

CHILDREN IN THE DOG PARK

What Every Parent Should Know

While children are permitted in the park, parents need to be aware of the risks.

- ✎ Not all dogs have been around children and may not be child-friendly.*
- ✎ Dogs may view children as prey, especially if they are running or waving their arms. Dogs who view children as prey may chase them, knock them down, and possibly nip or bite.*
- ✎ Dogs may view children as litter mates. Dogs who view children as litter mates may try to play with them as they would other dogs. Snapping, growling and nipping is possible.*
- ✎ Running dogs have been known to knock down adults - children are even easier to knock down.*
- ✎ Herding breeds may nip children in an attempt to round them up.*
- ✎ Children are often at eye level with dogs. Some dogs may see this as confrontational or challenging behavior.*
- ✎ Children's immune systems may not be developed enough to handle the bacteria found in dog parks. They may pick up fleas or contract intestinal parasites.*

If you still choose to bring your child to the dog park you:

- ✎ Should NEVER leave your children unattended in the park.*
- ✎ Should NEVER leave infants on picnic tables. Dogs can even jump high enough to reach babies in front or back packs.*
- ✎ Should keep your children within arm's reach.*
- ✎ Should prevent your child from running, screaming or waving arms wildly.*
- ✎ Should prevent young children from sitting on the ground.*
- ✎ Should not bring toys into the park. Dogs don't know the difference between children's toys and theirs and may try to take toys from children.*
- ✎ Should not bring bikes or skates into the park.*
- ✎ Should teach your child not to look a dog in the eye.*
- ✎ Should teach your child to ask before approaching or petting a dog.*
- ✎ Should not let your child give treats to dogs. A food-aggressive dog may try to take all the treats away from your child.*
- ✎ Should teach your child to ask before approaching or petting a dog.*
- ✎ Should not bring more dogs and children to the park than you can closely watch.*
- ✎ Should not allow children to climb on agility equipment. These are for the dogs!*

And above all, teach your child what to do if threatened by a dog. NEVER RUN. A child should hide the face, fold the arms and stand still "like a tree". Or lie down, tuck arms and legs into the body and lie still "like a log". Wait until the dog leaves or help arrives.

REMEMBER - THIS IS A PARK FOR DOGS. YOU BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE DOG PARK AT YOUR OWN RISK AND ASSUME THE RISK FOR YOUR CHILD.