

# Raising Dogs and Kids Together

(A Guide for Thoughtful Pet Parents)

Simple Steps to Keep Everyone Safe,  
Happy, and Connected

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# Hello and Welcome!

When you imagined raising a puppy and a family together, you probably pictured a happy, wagging tail, a child's laughter, and a lifelong bond growing right before your eyes.

And that can happen — but only with the right foundation.

The truth is, even the sweetest, most tolerant dogs have limits. As a parent — to your human and canine kids — understanding those limits is the key to keeping everyone safe and building a relationship built on trust, respect, and love.

In this guide, you'll learn:

- How to create healthy boundaries between kids and dogs
- How to recognize when your dog needs space
- Safe, positive ways to encourage interactions
- What to teach your child about respecting a dog's body and emotions

There's no such thing as a dog bite "out of nowhere."

There's only communication — and the opportunity to listen before it's too late.

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# 4 Rules Every Family Should Know



## 1. Respect the Dog's Space

Every dog needs a "safe zone" — a crate, a quiet room, or a cozy corner where they can retreat and relax without being disturbed.

Teach your child:

- The crate is always off-limits.
- If the dog walks away, you don't follow.

This simple boundary helps your dog feel safe in your home — and prevents fear-based reactions before they ever start.

## 2. Leave Dogs Alone While Eating

Even the most gentle dog can feel protective over food.

When dogs are eating:

- No petting, playing, or approaching.
- Feed dogs in a calm, secure space away from distractions.

Would you want someone poking at you during your favorite meal? Neither does your dog.

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### 3. Gentle Hands, Always

Young kids don't always understand the difference between playful and overwhelming. That's where you come in.

Teach them:

- Pet softly with open hands — no pulling fur, ears, or tails.
- Always wait for the dog to come to you for affection.

A simple rule:

Three gentle pets, then pause.

If the dog stays, they want more. If they walk away, they're done.

### 4. Personal Space Matters

Dogs aren't stuffed animals. Hugging, lying on, or sitting on a dog can feel scary or threatening — even if the dog "tolerates" it.

Instead, show your child better ways to show love:

- Play together
- Train simple skills
- Offer gentle pets when invited

Affection is safest — and most meaningful — when it respects your dog's comfort.





# Understanding Dog Body Language

Before a bite ever happens, dogs always give warning signs.

Subtle signals include:

- Lip licking
- Yawning
- Turning the head away

More obvious signs:

- Stiff body
- Tucked tail
- Pinned ears
- Growling or snarling

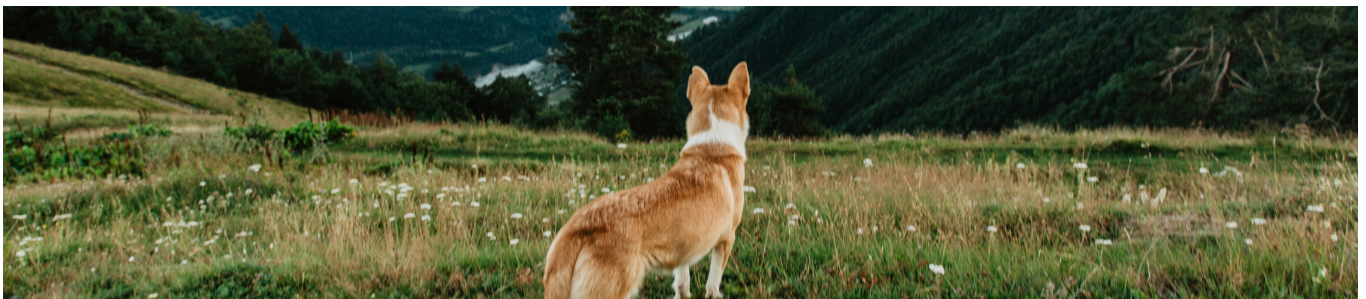
Important:

Growling is not bad behavior — it's communication.

If your dog growls, they are saying, "I'm uncomfortable."

Respect that warning, and step in to help your dog feel safe again.

Punishing a growl doesn't make the problem go away — it only removes the warning.



# Safe, Fun Ways Kids Can Build a Bond with Your Dog

Three easy, supervised activities that create positive connections

## 1. Hide & Seek

Have your child hide with a treat and call your dog's name. Celebrate when your dog finds them! Builds confidence and recall. But remember dogs can't open doors & no jumping out when they find you!

## 2. Cup Game

Hide a treat under one of three plastic cups. Let your dog sniff and search while your child cheers them on. Also a great confidence builder for your dog. Fun for both!

## 3. Train Together

Teach simple cues like "sit," "touch," or "down."  
Kids love feeling empowered — and dogs love the clarity.

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# Thank you!

Your dog and your child are both learning — about the world, about each other, and about trust.

You're not just raising a dog or a child.  
You're raising a relationship — one rooted in calm, confidence, and connection.

You don't have to do it perfectly.  
You just have to do it thoughtfully.  
And that's exactly why you're here.



## Do You Need More Help?

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