

Dog Bites

A Public Health Problem

Dog Bite Statistics

- More than 1/3 of US households own a dog, adding up to about 65 million pets.
- A survey by the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta ("CDC") concluded that dogs bite nearly 2% of the U.S. population -- more than 4.7 million people annually.
- An American has a one in 50 chance of being bitten by a dog each year. (CDC.)
- Every year 2,851 letter carriers are bitten. (US Postal Service)
- Almost 800,000 bites per year, 1 out of every 6 - are serious enough to require medical attention. (JAMA 1998;279:51-53)
- Dog bites send nearly 368,000 victims to hospital emergency departments per year (1,008 per day). (MMWR 2003;52:605-610)
- An average of between 15 and 20 people die each year from a fatal dog attack.
- The chances that the victim of a **fatal** dog attack will be a burglar are one in 177; the odds that it will be a child are 7 out of 10.
- Researchers from the CDC estimated that the direct medical costs of dog bites per year equal \$164.9 million in the USA.
- Most people think dog bites are from strays, but 58% of the dog bites occur at home.
- **Each year in our community, over 1000 dog bites are reported to your Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness !**

5-07



Dog Bite Prevention Tips for Kids

- Don't pet a dog that is eating, sleeping or guarding its puppies.
- Don't try to pull a toy, stick or any item from a dog's mouth, don't play tug-of-war!
- When a strange dog comes up to you, don't run or scream. Instead, stand still with your hands at your sides and do not stare into the dog's eyes, "**be still like a tree.**"
- If knocked to the ground, curl into a ball, put your hands over you ears, "**lie like a log**" until the dog goes away.



For more information : 502-574-6650
Division of Environmental Health & Protection

<http://www.louisvilleky.gov/health>