



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Doggone Safe Offers Free Resources for Dog Bite Prevention Week**

Campbellville ON, April 16, 2009 – During the third week in May, the U.S. Postal Service, the American Veterinary Medical Assoc. (AMVA), Doggone Safe Inc. and other organizations will be calling attention to one of North America's most commonly reported public health problems: dog bites.

Doggone Safe, a non-profit organization dedicated to dog bite prevention through education offers free information at its website [www.doggonesafe.com](http://www.doggonesafe.com) to help promote safety messages during dog bite prevention week. Doggone Safe also promotes the "Be a Tree" children's program. This program, for school age children, is a short presentation with large photos and lots of activities to teach children to understand the signs dogs send with their body language. The central message of this program is "Be a Tree". That is, stand still if a strange dog approaches or any dog is threatening or overly frisky.

Doggone Safe offers the following tips for parents and dog owners to help keep kids safe:

### **The 3 Most Important Things to Teach Your Kids**

- 1. Dogs Don't Like Hugs and Kisses** – Teach your kids not to hug or kiss a dog on the face. Hugging the family dog or face-to-face contact are common causes of bites to the face. Instead, teach kids to scratch the dog on the chest or the side of the neck.
- 2. Be a Tree if a Strange Dog Approaches** – Teach kids to stand still, like a tree. Trees are boring and the dog will eventually go away. This works for strange dogs and any time the family dog gets too frisky or becomes aggressive.
- 3. Never Tease a Dog** – and never disturb a dog that's sleeping, eating or protecting something.

### **The 2 Most Important Things Parents Can Do**

- 1. Supervise** – Don't assume your dog is good with kids. If a toddler must interact with your dog, you should have your hands on the dog too. Even if your dog is great with kids and has never bitten – why take a chance?
- 2. Train the dog** – Take your dog to obedience classes where positive-reinforcement is used. Never pin, shake, choke, hold the dog down or roll the dog over to teach it a lesson. Dogs treated this way are likely to turn their aggression on weaker family members. Involve older children in training the family dog while supervising. Don't allow children to punish the dog and don't punish the dog yourself. Condition the dog to enjoy the presence and actions of children using positive experiences.

### **The 3 Most Important Things Dog Owners Can Do**

- 1. Spay or Neuter Your Dog** – Neutered pets are calmer, healthier and less likely to be aggressive. Neutering prevents unwanted dogs that may end up in shelters or in less than ideal conditions where they may grow up to be poorly socialized or aggressive.

2. **Condition Your Dog for the World** – Give your puppy lots of new positive experiences. Train using positive methods e.g. clicker training.
3. **Supervise Your Dog** – Supervise your dog at all times around children. Do not allow children to hug and kiss the dog. If visiting children are bothering your dog, put the dog away or send the children home.

In addition Doggone Safe offers resources for use during dog bite prevention week, which include a parent guide, activity and coloring pages for kids, safety pamphlet for parents, a three-minute slide show/video, articles for on-line or print newsletters and public service announcements for radio in script and recorded form. These materials can be accessed through the website [www.doggonsafe.com](http://www.doggonsafe.com).

Doggone Safe has experts in dog training, dog behavior and dog bite prevention education available for interview.

About Doggone Safe Inc.:

The not-for-profit Doggone Safe mandate is based on jurors recommendations following an inquest into the mauling death of 8 year old Courtney Trempe in Ontario, Canada. Along with their many educational programs, Doggone Safe also provides victim support and administers the Courtney Trempe Memorial fund, in honor of her memory, to help provide trauma counseling (not provided by insurance) for child dog bite victims and their families.

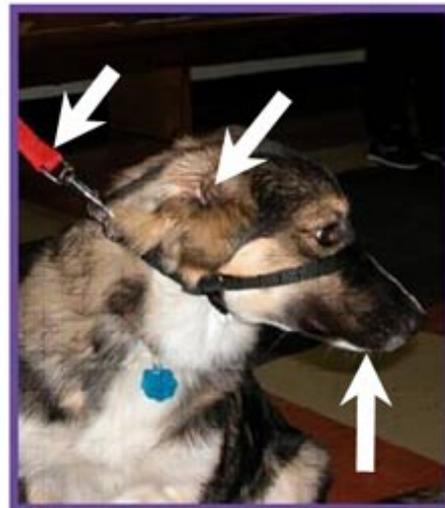
Visit [www.doggonesafe.com](http://www.doggonesafe.com) for more information and [www.be-a-tree.com](http://www.be-a-tree.com) for information about the Be a Tree program.

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**Hello, nice to meet you**



**Please go away**