

KIDS & DOGS



Never Ever Leave a Child and Dog Alone

Never ever leave a child and a dog alone - even for an instant. Situations can go sideways in the blink of an eye and the results can be devastating. If an adult is not able to actively supervise the child and dog, the dog should be placed behind a baby gate, in another room or in his crate.

Pet Consent

PAT your leg and call to your dog. Does he come over and start trying to interact?

- No ... leave him alone. He doesn't want to be petted right now ... and that's okay.
- Yes ... PET him for 3 seconds under the chin, on his side or chest. Most dogs don't like top of head pets.

PAUSE and Repeat.

Keep A Parent In Between

When young children and dogs are interacting, it is always best practice to keep an adult in between to mediate and keep the interaction safe for everyone.

Don't Ignore Growls

A growl is your dog's last effort to tell you or your child that he is uncomfortable with the situation. If you ignore growls and/or less subtle body language, your dog may resort to a bite.

Watch Body Language

Does your dog really want to be pet or played with right now - or does he just want to sleep or chew on a bone? Learn your dog's body language signals and take cues from his subtle signals so that he does not need to resort to a growl or nip.

Take Play Breaks

Kids and dogs can easily work each other up into a frenzy - then your dog will begin to use his mouth or start jumping up. Avoid this by taking frequent breaks. Switch gears to a playing a calming activity like Find It, a small scatter feed, or ping pong to allow child and dog to calm down.

Your Dog is NOT ...

... a Prop for photo opportunities;
... a Pony for your child to ride;
... a Chair for your child to sit on.
Sometimes we forget that our dogs are sentient beings. Older dogs can be very patient with children, but often have aches and pains that affect their patience.

Don't Punish Growls

A growl is your dog's last effort to tell you or your child that he is uncomfortable with the situation. If you punish a growl, your dog may stop growling and move from subtle body language straight to a bite.

Alone Time and Safe Spaces

Your dog is going to need some time away from your child's attention. Use baby gates or x-pens to create a safe space for your dog where he will not be disturbed by anyone. This could be a room in your home or even a quiet corner. Add a visual reminder by hanging a STOP sign to remind your child(ren) that this is your dog's private space.

