

# Ward's Dog Training Presents:



## How to Properly Introduce Children (Babies) to Dogs

Bringing home a new baby is an exciting time for your family including your dog. Routines you and your dog have been accustomed to are going to be disrupted and you won't have the same amount of time to devote to your dog. Amidst all the changes and excitement, your dog may share more of your stress than enthusiasm. Preparations before and after the baby arrives home can help ease your dog's mind that a new member of the family doesn't mean they are out of the pack.

### **Before the Baby**

Your dog has to get used to the idea of having a baby around the house. This means changes in your daily routine, unfamiliar noises in the house, less recreational time among other things. With nine months to prepare you can help your dog ease into the transition of having a new family member in the house. First thing to consider is: has your dog been around kids before? If so how did they do? How did they react and what kind of experience was it? If it was good and they were gentle and happy to greet them that is a good sign they get along with them. If they showed any signs of being fearful or aggression, an evaluation by a professional Trainer and Behavior Specialist should be scheduled immediately.

One way to prepare your dog for having a baby in the house is to get them used to you holding something in your arms while going about your daily routines. Dolls that make realistic baby sounds are available in your arms while going about your daily routines. Bring your dog to the area where your baby will sleep or play and reward them for remaining calm there.

**Obedience training** is a must to help keep your dog under control when around your baby. Commands like "Sit" & "Place" will be helpful in keeping your dog close to you while still attending to your baby. If your dog has already gone thru obedience training consider taking another class to refresh their skills. Try to expose the dog to as many different children as possible in a safe & positive manner before your baby arrives. Make sure the children you introduce them to are calm and gentle with your dog minimize any excitement or anxiety. Have your dog sit, if they are comfortable have the children give the dog treats

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and calmly pet him. Do not force an introduction if either the dog or child is uncomfortable. To do so can heighten the anxiety of the situation and make our dog more apprehensive of children. If you are unsure of how your dog will react have them wear a *Basket Muzzle* during the introduction until you are sure that it is safe to take it off. (Never let your guard down with a dog). You will first need to condition your dog to the muzzle.

### **Baby Safe Training Exercises**

A **solid foundation of obedience** for your dog will help tremendously when you bring the baby home. Commands such as "Sit" "Off" "Leave it" & "Place" will be utilized frequently. The Clicker can help you quickly and easily teach your dog commands while making it fun for both you and the dog.

The reason for these exercises are important is you will have a way of communication with your dog as well as allow them more freedom around the house once the baby arrives. A dog that understands the rules will be able to stay close to their family instead of being isolated to the yard or crate. Isolating your dog can create more anxiety, possibly resulting in destructive behavior problems. You need to incorporate these exercises into your daily routine. Be sure to calmly reward their quiet/calm behavior often. Keeping a training collar with a tab leash on your dog while you are home and supervising can also help direct them into various exercises. (Never leave a leash on an unattended dog)

### **After the Baby**

When your baby finally arrives home, it is important not to forget about your dog. Continue with your obedience exercises and further incorporate them into your new routines. This will allow your dog to remain close to you and reduce their stress level. Have your dog remain in a Down stay or place command while you feed or change your baby. You might even consider adding a place bed besides your baby's if you will be spending a lot of time there so your dog can stay close to you. If you take your baby for a walk take your dog with you. Be sure to always reward your dogs for their calm behavior around your baby. You need to keep all experiences with your dog and baby as positive as you can. Your dog is bound to be curious about the baby but will not understand how delicate your baby is. Always keep close supervision with your child and dog. Even though the dog may not have displayed any signs of aggression in the past they are still capable of accidentally harming your baby. Even small dogs!

### **Raising the Kid to Respect Animals**

Humane treatment of all animals is an important lesson for all kids any age to learn. As your child grows older and is better able to understand, teach them how to properly handle your dog. It is a good idea to contact a Certified Trainer also to help with this process to help teach things like how to approach an unfamiliar dog, body posture of a dog, how to take care of them.

### **All in the Family**

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Your dog doesn't have to be left out in the doghouse with the arrival of your baby. At Ward's Dog training we believe that a well-behaved & well-trained dog is a happy balanced dog and a better companion. Each dog and owner is unique that's why we use a variety of techniques, customizing your dog's training experience to suit their personality and your individual needs. Using our training techniques with consistency and patience your dog can still be your bundle of joy.

For additional solutions, information about our products & services please visit one of our websites listed below.

### **"Enhance You & Your Dogs Lives".**

For more pet solutions, information on products, & services please visit our websites below.