



# Be Safe Around Dogs

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## Dog Bite Information

According to the Center for Disease Control, almost 4.5 million Americans are bitten by dogs each year. And, half of those bitten are children! Nearly one in five people who are bitten require medical attention for dog bite-related injuries.

Children, adult males, and people with dogs in their homes are at the highest risk for being bitten. The rate of dog bite-related injuries among children is highest for those ages 5 to 9 years. Also, children are more likely to receive medical attention for dog bites than adults. The American Humane Association reports that 66% of dog bites among children happen to the head and neck.

National Dog Bite Prevention Week takes place during the third full week of May each year. Look for information during National Dog Bite Prevention Week focusing on educating people about preventing dog bites.

## Greeting a Dog Activity

### Materials:

- (1) Required: 1 Stuffed Dog (that can stand on all four feet)
- (2) Optional: Collar and Leash for Stuffed Dog
- (3) Optional: American Kennel Club's (AKC) *The Dog Listener* Activity Copymaster (Attached to the end of this Click it, Print it, Do it! Activity)
- (4) Optional: Crayons
- (5) Optional: Show AKC's *The Dog Listener* Video (<http://www.akc.org/public-education/safety-video/>)

## Greeting a Dog Background

Always ask the owner's permission to pet a dog when it is on a leash. Never greet a dog when it is loose and without its owner. Follow this plan even if you are friends with the dog and owner.

### Follow and practice these steps when greeting a dog:

- 1) Walk slowly to the dog's owner to ask if you can pet the dog.
- 2) Do not pet the dog unless the owner gives you permission.
- 3) If the owner says, "Yes, you can pet my dog," curl your hand into a closed fist with the back of your hand facing upward. Slowly extend your hand to the dog.
- 4) Let the dog sniff the back of your hand so it will learn your scent. We recognize people by looking at them. Dogs recognize people by smelling them.
- 5) After the dog has sniffed the back of your hand and learns your scent, pet it gently under the chin or on the chest. Don't pet the dog on top of its head or on its face as it might interpret this as a threat.

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### **Activity**

Using a stuffed dog, demonstrate how to greet a dog. Then have each Cloverbud practice properly greeting the dog.

*Optional: Print copies of pages 2 and 3 from The Dog Listener Activity Copymaster for each Cloverbud and help them complete them.*



### **Make Like a Tree Activity**

#### **Materials:**

- (1) Required: 1 Stuffed Dog (that can stand on all four feet)
- (2) Optional: American Kennel Club's (AKC) *The Dog Listener Activity Copymaster*
- (3) Optional: Crayons
- (4) Optional: Showing AKC's *The Dog Listener Video*

#### **Make Like a Tree Background**

If you see a loose dog, do not approach it! Do not try to get it to come to you! If a loose dog comes over to you or is running at you, do not run away! Don't yell and don't make loud noises! If a dog appears threatening to you do not run toward or away from the dog!

#### ***Follow and practice these steps when approached by a loose or threatening dog:***

1. MAKE LIKE A TREE! To do this:
  - a) Stand up straight and very still like a tree.
  - b) Cross your arms and rest them over your chest like you are giving yourself a hug.
  - c) Look away from the dog. DO NOT make direct eye contact with the dog. Dogs think direct eye contact is a challenge for power and control. You don't want to challenge or threaten dogs by looking at or staring at them.
  - d) Do not make any noise, yell, or scream. If you are with friends, everyone in the group needs to Make Like a Tree, not move, not talk, and remain still until the dog leaves or help comes.
  - e) The goal is to get the dog to leave. Wait to move once the dog is far enough away not to return. Slowly and quietly back away from the area after the dog is gone. Backing away allows you to still watch where the dog is going. Do not run, yell, or scream to attract the dog's attention.
  - f) If the dog should knock you down, roll into a ball and be still until the dog leaves.

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## Activity

Demonstrate how to “Make Like a Tree” by placing the stuffed dog in a position where it is facing like it is approaching you. Then place the stuffed dog in a position where it is facing the Cloverbuds like it is approaching them. Have the Cloverbuds “Make Like a Tree”, remain quiet, still, and look away from the stuffed dog. Have them stand there for 60 seconds and then move the stuffed dog several feet away, facing it away from the Cloverbuds. Tell the Cloverbuds to now slowly and quietly back away from the direction the dog is headed.

*Optional: Print a copy of page 4 from The Dog Listener Activity Copymaster for each Cloverbud and help them complete it.*



**Note:** There are many activities in the *Dog Listener Activity*. Copymaster you can copy and use for additional lessons on being safe around dogs. Following is the link if you would like to download the entire Activity guide: <http://www.akc.org/dog-listener/> \*\*

\*\*AKC gives permission for anyone to use this activity for educational purposes as long as they are not sold.

Sources: American Kennel Club’s *The Dog Listener*, [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)  
Center for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
American Humane Association, [www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org)