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Introduction

This booklet was developed by The Safe Kids/Safe Dogs Project in response to the overwhelming number of calls, emails and student complaints not to mention the number of dog-related injury cases every year. Children often receive more dog-related injuries than adults and injuries to children tend to be more severe. There are many dog safety programs available, but sadly, many are narrowly focused. The Safe Kids/Safe Dogs Project was developed to be adaptable to any school-age group and now, to any age group as well as profession. However, since the program was developed first for children, the name remains unchanged.

The Family Guide to Dog Safety is based on the younger children's adaptation of The Safe Kids/Safe Dogs Project; therefore, it contains many pictures and easy to understand language.

Please note: this booklet is NO substitute for seeking professional assistance with your dog. This is just a look at how we can increase our (children, parents, dog owners and dogs) safety.

No matter what you hear or assume, there is no 100% safe breed or cross of dog. Ultimately we make dogs what they are: good or bad. The time and effort put into a child and/or dog will determine how safely they interact together.

Even if you have a dog but no children or children but no dog, they still need to learn how to interact when together.

This project has been a labor of love for me and one I feel way past its time.



Karen Peak

All Dogs Can Bite!

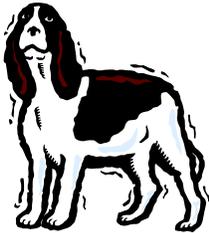


Just because a dog is cute and cuddly does not mean it is safe.

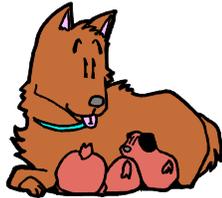


Just because a dog looks scary does not mean it is dangerous.

A dog is more likely to bite when:



scared



has puppies



sick/hurt



eating



sleeping



playing rough



**poorly trained/
no manners**

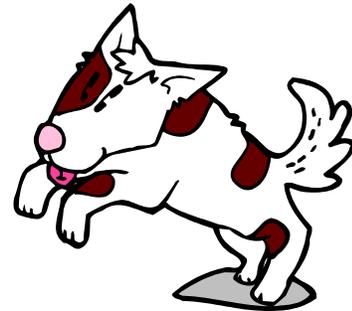
Basic Dog Talk

Dogs do not have words to tell us when they are scared, not feeling well or angry. Dogs use body language as well as sounds like growls, whines and barks. Part of being safer with dogs is knowing how to understand them.

What do you think these dogs are saying?
(Answers on the next page.)



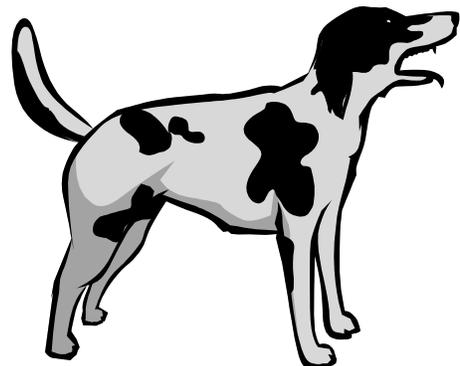
This dog is up on his toes, growling, barking, ears forward, hair on his shoulders raised. What do you think he is trying to tell us?



This dog is jumping up, his tail is wagging and his ears are up, eyes bright and he is yipping. What do you think he is trying to tell us?



This dog is backing up, he is shaking, growling and trying to make himself look smaller. What do you think he is trying to tell us?



This dog is stiffening up, he has his ears forward and the hair on his shoulders is up. His tail is out straight and he is growling. What do you think he is trying to tell us?

Here are some basic Dog Talk bits we should all learn!



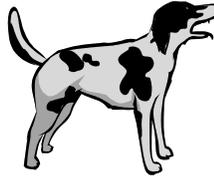
Aggressive

- Dog will try to make himself look bigger by getting on his toes, raising his hackles (area over the shoulders) and fur down the back
- His ears may pin and eyes narrow
- Body will be stiff and tail out straight or slightly raised
- Teeth shown, with or without snarling



Fearful

- Dog will cower and try to look smaller
- Ears will be pinned and he will try to avert his gaze
- May or may not show teeth
- Tail may be tucked and dog may try to back away
- May or may not be shivering



Dominant

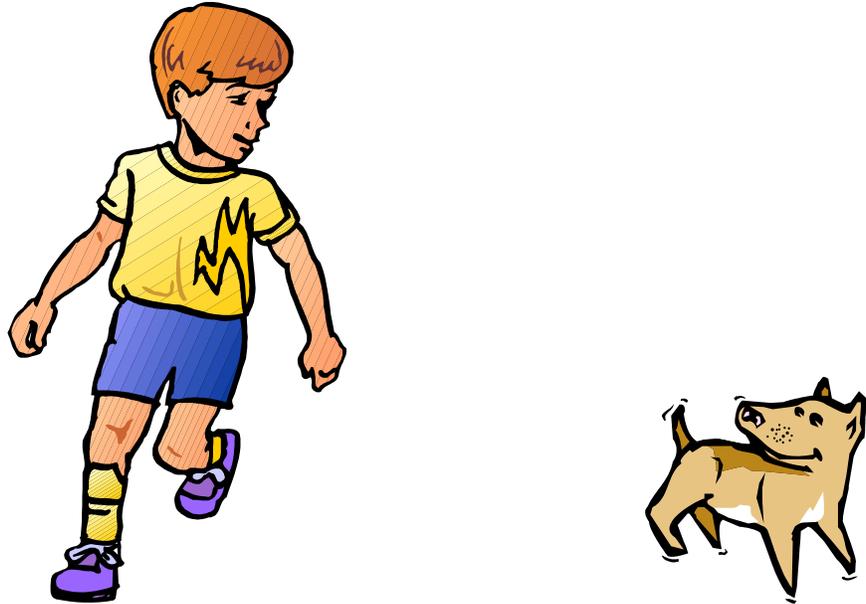
- Dog will be standing tall, with or without hackles raised.
- Mouth closed
- Ears up and forward, eyes wide
- Tail up and may be slowing wagging



Wants to play

- Ears forward and tail wagging
- Eyes bright and wide, mouth slightly open and may be panting excitedly
- Dog may be bouncing, play bowing and woofing/play growling.

Safety around loose and strange dogs.



**Do you know how to be safer around loose and strange dogs?
Ask yourself these questions:**

Can I run faster than a dog?

Is it OK to run up and say “Hi!” if I see a nice looking person with a dog?

Should I go help someone who says they have lost a dog?

Should I go see someone’s new puppy if they ask me to? (Even if I really want to?)

What to do if you see a loose dog



This dog is running loose in the park. Most dogs can run faster than an Olympic runner or even you on your bike! Dogs like to chase things that move fast. Sometimes, these chases can lead to someone getting hurt! Never run from a dog, chances are he will start to chase you. You need to be boring. Dogs do not like boring things.

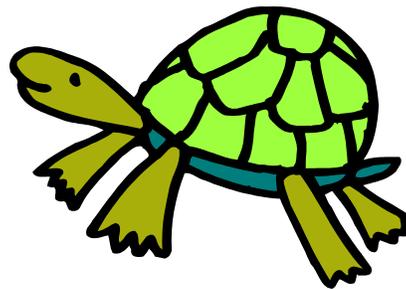
When you see a loose dog you need to:



Stop playing, running, screaming or whatever you were doing.
Slowly walk away from where the dog is. If the dog comes towards you, freeze and play tree!



Stay quiet and still. Do not stare in the dog's eyes. In dog talk, this can be a threat. Just watch him and be as still as this tree! If the dog starts to jump on you, curl up like a turtle.



If you have to play turtle make sure you put your hands behind your neck and tuck your head down. Pretend you are a turtle getting into your shell. Now call for help – you need it!

What if you see someone walking a dog?



This man is walking his dog. The dog is on a leash and looks under control. Is it safe to pat the dog? **NO!**

First, you must ask permission from a parent, grandparent or other adult caring for you before you ask the dog owner if you can pat his (or her) dog.

After getting permission from an adult with you, slowly walk to the dog owner, stop a few feet away and ask politely:



"May I please pat your dog?"

If the owner says you may, slowly approach the dog from the front, let him sniff your closed fist and then gently touch his side or back. Do not reach over his head; this can scare a dog. Do not jump or squeal; that can scare a dog, too.

If the dog is acting silly and will not settle down, do not pat the dog. It can jump on you and you could get hurt. Politely say, "I do not think your dog is ready right now, thank you anyhow," and walk away.

NEVER EVER go with someone who asks you if you want to see a cute puppy or help find a lost dog. You need tell an adult caring for you what happened! Not all people are nice and may try to trick you into going with them.

Who should not be patting a dog? Who is ready to pat a dog?

(Answers at the bottom of the page)



A



B



C



D



E



F

- A** No. This boy is acting silly and running. He could scare the dog.
- B** No. These children are Trick-or-Treating and costumes can scare a dog.
- C** No. This girl is skateboarding. She needs to get off before going near a dog.
- D** No. She is carrying her pet cat.
- E** No. There is no adult with this boy to give him permission to pat a dog.
- F** YES! These children are with their parents, behaving and have nothing that could excite or scare a dog.

How safe are you with the dogs you know?

More dog-related accidents happen from dogs we know than stray dogs. Why? Well, we are with dogs we know a lot more than we are around stray dogs. Many dog-related accidents happen because we do not know how to behave around dogs and we do not teach our dogs how to behave around us.

Let's see how much you know about being safe around dogs we know!

What things do you do with your dog?



Do you think it is cute when a pup tugs your clothes or fingers?

Do you play games where your dog chases you?

Do you make your dog jump for things?

Do you play games like Tug-of-War?

Do you wrestle with your dog?

Do you tease your dog?

UH OH! These are all things that you should not do with your dog.



Why do you think these games may be bad?

Let's talk about Safer Playing with dogs.

Some games can teach dogs it is good to play roughly and even to use their mouths on us. Play like this can lead to accidental injuries. Teasing dogs is not nice and frustrated dogs may get rough and even bite. Remember, dogs do not have words to tell us to stop teasing them.

Instead of games that teach dogs to be rough with us, play games that teach dogs to play nicely:



Fetch is a good game as long as it does not turn into a tugging match to get the stick or ball back! If the dog will not let go, tell him the game is all over and walk away. Have an adult help you teach your dog to drop toys on command.



Teach your dog tricks. Tricks are a great way to get a dog to use its brain and to work with you. Set up low jumps, tunnels to crawl through and hoops to go through.



Teach your dog to run with you (on leash for safety) and not to chase you!

Other games like hide and seek with toys and treats or even with you and your family are safer games to play.

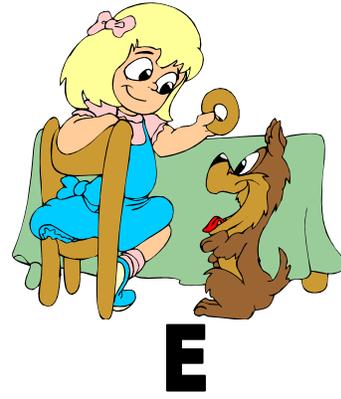
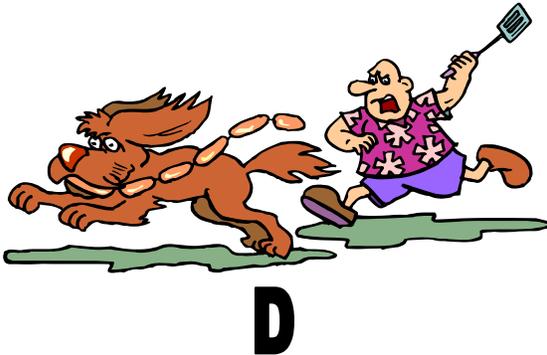
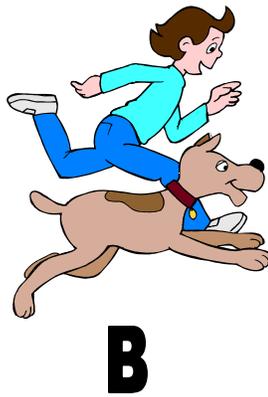
Living safer with your dog.

Do you remember when dogs are more likely to bite? Let's see how much you remember.

When are dogs more likely to bite or snap at you?

HINT: If you forgot, go back to the beginning of the book and find out!

What is wrong with these pictures?



- A** The girl is bothering her dog while he is trying to eat.
- B** This boy is running with his dog but the dog has no leash and there is no adult with him! Tricky! We did not talk about leashes! Leashes help keep dogs safe. Never walk a dog without adult supervision or without a leash!
- C** There is a loose dog near these children and they are still playing.
- D** This dog was not taught good manners.
- E** This girl is teaching her dog bad manners.

Did you know?



Did you know that dogs do not know how to share? Just like we have to learn how to share, dogs have to be taught as well. Dogs that have not been taught how to share are more likely to try and stop us when we try to take food or a toy from them. Leave dogs alone when they are eating or are chewing toys. If a dog has something he should not have, let an adult stop the dog and give him a better toy!



Did you know that bored dogs are more likely to have bad manners and act up? They need fun and games and exercise just like we do!



Did you know that dogs get lonely? Lonely dogs are more likely to have bad behaviors and act up when they see people. Dogs need to be part of the family in order to be happiest and not left outside at night and ignored!



Dogs need to be our best friends and we need to teach them how to be good doggy citizens!

And did you know?

Many accidents happen because owners may not know how to best take care of their dogs or have ideas that are old-fashioned about how to care for dogs.



Did you know that being chained up is bad for dogs? It can lead to bad behaviors because the dog always feels pulled back. A dog can get hurt if the ropes tangles or he runs to the end and gets snapped back. A rope does not keep people off your property and away from your dog. Dogs should have a safely fenced yard to be in. Fences must be high enough that your dog cannot climb over and make sure your dog does not dig under!



Did you know that dogs are never too young or old to learn? Even young puppies can go to puppy training classes. Senior dogs make take a bit longer to teach, but they can still learn new tricks and learn manners!



When being walked, dogs should always be on a safe leash that is not so long you cannot manage the leash. Four or six foot leads are nice for walking dogs. Even if you think your dog is safe off leash while walking, he may forget his lessons and run after something or someone. Children should not walk dogs without adult supervision for the safety of child and dog.

Think About It!



We decide how safe our dogs are. We also play a big part in how safe we are around dogs!

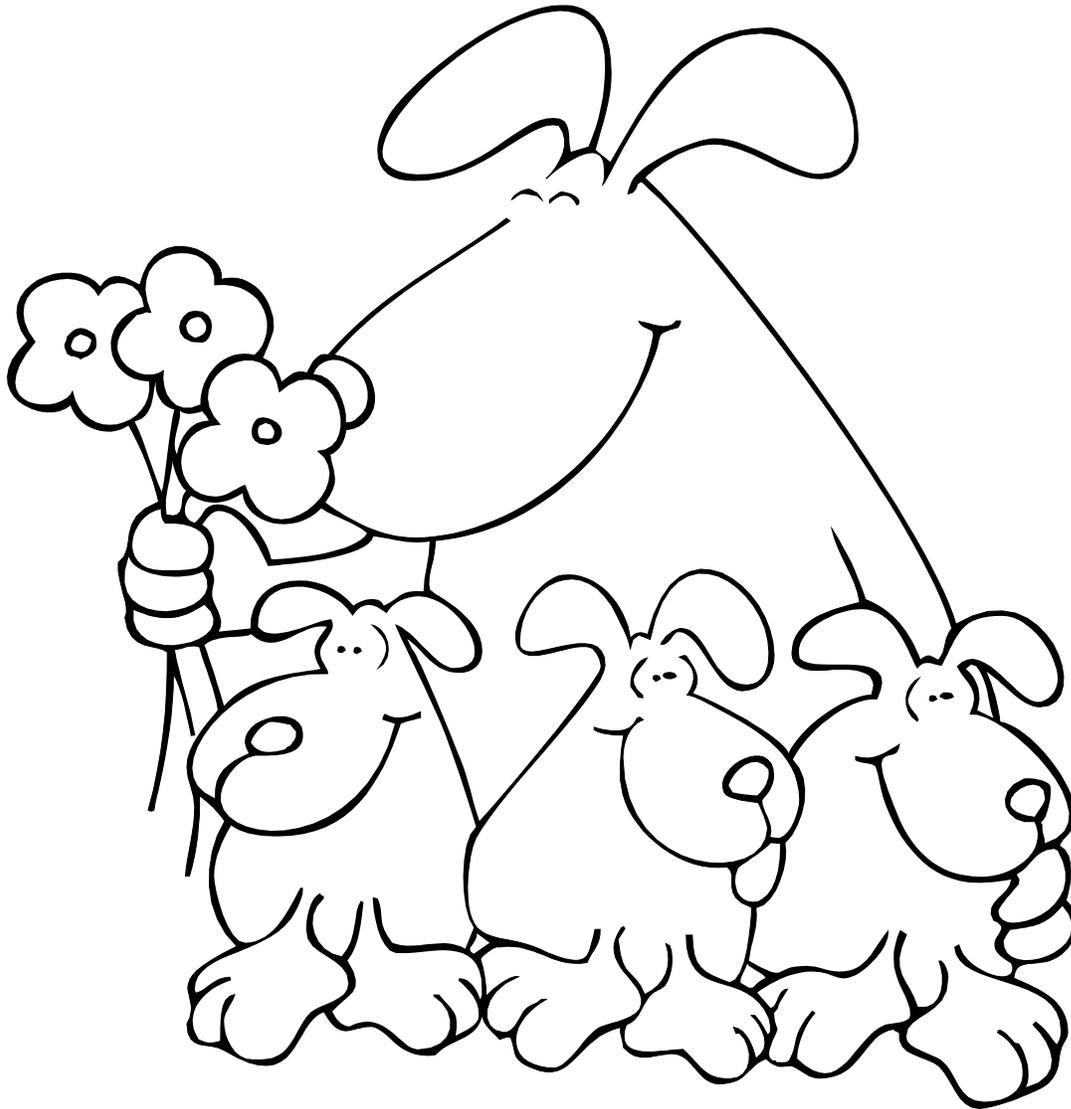
How safe are you being?

How safe is your family being?

How safe are your friends being?



Have fun coloring us in and congratulations for learning more about dog safety!



Dog Safety Begins With You!