

# Dogs Can Be Friendly



# Dogs Can Bite



## Dogs Can Be Friendly, Dogs Can Bite!

The friendship of a dog can help boost children's emotional and physical health.

At the same time, children, especially those nine years of age and under, are most at risk for a dog bite. One Canadian doctor says that each year, one child in 100 is bitten by a dog. These bites cause scars and disease, and can make children afraid of dogs for a long time.

Although the provincial government has legislated that all dogs and cats should be vaccinated against rabies, many animals are not immunized against this disease. This makes it more important than ever to protect children from dog bites.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit is working reduce the number of children bitten by dogs by teaching people how to act around dogs. The Health Unit is urging parents to help protect their children by teaching them how to treat all dogs with respect.



## Why do dogs bite?

Most dogs are safe and you can trust them. But even a friendly dog may bite if afraid, hurt, threatened or angry. Some dogs are dangerous because they have been bred or trained to protect their owner.

Dogs protect things, people and places. Dogs care about their food, their puppies and their favourite toy. They protect their owners' homes, yards and cars. They also protect their owners and their owners' children.

Teach children that dogs protect people and things and they should not surprise a dog. They should never take away a dog's food or puppies. Be careful not to move suddenly towards an owner or their children when dogs are near. Do not frighten a dog or make it angry. Do not try to pet a sleeping dog or a dog that is tied up.

**🐾 Dogs that are cornered or crowded might feel afraid.**

Do not crowd dogs, yell or wave your arms at them. Speak softly. Stand very still. Let them sniff you.

**🐾 Stray dogs are lost, afraid and may be hurt.**

Teach children not to pet stray dogs. When they encounter a stray dog, teach them not to turn and run, but stand still like a tree. They should let the dog sniff them. If the dog is barking or growling, they should walk away slowly, backwards or sideways, always keeping the dog in view.

If the dog bites or jumps on them, children must be taught to lie face down and cover the back of their necks. Report any injured, stray or threatening animal to the Humane Society.

**🐾 Sick or hurt dogs might be afraid and cranky.**

Teach your children to stay away from sick or hurt dogs.

**🐾 Old dogs might not see or hear very well and be surprised easily.**

Children must be taught to be careful around old dogs. Do not yell at or tease the dog. Try not to frighten it.

**🐾 Some dogs are not good with children.**

Teach children to stay away from dogs that are known to be mean to children. Do not leave very young children alone with any dog.

**🐾 If a dog is excited or nervous, he might bite by mistake.**

Teach children not to tease dogs, chase them or pull their ears or tails. They must always be kind and gentle.

## Ways in which Owners Can Prevent Dog Bites

**🐾 Dogs can feel left out, especially when a new baby or pet arrives.**

Pay attention to the dog if there is a new pet or new baby in the house. Dogs have feelings too.

**🐾 Dogs which have been spayed or neutered are quieter.**

Have the dog spayed or neutered.

**🐾 Do not let dogs run loose.**

Build a fence for the dog and take him for walks on a leash.

## What to do if you or your child are bitten:

1. Wash the wound with soap and water.
2. See a doctor right away.
3. Remember everything about the dog and report the bite to the doctor or Health Unit.



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