

After a dog bite:

What parents and carers need to know

Support and advice for the whole family



We're here to help!

At Dogs Trust, we understand that a dog bite - especially one involving a child - can be both worrying and confusing.

This leaflet has been created to support parents and carers following a bite incident. It offers you clear, compassionate, expert guidance that your whole family can benefit from and will signpost you to the free advice and support we offer.

Last year, our Behaviour Support Line staff helped over 9,500 owners with their dogs!

(Dogs Trust data, 2025)



It's okay to feel how you are feeling

Witnessing or being involved in a dog bite can be frightening and shocking. You might be feeling a range of emotions from shock, guilt, frustration, confusion and you may even be blaming yourself. These are all normal reactions following an unexpected and traumatic event, so be kind to yourself and know that we are here to help!



Knowing where to start

We know asking for help can be difficult, but we are here to make it easier!

You don't have to decide everything right away but a great first step is to simply **give our FREE Behaviour Support Line a call (0303 003 6660).**

We have a skilled and supportive team ready to **listen and support without judgement.** They will help you to understand what has happened and what your options are - be it training, making small changes at home, or perhaps finding a new home for your dog if everyone feels that's the kindest and safest option.

Many families have been where you are right now and **getting in touch really helped them.** One parent told us:

"I didn't know where to start but speaking to someone at Dogs Trust who understood made all the difference. We felt supported—not judged—and now we feel safer and closer as family."



Whatever the situation, we promise to be honest and kind, and help you to feel clearer and more in control of what those next steps are - **we want the best for you, your child, and your dog!**

Behaviour Support Line:

What to expect

Calling our Behaviour Support Line is totally **free of charge** and the team is made up of friendly and caring dog behaviour experts.

When you speak to our team, they will:

- Listen carefully to your concerns.
- Help you understand what has happened.
- Recommend a course of action.
- Give you clear next steps, whether this is advice from our team, or directing you to more in-depth support.
- Offer options for low-income families.
- Answer any questions you may have.



Call free now!

Call our **Behaviour Support Line** for immediate **advice**, Monday to Friday 8.30am to 7.30pm and Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays 9.30am to 5pm.

0303 003 6666

Or simply scan the QR code to **fill in a short online enquiry form** where you can select a time for us to call you back!



Scan me!



FAQ?

Do I need to report the bite?

You do not have to report the bite, but getting advice straight away can help prevent further problems and keep everyone safe – including your dog.

Do I need to rehome my dog if they have bitten?

Not all dogs need to be rehomed after a bite – expert support can help you understand what's happening and what's best for everyone. To talk to one of our friendly dog behaviour experts, **call our Behaviour Support Line free on 0303 003 6666.**

What should I do with my dog when I get home?

It's important to keep everyone safe, calm, and ideally separate until you understand how best to move forward.

- Avoid punishing your dog – we know bites are a scary and emotional experience, but punishment can make things worse.
- Avoid anything you think may have led to the bite – i.e., approaching your dog when they are resting or playing with a toy.
- Keep your child and dog separate where possible – consider whether your dog can stay with a trusted friend or relative for a short period.

Other support on offer

To support dogs and children to live happily together, we are pleased to also offer the following resources that you might find helpful!

Our **dedicated webpage** with lots of practical tips you can put into practice immediately.



Scan me!



Our easy-to-follow **essential guide for parent and carers** that offers a deeper dive into keeping dogs and children safe together.



Scan me!



Scan me!