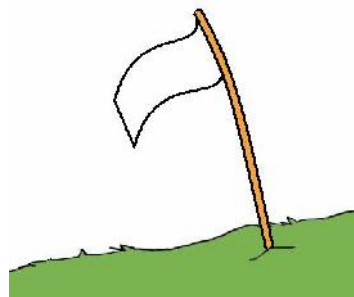


Kids and Dogs: Living Together Happily...and Safely!



Is your dog saying “enough is enough”? Learn to read the signals before it’s too late.

Dogs rarely bite without warning. A bite is often the final escalation in a series of signals sent out by the dog – and ignored by humans. In the vast majority of cases, dogs tell us they are stressed long before they bite, making dog bites predictable and, therefore, preventable.

Dogs have a rich vocabulary of *calming signals* – expressions, postures, and movements – designed to show discomfort or stress.

Children especially have a gift for stressing dogs out by getting too loud, too close, or too excited around dogs. As adults, our responsibility is to pick up on our dogs’ stress – and take action. This means separating the kids and the dog, both to protect the kids and to respect the dog’s right to peace and quiet.



Example 1:

Tess is stressed out by a child playing with a stick nearby. She lifts a paw to show her discomfort.

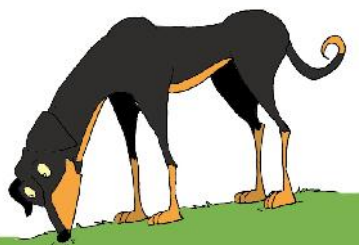
First, take the stick away from the child. If the dog still looks stressed, separate the dog and child.



Example 2:

A child quickly runs up to Belle head-on. Belle shows her stress by licking her nose several times quickly.

Make sure the child stops immediately and turns away from the dog. The dog will naturally come up to the child on his own when it feels more comfortable.



Example 3:

The house is crowded with noisy guests and their rambunctious children. Tootsie feels uncomfortable, which she expresses by sniffing.

Take the dog away to a quieter place. Divert the dog’s attention by playing with it as you walk away. Keep all children away from the dog.



Example 4:

Lucky looks away when a child runs up to him.

Make sure the child stops immediately and looks away from the dog.



Example 6:

A child gives Diablo too many orders, too fast. Diablo doesn’t understand what is expected of him and shows his stress by scratching.

The dog and child are not communicating well. Either separate them, or help the child give the dog a clear order you know the dog can obey successfully.



Example 5:

Sybil is resting on her dog bed, when a child approaches. Sybil yawns to show her discomfort.

Make sure the child stops immediately and set clear rules to ensure that the dog is not disturbed when resting in its special sleeping space.