



Dog Safety Tips for Parents



Helping Kids Build Safe, Kind, and Happy Friendships with Dogs

Dogs and children can be wonderful companions—but it’s important to teach kids how to respect and understand dogs to keep everyone safe.

Watch the Body Language

Dogs “talk” with their bodies before they use their teeth. Teach your child these important signals:

- Happy & Relaxed: Loose body, high wagging tail, open relaxed mouth.
- Stressed or Scared: Tucked tail, ears back, lip licking, yawning, turning away.
- Warning Signs: Growling, showing teeth, stiff body—this means back away.



Things Kids Should Not Do

- Don’t hug tightly, climb on, or ride dogs.
- Don’t grab ears, tails, or fur.
- Don’t approach a dog who is eating, sleeping, or in their bed.
- Don’t run and scream around dogs—it can excite or scare them.



Safe & Kind Behaviors

- Ask before petting any dog.
- Let the dog sniff first before touching.
- Pet gently on the back or side, not the face or tail.
- Give dogs space and respect their “no.”

Teaching Kids Manners Around Dogs

- Model calm, kind behavior yourself.
- Remind kids: “If a dog walks away, let them go.”
- Supervise all interactions between young kids and dogs.

The Big Picture

When children learn to respect dogs’ feelings, they build kindness, empathy, and safe lifelong friendships.

Looking for a fun way to teach kids about dog safety?

Check out “I Have Feelings, Too (Understanding Dog Communication)”, a children’s story that helps kids understand dog communication through interactive storytelling.