



## **DOGS AND KIDS**

Dogs and children can become great friends. Having a dog in the home can help a child learn responsibility, kindness, understanding and respect for other living things. However it is extremely important that parents teach children how to properly interact with the dog for everyone's safety.

### **Supervise** and instruct!!!

- Children must be taught to be calm and respectful around dogs.
- Teach children to pet dogs gently, in the direction of their fur. No pulling, pushing, tail tugging, or squeezing.
- No hugs for dogs...hugs are for people only! Dogs may be uncomfortable with the restraint.
- Children should never be allowed to sit or lay on dogs.
- Pay special attention if your new dog chooses to move away from your child or avoids eye contact, this could indicate that the dog is uncomfortable and needs space away from your child.
- If you aren't sure if your dog is enjoying attention from your child try "Pet & Pause" –
  - Have the child move across the room and call the dog.
    - If the dog chooses not to go or moves away, give them space.
  - If the dog goes to the child, have the child pet the dog briefly and then pause and stand still.
    - If the dog solicits more attention – great!
    - If the dog chooses to move away – give them space.
- Encourage children to invite the dogs to come to them rather than moving into their space to pet or interact.
- Teach children to NEVER approach a dog that is eating, chewing on/playing with a toy or treat, or sleeping.
- Teach children that a crate is a safe space for the dog to retreat and be alone, children should NEVER crawl into a crate with a dog or use a crate as a place to play whether the dog is in it or not.
- Include your children in the care and training of your new dog and model how to properly interact with the dog.
- Encourage patience. This is a new situation for both the child and your dog.

Websites with good information and videos for kids about how to interact politely with dogs:

<http://stopthe77.com/> and <https://www.thefamilydog.com/>

If you have any questions about these exercises or notice any concerning behaviors from your newly adopted dog, please contact the Training and Behavior Department for behavior Adoption Follow Up at [training@longmonthumane.org](mailto:training@longmonthumane.org) or 303-772-1232 x 270.