

Television is a great babysitter...

...not as good as Katie from Puddleducks, but close. It is really tempting to put the kids in front of Cartoonito and let them watch `Fireman Sam` repeats all morning – forgive me, but at least it's Welsh. But did you know that dogs are watching more television than ever according to a recent survey by Digital UK?

Digital television means dogs are seeing the television screen better than ever. In days long gone, when televisions were deeper than wider, the analogue signal was aired with too low a flicker-fusion rate for dogs to see it as anything other than stuttering freeze-frame images. However the changeover to digital means our faithful friends can enjoy the marvels of Channel 5's Big Brother like never before on our flat screens. Unlucky them you might say.

Apparently the breed that watch most television are Labradors and their favourite programmes are soap operas. I have a theory that actually most dogs could not

give a Scooby snack about what's on during prime time. I would suggest the reason they get excited when they hear the Eastenders/Corrie theme tune is that they anticipate a bit of a family get together and the chance of TV dinner leftovers; the canine equivalent of the pack congregating socially after a hard days hunting and scavenging.

The Dogs Trust – a usually sensible charity – commented it was irresponsible to leave your dog in front of the television all day as they are social animals and might also be more prone to obesity. I wonder if the Dogs Trust will do babysitting this Friday for a four and six year old for less than £5 an hour?

