Feeding shelter animals is a seemingly simple task, but one that can't be treated lightly if animals are to be healthy. And feeding time can be quality time for the animals if staff make it so. The companion animals staff of The HSUS receives numerous questions regarding feeding shelter animals, and this article will answer many of those questions.

What, When, and How Much To Feed?

When it comes to determining how much to feed animals, beware of general quantity guidelines. The amount needed can vary drastically with the animal's age, health, and stress and exercise levels,
as well as the nutritional quality of the food being fed. It helps to use one kind of food (as long as it is good quality) so that staff can become accustomed to the amount of dogs of different sizes and their hunger after about four hours, the staff can give them food. From the uneaten food, the food bowls should be picked up. This also minimizes housekeeping and sanitary problems from the uneaten food.

To decrease the risk of contagious disease, you can use disposable paper trays for feeding. But watch the dogs, and especially the puppies, to make sure they don’t chew or play with them after they eat. Be aware that paper feeding trays can end up in your kennel’s drain system. If this is likely in your shelter, then standard, washable bowls may work better.

Puppies over four months of age must be fed at least twice daily, and those between eight weeks and four months, three times. Adult dogs in good condition need only be fed once daily, but keep in mind that frequent changes in diet are not recommended. Keep in mind that frequent changes in diet are not recommended.

For the shelter, both requirements are reliably met by a good-quality dry cat food. Remember that kittens between 12 weeks and 12 months should have kitten food, moistened, if needed. The best feline diet contains a variety of protein and calorie sources. For palatability, the food should have kitten food, moistened, if needed.

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As the shelter environment, these young animals need the best food you can afford. AVOID generic dog foods and commercial foods with red dyes that may cause diarrhea. Timed feedings work best. For example, after a specific time (30 minutes or so), all the food bowls should be picked up. This also minimizes housekeeping and sanitary problems from the uneaten food.

In addition, the risk of bloat can be minimized by premoistening dry food so it does not swell in the stomach. Splitting feedings into two equal portions also helps. Signs of bloat include generalized restlessness or abdominal discomfort, salivation, and attempts to retch.

Bloat is an often fatal stomach disorder in which the stomach distends with gas and can actually turn around on itself, preventing the escape of stomach contents. The condition can progress rapidly, leading to irreversible shock and death in a matter of hours. Large, deep-chested breeds such as Dobermans, Rottweilers, Great Danes, and shepherds are predisposed.

In addition, regular bloat can be minimized by premoistening dry food so it does not swell in the stomach. Splitting feedings into two equal portions also helps. Signs of bloat include generalized restlessness or abdominal discomfort, salivation, and attempts to retch.

Keep in mind that frequent changes in diet are likely to cause diarrhea. Should your shelter get donated food, it is probably best to mix it in small amounts with your usual food to minimize the effects of the variation. Any money saved by using poor-quality or donated food may be outweighed by extra clean-up efforts, odor, and decreased adoptions.

Although feeding a premium food (such as Iams or Science Diet) is not critical an issue in healthy adult animals, it is advisable to feed the best quality food you can afford. Avoid generic foods and commercial foods with red dyes that may cause diarrhea. Timed feedings work best. For example, after a specific time (30 minutes or so), all the food bowls should be picked up. This also minimizes housekeeping and sanitary problems from the uneaten food.

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Cats must be fed good-quality cat food. Dog food is not nutritionally complete for cats. Opportunities to get to know the animals in your care and to observe each of them for health or behavior problems or special needs. This is one reason why self-feeders are not recommended. (Other reasons include potential spoilage, pests, and inability to regulate intake.)

Since a lack of appetite is often the first sign of a problem, it is essential that shelter personnel be attentive to animals who are not eating. Every shelter should have some system for monitoring daily eating habits. Even without a veterinarian on the premises, there are several easy things staff can check or do if an animal is not eating:

1. Check the food to be sure it has no undesirable odor or contamination.
2. Check the food for injuries, sores, or foreign bodies. Also, especially with stray cats, be sure to move the jaw to determine if it is fractured. A fractured jaw can be present with no other signs of injury.
3. Check the animal's temperature, pulse and breathing.
4. Look for other signs of illness such as listlessness, vomiting, diarrheas or ocular or nasal discharge.
5. Try a different kind of food. Cats and small dogs often have been fed only one type of canned—or worse yet—home-cooked food. Call the owner or ask at check-in what the animal usually eats. Cats can become addicted to single-source protein gourmet foods and may turn their noses up at shelter fare. Have a supply of these foods available to use for your finicky felines. Cats have a very high metabolic rate and will lose condition rapidly if they are not eating.
6. How you feed the animals in your care is of utmost importance and should be done by caring people who are knowledgeable about the animals' needs and general health. All animals should be able to eat individually, without competing for food. One of the few creature comforts a shelter animal has is dinner. It should be a priority to provide the animals in your care with the best food and mealtime experience possible.

Reporter Sees Red After Bad Experiences at Shelters

O ften, after dealing with the products of human irresponsibility all day at the shelter, the last thing a shelter worker wants to do is face a human being. Without really thinking his or her actions through, the worker may be rude, unhelpful, and insincere to a person who has come in to adopt a pet. The fact is, however, that poor treatment of a shelter visitor can even im­

• Check the mouth for injuries, sores, or foreign bodies. Also, especially with stray cats, be sure to move the jaw to determine if it is fractured. A fractured jaw can be present with no other signs of injury.

I first visited one very well-known shelter in the area. A worker told me it was a slow time of year, that they weren't getting very many dogs. Although I found this a little peculiar, I told them I was in no hurry, that I'd be willing to wait. I asked if they'd take my name and phone number and call me in the event one came in. That would not only be good for me but for the shelter as well, I reasoned, since they could place a dog as soon as he or she came in. The less they had to spend on food, veterinary care, etc., the better.

The sooner a dog left meant an open spot for another dog in the kennel. To my surprise, I was rebuffed. They simply told me to keep calling back.

At another shelter, I was pounced on like a laboratory scientist or puppy-mill operator when I said I wanted a female. Once I explained that I preferred a spayed dog, I was shown the door to the kennel and told to take a look. That was all the time and attention I was given. I ignored after that and just left.

The best advice another shelter could offer, and abruptly at that, was to just keep coming back and looking over the dogs in the kennel. I phoned several other shelters, and was usually off the phone in less than a minute.

Now, I realize that shelter workers are overworked and underappreciated. No one, though, seemed to want to take any time with me at all, even a few minutes.

The most help came from a woman at a city laboratory. She was a field worker. She knew her business, and called me in the event one came in. That would be easier for her. Fine, they said. She'd be ready.

When I arrived on Friday, they told me she wasn't spayed! And that I had to make an appointment to do this! Why didn't they spay her during the week, I asked, since they knew I was picking her up on Friday? They simply stared at me blankly. They asked for the $5. It seemed like that was all they were concerned about.

I was given two weeks to decide whether or not to keep the dog. Unhappily, things did not work out. I kept her the entire two weeks, hoping things would improve. Instead, her bad habits—which were numerous—got worse. I finally gave up after she bit me, figuring that if she came after me she might go after others.

I'm sorry to say that these experiences have left me with negative feelings about the shelters and animal clinic. In almost every case, workers were abrupt at the least and downright rude at the worst. I got very little help.

Since word of mouth is a powerful advertisement, this can't be the best way to establish good relations with the community or place as many animals as possible.
**Shelters Must Dictate Policy When Working with Breed-Specific Rescue Groups**

By Geoffrey L. Handy

A few months ago, the Aiken SPCA (401 Wire Rd., Aiken, SC 29801) found itself under fire from individual members of several local breed-specific rescue groups. According to the SPCA, the individuals were “demanding”—among other things—that the shelter turn over purebred animals to them to increase their chances for adoption through fostering.

The SPCA decided to seek a cooperative relationship with the local purebred-rescue groups. The agency invited representatives from the groups to voice their concerns before a full board meeting. Keeping its own objectives in mind, the SPCA then hammered out a specific policy regarding the handling of purebred dogs.

The dealings between the Aiken SPCA and breed-rescue groups in its area reflect growing relationships between those agencies charged with sheltering all homeless animals and those groups that handle the rescue and placement of particular breeds.

“Breed-specific rescue groups can be of great assistance [to animal shelters] in reducing the burden of finding suitable homes for displaced companion animals,” says Shirley Weber in the preface to her national directory of breed-specific rescue groups. The Project BREED Directory (see the February 1990 issue of Shelter Sense for ordering information).

These purebred rescue groups generally consist of members who are active in particular kennel or breed clubs and who are knowledgeable about the breed’s usual traits, from general temperament to physical and behavioral tendencies. Relationships between animal shelters and breed-rescue groups can be mutually beneficial and can result in more and better homes for larger numbers of animals. Problems arise, however, when breed-rescue groups make demands on public and private animal shelters, while at the same time, the shelters fail to develop policies that allow them to identify and work with responsible groups. Problems also occur when animal shelters place implicit trust in purebred-rescue groups that may operate at cross purposes to the shelters and even contribute to pet overpopulation.

Certainly, promoting animal adoptions must be one of the ongoing endeavors of any animal shelter. With purebreds composing up to 25 percent of all shelter animals, responsible breed-specific rescue groups can be a valuable asset in meeting the goal of increased adoptions.

A higher adoption rate, however, shouldn’t be the blind ambition of any animal shelter. "Responsible animal shelters must have policies that promote a humane disposition for each animal and also prevent unwanted animals from being born," says Barbara Cassidy, HSUS director of animal sheltering and control.

If the shelter can work alongside a breed-specific rescue group to promote adoptions without compromising its overall goals and the policies that are consistent with them, then they should by all means do so, says Cassidy. "But if breed-rescue groups are unwilling to comply with the policies and procedures of the agency, then shelters have no obligation to work with the group."

“Purebreds animals with or without papers are in the shelter because they are unwanted—just like the mixed breeds that are in the shelter,” says Phyllis Wright, HSUS vice president for companion animals. “Shelters can’t become revolving doors in their placements, regardless of whether the animals are purebred or cross breeds. They should have the same requirements for all dogs and find homes that will be lifelong homes."

The key is to institute sound policies and procedures that allow the shelter to work effectively with any breed-specific rescue club. Shelters should be especially wary of unethical groups. Not all purebred-rescue groups are bona fide organizations whose main purpose is the rescue, sterilization, and careful adoption of certain breeds. Calling themselves members of “rescue groups,” some individuals have even asked the Aiken SPCA for unaltered dogs with American Kennel Club (AKC) registration papers—undoubtedly for purposes of showing and even breeding the animals.

The HSUS believes that two policies can ensure that unethical breed-rescue groups don’t profit from shelter animals and contribute directly to the pet overpopulation problem. These related policies should already be standard practice for humane and animal control agencies.

First and most important, any animal should leave the shelter with its parent. This policy should be cast in stone, regardless of whether the purebred is adopted out to a board member or to an adopter referred to the shelter by a breed-rescue group.

**Shelters Should Destroy AKC Papers**

The HSUS urges animal shelters to destroy AKC papers on dogs that have been adopted or turned over to the AKC, and to require pet owners to return AKC papers before adopting a dog from another purebred rescue group. "Responsible animal shelters, whether or not they have an adoption program, should not let AKC papers interfere with pet ownership or foster a false sense of breeding legitimacy," says Barbara Cassidy, HSUS director of animal sheltering and control.

The AKC does not generally provide protection from paperwork to purebred rescue groups who are trying to prevent abuse of AKC registration by animal shelters. "Our people are responsible for keeping records in accordance with our regulations. They are under no obligation to do so," says the AKC.

The AKC does not object to papers being mailed to the AKC, co-Registration, 53 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010, so that they can be returned. However, the AKC does not generally return registration papers. "If a shelter sends AKC papers to the AKC, the AKC will notify the pet owner that they are in the AKC cellar," says the AKC.

"Purebreds are in the shelter because they are unwanted—just like the mixed breeds.”
All Dog Bites Aren’t Equal

By Patricia Gail Burnham
Condensed and Adapted from Dog World Magazine, April 1990

You would think Americans would be authorities on dog bites. After all, there are newspaper stories every time someone runs afoul of a “pit bull,” and these stories often quote the national figures for dog bites and for people killed by dogs.

According to dogbite statistics, 70 people were killed by dog attacks in this country during the last five years, which is an average of about 14 fatalities per year. But every year, two to three million dog bites are reported, and only one-tenth of all bites are thought to be reported. So what is the difference between the dozen or so attacks that kill people and the two million that don’t—and the possibly 20 million that are not even reported to authorities?

Isn’t a bite just a bite? Why should we care what kind of bite it is? Aren’t they all equal? The answer is “No, they are not.” And if we know the types of possible bites and the reasons behind them, it becomes much easier to keep ourselves and our community’s children and dogs from becoming part of the statistics.

Part of the problem is that the news media divide dog bites into two kinds: those by “pit bulls” and those by any other dogs. They are right in that it is possible to divide dog bites into categories, but they have the categories wrong. To students of animal behavior and dog trainers the two main categories of dog bites are uninhibited bites and inhibited bites.

Uninhibited bites are those rare and impressive bites that get a lot of publicity. They are not single slashes or a couple of punctures. These are the attacks that kill people—big dogs using all their strength and formidable teeth. So what causes a few dogs to lose their inhibited biting reflex? Insanity is one cause. There are dogs whose reactions are not normal, and often not predictable. Some of these are violent, and some are not. Yet they often have no place in society.

There are more dogs whose inhibitions have been broken down. Dogs who have been fought professionally have usually had training designed to destroy their inhibitions against biting other dogs. But because they have to be handled in the ring during a fight, it is to their trainers’ advantage if the dogs remember not to bite people.

Under what circumstances does an owner want a dog who will bite people? There is really only one situation: when the dog is being used to guard something, whether that is a yard or a drug stash. Properly trained guard dogs are taught obedience and are under control. An amateur owner can often break down the dog’s inhibitions without bothering to teach control. And those dogs are walking time bombs. They are dogs who have been taught that biting is OK. It is possible to end up with such a dog unintentionally. Sometimes the training is not even done by the owner. A dog who is chained up, or enclosed by a wire fence that gives no privacy, is an easy target for young and old kids with a mean streak. They find it daring to incite a dog into a rage as long as that dog cannot reach them. The problem comes if the dog ever gets loose, and the tragedy is that he may attack any passing child and not the ones who tormented him. And even the ones who tormented him were probably too thoughtless to understand what they were creating.

There are times when a bite really is an accident on the dog’s part. It is not even necessary for the dog to bite down to fulfill the requirements of a dog bite. While playing with my dogs, I have on several different occasions accidentally run my hand against their teeth and cut my skin. They had never even closed their mouths. They certainly did not intend to bite me. But technically these may qualify as bites.

There are also unintentional bites that are actually misdirected. That is, the dog did intend to bite or discipline something, but not the person who was hit. Misdirected bites can be very serious because the dog is putting a lot of force behind them, an appropriate amount of force for what he thinks he is striking at, which may be entirely too much for a human recipient.

Sometimes even a single discipline strike can go wrong and result in very serious consequences. A few years ago, there was a court case centered on a bite by a large male show dog. From the accounts that were printed at the time, it sounded as if this was what happened: The dog was asleep on the floor in his owner’s house. The elderly grandmother of the household got up in the night, tripped and fell across the sleeping dog. Pack leaders do not tolerate being stepped on by subordinates. He responded with what appeared to be a single discipline strike and drove a canine tooth into her artery, killing her quickly. There were none of the repetitive bites or the crushing power of an uninhibited attack. If
It is vital that people who work with animals understand the different kinds of dog bites and the reasons they occur.

the single tooth had missed the vital area, it might have been another unreported family dog bite—a case of a dog disciplining a family pack member he considered weaker than himself. Instead it was a family tragedy and a field day for the press.

So other than uninhibited attacks, discipline bites, and accidental bites, what other kinds of bites are there? One of the most common and potentially dangerous is the fear bite. The bad news is that a dog in a fear-biting situation is in a state of panic and is not thinking properly, so his inhibitions may be gone.

biter? How do people become the victims of a fear-biting dog?

In most cases, the biter is trying to protect his family. Both the dog and the owner are likely to be in shock and not thinking too clearly. While many dogs will accept help without resisting, some injuries are painful enough that the dog will respond with a bite to any attempt to move him. Two friends of mine, for instance, were bitten in almost identical circumstances when they went to the assistance of dogs who had suffered broken necks. That’s why muzzles are always a good idea, even if a muzzle must be improvised by using pantyhose.

That opening estimate of at least two million annual dog bites in the U.S. does not mean two million uninhibited attacks. It means two million attacks with a wide range of severity and cause. And understanding these different kinds of dog bites can not only help shelter and animal control personnel educate community members, but also help them protect themselves and better handle the animals. For instance, entering the run of a dog impounded for a vicious, uninhibited attack.

But remember, nobody has to be bitten in order to be in shock and not thinking too clearly. Injured dogs may also be more inclined to bite. When a dog is injured, both the dog and the owner are likely to want to be pack leaders are far less dangerous than those who want to be pack leaders. The more people know about the different kinds of bites and their different causes, the better their interactions with dogs are going to be. And the more you know about why dogs bite, the safer your job is going to be.

The crucial point to remember is that lumping all dog bites into the same category does a disservice to both the public and the animals themselves. The more people know about the different kinds of bites and their different causes, the better their interactions with dogs are going to be. And the more you know about why dogs bite, the safer your job is going to be.

The only state-run spaying and neutering program in the country continues its amazing run of success.

New Jersey’s Animal Population Control Program, created by law in 1983, is putting a tremendous dent in the state’s pet overpopulation problem. Through July 1990, over 31,000 animals had been sterilized through the program since its inception in September 1984.

When first enacted, the program enabled low-income pet owners to have their cat or dog spayed or neutered for $10. Two revisions to that original law have extended the program to an unprecedented number of pet owners.

In 1986, the program was amended to allow any pet owner who adopted a pet from a municipal pound or non-profit animal shelter to have the animal altered for a flat fee of $20. The law required that both dogs and cats be properly licensed and vaccinated.

That amendment made spaying and neutering economical for quite a few pet owners. One drawback, however, was that only 24 out of more than 500 municipalities required cat licensing. So last January, the New Jersey State Legislature further refined the program by eliminating the cat-licensing requirement. The legislature also amended the law to allow pets adopted from other agencies besides pounds and non-profit shelters to be sterilized through the program.

Since its inception, the number of New Jersey pet owners taking advantage of the program has steadily increased. In 1989, for instance, 7,500 surgeries were completed, a 20 percent increase over the 6,200 performed in 1988. 1990 is showing the largest increase yet, partially due to the fact that cats no longer have to be licensed to be sterilized through the program.

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Injured dogs may also be more in-
remove the container. Neighbors estimated that the dog had survived for over two weeks with the container on his head.

Hollis contacted Kal Kan, the cat food company that put out this type of container under its Crave® label. The company explained that the container was for a promotional item and was to be discontinued, which it has been.

But Purina is now marketing its DeliCat® cat food in a similar plastic jug. The Deli-Cat container comes in two sizes, the larger of which corresponds to the size and shape of the Crave container the dog was caught in. The jug is clear plastic, containing 56 ounces of food and has an opening 4½ inches in diameter—large enough for medium-sized dogs to get their muzzles and heads through if trying to get at food inside. The smaller size container (holding 18 ounces) has an opening of 2½ inches—too small for most dogs, but big enough for kittens or puppies to become entrapped.

A spokesman for Purina says the packaging is intended to be permanent and that they have received no complaints of animals getting caught in the containers. The spokesman pointed out that the screw-on lid should prevent pets from being able to get inside the container.

However, consumers not only pose a potential hazard to hungry strays or even pets at home, but are also environmentally undesirable. Cat and dog food traditionally has been packed in paper sacks or cardboard boxes, both of which are biodegradable. Plastic containers are made from petroleum, a non-renewable resource, and do not degrade. Although they are recyclable, the difficulty in finding a place to take plastic for recycling makes it likely that these and other plastic containers will simply be thrown away.

You can write to Purina and let them know your concerns about their plastic packaging. Tell them about the dog in this article and ask them to prove that they care about the health of the pets eating their foods by discontinuing the plastic containers and switching back to safe and environmentally responsible packaging. Write to Ralston Purina Company, Office of Consumer Affairs, Checkerboard Square, St. Louis, MO 63164.

In the meantime, people using this cat food should replace the lids on the containers before throwing them away.

Society Holds Celebrity Auction

A tote bag from Elizabeth Taylor, a golf ball signed by Jack Nicklaus, and several autographed items from the rock band The Grateful Dead were just a few of the celebrity items auctioned off last March 24 by the Humane Society for Animal Welfare (P.O. Box 5683 EKS, Johnson City, TN 37605-5683). The unique fundraiser brought in over $2,000 for the society’s spay/neuter assistance fund. The fund, established in 1985, has provided some 450 low-income pet owners with $20 subsidies for the cost of spaying or neutering.

The celebrity auction was the brainchild of Carol Jones, former board chairperson of the society. Jones worked nine months on the project, with most of her time spent finding addresses. She sent over 2,800 letters to celebrities ranging from rap groups to politicians. She even made the effort to learn the names and addresses of stars she wasn’t familiar with, such as pro wrestlers and rock groups.

Celebrities donated some 280 items in response to her letters, including autographed photos, T-shirts, and posters. Items of note included a script from the television series M*A*S*H, a baseball signed by Willie Maya, and an autographed copy of Richard Nixon’s No More Vietmans. “Those who couldn’t donate items responded anyway,” Jones said. “I even received calls from several celebrities who wanted to know more about the auction and why I was doing it.”

Over 80 people attended the auction. The highest single bid was $90 for an original, autographed design of a Grateful Dead T-shirt. This was actually Jones’ second celebrity auction for the humane society. In 1987, her first one raised money that was donated to the Washington County-Johnson City Animal Control Center, the public shelter the society works with. She plans to hold a third auction in a couple of years.

After this latest event, Jones made sure the celebrities knew her appreciation. “I sent every one a thank you note,” she said.

Rabies Information a Call Away

Need general information on rabies or tick bites? Getting calls from community members on these subjects? Now there is a hotline that provides the answers. The Rabies and Rickettsial Diseases Hotline is a 24-hour, automated phone system created by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that provides callers with information on rabies, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and humane ehrlichiosis. Menu options include information on tick bites, rabies prevention, and procedures for reporting physical reactions to the rabies vaccine. The hotline also includes instructions for obtaining written materials.

To access this information, call the CDC Information Hotline at (404) 332-4555.

Solutions to Wildlife Nuisances

You’ve heard the questions—“How do you get downtown merchants keep birds from nesting in their eaves? What can be done to keep rabbits from eating petunias? How do you get a skunk out of a window well?”

The solutions to these and many other wildlife-related problems are found in the new Pocket Guide To the Humane Control of Wildlife in Cities and Towns, published by The HSUS. This handy guide covers the natural history, legal status, and published health concerns over 24 species or groups of animals. The damage each type of animal can cause, as well as the most effective means of controlling the damage, is carefully explained.

Following the theory of animal-proofing (detering wild animals so that they don’t become nuisances) rather than exterminating, the guide clearly illustrates the various methods of deterring animals and recommends the best methods for individual situations.

In addition, the guide discusses various zoonoses that are of concern to people working with wild animals. Sixteen zoonoses are outlined, and the guide lists how they are transmitted and how infection can be prevented. What to do if bitten or injured by an animal is also covered.

Rounding out the guide is a list of product sources for wildlife-damage control. Devices to humanely trap, exclude, deter, and repel wildlife are available from the numerous sources listed. This guide should be in every shelter. Personnel answering the phone will refer to it often. No longer does a question like “How do you get an armadillo out from under your house?” have to be a stumper. Have copies on hand to sell or give out to patrons. And field officers can use the guide to show people how to cope with their wildlife problems.

The guide costs $4.00 per single copy but only $3.25 for 50–99 copies and $2.25 for 100 or more. Order from The HSUS, at 2100 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20007.

Kitty Note Cards Available

Whimsical note cards featuring four designs of kittens in colorful, cozy surroundings are available at a special price from HSUS. These 4" × 6" cards come in sets of 12 with matching envelopes for only $4.00 per pack. If you order three or more packs, the cost is only $3.00 per pack. Each card is blank inside so the sender can write his or her own message. Supplies of these cards are limited.
Dogbite Prevention for Workers

Letter carriers are well known among frequent dogbite victims. Because of the nature of their jobs, they and other delivery personnel, utility workers, meter readers, and home repairmen fall victim to bites by aggressive dogs far more often than the typical person.

That’s why RMI Corporation, a company specializing in safety training programs, sells three booklets and a video on dogbite prevention specifically for workers who enter other people’s property as part of their regular jobs.

One booklet, entitled Dogbite Prevention Program, presents general safety precautions all workers should take to avoid being bitten. It tells how to identify threatening signals, how to escape a challenge by a dog, and what to do if actually attacked. The other two booklets build on that information for these specific situations: delivering parcels and other materials requiring the customer’s signature, and entering and working in the customer’s home.

The booklets are specifically designed for use in classroom training sessions, although they are just as effective for self-instruction. They feature easy-to-read text and helpful, two-color graphics. Simple review questions appear throughout each booklet to reinforce what is taught, and an answer sheet is included on the inside back cover.

An outstanding new dogbite prevention video shows workers the best ways to handle threatening situations. Humane agencies could use the booklets and video to offer their own training sessions for local companies, or they could simply refer companies to RMI. Each order of booklets is accompanied by an administration manual with tips on conducting a seminar. For prices and ordering information, contact RMI at 391 Totten Pond Rd., Waltham, MA 02154; (617) 980-9430. Ask about their 15% discount for humane agencies.

How to Avoid Getting Bitten by a Dog

Everyone knows a dog is man’s best friend. And it is generally true. But every dog has the capacity to bite, and children are most often the ones who get bitten. Everyone, particularly children, should learn some basics about dog behavior and safety around dogs.

When Dogs Might Bite

• When they feel threatened or afraid.
• When they are protecting their territory, food, toys, family, or pups.
• When they get excited, even in play.
• When they don’t know you.
• When their “chase response” is triggered.
• When they have been bred and/or trained to be aggressive.
• When they are in pain or irritated.

How To Tell When A Dog Might Bite

• The dog may stare at you.
• The dog may stand still and still, maybe with his or her hair up.
• The dog may stare at you.
• The dog may hold his or her tail still and up in the air, and may wag it back and forth very fast.
• The dog may growl, snarl, show teeth, or bark.

What To Do If You’re Threatened By A Dog

• Stand very still and try to be calm. DON’T SCREAM AND RUN.
• Be aware of where the dog is. Don’t turn your back on him or her, but don’t stare the dog in the eyes, either.
• If the dog comes up to sniff you, don’t resist. In most cases the dog will go away upon deciding you aren’t a threat.
• If you say anything, speak calmly and firmly.
• Try to stay until the dog leaves then back away slowly until he or she is out of sight.
• If a dog does attack suddenly, “feed” him or her your jacket, purse, your bike, anything that may distract the dog and give the animal something to bite besides you.
• If you fall or are knocked down, curl into a ball with your arms and hands over your head and neck. Try not to scream or roll around.

What To Do If You Get Bitten

• Children should tell their parents immediately. All bites should be reported to the police or animal control department.
• Go to the hospital for treatment.
• Tell the policeman or animal control officer as much as you can about the dog—what he or she looked like, where you saw the animal, if you’ve seen the dog before, and on. It’s important for them to try to find the dog.

Remember: Most Dog Bites Are Avoidable

(This space for your organization’s name and address.)

Provided by The Humane Society of the United States.
Art by Beverly Armstrong
Pope Urges Kindness to Animals

By Phyllis Wright, HSUS Vice President for Companion Animals

With the new year come new ideas and bright beginnings. I am thrilled to tell you that animal protection has been given a hand of support from the Catholic Church. In a speech, Pope John Paul II announced that animals are “the fruit of the creative action of the Holy Spirit and merit respect.” He went on to say that “the animals possess a soul and that men must love and feel solidarity with our smaller brethren.”

According to the Catholic Information Center in Washington, DC, this belief has long been a part of Catholic philosophy. The Pope’s affirmation of it now is simply his way of saying that he wants people to be kind to animals.

Many humane groups have run up against people who assume that because God gave men “dominion” over the animals, the latter were lesser beings than people and that cruelty to them did not matter. But the Pope’s official statement negates this notion.

To spread the word that kindness to animals is a moral requirement, the Catholic Study Circle for Animal Welfare (39 Onslow Gardens, London E18 1ND, England) has published a leaflet detailing the Pope’s message. You can obtain a copy of this leaflet by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Shelter Sense, 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda, MD 20814. Feel free to make additional copies to distribute in your community. But please copy the leaflet in its entirety and give credit to the Catholic Study Circle for Animal Welfare.

The Pope’s statement lends weight to animal protection messages. Make his words known to local churches and civic groups; publish them in your newsletter. Let his official position help you in your work to protect animals.

The Pope’s message is further indication that the tide is turning in favor of animals. Don’t miss this opportunity to make some headway while conditions are favorable. For the upcoming new year, resolve to make a change in your shelter or community. Come up with something you would like to see changed and then set out to do it by defining your goal, setting ways to attain it, and doing what it takes. You may be surprised at what you can accomplish.

Shelter Sense

The Humane Society of the United States
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Bethesda, MD 20814

Address Correction Requested