

- Before getting a dog, realistically evaluate your schedule, environment, and lifestyle. Consult with a professional (e.g. veterinarian, animal behaviorist, animal trainer) to determine the types of dogs best suited to your situation.
- Dogs with a history of aggression are inappropriate in households with children.
- Be sensitive to cues that a child is fearful or apprehensive about a dog and, if so, delay acquiring a dog.
- Spend time with a dog before adopting it. Use caution when bringing a dog or puppy into the home of an infant or toddler.
- Spay/neuter your dog to reduce aggression.
- Never leave infants or young children alone with any dog, even a small dog.
- Properly socialize and train any dog entering the household.
- Immediately seek professional advice (e.g. veterinarian, animal behaviorist, animal trainer) if the dog develops aggressive or undesirable behaviors.
- Do not play aggressive games with your dog (e.g. wrestling).
- Teach children basic safety around dogs and review regularly:
  - Never approach an unfamiliar dog.
  - Never run from a dog and scream.
  - Remain motionless when approached by an unfamiliar dog (e.g. “be still like a tree”).
  - If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (e.g. “be still like a log.”)
  - Never play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
  - Immediately report stray dogs or dogs acting strangely to an adult.
  - Avoid direct eye contact with dogs.
  - Do not disturb a dog who is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
  - Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.
  - If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult.

