack of dogs in and of itself is fascinating and full of fun, much less the story opportunities it provides. The humans and dogs are family. The more we explore their home lives, the more we get to know them and love them. The idea is to give our main characters every opportunity to shine at all times even though they are helping a new “guest” dog in each episode. The Dog Squad not only place dogs in homes, but help dogs adjust to the situations they are in, or even help families deal with their problem pup. Some of these dogs can be runaways, or lost, or feeling shame, but in these stories being placed back into their families will be vitally important - not simply given to someone else.

Dog Squad! stories follow a classic three-act structure. There is an **“A” story and a related “B” story**. The **“B”** story often offers clues to helping the guest dog-of-the-day.

Act One

Episodes usually begin with the dog-of-the-day somewhere in Barkley Bend who needs help, either finding a home or fitting into the home it has. For example, the episode “Herding Henry” opens on a pup named Henry and his humans having trouble keeping him from herding anything that Moves.

After we meet the dog-of-the-day, we usually head over to the Houndly’s where the **“B”** story reveals itself. . In this case, Ketus has been digging up bones Vlad has carefully buried, and Vlad is upset. Ketus can’t help himself. He feels bad and wonders how he fits in with the Squad

There are a few touchstones that make each episode feel familiar, like the Hound Sound. This is a **“Bat Signal”** dog-in-distress device, essentially chain-reaction barks from neighborhood dogs telling the Dog Squad there’s a pup in trouble (in this case, Henry).

The Squad assembles in the converted garage known as the Canine Cave where Jilly and Jett heroically put on their utility belts, full of treats and poop bags, and mount their bespoke bikes. Then the Squad set off as a group to help the dog-of-the-day.

*It’s important to note that stories don’t always follow a strict formula! Sometimes, we can begin in the Houndly’s home, or focus on Jilly, Jett, or even a Dog Squad dog facing a specific challenge. The show should NEVER FEEL *TOO* PREDICTABLE. ***Dog Squad!*** stories, like life with dogs, can be messy!

Act Two

The Squad investigates the dog in need and whatever challenges it has, either finding a home or adapting to the home it's currently in. There is always a “solution” which reveals itself organically in each episode. We always want to give our audience the chance to spot the clues and try to figure out the solution along with the Squad.

After they meet the new dog, the Squad usually return with it to the Canine Cave to do some research. Jilly and Jett initiate a “Mission Impossible-style” dog identification and assessment process. Jett uses an app on his phone he has designed, called the Doggie-Identifier, which tells them things like breed and important characteristics. If the dog already has a home, it gets grilled on its life with its human(s): what kind of home is it in; is it peaceful or chaotic; what kind of food and exercise does it get? Jett and Jill also explore the various behavioral challenges modern dogs face, such as why some dogs bite and bark and chase their tails. Children will love this discovery element, learn lots about the amazing world of dogs, and appreciate that how dogs live and how they are treated can have a huge impact on them and why dogs can be so different.

In “Herding Henry,” they meet Henry and his humans (Irma and Howard) in Barkley Bend Park and find Henry tearing around, herding the park’s geese. They learn that Henry is a border collie who loves to herd sheep, but there are no sheep in Barkley Bend, so he’s bored. At first, the Squad attempt to train Henry's herding behavior so that he does not have to be re-homed. (*The Squad always try to keep dogs in their human homes, if it's possible and appropriate.) But Henry is a herding horror! Jilly and Jett use their computer database to identify potential new homes for Henry, hopefully an athletic family who love to play soccer and want a dog with high energy. After plenty of trial and error, twists and turns, and barks up the wrong tree, everyone is almost ready to give up, having run out of prospective homes.

Act Three

The third act ties up all the loose dog-ends with a clever solution (that our audience has hopefully figured out by now!) Henry has run off, presumably herding again, and is located – thanks to bloodhound Ketus’s super-sniffer. Ketus is delighted to discover he has a place in the Dog Squad pack after all. This settles the “B:” story. Jilly is the one who usually has some insight into the dog-of-the-day’s personality that lends a clue to ultimately finding a happy home. Here, Jilly realizes that Barkley Bend’s disastrous geese problem can be solved with a little help from Henry – who it turns out loves herding geese! And when Henry’s done his herding, all tuckered out, he can go home to his human family, proving, as the Dog Squad always say, “There’s a happy home for every hound!” Jilly is the one who usually has some insight into the dog-of-the-day’s personality that lends a clue to ultimately finding a happy home.



Story Thumbnails

The Biggy/Smally of It

THEME: *There's a happy home for every hound, but one size does not fit all!*

Biggy is a *BIG* Bernese mountain dog who lives with Mr. and Mrs. Tinely, an itchy-bitsy bird-like couple. The Tinelys live in a laughably minuscule apartment filled with dainty little nick-nacks. They rescued Biggy from a shelter when he was a tiny pup and he fit right in... at first. But then, of course, he grew. And *grew*. And *grewwww*! Now, high energy and huge-impact Biggy knocks over everything in his track – including the Tinelys. He can't help it! The Tinelys drive a micro-sized car and Biggy's head is always out the sunroof. When the Tinelys take Biggy for a walk, they often end up in a neighborhood far, far away, both hanging onto Biggy's leash for dear life.

Meanwhile, over at the Hugely's farm, next door, mayhem rules. The Hugely's have gotten a chihuahua for Christmas – Smally. The barrel-chested Hugely clan are the size of small elephants and, along with their cows and horses, poor little Smally is in constant peril of being smushed! (Guess where this story is going!)

Happy Abby!

THEME: *Being "different" is delightful! (Different dogs for different jobs!)*

Abby is an adorable Labrador pup with an not-so-adorable dilemma: Abby's parents and litter-mates are all guide dogs for the visually impaired – and they're amazing at their job. Abby... not so much. You see, Abby is suuuuuper friendly. She tears over to everyone she sees, wagging her tail and wriggling with delight. In fact, everyone calls her "Happy Abby." This does not make for great guiding. However, when the Squad tries to train Abby, it's one big sight-gag (pardon the pun). Abby just doesn't fit in with her fabled canine family. Still, Abby really wants to help humans!

The Dog Squad attempt to curb Abby's enthusiasm, but Abby can't help greeting everyone she sees and make them smile. Jett rigs up a gizmo for Abby (a dog cone with VR-like video game headset thingy). It's supposed to keep Abby cut off from excess interaction and focused on the road ahead. But not greeting everyone she meets and seeing their smiles is kind of heartbreaking for Abby (and the cone looks kinda silly, to boot). During her training, Abby leads Jett (who is blindfolded to simulate someone visually impaired) into a ditch and he ends up in the infirmary with a sprained ankle. It's there the Squad observes that Abby makes sick kids happy. Just the sight of her sends hearts soaring. Abby lands her dream job as a hospital therapy dog... and she couldn't be happier, too!

The Wild Boys

THEME: *What's fun and happy for most dogs might not be so for all dogs.*

In the middle of a fun game of “Slobber Ball, the Squad receive word of a stray behind the taco place in town. They’re on the case! With the help of Ketus’s nose they discover Axel, a stray who likes being a stray; he’s never known anything else! Vlad bonds with him as another “wild” dog... they’re the “Wild Boys”! But despite the Squad’s efforts to help him fit in and socialize, he still seems to want to go off on his own. Living behind a restaurant by himself is the only life he’s ever had, and being among other dogs and humans is overwhelming for him. Not even the wet, sticky joys of Slobber Ball can persuade him. Fortunately the Squad also know about Amelia, a shy young girl who loves to come by and play with the Squad sometimes. She might just be the perfect human to give Axel a warm place to sleep.

Curriculum and Kibble for Thought

To support the ***Dog Squad!*** theme of “embracing and celebrating differences,” we are identifying curriculum professionals to advise on ways our stories can meaningfully resonate with our audience. We must ensure that our messaging is clear enough to children that even though we are talking about dogs, we are talking about *them*. We must take care not to give so much focus on dog breed facts, or breed-specific skills, that we water down our diversity and inclusivity theme. We always need to make sure that our main message is clear and upheld and not easily confused.

In addition, a careful study of the newest dog research will certainly be important. Not only will it inform but it will also generate stories. We are identifying dog behaviorists who will help inform us on “best practices” around the important issues of training, socialization, behavior, dog-adoption, and re-homing. Most dog behavioral issues have underlying connections to certain anxieties or fears, or trauma. Dog’s fears, anxieties, and learned behaviors are something that children can relate to in their own lives. This is an obvious match made in heaven in terms of connecting a dog's world to a kid's world with relatable stories.

Dog Squad! is suitable for families and co-viewing. The strong comedic and non-pedantic makeup of the series means that adults can happily engage along with children. Again – dogs draw lots of attention!

Beyond Broadcast - Discoverability

Dog Squad! has a strategic marketing roadmap focused on driving engagement with our target audience; preschool children, and parents and caregivers.

The series strikes a universal chord. Almost every child wants, or has wanted a dog, and why not? Dogs are AWESOME, and they have almost never-ending unbreakable love for the families they grow up within.

Digital and New Media engagement

Objective: Utilize non-linear platforms to magnify our brand.

We'll emphasize audience growth through digital tactics that engage our targets to grow awareness for/interest in the series as edutainment, promoting it through influencer partnerships, and seeding it online across windows and platforms to generate an organic following from young audiences.

To this end, we suggest a robust “beyond broadcast” strategy for YouTube and streaming platforms, with short-form segments like **BASIL’S BOW-WOW BASICS** (digital dog-training tips) and **VLAD’S WILD WALKIES**, (comedy segments that kids can control.) Our Dog Squad **DIGITAL DOGGY APP** will let our audience select a dog from a variety of breeds (or a mutt!) and digitally adopt it. It becomes a virtual dog that they can learn about, care for, and watch grow before their eyes.

Social and traditional engagement

Objective: Leverage audience growth through value-add marketing tactics that cement us as a series that goes beyond the TV experience.

Because our DNA is so focused and unique (diversity + dogs), it allows us to engage with our audience in ways that most series would not contemplate. While some of this engagement is charitable (our support for rescue shelters, etc.) it all serves to drive attention to the brand (and of course our great cause!)

Dog Squad Walkies and Talkies

Every week a new episode of Dog Squad can be featured on Dog Squad Walkies and Talkies, a series on YouTube similar to what “The Talking Dead” is to “The Walking Dead”. This series would consist of 5-minute episodes, with 1 new one launched per week focusing on the storyline and positive message behind a featured episode. As always, the focus would be on celebrating and understand dogs and diversity. It would be hosted by special guests such as veterinarians, dog rescue volunteers, or the creator & voice talent from the show.

Dog Squad Care Club

5% of the profits that Dog Squad Generates will be donated to dog shelters worldwide.

We could hold a series of launch events at a dog shelter that focuses on **Dog Squad’s** global initiative to support shelters and general awareness of dogs.

Some inspirational designs





An HHA Original
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