

What a child should do.....

To pat a friendly dog

- Ask the adult with you first.
- Ask the dog owner next.
- Ask the dog as well by ...
- ▶ Standing quietly next to the dog.
- ▶ Placing your hand out near the dog, curl your fingers and allow the dog to sniff.
- ▶ Waiting to see if the dog wants to be patted and comes to you.
- ▶ If it's OK then just a tickle under the chin or on the chest is most welcome.
- **Do not pat a dog on its head. It may not like it.**
- Do not stare at the dog.

Leave a dog alone if it

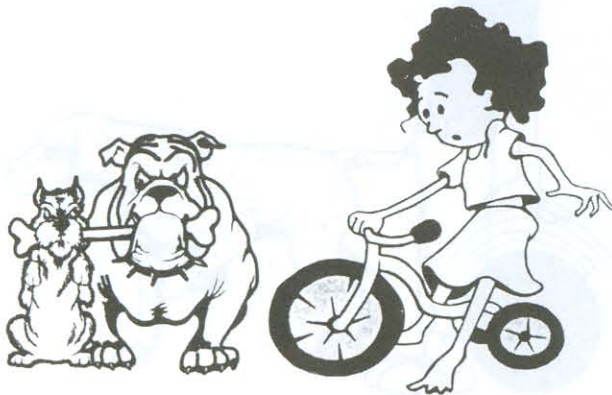
- Lifts its lips.
- Growls.
- Backs away.
- Raises the hair on its back.

When approached by an unleashed, unknown dog

- Stand still. Be absolutely quiet.
- Hug yourself – tuck your fingers under your armpits.
- Look away from the dog.
- Wait for the dog to go away.
- Tell a responsible adult.

If you are knocked down by an unleashed, unknown dog

- Curl your body up like a snail to hide from the dog – cover your head with your hands.
- Stay quiet.
- Wait for the dog to go away.
- Tell a responsible adult.



Two-thirds of all bites involve the family or neighbour's dog and 60% of them occur in young children and because they are 'little people', many of these bites are to the head and neck.

Most dog bites occur because neither adults nor children have been educated about appropriate behaviour around dogs. A dog in the family is a wonderful source of companionship and fun. The benefits of positive interaction between people and their pets have been well documented. But there are some very important messages about canine behaviour that are simply not being provided to dog owners.

Animal Control Services teaches practical, pro-active and dog friendly ways in which families and communities can significantly reduce the incidence of dog bites, particularly in young children.

For more information on how to stay safe around dogs contact:



Animal Control Services Ltd
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HOW TO STAY SAFE AROUND DOGS

Dogs and Kids



A guide to safe and sensible behaviour
and
interactions with man's best friend.

A.C.S. public safety programme

Messages for Parents

Supervise

- Constantly supervise and manage children and dogs. Many children get bitten by trusted family or neighbours' dogs and while there is no 'safe period' during childhood and adolescence, the highest risk age group in New Zealand is under ten years of age, with severe bites occurring to the head and neck.
- Create supervised activities that can be safely initiated between children and dogs where appropriate, such as training, tricks or calm games.
- Be aware that children raised with tolerant and friendly dogs may be at risk with other dogs.
- **Never leave a child under seven unattended with any dog.**

Learn & educate

- Learn to interpret dogs so you can judge a dog's behaviour when interacting with a child and heed any early warnings.
- Consistently identify and discuss dog body language with the child. Explain situations in which it would be inappropriate to approach a dog and other situations where it would be friendly and safe.

Teach children

- Not to tease, hurt or interact roughly or excitedly with any dogs.
- To interpret and respect dogs.
- How to interact appropriately with friendly dogs and ignore others.
- How to behave if they feel threatened by a loose dog.
- To inform adults if they feel threatened by a dog.



Model

- Children observe and model adult behaviour so it is vital that adults interact appropriately with dogs in a manner that children can copy.

Manage

- Be aware that all dogs' tolerance may reduce with age, pain, stress, high excitement levels, specific situations and constant exposure to children.
- Create secure areas to isolate your dog from children for occasions when supervision is not viable.
- Seek professional assistance if you are at all concerned.

Choosing a dog

Many problems can arise from choosing the wrong dog:

If you are buying a puppy from a breeder

- Choose a breed which suits your family lifestyle and environment.
- Choose the puppy which behave as you would like the adult to behave.
- Avoid pushy or fearful puppies, go for the relaxed friendly one.
- Always try to see and interact with both parents of the puppy if possible.

If you are acquiring a pup or dog from a pet shop, pound or shelter

- Ask about its temperament or its parents' temperaments. If they can't tell you, then go elsewhere.

Training

- Make the time to train your dog and teach your child safe, kind and sensible behaviour with the dog.



Messages for Children

Some dogs are friendly

- Friendly dogs appear relaxed, calm and interested.

Some dogs are not friendly

- Children need to recognise and respect a dog's feelings. A dog might be sleepy, angry, sick, frightened and may not want contact. It might not want to be interrupted because it is eating or playing with a favourite toy.

Angry or frightened dogs are unfriendly

- An angry dog will stand up straight, prick its ears, look at you, straighten its tail, might growl, lift its lip or bark.
- A frightened dog will cower, look away, put its head down, raise its hackles (hair on the back of the neck).

