



Introducing Dogs To Children

If you have an infant or young child, bringing a new dog home can be an adjustment for the entire family, including the dog. Follow these dos and don'ts when it comes to successfully acclimating your new pet and your child to each other.

Buy Crates, Tethers And Gates To Be Able To Set Up Boundaries That Help Separate Your Child And Dog

These tools will provide a safe barrier between your child and dog but will still allow the dog to feel included and not isolated from the family until he warms up to the child.

Don't Force Interaction Between Your Dog And Child

Allow your dog to approach your child rather than suggesting your child forcibly approach your dog. This can very easily make your dog uncomfortable and put your child at risk. Once your child learns to walk, be sure to teach them to always allow the dog to come to them first, and never corner or trap the dog.

Familiarize Your Dog With Your Child's Scent And Sounds

To help your dog feel more at ease, introduce your child's scent to the dog by allowing him to smell clothing items or a stuffed animal before bringing the dog home, and again once he is home. This is especially important when you are bringing a new baby home from the hospital and the dog is already a member of the family.

Don't Leave Your Child Unsupervised With The Dog

It only takes a few seconds for your child to provoke your dog, putting themselves at risk. If you need to leave the room, always take either your child or dog with you. If you are the only adult present, sometimes it's easier to put your dog in his crate or behind a gate so you don't have to worry about being so attentive.

Allow Your Dog To Be Curious

It's natural for your dog to want to sniff and lick your child, it's his way of getting to know them. Don't scold him for being curious, just always keep yourself in between your child and dog, and be prepared to pull the child away if needed.

Don't Allow Your Child To Take The Dog's Food, Treats And Toys

It's important for children to not only respect your dog's space, but his things too. Allowing your children to take the dog's toys for themselves puts them at risk and shows your dog that he has no ownership over his things. Plus, a dog's toys or food can harbor germs that can make children ill.

Pay Attention To Your Dog's Behavior And Body Language

Your dog will make it clear that he is uncomfortable through his actions. If he's licking your child but standing back with an outstretched neck, he likely is trying to get out of the situation. If he growls at your child, don't scold him, understand that he is uncomfortable and react accordingly.

Remember To Give Your Dog Some One-On-One Time

If you choose to bring a dog or puppy into your family, be sure that he is going to get the attention and affection he needs. It's easy to forget this when there's a baby in the house, but it's not an excuse to neglect your dog.



Introducing Your Child And Dog

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