

Parents Guide to Bite Prevention

Dogs can be a wonderful part of our family. But did you know that 50 percent of all children in the United States will be bitten by a dog before their 12th birthday? The vast majority of dog bites are from a dog known to the child—his or her own pet, a neighbor's or a friend's. The good news is that most bites can be prevented. This parent guide is intended to introduce the tools children and parents can use to help reduce the risk of occurrence of a dog bite.



- 1. Supervise children at all times when interacting with a dog, even the family pet.**
- 2. Do not allow children to approach or hug any dog that does not belong to them, unless they ask the dog's guardian for permission.** *If it is OK, approach slowly and quietly. Let the dog sniff you first, then pet the dog under the chin.*
- 3. Never surprise a dog who is eating or sleeping.** *Animals can bite when they are frightened or startled.*
- 4. Never take a toy away from a dog.** *Dogs are often protective of their toys and will sometimes bite to protect their things.*
- 5. Never approach a dog who is in a car.** *Dogs will often protect their space.*
- 6. Never approach or reach for a dog who is behind a fence.** *Most dogs naturally protect their home or property.*



- 7. Teach children to stand still like a tree if an unfamiliar dog approaches and they are frightened.** *Stand very still with hands at their side. Be very quiet and do not look the dog in the eyes.*
- 8. If a child is knocked down by a threatening dog teach them to be a turtle!** *Curl up in ball on your side and put your fists over your ears. Stay very still and quiet until the dog goes away.*

- 9. Never, ever try to outrun a dog!** *Back away slowly.*
- 10. If you have a dog, train it to enjoy the presence of children using positive methods and never allow rough play or chasing games between child and dog.**