

A baby with light hair and blue eyes is sitting in a white crib, leaning on the railing. Above the baby, several colorful plush toys are hanging from the ceiling. The background shows a window with white blinds and a yellow curtain.

The Ultimate Starting Guide for Seeking Shalom Acres Pups Living with Kids

A golden retriever is lying on a grey surface, looking towards the right. The dog has long, wavy, light-colored fur and its mouth is slightly open, showing its tongue.

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Hi there

Parenting kids and dogs at the same time is hard. I'm a mom too, so I get it.

I'm Michelle, founder of Pooch Parenting. I'm a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT-KA) and Family Dog Mediator, mom and educator with 16 years of experience. You don't have to do this alone. I've been there, and I get what you are going through.

I am thrilled to be a Seeking Shalom Acres Approved Partner. Together, we will set your family up for a lifetime of happiness.



*xoxo
Michelle*



BECAUSE YOU DESERVE
PEACE OF MIND

Safety Checklist

Must have safety & management equipment for families with kids and dogs.

Pen for kids or dogs

Moveable and convenient. Can be used as a pen or large barrier. Ideal for open floorplans

Top Picks:

[Toddleroo 3 in 1 Metal Superyard](#)

[Amazon Basics Foldable metal pet exercise and playpen](#)

[Evenflo Versatile Play Space](#)



Baby Gate

Available in tension and hardware mounted versions. For use at the top and bottom of stairs, use hardware mounted only.

Top Picks:

[Regalo Easy Step Extra Tall Walk Thru Baby Gate](#)

[Toddleroo Swing & Lock Baby Gate](#)

[Baby Safety Gate: Retractable](#)



Food Enrichment Toys

Help your dog to feel happy behind a barrier, in a crate or separate room.

Top Picks:

[West Paw Zogoflex Toppl](#)

[Kong](#)

You can also use crates and doors to provide safe zones

Keeping the Peace

When parenting kids and dogs at the same time, the Golden Rule is your best friend. Everyone needs to be treated with respect. This will keep the whole family physically and emotionally safe.

How Kids SHOULD Interact with Dogs

Use common sense.

Be polite and kind to pets		Learn to recognize when your dog is scared or anxious	
Play appropriate games with pets, such as:			
Fetch		Training tricks (like roll over, shake, beg, etc.)	
Walking and running with a dog		Playing hide-n-seek	
Always remember:			
Supervise all interactions. Accidents can happen in a split second.		Train your dog to associate the kids with positive experiences so he'll be more likely to tolerate your child in case she accidentally interacts inappropriately.	

How Kids SHOULD NOT Interact with Dogs

It's common sense. Just imagine how people should interact with each other.

Avoid taking people's food		Avoid bothering dogs when they are eating	
Avoid stealing other people's toys		Avoid taking a dog's bones or toys	
Avoid putting your face right up to someone else's face		Avoid putting your face right up to a dog's face	
Avoid bothering when asleep		Avoid bothering animals when they are resting. Let sleeping dogs lie.	
Avoid pestering		Avoid grabbing tail/ears	
Avoid climbing on or trampling		Avoid climbing on or trampling	
Avoid pinching		Avoid hugging. Most dogs dislike it.	
Avoid screaming around		Avoid hollering and shouting. Use your "inside" voice instead.	

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For additional Low Stress Handling information, posters, flyers, books, and DVDs, please visit our website at <http://DrSophiaYin.com>

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SET UP YOUR WHOLE FAMILY FOR SUCCESS

- Use management, such as baby gates, pens and doors to provide some separation. Everyone needs a break sometimes.
- Dogs are not toys, dress-up dolls or chairs. They need to consent to all interactions.
- Teach your kiddos to leave your dogs alone if they are sleeping, eating or chewing on a bone. Use barriers to prevent access if your kids are too young to follow directions.
- Become a dog body language expert. This will help you to intervene when your dog needs support or a break. This is a topic that I teach regularly to members of my Thriving Parents of Kids and Dogs program.

How Does Your Dog Feel?

Many parents say it was a total surprise when their dog lunged at their child. But truth be told, dogs communicate in "whispers" before they begin to "shout." By understanding your dog's stress signals, you can intervene before the dog escalates to a growl, lunge or bite.



Dogs often yawn at times of stress. Look at the context – are they being restrained? Is there a crying baby nearby or a new piece of baby equipment?



Tongue flicks can indicate discomfort when it's not associated with eating and drinking.



Not all licking is "kissing." This dog is asking for space. If the licking feels frantic, remove your child in a timely manner.



Ears back, tight jaw, paw lifted and tail down are all signs of a fearful dog.



The term "whale eye" is often used when the whites around the eyes are visible. It's a clear sign of stress. This dog is also cowering, asking for space.



Dogs who turn away are often trying to appease you or another threat. They are trying to say they mean no harm. Back away.



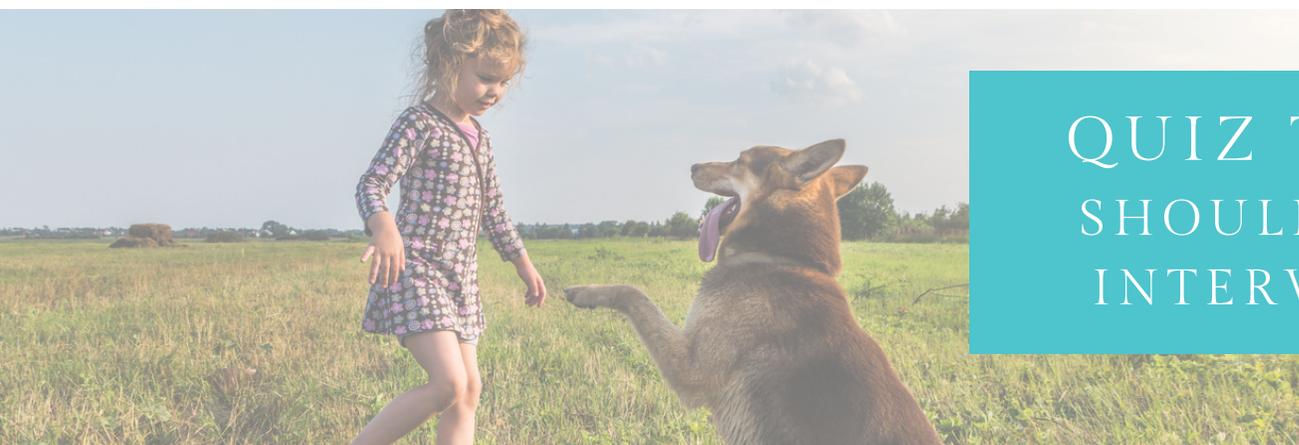
QUIZ TIME: SHOULD YOU INTERVENE?

ANSWERS

Yes! This dog is not comfortable. By intervening, you can provide relief to the dog and avoid a growl or bite.

Notice how the toddler is crawling towards the dog? The yawn is a big giveaway that the dog is uncomfortable with the child's approach.

Gently approach your child and redirect them somewhere else away from the dog. By reacting calmly, you are not giving your dog something else to worry about.



QUIZ TIME: SHOULD YOU INTERVENE?

ANSWERS

No, this dog is happy. But keep your eyes open for changes in body language or shifts in their interactions.

Great things about this interaction:

- The dog approached the child by choice.
- The dog is doing a trick and looks like it's interested in engaging with the girl.
- The dog's body language is "loose" and free from tension

Watch for sudden changes in the dog or child's behavior. Polite play can shift quickly into disrespectful interactions.

Alone Time Tips & Checklist

It's natural for your dog to want to be with you or other family members. Our goal is to help your dog to relax while you are either out of the house or busy with the kids in another room. Daily practice makes this less stressful for your dog. Check off the boxes when you have tried these steps.

- Practice having your dog in the same space he will be in while you are gone.
- Spend some time every day with the dog on the other side of a barrier from you.



Help your dog learn to feel comfortable with you leaving. Mimic your normal departures, including picking up your keys and grabbing your purse. Take things slowly and don't be gone long. Try these ideas:

- Use the bathroom
- Do your bathtime routine
- Read bedtime stories
- Start a load of laundry

KEY CONCEPTS

When helping your dog learn to be alone, your goal is to return before your dog becomes overly stressed. Bring your children with you so that they are not unsupervised together. All of these tips are very useful for young dogs or new dogs in your household, so that they can learn that you always come back. If your dog panics, drools or is unusually destructive, you will need professional help.

Parenting Kids and Dogs: Top Resources

Whether you are expecting, chasing toddlers, or living with teenage children, these popular blog posts will help to reduce your stress and improve how your dog feels and behaves, making your family happier and more harmonious, in the process.

- [Ask Pooch Parenting](#)
- [Parenting Kids and Dogs 101 Podcast](#)
- [The ABC's of Growling - What EVERY Parent with Dogs needs to know](#)
- [Kids and Dogs: Keeping the Peace](#)
- [5 Essential Steps to Prepare Your Dog for New Baby](#)
- [5 Habits Every Toddler and Dog Parent Should Develop](#)
- [Choosing a Dog for Your Special Needs Family](#)
- [Avoiding Dog Meltdowns](#)

There is a LOT you can do on your own to make life living with kids and dogs easier and safer. But sometimes, you may feel like you could use a little extra support.

[Book a consult](#) or [Join the Club](#) for ongoing support

Because you deserve peace of mind, and so does your dog.