

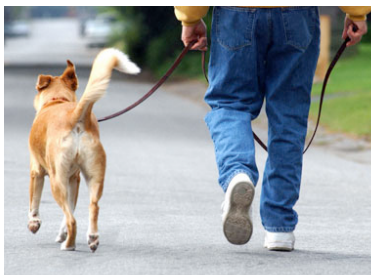
# Pets Are People Too!

## PETiquette: Respectful Ways To Bring People And Pets Together

by Carol Dorsey

Your dog's keen sense of awareness will tell you if he is able to make an introduction safely. This is especially important when a child is involved. Excited energy in a pack jeopardizes the safety of the pack. Since dogs are able to sense irritability, fear, instability and anger from others, they will correct those energies to create balance. By honoring their sense-ability we, as pack leaders, can introduce our dogs in a safe and appropriate manner.

Your energy, as pack leader, will be critical to the successful execution of the introduction. You must remain in control of the situation while in a calm, assertive, state of mind.



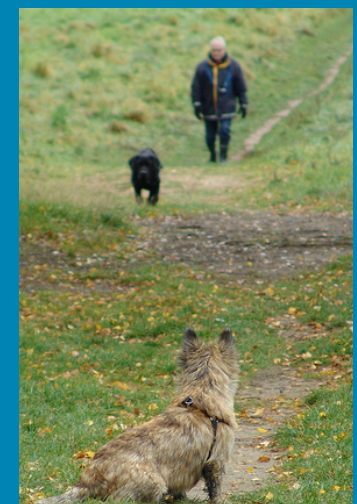
**Don't let a child or stranger make the first move toward your dog, and be observant.** Do not feel pressured to force the introduction. Notice body language, behavior, and eye contact of the child or stranger who wants to approach your dog. Excited behavior from a person can be interpreted as disrespect by your dog and he/she may try to punish the offender by pushing with her head, body or feet. Your dog will make a judgment based on the intensity of the energy that is around him and react accordingly. If the person's energy doesn't seem appropriate for your dog, tell the person that your dog is "in training" right now and can't be approached.

If you know your dog can be trusted with strangers, recommend the dog get to know the person or child first, by suggesting to ignore the dog by not touching, talking or using eye contact for two minutes. Then, watch your dog's reaction. Allow your dog to sniff or even walk away. If it feels safe after this period of time, allow the person to touch your dog – make sure a child knows how to appropriately pet your dog.

**Never try to meet a dog that is not in the same state of mind as your dog.** If a dog is excited and your dog is calm-submissive, it is not healthy to put them together. Never experiment. If you want a new dog to be a part

of your dog's life, make sure you walk them together as a pack before you allow them to play together.

A Dog will always show you how he feels in the moment; he will never say "Yes" when he really means "NO". Thus, being able to read your dog's energy, and the stranger's energy that wants to approach your dog, is extremely important. The pack's synergistic relationship creates balance and strength among its members. By being aware, maintaining calm-assertiveness, and honoring your dog, if he is not open for introductions, will create a stronger relationship with your dog, and a positive outcome when introducing your dog to someone new. LCM



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