

Tips for a calmer dog - involving the children

As a dog owner, you are responsible for ensuring that your pet's welfare needs are met. This is actually easier than you might think. Here are a few ideas to promote natural behaviours and therefore your dog's relaxation and fulfilment within the home environment;

- Hide toys and treat-filled rubber KONGs for your dog to discover. Children can use a stop-watch to time how long it takes the dog to find them.
- Have a messy play activity, getting the children to fill a rubber KONG chew with your dog's normal food. If using kibble, soak first in warm water until absorbed and soft. (Portion the meal out of your dog's daily food ration).
- Set up a toy box full of dog toys and different types of chews. The children can take out a few different toys and chews each day. This keeps up a good level of variety to meet your dog's needs, and can help with the development of counting, speech, and responsibility for the younger family members.
- Fill a paddling pool for splashing fun, or sandpits for digging. Introduce the dog to the item first and make sure they're happy using it, before introducing to the children.
- Set out large JOLLY BALLS (or other sturdy balls) and the children can watch or interact as the dog herds the ball around the garden or room.
- Set up games of hide and seek for your dog to find the children around the garden. If children give the dog a treat when he or she finds them, this does not take very long at all!
- Large bedding or bean bag areas, separate from the dogs area, can be used to create a 'calm zone' for your dog and child to sit or lie quietly together in, for example in the lounge.



Now with these ideas in mind, get together with the family to think up some similar appropriate activities

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