

Dog bites can be avoided when people behave safely



Safe, Responsible Behavior (S)

Always walk your dog on a leash. (Keep your cats indoors, where they are safe from traffic and from other animals.)

Before petting someone else's dog (or cat), ask the guardian for permission. After getting permission to pet a dog, always let the dog sniff the back of your hand first.

When a dog approaches you, stand still and stay quiet. Keep your hands at your sides.

When you are not walking your dog, keep him indoors with you—or in a fenced yard. Spend time playing with and caring for your dog.

Unsafe Behavior (U)

Don't pet or approach a dog (or a cat) while he is eating, sleeping, or guarding something. Pets naturally guard their food, their babies, and their toys. Dogs also protect their owners, as well as property that belongs to their owners—such as an owner's home, yard, or car.

Don't try to pull a toy, a stick, or any other item from a dog's mouth. Also avoid playing tug-of-war with dogs. Playing roughly with dogs may teach them to bite, jump, or become aggressive.

Don't run away from a dog who is chasing you. (A dog's natural instinct is to chase and catch someone who is running away. If you stand still, the dog will most likely stop, sniff you, and leave you alone when he realizes you are not a threat.) Also, don't chase or tease dogs or cats, and avoid petting or trying to pick up strange pets.

Don't approach a dog (or any other animal) who is injured. Instead, tell an adult about the animal.