



Kids & Dogs

A Guide to Safe Interactions

Happy, safe interactions start with understanding, respect, and supervision. 

KEY POINTS



Always supervise interactions between dogs and kids **AT ALL TIMES.**



Advocate for both kids and dogs needing their personal space.



Give your dog a break from kids when needed.

LOOK FOR SIGNS IN YOUR DOG

When your dog is interacting with kids, be sure to look for signs of stress, fear, or anxiety. These signs can be subtle and may mean your dog needs space.



Panting



Licking Lips



Yawning



Holding Breath



Moving Away



Cowering



Eyes open wide enough to see the whites



Ears Pinned Back



Suddenly Holding Still



If you notice any of these signs, calmly give your dog space and end the interaction.





Teaching Kids & Dogs How to Be Successful Together

WHAT TO TEACH CHILDREN



Be gentle.
Pet calmly and kindly.
No yanking on ears or
other body parts.



**Do not sit, lay, or
stand on dogs.**



**Do not run up to dogs
or rush at them, even if
you know the dog. It can
scare them.**



**Always ask the dog's
owner for permission
to pet their dog, even if
you already know the dog.
Not all dogs are good with kids.**



**Do not disturb the dog
if they are in their bed,
crate, or sleeping.**



**Just like humans, dogs need
their personal space. Some
dogs don't enjoy snuggles
or being held.**



**Teach kids (if age appropriate)
to help enforce basic commands
such as sit, down, or leave it
under adult guidance.**

WHAT TO TEACH DOGS



**Respect boundaries
and space.** Do not let
the dog herd or push
children around.



Provide an area for your dog
to decompress and relax
where they won't be disturbed
by kids, such as their bed
or crate.



Be calm when interacting
with kids.



Dogs should not mouth,
nip, bite, or nibble at kids
or adults.



No jumping on people.



REMEMBER



- ✓ Every dog is different. Not all dogs enjoy interacting with children, and that's okay.
- ✓ A wagging tail does not always mean a dog wants attention.
- ✓ Never punish a dog for growling. Growling is a warning that your dog is uncomfortable.
- ✓ If your dog shows signs of stress or discomfort, end the interaction and give them space.