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*The Definitive Guide to  
Stopping  
Puppy Biting*  
***Without Punishment***

By Joan Orr and Teresa Lewin



# Contents

## #1 Bite-proofing your puppy

- How to condition your puppy to tolerate touching
- How to teach your puppy to share
- How to build trust practicing exchanges
- What to do when your puppy bites

## #2 Prevent Guarding

- How to prevent food guarding
- How to prevent resource guarding
- A common mistake building mistrust
- Teach “give” using exchange
- How to cure guarding issues

## #3 Curing guarding issues in puppies

## #4 Teaching Kisses

- How to teach kisses
- How-to Video
- Step-by-step training instructions

## #5 Teach your puppy to “Leave It”

- Command vs Cue
- Getting the behaviour
- Video Demonstrations

## #6 Kids & Dogs

- What if being a tree doesn’t work
- Managing kids and dogs
- Crate training
- Teach the puppy to chase and bite a toy

# #1 Bite-Proofing Your Puppy

Puppies are furry, friendly and programmed for learning. Now is the time to teach your puppy about the things that people, especially kids might do, that dogs do not naturally accept. Things like toddlers pulling his tail, people taking his toys, kids going near his food bowl or kids taking over his special sleeping area.

## **In this Chapter:**

1. How to condition your puppy to tolerate touching
2. How to teach your puppy to share
3. How to build trust by practicing exchanges
4. What do do when the puppy bites



# How to make touch a positive experience

To prevent biting accidents later in life you can condition your puppy to tolerate and even enjoy any kind of handling. Give him hugs, pull gently on ears and tail, tug gently on his fur all over while at the same time feeding him goodies from your hand, or allowing him to chew on a yummy bone. You must not just do strange things to the puppy to “get him used to it”. He may learn to tolerate inappropriate handling from you, but this will not likely transfer to other people. The goal here is to make any kind of touching or handling into a positive experience by associating it with a really good treat.

Pairing with a treat can make even rough handling a positive experience. It is essential to use the goody in this type of conditioning. When that toddler runs up and yanks on his tail, the dog is more likely to look at you as if to say “where’s my treat?”, rather than snapping at the annoyance.

This touch desensitization should be done daily with a puppy and monthly throughout the dog’s life.

[Watch this video](#) to see how kids can help teach a puppy to enjoy the kinds of things that kids do.



# How to teach your puppy to share

Dogs do not naturally share, but you can teach your puppy to give up his toys, bones, food and resting place by associating the approach of people with great things. When you first get your puppy, feed him at least some of his food by hand. If he shows any sign of being unhappy with you near his food bowl, then feed all of his food by hand for the first two weeks. This teaches the puppy that hands near his food is good. As he is eating from his bowl walk by and toss something really yummy near the bowl, so that the puppy leaves the bowl to get the treat. This teaches the puppy that it is OK to move away from his bowl when a person approaches.

After a few meals, move to tossing treats into his bowl while he's eating. Feed your puppy by hand for some meals and put food and treats into his bowl by hand. This teaches the puppy that hands near his food are a good thing.

**MYTH:** Taking the puppy's bowl away and giving it back teaches the puppy to allow people to take his food.

**FACT:** This teaches the puppy that you are unreliable and he needs to protect his food or eat it really fast! Remember always to GIVE to the puppy, never take from the puppy.

[Watch a video demonstration](#)



# How to build trust by practicing exchanges

Practice exchanges with your puppy, where you get him interested in something of equal value to the toy that he's playing with and you give him yours and take away his. Only take his toy once he is engaged with what you have given him. Or give him a great treat in exchange for his toy and then give the toy back. Sit with him in his resting place and give him toys and treats.

Make sure that every experience the puppy has with people approaching his things or special places come with a great reward and you will have a puppy that is happy to share and is less likely to become defensive later in life.





# What to do when your puppy bites

A technique that often works to discourage nipping by a puppy is to squeal “ow!” and then withdraw attention from the puppy for a few seconds. It is essential that the puppy is allowed to use his teeth on your hands at first so that he learns to control his bite. At first say “ow” only if it really hurts, and then say “ow” for gentler and gentler bites. If you’re playing and you feel teeth on your skin, stop immediately for a few seconds. You don’t need to shout “NO” or physically punish the puppy. Withdrawing the play and attention is enough. The puppy will learn to be careful with his teeth on human skin.

Have lots of dog toys available so that the kids can give the puppy something appropriate to bite on if he is in a nippy mood. Teach kids to give appropriate chew items to the puppy, but never to take anything away from the puppy. It’s an adult’s job to rescue stolen items from the puppy by trading for a treat or a toy that the puppy is allowed to have.

Sometimes squealing “ow” makes the puppy even more excited, or your puppy is so sensitive that he is afraid of you if you do this. In this case always have a toy ready to give the puppy to bite, and follow the other steps in this book.

# #2 Prevent Guarding

Many bites to children occur around the food bowl. We are frequently told that the dog growls (but he would never bite of course) when the kids go near him while he's eating. This situation is easily prevented if the puppy is taught that people approaching the food bowl means good things for the puppy

*Please note that these instructions are intended to prevent guarding. All puppy owners should do these exercises even if the puppy is not guarding. It is much easier to prevent guarding than to cure it..*

## **In this chapter:**

1. How to prevent food guarding
2. How to prevent resource guarding
3. A common mistake building mistrust
4. Teach "give" using exchange
5. How to cure guarding issues





# How to prevent food guarding

The best way to prevent food guarding is to go up to the puppy while it is eating (adults only; not children at first) and toss something extra yummy near the food bowl. Progress to adding the treats right into the bowl. Children can toss treats towards the bowl once the puppy gets the idea that people approaching is a good thing. Soon the puppy will welcome the approach to his bowl with a wagging tail. If the dog raises his tail when a person approaches the food bowl, this is a serious warning. Watch out for this raised tail warning.

Other signs that the dog is worried about people

stealing his food include, blocking the food bowl by moving his body, growling, freezing and staring at the food or the person, or gobbling at an alarming rate. Recognize these warnings as an impending problem and go back to conditioning the dog to welcome approach by adding yummy treats once again.



## How to prevent resource guarding

This approach can be used to prevent other types of resource guarding as well. For example, if the puppy is lying on his mat chewing a bone, the kids can walk past and toss really yummy treats onto the dog's mat. Similarly if the dog has a toy, the kids can toss treats in the direction of the dog and keep walking. The puppy will soon come to view any approach by a person as benign and will not become defensive.





# A common mistake that builds mistrust

Many people are of the unfounded belief that taking the bowl (or other high value object) away and giving it back is a way to teach the dog to accept this. Actually this teaches the dog to mistrust people coming near the bowl. The action that occurs immediately following the approach of the person is the taking of the desired object. Even if the object is subsequently returned, it is the taking away that becomes associated with the approach of a person.

Using this approach could increase bite risk for children and visitors to the home since the dog will assume that

any person intends to take his treasures and he may be less tolerant than with the ruling adult.





## Teach "give" using exchange

Another important lesson is the exchange. Obtain two identical chew toys or Kongs and stuff them with goodies and give one to the puppy. Take the second one and show it to the puppy right under his nose. When he focuses on the second one and starts licking it, take the first one away. Repeat several times per session by walking away and returning to make the exchange. The puppy will soon get the idea that people taking things away is a good thing. If a child ever takes from the dog the possibility of a bite is greatly reduced (children should still be taught not to take anything away from the dog, but best to be prepared in case it does happen).

The exchange can also be used to regain stolen objects from the puppy. Instead of punishing the puppy, trade for something the puppy wants more and say "give" or "off" at the same time. The puppy will learn to give up objects willingly at the "give" command, thus reducing the likelihood of a tug-of-war happening between child and dog.



# How to cure guarding issues

If resource guarding problems do develop despite your best efforts to prevent them, or the dog is an adult rather than a puppy, don't delay, seek professional help from a trainer that will use positive methods to solve the problem. Remember, it is critical that the puppy or dog learn that it is a VERY GOOD thing when people come near. Any training approach that involves punishing, startling or frightening the puppy to distract him from growling will make things worse.

Never punish a puppy for growling, or allow others to do this. The puppy may learn not to growl and may go straight to a bite the next time, or when you are not

there to mete out the discipline. The puppy may become even more worried about kids around his food or toys if bad things happen in the presence of kids.

# #3 Curing Guarding Issues in Puppies

*Please note that the topic here is **PUPPIES** not adult dogs. If you have an adult dog that is guarding food or possessions or a resting place then we recommend that you hire a professional behavior consultant to help you. This is a very dangerous situation and we would consider this an emergency that requires professional help immediately.*

*If your efforts to follow the instructions below with your puppy are not successful, then please get professional help right away. Once your puppy is cured and even if your puppy never shows signs of guarding, it is important to keep up with these exercises for the life of the dog and not to get into the habit of just taking things away from the dog because he seems to tolerate it.*

*This article is reprinted with permission from Jean Donaldson*

## Resource Guarding in Puppies- By Jean Donaldson

*Dear Jean,*

*I just got a new nine week-old Rottie puppy. He's stunning, smart and generally friendly but growls and snaps if I go near him while he's eating. He also does this to my adult Rotties. I've never seen this in a puppy so young. Is he some sort of lemon? Is he a dominant dog? Is there anything I can do? Help!*

It is indeed alarming for most people to see frank aggression in puppies. In the case of resource guarding – food, bone, bed etc. possessiveness – there is good news and bad news. The good news is you can start addressing it in a young, hopefully plastic, spongy puppy with weak jaws.

The bad news is that there is some sentiment out there among trainers that aggression in puppies is an insidious sign of the problem having Deep Genetic Roots and therefore fruitless to tackle. I'm going to explore the whole nature-nurture debate later but for now will simply say that there doesn't seem to be any overwhelmingly tidy correlation between behavior problems that are thought to have a strong genetic component and their susceptibility (or lack thereof) to behavior modification.

I recently had a similar case, in my own foster puppy.

Buffy, a stray six week-old Chow, presented with object and food guarding against people and dogs. I elected to not touch the dog-dog issues, which is a relatively common approach. Her socialization and play skills were coming along nicely and she was developing good acquired bite inhibition. The guarding against people, however, needed to be actively resolved. The following is a summary of Buffy's food guarding exercise regime. Incidentally, Buffy also presented with socialization deficits and severe body handling problems, which were also addressed, as was her object guarding. The key to good hierarchy design is small enough incremental steps that at no point do you see the original guarding problem. In the case of a puppy, such as this, there may actually be more aggressive increment jumps. I did a few other things in the can't-hurt-might-help category. These included impulse control (stay, off and wait) and extra soft-mouth training.

## **Baseline**

When approached while eating from her dish, Buffy would freeze and, if approach continued, growl briefly and then lunge and snap. If touched while eating, she would growl simultaneous to whirling and biting. Due to the independent body-handling problem, this had to be partly resolved prior to combining it with food bowl exercises. Buffy did not guard an empty dish.

## **Hierarchy**

**Step 1 (day 1):** Installment feeding of canned food. I sat on the floor next to Buffy's dish and spooned in one mouthful. Once she had swallowed, I spooned the next mouthful into her dish. By the end of the second meal, she demonstrated a clear happy anticipatory orientation to my spoon hand



after each swallow.

**Step 2 (day 1-2):** Overlap. This was essentially the same as Step 1 except that I added the next spoonful to her dish while she was still consuming, always a much dicier proposition. We did this for three meals without evidence of guarding seen.

**Step 3 (day 2-3):** Approach overlap. I was now standing. I spooned larger installments, withdrew two paces, re-approached and added the next spoonful while Buffy was still consuming. So, this combined approach with the overlap exercise. We stuck with this for three meals, at end of which time a Conditioned Emotional Response (CER) had become evident – Buffy wagged and looked up on approach. We then repeated the exercise for one more day (5 small meals) with larger withdrawal distances and intervals.

**Step 4 (day 4):** Trumping. Now I spooned her entire puppy-sized ration into her bowl. I withdrew five paces, paused 15 seconds, approached and added a (hidden) marble-sized dollop of goat cheese. I had pre-auditioned the goat cheese out of context and ascertained it to be in Buffy's Top Five All Time Foods. I withdrew to six paces and waited for Buffy to continue to consume – this was not immediate (typical of trumping – dog orients to handler rather than back to dish) – then repeated. On the third trial I got a clear CER– withdrawal from bowl on approach, orientation to me and tail wag. Clever little thing.

**Step 5 (day 4-6):** Covering High Value Base. To up the ante, I tried some approaches while she was consuming a top food (bowl of treats), rather than normal meal ration level food. I trumped it with higher value stuff (gorgonzola). In two trials, I once again saw her happy anticipatory CER,

a very rapid curve indeed.

**Step 6 (day 4 onward):** Cold Trials. To better simulate real life, I initiated random trumping. At least once per meal, from a random direction, at a random time and with one of Buffy's top foods, I approached and added the bonus. Better than 80% of the time, I got an evident "yippee" CER. At no point did she guard.

**Step 7 (day 8 onward):** Generalization. I recruited my husband, colleagues in my office and a neighbor to do some random trumps, with careful monitoring for any evidence of regression, including the absence of "yippee" CERs to their approach. Had this been an adult dog, the hierarchy – and, notably, a much more gradual one too – would have been recommenced at the beginning by each new recruit, with likely accelerated progress rate for each successive person.

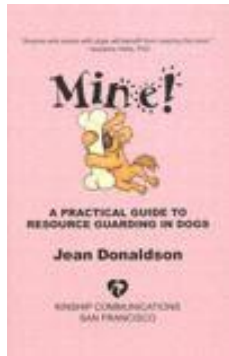
**Step 8 (day 15 onward):** Body Handling. It was only here that I commenced patting, grabbing or pushing her around while she was eating. In most cases this would come earlier (prior to cold trails), however with Buffy it took me this long to get the independent body-handling problem up to speed. The handling during eating exercise consisted of the body touch (later handling) followed by a trumping addition, repeated until the body touch/handling elicited the "yippee" CER. Buffy's CER consisted of a wag as well as orientation to my hand. If I stored the bonus in my other hand behind my back or my pocket and reached with a blank hand, she would wag and orient to my face.

Buffy is now on maintenance with a cold trumping or body handling trial usually once per meal and use of other people whenever an opportunity presents itself. I ended up adopting her.

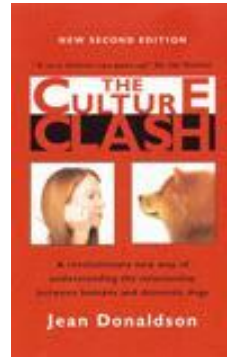
## We highly recommend these books from Jean Donaldson:

If your dog has guarding issues, you need the book Mine!

If you have a dog and you want to understand what it's like for a dog to live in a human world, you need to read The Culture Clash. Essential reading for all dog owners!



[Mine! A Guide to Resource Guarding in Dogs](#)



[Culture Clash](#)

# #4 Teaching Kisses

Teaching your puppy to control his mouth and to keep his teeth to himself requires a multi-faceted approach which is a combination of management and training. In this chapter we'll talk about the first of two very effective training approaches that you can take to help your puppy learn to give kisses and not to bite.

## **In this chapter:**

1. How to teach kisses
2. How-to Video
3. Step-by-step training instructions



# How to teach "kisses"

## **Welcome kisses offered by the puppy:**

Most puppies are generous with kisses and you can encourage this by saying "kisses" and welcoming the kisses when the puppy offers them. Of course if you don't want the puppy slobbering all over you, then just ignore the kisses or move the attractive body part out of range.

Your puppy will soon learn that if you say "kisses" you will welcome his licking you and otherwise you will not welcome this. Never scold or punish or take away your attention altogether from a kissing puppy.

## **Encourage kisses using treats:**

A great way to encourage kisses instead of biting and to help a puppy learn to take treats gently is to put something like cheese spread or peanut butter on your hand and fingers (don't use peanut butter if your puppy is going to be around children though in case of children with peanut allergies). Let the puppy lick this off, while you say the word "kisses" over and over. This helps him associate the action of licking with the word "kisses".

If he is really frantic for the yummy stuff on your hand he may not be paying too much attention to what you are

saying, so it could take a while for the association with the word to sink in. For some puppies this exercise is all that you will need to do teach him what “kisses” means, but others may not seem to catch on.





# A more effective technique

A better way to ensure that the puppy is thinking about what he is doing and not just madly licking is to set up the situation so that he offers a lick and is then reinforced for that so that he will repeat it with the conscious thought of doing it.

To do this you need: Some kind of marker sound that tells the puppy he is doing the right thing (We use a clicker for this, but you can use a ball point pen or something else that makes a short sharp sound. You can also use a marker word such as “yes” or “yip”, but this does not work as well as using a clicker.)

[Here is a video](#) that shows how to do this with step-by-step instructions following. The puppy in this video was the nippiest puppy we had ever worked with and she rarely offered spontaneous kisses – she had much more fun nipping!

## Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Offer a treat that leaves a tasty residue on your hand (put a dab of cream cheese under the treat if necessary to get things started).
2. Click when the puppy licks and give another treat. Create the cycle: lick – click – treat – lick – click – treat. At first the puppy is just licking the treat residue off your fingers, but after a few tries she will offer a lick on purpose.
3. Add the cue “kisses” when the puppy offers a lick when you hold out your hand. Use this cue from now on when offering treats.
4. Gradually move from a more open hand presentation to holding the treat between thumb and forefinger. Click when the puppy licks and release the treat.

Eventually the puppy will learn that the offering of a treat is the cue for “kisses” and she will lick to get the treat rather than snatching it. Practice with different people in different locations. If the puppy makes a mistake such as biting at your hand or putting her paw on you, just ignore this. You don’t need to say “no” or “ah ah” or “oops” if the puppy makes a mistake. It is best just to be quiet and let the click be the only communication during this training session.

The training session in the video above was about a minute and a half – this is plenty long enough. After training, play for a few minutes and then do another short session. You will get much more out of five 1 minute sessions than out of one 5 minute session.



# #5 Teach the Puppy to “Leave it”

An important strategy in helping the puppy to learn what he can and cannot bite and whether he is biting too hard is to teach a cue that tells the puppy to leave it. Some people use the cue “leave it” or “out” or “off”. In our example we will use the word “off”. You can use whatever you want, just be sure that this word is unique for the purpose. Choose a word that is going to be easy for you to remember to use in a consistent context.

Avoid using the word “no” for this purpose. The puppy will hear this too much and will just ignore it for the most part and will never likely associate it with taking his mouth off something.

## **In this chapter:**

1. Threats vs Positive Approach
2. Getting the Behaviour
3. Video Demonstrations



# Threats vs Positive Approach

Many people train “off” as a command with its associated threat: “Leave it or else.” The trouble is, once the dog has swallowed the light bulb (I am not making this up), or Granny’s \$3000 hearing aid, the ensuing “or else” does not do much to remedy the situation. It is not as if you can dock the dog’s allowance or extract an IOU to pay for the costs of his transgression.

Experienced clicker trainers, especially those whose training goals require an exceptional degree of reliability (those who work with guide dogs, service dogs, bomb detection dogs, etc.), know that training with a positive approach produces a dog that can be counted on even in very difficult

situations. Be sure to watch the video clips at the end of this article to see the results of training with positively trained using clicker training.

It is important to understand the difference between a cue and a command. A command implies a threat: “Do it or I will make you.” A command is given before the behavior is learned, and it can be enforced if the dog does not comply. For example, a trainer may teach “sit” by pushing down on the dog’s rump while saying sit, repeating the word and action over and over until the dog figures out that the word sit goes with the action of sitting, and that sitting fast enough will prevent the rump pushing.

In the early stages of this kind of training, the dog associates the command “sit” with all kinds of stimuli and with actions that have nothing to do with the dog sitting on its own.

Eventually after much frustration he figures it out.

“Off” is commonly trained as a command by placing a temptation near the dog and holding him back, or tugging on his leash and saying “off” in a stern tone of voice. If the dog does manage to grab the prohibited item, the command is repeated while the item is forcibly removed from the dog’s mouth. This method is stressful for the dog, and he may not learn much. In many cases, the command approach may place the trainer at risk of being bitten, too.

A positively trained cue is completely different from a command. There is no threat implied with a cue. A cue is like

a green light that tells the dog that now is the time to execute a behavior for the chance of reinforcement.

A cue is attached to a specific behavior only **after** the dog is offering the behavior on his own. The “sit” cue, for example, is only given once the dog has learned to sit, and, therefore, the cue is not associated with anything other than the act of sitting. If the dog does not respond to a cue, a trainer knows that further training is required. The trainer does not assume that the dog is intentionally misbehaving and must be forced or helped to do the behavior.



# Getting the behaviour

A common and very reasonable question about teaching positively trained cues is, “How do you get the dog to sit or demonstrate the goal behavior in the first place, so that you can click/treat and eventually add a cue?”

An easy way to get the puppy to take his mouth off your hand so that you can then click (or say yes) and reinforce is summarized below ([click here](#) for a more detailed article).

A popular method is to hold a treat in your closed fist and allow the dog to sniff, lick, paw it—whatever he wants to do to try to get the treat. Keep your fist closed until he backs off for just a fraction of a second, then click and open your hand to

give him the treat. Alternatively, you can click when he backs off, and give him a better treat from your other hand. Avoid the temptation to say anything—no scolding or otherwise telling him not to pester your hand. The dog learns best if he figures it out for himself without fear of reprisal.

If the dog is too frantic to get at the treat, use something less tantalizing to start. If the dog loses interest and does not try to get the treat, use something more tantalizing.

Raise criteria gradually so that the click/treat comes only when the dog is deliberately moving his head back several inches from your hand. Raise criteria again so



that the click/treat comes only when the dog makes eye contact with you after moving away from your hand. Gradually require longer periods of eye contact, until the dog backs off from your hand and maintains eye contact for three seconds. Now is the time to add the cue “off.”

Show the dog your fist containing the treat. When he looks away from it and toward you, say “off,” click, offer the treat, and say “take it.” Teaching opposite cues in pairs like this is a really effective approach. From now on, always say “take it” when you give a treat after the dog responds to the “off” cue.



# Video Demonstrations

[Here is a video](#) demonstrating the method by super trainer Emily Larlham. Emily uses the cue “leave it”. Notice the tone of voice; there is no threat. Note the extreme reliability of the behavior. Emily puts a plate of food down, asks the dogs to leave it and leaves the room. We recommend that you watch all of Emily’s training videos!

[Here is another](#) video that demonstrates the extraordinary power of this type of training. See a dog retrieving a hot dog and another willingly relinquishing a raw steak.



# #6 Kids and Dogs

Our extremely popular [Doggie Detective program](#) teaches kids to stand still and “be a tree” if a strange dog comes near or any dog is bothering them or acting too frisky. Every major dog bite prevention program and dog behaviour expert recommends some version of standing still and avoiding eye contact as the best way to prevent dog bites.

This is because movement is a powerful trigger for dogs, whether they are in predatory mode, are threatening or guarding or are simply playing. Being a tree is boring and non-threatening to dogs and they will soon lose interest and go away.

## In this chapter:

1. What if being a tree doesn't work
2. Managing kids and dogs
3. Crate training
4. Teach the puppy to chase and bite a toy



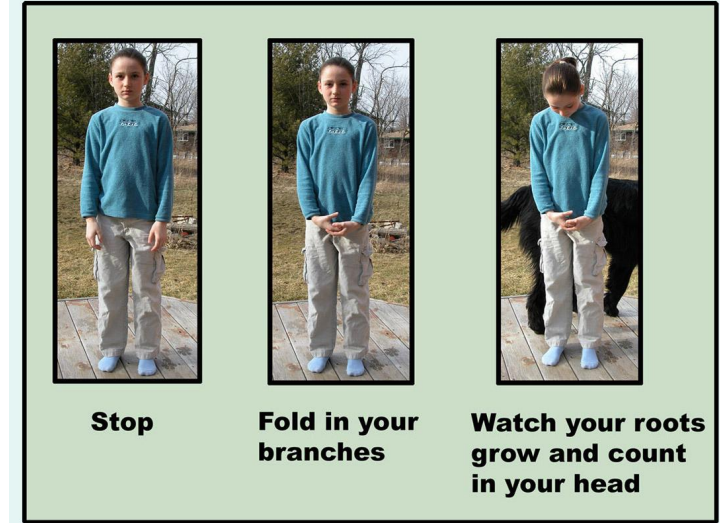
[Click here for more information](#)



# What if being a tree doesn't work?

But what happens when the standing still strategy doesn't work right away? In some cases a dog is so excited that it jumps up, pokes or nudges, nips or pulls on clothing even if the person stands still. No matter what the dog does it is always best to remain still. Any movement will make the dog even more excited and will make the situation worse. Even if the dog does bite, pulling away or moving could cause the dog bite again or to bite harder.

Parents have sometimes reported to us that this is all very well, but their puppy sometimes gets hold of the child's clothes and keeps on tugging and sometimes nips by accident even if the child stands still. This is a particular





problem with toddlers and preschoolers, who really can't be expected to stand still while the puppy is tugging madly at their clothes. Even if there is a rare toddler that can stand still, there is still resistance for the puppy to tug against and this can be enough fun to keep the puppy at it.

There is no question about it ... puppies love to chase toddlers. They are small, they squeal, they run, they behave erratically. They meet every requirement for the perfect squeaky toy as far as the puppy is concerned. It is so much fun for the puppy to chase the toddler and tug on his clothes, that even repeated punishment and scolding from the parents is not enough to stop it. In fact adding the parents to the chase can often cause the puppy to reach even greater heights of wild excitement.

Puppies naturally like to play rough games and they will play this way with your toddler and young children if they get the opportunity. It is essential that the puppy and the children learn how to behave appropriately around each other. [Watch this video](#) to see how wound up puppies can get. You certainly don't want your puppy to try to play this way with your children!



# Managing kids and dogs

## A Multi-Faceted Approach

The best way to solve the problem of puppy biting is to take a multi-faceted approach. Here we will talk about two things that you can do.

1. Institute a management program to limit the interaction between the puppy and small children.
2. Teach the puppy to chase and bite a toy instead of you and your children.

## A Management Program

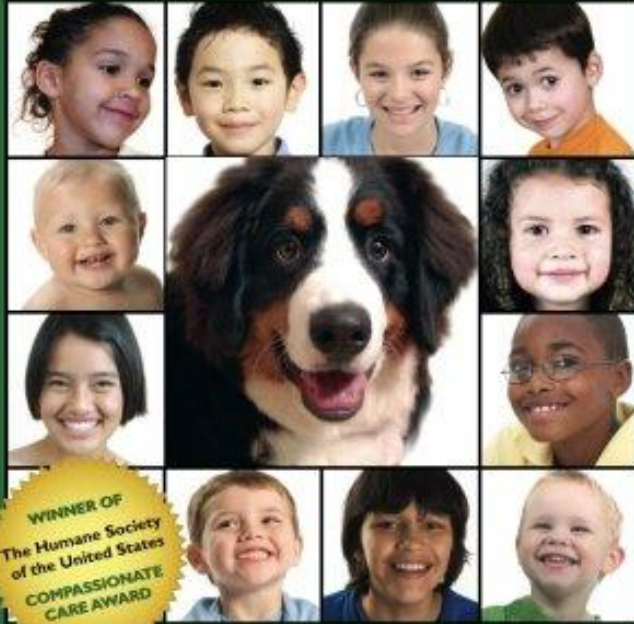
Dog behaviour and training experts agree that it is essential to institute a management program to keep both children and puppies safe. This includes using a crate for the puppy to sleep in, placing gates to restrict the puppy's access, teaching children to respect the puppy's sleeping and eating areas and his toys and supervising all interaction between child and puppy.

Visit [familypaws.com](https://familypaws.com) for excellent resources about baby and toddler safety around dogs for parents.

# Living with Kids and Dogs

...Without Losing Your Mind

A Parent's Guide to Controlling the Chaos



WINNER OF  
The Humane Society  
of the United States  
COMPASSIONATE  
CARE AWARD

Colleen Pelar

Second Edition  
200 new photos!

Parents have said to us, "We got the puppy for our child. What is the point of having a dog and keeping it locked in a crate all the time? We want the dog to be part of the family."

Of course you want the dog to be part of the family! But a family member who chases and bites the toddler is soon out of favour and no-one is happy. The best way to keep both toddler and puppy safe and happy is to keep them apart until they both learn how to behave around the other and to supervise closely when they are allowed limited contact with each other. It is best if the puppy never learns to chase and bite the toddler. If he never has the chance to do this, then he will never do it. If he has already had some fun with this, it is not too late to prevent it from happening again and to teach him more acceptable forms of entertainment.

[Here is a link](#) to a great book you should buy that will help you create a situation in which the puppy becomes a great family member.

You may need to put the puppy on a leash so that he does not get the chance to chase the toddler.

Give the puppy access only to his own toys. The child's toys should be in a playpen, or in an area to which the puppy has no access if the puppy is allowed to roam the house. Once the puppy is older and has some training you can teach him to leave things alone that are not his, but at first he will not know the difference between his toys and the child's toys. Remember the puppy is just a baby too and you can't expect him to know anything about how things work in a human household until you have taught him.

Teach the children that when the puppy is in his crate, no-one is to bother him. With your permission they can give

him treats in the crate by dropping them through the bars. Teach the children to respect the puppy's toys and chew treats and never to bother him while he is eating or to take anything away from him. Teach the children to be a tree if the puppy gets excited and never to run away screaming.

A good time for the toddler to interact with the puppy is when the puppy is tired out. The toddler can sit with you and the puppy and gently pet the puppy and talk to him while he falls asleep. When the puppy is asleep, pick him up and put him in the crate.

Once the puppy learns to chase a toy and bring it back, young children can participate in supervised games of fetch.



# Crate Training

Let's talk briefly about crate training. Crating a puppy is not cruel, in fact if the training is done properly the crate is a sanctuary for the puppy. It gives him a safe and comfortable place to go to sleep, chew on his toys in peace or to get away from noisy children. [Watch this video](#) that shows two different puppies who can't wait to get into their crates.

Teach kids to respect the dog's cozy resting place. [Read more.](#)

There are lots of resources on the internet that describe crate training so we won't go into that here. Be sure that all experiences with the crate are positive and your puppy will love the crate too.

It is not unusual for a young puppy to sleep 20 hours a day and there is no reason why all this napping should not be done in the crate. When the puppy is out of the crate he should have your undivided attention for play and training. Once he is tired out, back he goes into the crate with a stuffed Kong, bone or other special chew toy for another nap. We know that you are desperate for the puppy and toddler to nap **at the same time**. We have been there and we know how exhausting it is to look after a toddler, puppy, baby, other kids and dogs etc. If there are times when they are both awake at once, then it is essential to supervise at all times.





# Teach your puppy to chase a toy

A great way to teach your puppy not to bite you and your kids is to drag a toy on a rope or leash for him to chase. This is great fun for the puppy and conditions him to run with kids without biting them. When we have a puppy around we take the toy on a rope everywhere. We always keep one in the car so we won't be without it. Always trade for a treat to get the toy back. If young kids are going to do this, then it is up to the parent to get the toy back from the puppy. We have a video showing this with a 5 year old child and an 8 week old puppy on our [Clicker Puppy DVD](#).

[Here is a video showing](#) the same thing with an older child.

This is a sneak peak from our upcoming DVD: Positively

Perfect Puppy. This dog is a Puli, which is a sheepdog bred to chase and nip. Even with this breed of dog which is hard wired for chasing and nipping, the toy on a rope is irresistible and more fun than biting at the child. Occasionally he does get interested in the child and tries to pull on her clothes. She stands still and gets him interested in the toy and the game is back on. She is teaching the puppy to give the toy back using food and a clicker. She puts the food near his nose and when he lets go of the toy she clicks and gives him the treat. Soon he will let go on his own as soon as she stops and she will be able to reward this by starting the game again.

If you have young children, play this game with the puppy

yourself for a while until he is very engaged with the game before your kids try it. Be sure to supervise to make sure that you are there to take the toy back and get the game started again and to prevent the puppy from becoming interested in chasing the child rather than the toy.





# Teach Your Kids Too!



Your kids will have more fun with the puppy, will form a stronger bond and will be safer if they understand dog body language and know how to act safely around your dog and other dogs they'll meet.

The Doggone Crazy board game is a fun and interactive way for kids to learn all about dogs. They'll know more about dog behaviour and body language than most adults after playing this game a few times!

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# Keep Your Baby and Toddler Safe



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