

Healthy Pets Healthy Families Coalition

School Based Educational Presentation

Title: You and Your Pet: Bite Prevention at Home

Grade Level : K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade

Speaker Notes:

Slide 1: Title of talk: "You and Your Pet: Bite Prevention at Home"

Slide 2: Pets are Family members

- How many of you have pets? Dogs? Cats? Other pets?
- Pets are an important part of many families. Today we are going to talk about how to understand your pet and how to be safe around them.

Slide 3: Going up to your dog

- When is the best time to go up to your dog?
  - When they are playful, when they are seeking your attention.
- How should you go up to your dog?
  - Should you jump at them? Scream? Chase them? Grab them?
  - NO!- You should first go slowly up to them and make sure they want to play with you, or let them come up to you.
  - Dogs, just like people, may not want to play or be bothered at certain times.

Slide 4: What is your dog saying? Happy dogs

- Dogs use their bodies to let us know how they are feeling since they can't talk.
- Dogs that are happy look relaxed, have their mouths loose and open, or bow down to who they want to play with.

Slide 5: What is your dog saying? Scared dog

- Scared dogs can bite. Their ears may be pinned back against their heads, their mouth is closed. They may be cower, have a worried expression on their face, and move away from you. They may also have their tail between their legs.
- Should you go up to a dog looking like this? (No!)

Slide 6: What is your dog saying? Angry dog

- When a dog is angry or upset, it will tell you: BACK OFF OR I WILL BITE!
- Their body is stiff, they will show their teeth, and you may hear them growling.
- Do you want to go up to this dog? NO

Slide 7: When to leave your dog alone

- Just like us, there are times when dogs do not want to play or be bothered.

- Leave your dog alone when it is sleeping, eating, or when a dog mother is nursing her puppies
- If your dog gets injured, tell your parents or another adult. Do not try to help it yourself.

#### Slide 8: How do you pet a dog?

- How do you pet a dog?
  - Do you just run up to them and pet them? (“No, walk up slowly in front of them and make sure they are ok with you petting them before you do it. Always ask the owner if it is okay before petting their dog)
  - Do dogs like you to grab their fur? (“No! They don’t like it any more than you like your hair being pulled.)
  - Do you pet them everywhere? (“No! Just like you, they don’t like being touched in certain areas.)
  - Where is the best place to pet a dog? (On the back, shoulder, chest or flank. Some dogs also like their tummy to be rubbed)

#### Slide 9: Going up to your cat

- When is it okay to go up to your cat?
  - When it is coming up to you, rubbing you, or purring
- When should you not bother your cat?
  - When it is eating, sleeping, or trying to get away

#### Slide 10: What is your cat saying? Relaxed happy cat

- Cats also use their body and tail to let us know how they are feeling.
- Relaxed cats are relaxed all over: Their body, tails and ears. The cat is awake but its tail is not thumping. It might be purring.

#### Slide 11: What is your cat saying: Scared cat

- Scared cats can bite. They may be puffed up, their eyes are big and their ears partly lowered. They might be cowering, trying to hide or trying to get away. Their tail might be twitching or thumping.
- Should you go up to a cat looking like this? (No!)

#### Slide 12: What is your cat saying: Angry cat

- When a cat is angry or upset, it will tell you – Back off or I will bite!
- The cat may be hissing, their teeth are showing, their eyes are big and their ears lowered. The end of their tail is probably twitching.
- Do you want to go up to these cats? (No!)

#### Slide 13: How do you pet a cat?

- How do you pet cats?
  - Do all cats like being pet or touched? (No!)

- You need to make sure your cat is interested in being touched or pet before you do it.
- Which way do you pet a cat? From head to tail or tail to head?
  - Always go in the same direction as the fur (head to tail.
  - Do cats like their tail being pulled? (NO!)

#### Slides 14-19: Quiz Time

- Now let's see what you have learned
- Photos of various dogs and cats from the presentation showing dogs and cats to approach and ones to leave alone.

#### **Slide 20: Remember:**

- Pets are part of our family. We need to respect them
- Let's get to know what they are saying
- Know when they want to play or be petted and when they do not.
- Respect what they are telling you to stay safe and not get bitten.