

# Puppies and Children



**Puppies and children can be the best of friends**

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## **Start with Safe Habits**

**Crate & confinement training are absolutely crucial to raising a puppy in a home with young children.**

Your puppy needs a safe and secluded area to rotate in and out of throughout the day. An overly tired or energetic puppy is going to jump up, chomp, and be wild. An overexcited or overwhelmed child is going to run, yell and squirm. This combination can lead to an undesired outcome. For the first month I have a new puppy, I rotate the puppy in and out of the x pen or other confined space. When all is well and

calm, I monitor gentle interaction between the puppy and the child. That means every time my puppy is with children, it is a predictable and "low-key" time. This sets your puppy up with a habit of being mellow at the sight of children rather than being overly excited, jumping, mouthing or having an excited response to the presence of children.

## **Teach/Train Both of Them**

Teaching your children to behave a certain way around puppies, sets the puppy up for success and makes things much simpler overall. Teach them not to lay down with a puppy unless they're prepared for the rough mouthing and romping that it triggers. Give the child a safe retreat like a couch or chair where the puppy is not allowed, so that they don't run away, which only excites the puppy more. Encourage quiet voices and have the child avoid calling out commands like "No, sit, down!" That will confuse the puppy and make training more difficult. Have toys on hand to redirect mouthing and separate before things get too rowdy. Include your child in basic training sessions so the puppy recognizes them as leaders as well as playmates.

## **Create a Lifelong Friendship**

Clear boundaries between children and puppies are crucial so that everyone can enjoy one another in a safe, predictable environment. This requires adult supervision! The extra vigilance required during the first year will pay off for the rest of the dog's life.

