

August 2019

Dogs & Children: Onsite Introductions



Dog/Dog

- All children under the age of 16 should be instructed to exit the yard during the dog/dog introduction.
- If the dogs are not an appropriate match, the meet-and-greet should be discontinued. Adopters should be encouraged to meet with other dogs.

Dog/Children

- Following a successful introduction to the adopter's dog, the shelter dog should be introduced to the children **separately from the resident dog**.
- Children should be instructed to sit on the ground and/or sit on a bench.

- Children should be given treats to offer the dog by tossing on the ground or with a **flat hand**.
- Children should be given **large toys**, such as a flirt pole or rope, to avoid incidents involving mouthing or rough play.
- Following successful introductions, children may then begin to walk around and interact with the dog further. *Running should be discouraged. Be a tree, kids!*
- **Adoption Counselors must intervene at any time stress-signals are observed in the dog's body language.**

All Family Members

- Following a successful introduction to the resident dog and the children, all family members may spend time in the same meet-and-greet area.
- Customers should be instructed to remain calm and to refrain from showing overt affection to one dog or the other.
- Customers should be instructed to deliver treats **only** with both dogs at a distance from one another.
- Customers should be instructed to ignore toys.
- With both dogs present, customers should be instructed to stand or sit on a bench, *not on the ground*.
- **Adoption Counselors must intervene at any time stress-signals are observed in the dog's body language.**