



Dogs and Kids

Though there are many breeds of dogs in the world, there are really only three types of dogs when it comes to children: those who turn inside out with excitement at seeing a child, those who tolerate the presence of children, and those who do not like children. Ideally, dogs living in a home with children are from the first group – the kid-lovers. Though dogs from the other two groups can learn to tolerate or even like the family children, remember that where there's one child, there's bound to be more... that child's playmates. That will be a tall order for a dog who's a bit short on patience for, or worse fearful of, young'uns.

So, when you are searching for a new dog and you have or plan on having kids in the near future, make sure you're looking for a kid-loving dog. If it is a puppy you seek, then it will be your responsibility to socialize that pup to the many different people (including children), dogs and other animals, and life experiences that will be part of his lifescape. Have your pup get plenty of tasty treats from tikes of all ages, and as you do training with your pup, make sure to

include children in this process so that your pup learns that kids are as relevant to his life as adults are.



Kaylee and Brandy

In the home, there need to be rules so that everyone will enjoy a safe, peaceful coexistence.

- You should *never* leave your dog alone with young children, no matter how much you trust your kid-loving dog. Accidents can happen in the blink of an eye.

(continued on page 2)



Introductory Training Offer

Get an extra 30 minutes of training when you purchase a 4-session training package.

(Offer details based on location.)

Call **WOOFGANG** at **646.345.5116** to make an appointment.

A Baby on the Way

If you have a new baby on the way, a little being who will in many ways consume the attention and energy that has until now been channeled toward your pup, patient, positive preparation will help the relationship between your dog and your new baby start out on the right foot.

WOOFGANG can help your pup learn to navigate his new world in baby steps. Call **646.345.5116** today!

About the Trainer

Dog trainer **LAURA GARBER**, CPDT-KA, is a professional member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) and is certified by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT), the first national certification for dog trainers.

Laura has authored articles about dogs and dog behavior in dog-centric magazines and on-line resources.

Laura believes strongly in strengthening the bond between human and companion animal. For this reason, she regards training as an exercise in building relationship rather than obedience. Such an approach promises greater understanding and symbiosis within our family packs.

Log on to www.myWoofGang.com.

Is your Dog Pushy?

A dog who is pushy and demanding and disrespectful of others should have a more strict structure than a dog who is polite, respectful and compliant. Quite simply, nothing good should be granted for undesirable behavior.

WOOFGANG can guide you in training your dog to be a polite, respectful family member.

Dogs and Kids (cont.)

- Your dog should have a designated safe place, like a crate or private room. Children should understand that when the dog goes to this spot, he should be left alone.
- Young kids should be respectful of dogs and what they're expressing through body language; educate your child about dog body language and stress signals.
- Teach your child how to pet a dog gently. He should not pinch or pull on ears or tails, nor should he grab fistfuls of fur. If you know that your child tends to be rough, teach him on a stuffed dog first before introducing him to a real dog.
- Teach your child to wake the sleeping dog by talking to him before touching him. Startling him out of a deep sleep could result in his being defensive.
- As dogs age, they become less tolerant and more prone to pain- or startle-induced reactions. Have frequent vet appointments to make sure that your dog is healthy and pain-free.

Meeting Dogs on the Street

You must also teach your children how to behave with unknown dogs on the street.

- Your child should not pet unknown dogs without your permission and then the permission of the owner *and the dog* – by asking the dog to come forward to greet your child rather than your child going towards the dog. This is the rule even if his tail is wagging! If the dog does not come forward when invited, then he does not want to socialize and he *must* be left alone.
- If the dog is open to the interaction, your child should slowly offer his closed fist for a sniff of introduction. A dog may confuse a child's fingers for a treat, a mistake less likely to happen with an offered fist.

- Some dogs may startle when first touched on the back, so first contact is best done by scratching the side of the dog's neck, which does not involve the child's hand coming over the dog's head and does not put the child face-to-face with the dog.
- Teach your child how to pet a dog gently. He should not pinch or pull on ears or tails, nor should he grab fistfuls of fur. If you know that your child tends to be rough, teach him on a stuffed dog first before introducing him to a real dog.
- Avoid dogs that are: in cars, behind fences, or tied up, are eating or sleeping, are near a toy or bone, or are caring for a litter of puppies. Also instruct your child to never tease a dog never to approach a loose dog.
- If a dog growls or gives chases, running or screaming can provoke a predatory "chase" response from the dog. Instead, teach your child to **be a tree** – by standing still with legs together, hands clasped in front and looking down at their feet, and they should remain that way quietly until the dog loses interest.

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Dogs and children can share very meaningful relationships. Children who learn to respect, love and empathize with animals will carry these lessons with them into adulthood. All that is required is a thoughtful education on the part of both the children and the dogs to make this a reality.

For this article in its entirety, log on to www.myWoofGang.com.



Ask Woofie...

WOOFIE, my puggle Bentley pulls really bad, even with the Easy-Walk harness on. He chews on things that he shouldn't, such as furniture, phones, etc. I watch him pretty intensely but the minute he is not supervised, he looks for trouble. He also "play bites" but won't stop at times and wants to be entertained constantly. I take him to dog park and for long walks when I get home from work. I know he probably needs more exercise. Do you have any suggestions I might try? Jackie

Hiya, Jackie! Unfortunately nothing replaces the time spent doing training and practice of good behavior and supervision. Practice these essentials to help him be a better dog:

- Ongoing training to teach him better alternative behaviors
- Exercise (walking, running, dog play)
- Leashed supervision so that he can't sneak away and chew
- Puzzle toys for mental stimulation
- Crating when you can't supervise

The time spent up front shaping good habits and behaviors is well invested, as it means a life of enjoyment and symbiosis with your dog. Don't postpone this kind of work any longer. Hope that helps! **WOOFIE**



Unlike his tough-guy exterior, Mandingo, a 2-year old pit bull mix, is as gentlemanly as they come. He is playful with other dogs and has lived with them in the past. If you're looking for a BFFF, visit Mandingo at the Liberty Humane Society.