

The benefits of having a dog in the family...

Benefits of pet ownership have been identified in areas of child development, family harmony and even health. Pets are important in children's lives both for the enjoyment that they bring now as well as the role rehearsal for future adult activities.

Pet ownership can help children to:

- Learn to care and nurture others
- Develop a sense of responsibility
- Establish a daily exercise routine
- Develop friendships.

Train the dog to sit, stay, drop and come



A socially responsible dog owner...

- Chooses a dog that is suited to their family's lifestyle and environment.
- Teaches their dog good manners such as "come", "stay", "sit", and "drop" and to walk safely on a loose lead.
- Exercises their dog daily.
- Socialises their dog safely throughout its life.
- Keeps their dog healthy with nutritious food, clean water and keeps up to date with health schedules recommended by their veterinarian such as vaccinations and de-worming.
- Has their dog desexed if not intended for breeding.

For more information...

The *dogs 'n' kids Information Resource Kit* contains a more comprehensive booklet, display poster and multilingual brochures. It aims to empower health professionals, parents and children with information to reduce the incidence and severity of dog bites to children.

The Safety Centre

The Royal Children's Hospital
Flemington Road, Parkville, 3052
Telephone (03) 9345 5085, Fax (03) 9345 5086
www.rch.org.au/safetycentre, email safetycentre@rch.org.au

The Petcare Information and Advisory Service

404/685 Burke Road, Camberwell, 3124
Telephone (03) 9827 5344, Toll Free 1800 631 784
Fax (03) 9827 5090
www.petnet.com.au, email petcare@petnet.com.au
The Petcare Information and Advisory Service can assist with choosing a breed of dog that will suite your lifestyle and needs.

Kidsafe ACT

Telephone (02) 6290 2244
Email act@kidsafe.com.au

Kidsafe NSW

Telephone: (02) 9845 0890
Email nsw@kidsafe.com.au

Kidsafe Hunter Valley

Telephone (02) 4942 4488
Email hunter@kidsafe.com.au

Kidsafe NT

Telephone (08) 8985 1085
Email nt@kidsafe.com.au

Kidsafe QLD

Telephone (07) 38541829
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Kidsafe SA

Telephone: (08) 8161 6318
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Kidsafe TAS

Telephone (03) 6249 1933
Email tas@kidsafe.com.au

Kidsafe WA

Telephone (08) 9340 8509
Email wa@kidsafe.com.au

or contact

Your Maternal & Child Health Centre

Your Local Council

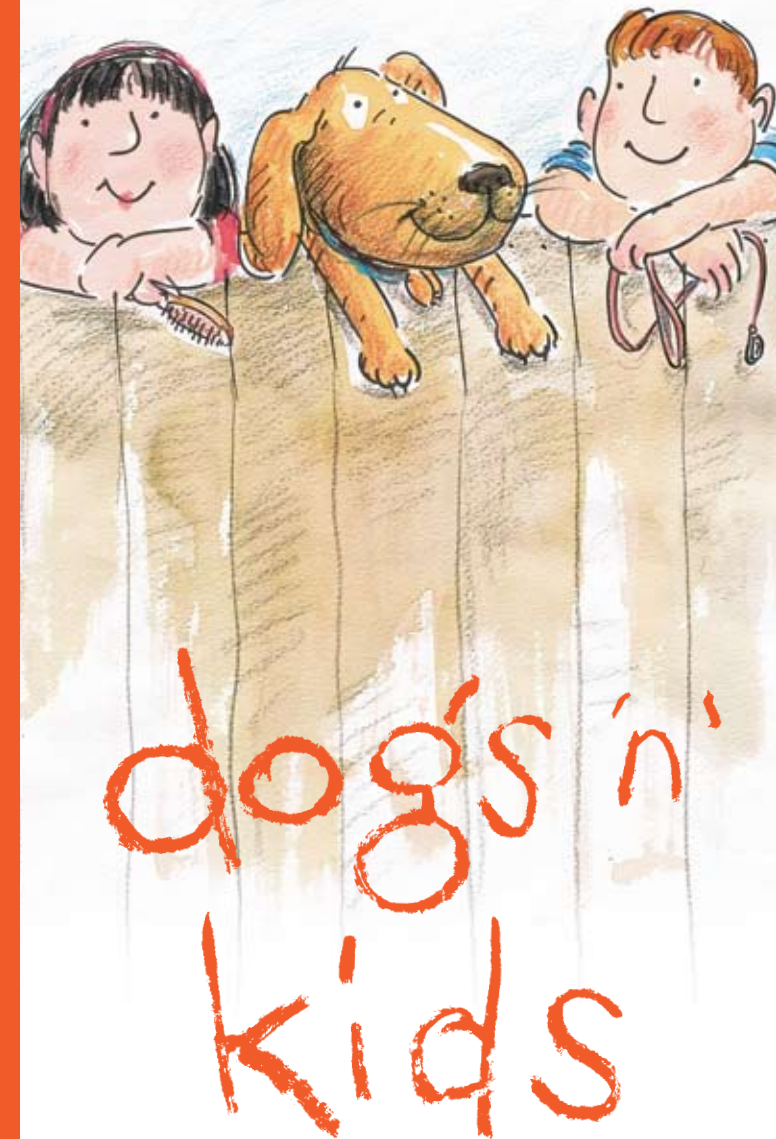
Your Veterinarian

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Some dog owning responsibilities...

- Register your dog with the local council and familiarise yourself with the local laws.
- Keep your dog in your yard.
- Leash your dog in public places unless allowed off leash. Your dog must always be under your control.
- Take responsibility for any faeces or damage from your dog.
- If you become concerned about your dog's behaviour seek professional advice immediately.



Exercise daily

Help to reduce dog bites in children by...

- SUPERVISION. Children always need constant, close supervision when near dogs, especially during play. When you cannot supervise dogs and kids then separate them.
- Teach children to leave a dog alone when sleeping, eating or gnawing a bone.
- Teach children and your dog to be gentle with each other.
- Seek professional advice about socialising dogs and kids.



Model the desired behaviour

If wanting to pat a dog...

- Teach your child to always ask permission from their carer AND the dog owner if they want to pat a dog, even if they know the dog.
- Never proceed if either the dog or child are not calm and content to be involved.
- Show your child first how to pat a dog and always closely supervise.
- If approaching a dog; approach on an angle, move slowly and calmly, curl your fingers into a fist and allow the dog to sniff the back of your hand, then stroke the dog gently on the chest or under the chin. Always be gentle.
- Wash your hands after patting.



Stand still if approached by a strange dog

Teach children that a dog should be left alone if it...

- lifts its lips
- growls
- backs away
- raises the hair on its back
- stares at you.

Teach children that if approached by an unfamiliar dog, then stand still like a statue, arms by their sides, hands in a fist and not to scream. Teach them to not make eye contact with the dog, by looking down at their own feet.