DOGS AND PUPPIES:
Kids in the Family

Are you considering bringing a dog into a home with children? Or, do you have a dog and entertain friends or family with kids? Children and dogs can form the closest of relationships. However, there are a few things to watch for to ensure you set your dog, and children, up for success. You, as the adult and pet owner, play a vital role in the dynamic.

Watch your dog's posture. Some dogs may be uncomfortable or unfamiliar with children. You want your dog to be loose, not stiff or tense. Also, watch his facial expressions – an open mouth, soft eyes, and relaxed brow are good indications your dog is comfortable. Excessive yawning, lip licking, a furrowed brow, growling, and the corners of his lips becoming shorter may indicate signs of stress or discomfort.

Teach children what stroking and petting your dog enjoys. Children should be taught to respect their canine companions. Make it clear to children that rough handing, including hitting, riding, teasing, and scaring, is unacceptable at all times. Incorporating kids into your dog's favorite games, like fetch or tug-of-war, can be great activities for both of them. It is also a good idea to keep children from your dog's food, which your dog sees as a valued resource.

Supervise interactions between your pet and children, especially if the children are visitors. Make sure your dog has a safe area, such as a bed or crate, he can retreat to. Children need to know when your dog is on his bed or in his crate, he is off-limits. Teaching your dog basic manners will also benefit both your dog and children. Familiarize your dog with

commands such as "sit," "stay," "drop," and "down." Teach him to greet others politely. A jumping dog can be both bothersome and dangerous, especially if the child is small. Finally, seek the help of a qualified trainer. Being proactive will help ensure a positive outcome for both your dog and your children!

MORE RESOURCES AT
hsppr.org/resources

Humane Society
Pikes Peak Region

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