

Responsibilities for the Parents of the Newly Adopted Dog

by [Petfinder](#)

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1. Never, ever leave a child alone with your new dog. Not even for a second to turn your head and answer the phone. The type of relationship we see on TV between children and dogs is a fantasy, and not a reflection of what real dogs can be like with children.



2. No one in the family should be encouraging rough play, wrestling or the dog to play with his mouth on human body parts or clothes. This is especially relevant when an adult member of the household plays with the dog in this manner, because when the child next excites the dog, the dog may be stimulated to play in the same rough manner, thereby putting the child at risk for injury.

3. Your dog should be fed his meals in an area completely protected from and away from children, as much for a bit of peace and privacy as it is to prevent guarding behaviors. The dog should also be fed portions that are quickly finished, so there is nothing left in the bowl for the dog to linger over and guard. Empty bowls should be taken up and put away, so the dog won't consider guarding the feeding area.

4. Most children are not bitten by their own dog, but by a friend or neighbor's dog. This means two things: watch your own dog closely when your child has a friend (or friends) over. Many dogs will tolerate a lot from his own family's child, but not tolerate a visiting child. Visiting children often do not behave as well as, or may behave differently from your own children, and could bother or provoke your dog. Consequently, if your child's friends have dogs, you need to, (as a responsible parent) go over and meet the friend's dog **BEFORE** you allow your child to visit their house. It is a good idea to see the size and general nature of your child's friend's dog, and check to see if the owner of this dog will allow unsupervised interaction between the children and the dog, to ask where and when the dog is fed, and to check if there are any chewable toys or bones lying around, and then to either request that they be picked up and put away while your child visits, or ensure that their dog has no possessiveness problems.