

DOG EDUCATION & KEEPING SAFE



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Comparing the likes and dislikes of students and dogs

To encourage students to think about being kind to dogs and treating them with care and respect, ask students to list:

- what dogs like and don't like
- what students like and don't like.

How do students' likes and dislikes compare to those of dogs?

How to care for a dog

Different types of dogs have different needs and requirements. Have students list important issues for creating a healthy and happy environment for their dog. Instruct students to use the website resources listed above to get them started.

Dog collars and tags

- Have students design a suitable dog collar for their favourite dog.
- Dogs need to display registration tags at all times. Discuss with students why this is a requirement. Find out about the cost of registration in their local government area. Most councils charge a cheaper registration rate for desexed dogs. Talk about responsible dog ownership.

Dog headlines

Ask students to create news-breaking headlines such as the following:

- 'Dog lands plane after pilot has heart attack'
- 'Dog eats eight wristwatches and stays on time'
- 'Dog digs hole to China'
- 'Dog eats student's homework'

Dog holidays

Sometimes dogs need a holiday as well! When the family goes away on holidays, it is not always possible to take the dog along (in which case the dog would need to be placed in kennels until the family returns). There are however some 'dog-friendly' hotels, motels and caravan parks that accept dogs. Ask students to try to find some 'dog-friendly' accommodation in their favourite holiday location using the internet.

Dog insurance

Explain insurance to the students. People often take out insurance for themselves and their family's health but insurance of pets is less common. Should we take out health insurance for our dogs? Why or why not? Split the class into groups to debate this topic.

Organisations that use dogs to assist humans.

Find out about organisations which use dogs to assist humans. Some leading organisations include Guide Dogs, Assistance Dogs Australia and Pets as Therapy.

Guide dogs

What are guide dogs? Who do the Guide Dogs associations assist in our community?

Locate your state or territory's Guide Dogs association.

There are particular ways to behave around a guide dog, known as 'guide dog etiquette'.

What is the correct guide dog etiquette?

The Guide Dogs associations of Australia train guide dogs for people who are blind or vision impaired. The Guide Dogs associations also:

- train people who are vision impaired to use canes and electronic aids to improve their mobility and thus independence and quality of life
- train companion dogs for children and adults who are disabled or disadvantaged owing to age, isolation or ill health
- help make the community an easier place in which to live and work.

Guide dog etiquette: how to behave around a guide dog

- The guide dog must not be the centre of attention—don't pat, feed or otherwise distract the dog when it's working. A well-intentioned pat can undo months of training.
- Don't grab the person or the dog's harness—ask the person if they need assistance. If providing guiding assistance, walk on the side of the person opposite the guide dog.
- If walking your own dog make sure that your dog is on the leash or otherwise under control. When approaching, it may be polite to let the person know that you also have a dog.
- If you see a loose guide dog contact the local council or the police.
- While working, the guide dog is legally permitted to go anywhere that the person may go.
- You can find out more about guide dog etiquette at:
www.guidedogs.com.au/Content.asp?z=5&c=40&p=94



Dog Care Basics: Fact Sheet courtesy of RSPCA

Being a responsible dog owner is largely about understanding your dog's needs and your obligations, as the dog's owner, to the community. Following are some basic rules for dog care:

- Learn about your dog's special needs—dietary, health, housing and general care.
- Provide your dog with an adequate balanced diet and ensure that it has access to clean, cool drinking water at all times.
- Regularly exercise your dog according to its needs.
- Train your dog using kindness and positive reinforcement.
- Provide appropriate housing and shelter for your dog.
- While unsupervised, keep your dog safely and securely confined to your property at all times.
- To minimise boredom, provide your dog with sufficient companionship and a stimulating environment.
- Protect your dog's health by taking it to a vet whenever health problems arise and by ensuring all necessary vaccinations and treatments are up-to-date.
- To help prevent disease and illness, ensure that your dog has a clean environment.
- Microchip your dog (where appropriate) and, where required, register your dog with the local council.
- De-sex your dog at an early age to prevent unwanted offspring.
- If your dog requires grooming, do this on a regular basis.
- Many dogs need to be socialised with other animals and people, particularly at a young age—provide your dog with appropriate opportunities for mixing with others.
- Teach your family and friends how to interact appropriately with your dog.
- Find suitable boarding facilities for your dog whilst on holidays.
- Respect the rights of non-dog owners by keeping your dog under control while in public and by disposing of any droppings made in public areas.
- Provide your dog with love and attention and commit to caring for it for its entire life.



Promoting Responsible Dog Ownership Socialising Children with Dogs

Press Release

The relationship between dogs and the family unit is far more complex than most people realise.

We expect dogs to know they are on the bottom of the pecking order in our family, even when an unexpected new member comes along. Yet, years of evolution speak differently to the dog; many dogs accepting that they have been placed third or second in the pack order, automatically place themselves above newly acquired pack members, such as children.

As humans, we expect the dog to simply accept a new member of the family, stupidly believing that because the dog has never bitten anyone, it won't bite the new family member but accept it as an automatic superior in the pack. Sure, this might work in dogs that are well socialised with children.

Indeed, dogs that are not socialised with children often see them as a completely different species to adult humans, given their body proportions, head size, and uncoordinated movements do not resemble anything they are use to seeing.

A child's poorly coordinated raise of the hand to pat or to take food away from the dog can be interpreted by the dog as a challenge.

However there are many benefits in our society in owning a dog. In 1995 the American Journal of Cardiology recognised that pet owners live longer. Most recently, the Journal of the American Geriatric Society (March, 1999) stated that pet owners remained more active and were far less likely to suffer from depression.

How then do we avoid a child being attacked by a dog?

Since the majority of severe attacks occur on children under five, it is difficult to teach a child of this age the correct way to behave around dogs. However, all parents and children of all ages need to be taught the following...

- How to behave toward dogs, ensuring the dog is properly trained to sit, stay, drop and come.
- Always supervise young children near dogs
- Choose a breed that is suited to your lifestyle and environment
- Ensure your dog has the opportunity to socialise safely with children
- Interact with dogs by modelling the desired behaviour
- Ask permission from the owner to approach their dog
- Approach a strange dog slowly with the back of the hand extended
- Curl your fingers and allow the dog to sniff
- Stroke the dog gently on the chest, or shoulder, or under the chin
- Avoid approaching dogs that are sleeping or eating
- Stand still like a fence post if approached by a strange dog and do not squeal or jump
- Avoid eye contact with the dog

When it comes to dog owners, these points are essentials:

- Socialise your dog, especially with children, but make sure your dog is always on a lead and under full control.
- Obedience train your dog. Don't take it for granted that your dog will understand his or her place around children and the home.
- Training allows your dog to better understand what is expected and allows you to have realistic expectations of your dog's capabilities and some understanding of canine behaviour.

When it comes to choosing a dog, these points are essentials:

Be careful when choosing a dog for your family. Make sure the dog breed you choose is suitable not only for the family members, but also your lifestyle. For example, whether the dog will be suited to your children or whether you will have the time to groom and exercise the dog properly.

When you buy a pure-bred puppy from a reputable Dogs NSW registered breeder you will know what to expect in the adult dog, as the size, temperament, appearance and characteristics are predictable. You should receive a documented history of the puppy and you will be able to see one or both parents or other family members

Breeders have experience to give puppies the care and nurturing they need at critical early stages. This ensures you'll have a healthy puppy and one less likely to develop into a difficult adult. Breeders will guide you in proper care and feeding, health issues and training and will continue to provide information and support as your puppy grows.

Owners of registered purebred dogs can join Dogs NSW and participate in a variety of activities and events with their dogs. These activities provide an opportunity for social interaction for both dogs and owners.

Discussion Points

- Ways to socialise your dog?
- What to do when a strange dog approaches?
- Discuss different breeds and their temperaments.
- How can I know the puppy will suit my lifestyle and fit my family when it grows up?
- How can I find out about the puppy's family or background?
- Where do I obtain information and advice about my puppy's needs as it grows?
- How can I be sure my puppy is healthy?

ACTIVITIES

Go to the Dogs NSW website for information on how to choose a puppy that is right for you www.dogsnsw.org.au/puppy-corner See bottom of webpage and follow the links for valuable education that will assist you with your decision.

Go to the Selectapet section on the PetNet website www.petnet.com.au This quiz will help you select a dog breed that is suitable for you and your family.

Colour attached illustration and see if you can identify the breed of each dog through researching photos on www.dogsnsw.com.au breeders gallery.

