



## KIDS & DOGS

**These tips will help provide for a safe and loving relationship between your dog and children.**

### **ATTENTIVE SUPERVISION**

As the parent, you are instrumental for ensuring a successful relationship between your children and your adopted dog. The first step is to choose a dog who demonstrates an active interest and comfort with your children, instead of simply a tolerance. Children can move faster and be louder in their day-to-day interactions than adults, which can be scary for some dogs. Children are also not as experienced at reading the subtle cues dogs give to communicate discomfort, and their need for space. Therefore, consistent parental supervision, management, and role modeling of appropriate interactions is essential.

### **SET EVERYONE UP FOR SUCCESS AND GOOD TIMES**

The first few weeks in a new home can be stressful to any dog. Help your children learn that it is their job to always help make the dog feel safe and comfortable. Explore together which activities support that goal. Living with a child is an adjustment for many dogs, as their movements, activity level, and noise can be overwhelming or scary. Plan a schedule for your family and your new dog that includes times for supervised interactions and times for relaxation. During supervised interactions, teach your children how to comfortably give the dog treats, either by hand or tossing them on the floor. When dogs receive treats from people, they start to equate that person with being a safe person.

### **NO TOUCHING DURING NAP TIME**

We've all heard the saying; Let sleeping dogs lie. And there is a very good reason for that! When dogs sleep, they are no longer aware and prepared for what is going on around them. Touching a dog while he is asleep can startle them, and cause an involuntary bite.

### **DO NOT DISTURB DURING MEAL OR CHEWIE TIME**

It is normal for dogs to guard things they care a lot about, even from family members and other dogs. This is called resource guarding. Teach family members and visitors to never touch a dog, or a dog's food bowl, when he is engaged with it. Chewies can be especially revered by dogs, and it is never a wise or safe choice to touch a dog with a chewie or to try to remove it from their possession. The dog must be allowed to enjoy these items or take a rest without interruption. It's up to parents to impart this important information about dogs.



## **MAKE SURE THE DOG IS INTERACTED WITH IN WAYS THAT HELP HIM FEEL SAFE AND COMFORTABLE**

Do not allow pulling of ears/tail/paws/fur, rough play, wrestling, climbing on top of, startling, or teasing of your new dog. These types of games teach your child inappropriate and unsafe interactions with dogs. Every dog has his limits and may bite under certain circumstances, so strict supervision and management is necessary.

## **PROVIDE A SAFE, QUIET SPACE**

It is important to provide an area that your dog can retreat to if he is feeling overwhelmed, uncomfortable, or tired. We recommend this area be out of the way and always accessible to him. Crates and dog beds are a great example of a comfy refuge that can be completely their own. Lastly, if your dog retreats to this space, honor his choice by leaving him alone to rest and relax.



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