



PARENTING KIDS & DOGS

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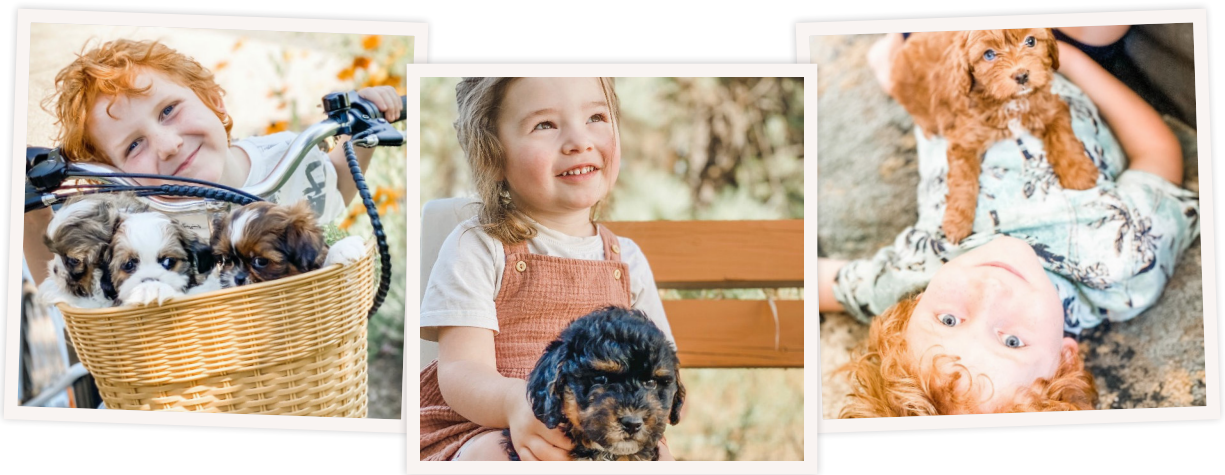


ADOPTION HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES WITH KIDS

You may be considering adopting a puppy, or perhaps are struggling with how to manage one already.

In this handbook, we've gathered our favorite sanity saving tips for parents of kids and dogs. They will help you through some of the most common questions, fears, and challenges that you may experience with your new dog. Careful planning can bring calm back to your home and life! We hope you enjoy our handbook, please reach out to us and let us know how its going!

♥ Julie



Parenting Kids & Dogs

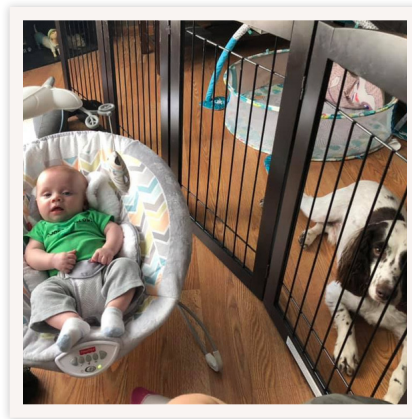


SET UP YOUR FAMILY FOR SUCCESS

- ☐ Use management, such as baby gates, pens and doors to provide some separation. Everyone needs a break sometimes.
- ☐ Dogs are not toys, dress-up dolls or chairs. They need to consent to all interactions.
- ☐ Teach kiddos to leave dogs alone if they are sleeping, eating or chewing on a bone. Use barriers to prevent access if kids are too young to follow directions.
- ☐ Kids need visual reminders to give dogs space sometimes. Put a safety perimeter on the floor around crates, beds, feeding areas etc. with **blue painter's tape** and pretend it's hot lava.



Pens can be used to contain either the baby or the dog. My favorite is the [Superyard by Toddleroo](#). The vertical slats can prevent the baby or dog from climbing out.



Rotate who uses the pen, so the dog and baby get special time with parents. Offers relief when 100% supervision isn't possible. Not suitable if parent leaves the room.



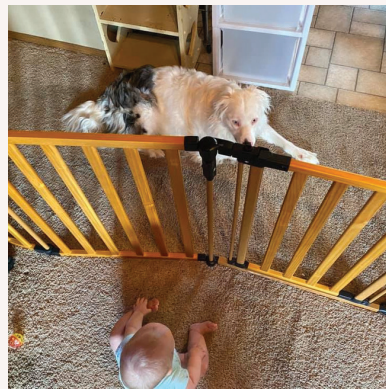
I love the [swing tension gate by Regalo](#). It opens with one hand and is too tall for most dogs to jump. Get the tallest one possible.

New Dog Tips

FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN



Congratulations on adding a new dog to your family! This is a time of big transition—both for the dog and for your children. This tip sheet will help to set your entire family up for success, dog included. Before we dive in, please remember that your dog needs YOUR help to make good choices. That means that you will need to use a combination of management, training and relationship building exercises to ensure that your new dog bonds with you and feels safe with your family. Using rewards with your new dog will help them to understand what behaviors you like, resulting in the likelihood you will see more good behavior.



- 1 Your new dog needs time to decompress and learn the lay of the land at home. Kids should ignore the dog as much as possible for a few days and dog should spend time with adult members of the household.
- 2 Every breed has different behavior tendencies based on how they have been bred for hundreds of years. Mixed breed dogs are no exception. MANY breeds love to chase and herd children. If your new dog does this, use a leash to prevent the dog from practicing this behavior and ask your child to go still and be boring so you can help.
- 3 Watch your dog's body language for clues that they are overwhelmed (lip licks, looking away, ears back, yawning). Stress can be caused by noise, tantrums, running and unpredictable behavior. Toddlers and noisy children often cause more stress than babies do.
- 4 Most dogs don't leave when they are uncomfortable. They often remain in place because they want to be close to you. You can cue your dog to move ("Out You Go") with treats if you suspect that current activities might cause stress.
- 5 Children should never approach a sleeping dog or one who is eating or enjoying a bone in case they get surprised or are protective of their treasures. Toss treats to dogs who are eating as you walk past so they see you as a giver and not a taker.

New Puppy Prep

FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN



Adding a puppy to your family is a BIG decision. Most families don't realize how challenging puppies can be, let alone how the difficulty grows exponentially when there are children in the mix. While puppies can be snuggly and loving, they also have sharp teeth and love to chase anything that moves—kids included. In order to set your family up for success, it's best to prepare your physical space and your expectations in advance.

- 1 Help your kids to understand that puppies have feelings and that they need lots of sleep and play breaks.
- 2 Puppies need to consent to interactions with kids. Children under age 9 should not carry the puppy because they are not developmentally coordinated enough to help puppy feel safe.
- 3 Be well stocked with puzzle toys, chews, tugs and treats so puppies are mentally engaged.
- 4 Puppies are not toys. Parents decide when it's appropriate to interact with the puppy.
- 5 Buy baby gates and pens to create safe zones for your kids and puppy. Make these spaces positive for your puppy.
- 6 Puppies who are resting, eating or chewing a special bone are 100% off limits to children.
- 7 Puppies often bite when they are over tired and need a nap.

Primer on Resource Guarding

FOR FAMILIES WITH KIDS & DOGS



IMPOLITE MYTHS

- We need to pet our dog while they eat so they “get used to it.”
- We need to put our hand in the food bowl—it’s our food, not theirs.

SIGNS OF RESOURCE GUARDING

Resource Guarding is a normal behavior resulting from a dog wanting to protect food, bones or other items. It can become dangerous, especially with children in the house. Here are some red flags to watch for.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tensing at your approach, you may see tongue flick | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog begins to eat faster at your approach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tail may wag rapidly, not relaxed | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog growls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog freezes with tense jaw | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog may move item away from you as if to hide it or prevent you from getting it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog stops chewing and hovers over item | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog may curl lips, growling louder, snarling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> May stare “into space” over item | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog may lunge at you snapping the air |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog glares, showing the whites of their eyes (we call this “whale eye”) | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog bites when you are near a resource |

PREVENTION

- Golden Rule applies—treat others with respect. This means leaving dogs alone while they eat or have a treasure.
- Taking items away can make a dog protect an item more. If you need to take an item, trade for something of higher value.
- If your dog has a history of resource guarding, take precautions. This dog should only eat or have treasures behind a barrier, such as a door, baby gate, pen or in a crate.
- Children are never allowed to approach the dog while it is eating or has a treasure. Safe spaces, such as crates or pens are 100% off limits to children at all times.
- Toss treats towards your dog while they eat or enjoy a bone, and then walk away. This helps the dog to look forward to your approach instead of worry that you will take their items.
- Only when a dog is relaxed with an adult tossing treats should children participate in this stage of training.

Dog Related Activities

FOR CHILDREN BY AGE



2-4 YRS.

- Toss treats across a barrier
- Scoop food
- Use a measuring cup to fill water bowl
- Help add items to stuffed Kongs
- Learn to pet stuffed dog toy
- Leash a stuffed toy and practice “walking the dog”
- Put away toys
- Freeze Dance game in parent arms—drop treats to calm dog
- Dog coloring pages or stories

5-7 YRS.

Previous tasks plus...

- Preparing dog food while dog is behind a barrier
- Sprinkle food at a spot in the yard
- Make dog food trails around the house
- Load and freeze food puzzle toys
- Holding a second leash on walks
- Use a marker word/cue
- Play Games: Freeze dance, Puppy Ping Pong, Find It
- Starter Nosework games with boxes

8-10 YRS.

Previous tasks plus...

- Use a pooper scooper
- Learning to gently brush the dog
- Hide and Seek
- Engineering activities: Recycled items into puzzle toys
- Obstacle course using household objects (hula hoop, overturned cooking pots, pool noodles, a bed sheet)
- Clicker games to improve timing
- Watch tricks videos and pick some for the family to teach the dog

11-14 YRS.

Previous tasks plus...

- Bake dog treats
- Prepare dog meals
- Wash dog dishes and toys
- Trick training

Depending on the child and dog:

- Independent dog walking may be possible
- Prepare for the Canine Good Citizen Test

Tips for Safe Games

WITH KIDS & DOGS



1

KNOW THE CHILD

Is the child old enough to follow directions? Does your child respect the dog and know when to give space? Parents should be actively involved in games for kids under the age of 10 (or older if necessary).

2

KNOW THE DOG

Is the dog a puppy? Does the dog get over-excited easily? Is the dog prone to using their teeth during play? Some dogs should be leashed during play for safety.

3

PICK THE RIGHT TIME OF DAY

Choose the time of day when the child and dog are the most likely capable of making good choices. Avoid times when they are tired, hungry or otherwise impatient.

4

CHOOSE THE RIGHT TREATS

Use treats that are rewarding to the dog but unlikely to cause over-arousal. If possible, use the dog's regular kibble or something of similar value.

5

STOP BEFORE IT GETS OUT OF HAND

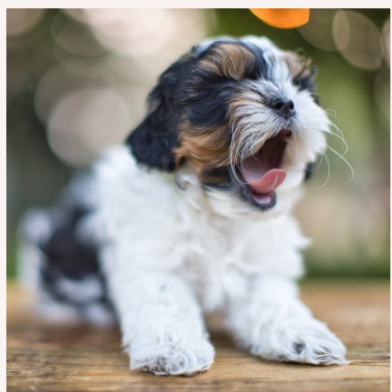
Both kids and dogs tend to make poor choices when they are too excited. End the game on a good note, before anyone starts to make mistakes.

Dog Body Language

YOU SHOULD RECOGNIZE



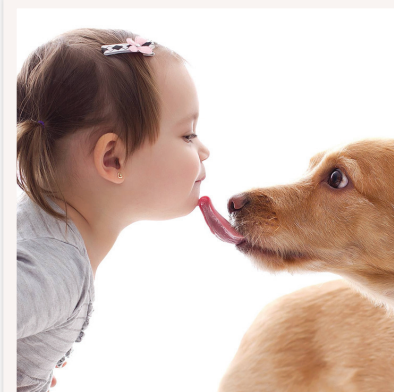
Dogs communicate with their bodies. It's our responsibility to watch and listen—and then to respond in a way that can help them feel safe. By learning to recognize signs of stress, fear or anxiety in dogs, we can help our dogs to feel supported, which will go a long way towards preventing dog bites. When in doubt, call in a dog professional to help your family to assess the situation.



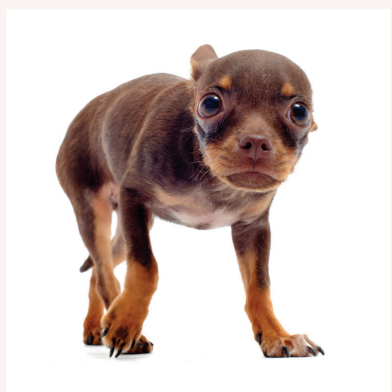
Dogs often yawn at times of stress. Look at the context—is there a crying baby nearby or a new piece of baby equipment.



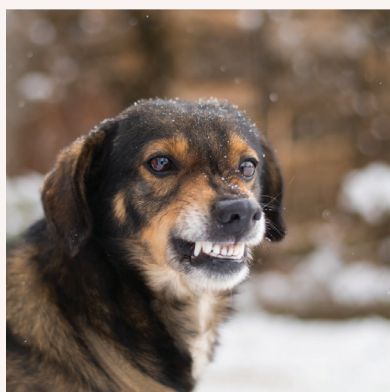
Tongue flicks can indicate discomfort when it's not associated with eating and drinking.



Licking people doesn't always mean that the dog is “kissing” or giving affection. Sometimes this is intended to push the person away to get space.



Ears back, tight jaw, paw lifted and tail down are all signs of a fearful dog.



Growling is communication. Be grateful that the dog is giving a warning. Back off. If you don't respond, this can turn into a bite.



Dogs who turn away are often trying to appease you or another threat. They are trying to say they mean no harm. Back away.

Our Dog is in Training

PLEASE CALL OR TEXT UPON ARRIVAL



PATIENCE IS APPRECIATED WHILE
WE GET THINGS UNDER CONTROL.

Babysitter Safety Planner

FOR DOGS & KIDS



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT OUR DOG

HOUSE RULES

- The dog and child are NEVER to be left alone together
- Identify where the dog will be and what activities it can do while you use the bathroom, do diaper changes, do bathtime, play, eat, and do the bedtime routine

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS FOR THE DOG

- One side of you with the kids on the other
- Behind a baby gate or in a crate/pen
- Outside
- With caregiver AFTER kids are in bed

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES FOR THE DOG

- Chew bully stick or bone
- Food puzzle toy
- Sleep or rest
- Being petted by you while kids are busy
- Play at a distance—throwing ball/toy

LIST WHERE THE DOG WILL BE AND ACTIVITY THE DOG WILL DO WHILE YOU ATTEND TO THE KIDS



Kongs for Dogs

MENTAL ENRICHMENT FOR DOGS



DO'S

- ✓ **START EASY**
Begin by adding loose ingredients to the toy so they fall out easily and help pup feel successful.
- ✓ **TAKE IT UP A NOTCH**
Layer dry ingredients with layers of moistened or canned food. Some layers will feel easier than others.
- ✓ **INCLUDE SURPRISES**
Add some fun surprises in the lower layers as a bonus, such as shredded cheese, applesauce or dried liver pieces.
- ✓ **BONUS CHALLENGE**
As your dog gets used to working harder to get the food out, you can freeze it before offering it to your dog.

DONT'S

- ✗ **FORGET TO READ LABELS**
Use food with natural ingredients. Xylitol is toxic to dogs and salt is unnecessary.
- ✗ **USE ONLY PEANUT BUTTER**
Peanut butter has a LOT of calories. Use a little as a mixer or simply as a lid over the big hole at the top.
- ✗ **USE AN INAPPROPRIATE SIZE**
Small dogs need small Kongs, or they won't be able to reach all of the filling. Large dogs can choke on small Kongs.
- ✗ **ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO APPROACH**
Dogs deserve to eat in peace. In order to prevent mistakes, give your dog a kong in another room, behind a baby gate or in a pen or crate.

Why did my Dog Growl

AT MY TODDLER?



REMEMBER: GROWLS ARE WARNINGS WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR

SLEEP / REST

DID MY TODDLER...

- ☐ STARTLE THE DOG WHEN IT'S SLEEPING?
- ☐ APPROACH THE RESTING DOG, MAKING IT FEEL TRAPPED?
- ☐ GRAB, HUG, OR CLIMB ON THE TIRED (AND CRANKY) DOG?

FOOD / TOYS

DID MY TODDLER...

- ☐ TAKE THE DOG'S TOY OR FOOD?
- ☐ GET TOO CLOSE TO A FAVORITE ITEM?
- ☐ APPROACH THE DOG WHILE IT'S EATING?

FEAR / PAIN

DID MY TODDLER...

- ☐ CHASE OR FRIGHTEN THE DOG?
- ☐ GRAB / POKE / PULL ON THE DOG?
- ☐ TOUCH A PAINFUL SPOT ON THE DOG?

I Love and Respect my Dog

REWARD CHART



I WAS GENTLE WITH MY DOG

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I LEFT MY DOG ALONE WHILE IT SLEPT

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I IGNORED MY DOG WHILE IT ATE

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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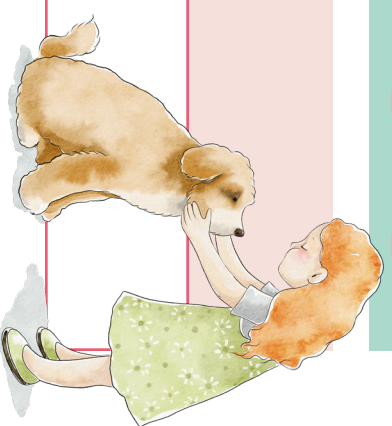
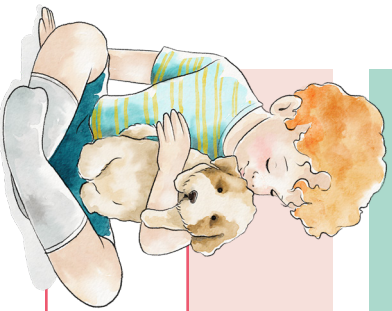
I DID NOT TAKE MY DOG'S BONE OR TOYS

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I GAVE MY DOG BREAKS AND MOVED AWAY

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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MY REWARD IS:



I Spy

DOG CLASS EDITION



- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TREAT POUCH | <input type="checkbox"/> DOG WITH LONG FUR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOG HARNESS | <input type="checkbox"/> DOG LEASH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PERSON SMILING AT THEIR DOG | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAINER PRAISING STUDENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WAGGING DOG TAIL | <input type="checkbox"/> DOG WITH TWO COLORS OF FUR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLAY BOW | <input type="checkbox"/> DOG BED OR MAT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WATER BOWL | <input type="checkbox"/> DOG LAYING DOWN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PERSON PETTING THEIR DOG | <input type="checkbox"/> A NERVOUS DOG |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOG THAT IS JUMPING | <input type="checkbox"/> A DOG SITTING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A POTTY ACCIDENT | <input type="checkbox"/> A DOG IN CLOTHES OR A BANDANA |

