

SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AROUND DOGS

Many parents are understandably concerned about the safety of their children around dogs. This is even more so due to the recent news of a child being attacked by a rottweiler.

Even if you are a dog owner yourself or come into contact with other dogs we have some guidelines and recommendations to be considered. These are taken from the Blue Cross web site who have given their permission to use in part some of their information for which we thank them. More advice can be found on their website www.bluecross.org.uk

HOW TO BEHAVE AROUND DOGS

- ◆ Always ask the owner before touching any animal and listen to the answer.
- ◆ Do not run or jump as this sudden movement may frighten the dog.
- ◆ Do not scream or squeal around the dog, talk in a normal voice.
- ◆ Do not crowd the dog and give them plenty of room as they might feel scared.
- ◆ Do not approach the dog if he is sleeping, feeding or drinking.
- ◆ Do not remove his/her toy.
- ◆ Never hit, kick, smack or be cross with the dog.
- ◆ Always call the dog to you and if he does not come leave him alone do not pull him.
- ◆ Do not play games where the dog chases you or rough and tumble games.

IF A DOG APPROACHES YOU

- ◆ If a strange or excited dog approaches you stand still and tall and look away. Tuck your hands in.
- ◆ Dogs love to chase so do not run away.
- ◆ If you are knocked over by a dog curl up small and tuck your head in and cover your ears with your folded arms.
- ◆ If, when riding a bike a dog chases you, get off on the opposite side and put the bike between yourself and the dog.
- ◆ If a dog tries to bite or jump up, put your bag between yourself and the dog.
- ◆ Drop food or toys so that the dog goes away.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

- ◆ Never leave children even for a few minutes unsupervised with ANY dog.
- ◆ Children should never follow a dog if it is trying to find somewhere quiet to get away.
- ◆ Never disturb a sleeping dog or if he is feeding or drinking.
- ◆ Children must learn to respect the dog and never tease or bully it.
- ◆ Teach the dog not to jump up or be boisterous.
- ◆ Teach the children not to squeal or scream around the dog as this could frighten it.
- ◆ Teach children to remain calm around the dog and give the dog space. Dogs do not always appreciate being hugged or cuddled.
- ◆ Slowly find out what the dog will accept, supervising constantly to ensure that no unacceptable behaviour occurs on either side.

Animals react to what is around them and how they feel. If they feel unwell and the room is noisy, they may react differently to when they feel well and the room was quiet.