

Dog Bites and Children

According to the Texas Department of Health, children are more often the victim of severe bites than any other age group. Unfortunately, many of these bites could have been avoided.

The Texas Department of Health also reported that domestic dogs were the primary cause of severe bites. Below is a list of the total number of bites per year and the percentage involving dogs.

Year	Total No. Bites	Domestic Dogs
1996	729	85%
1997	786	86.6%
1998	704	88.8%
1999	684	87.4%
2000	599	87.1%

The age and number of children bitten between 1996 and 2000 are as follows:

	Below 6	6-10	11-19
1996	22.5%	21%	16.3%
1997	25.3%	22.1%	15.5%
1998	19.6%	22.8%	16.5%
1999	21.3%	24.5%	16.0%
2000	16.6%	21.2%	14.4%



Lupine Legacy, Inc.
www.lupinelegacy.org.

Lupine Legacy, Inc.
3716 Woodview Drive
Joshua, Texas 76058

Where to contact the Directors:

Lisa Day — isiswolf@earthlink.net
Douglas Kirk — dougkirk@moment.net
Jerry Mills — lonewolf@wwbbs.net
Pam Thompson — pam@wtconnect.com

This brochure in its entirety, is
Copyright ©2002 Lupine Legacy, Inc.
All rights reserved

More facts reported by the Texas Department of Health.

In the number of severe bites where the sex and breeding status of the animals were reported, the following was found:

Year	Sex	Unaltered
1996	258 male	88.8%
	77 female	84.4%
1997	223 male	85.8%
	103 female	74.8%
1998	242 male	90%
	94 female	77.7%
1999	261 male	88.9%
	71 female	78.9%
2000	240 male	85.8%
	91 female	78%

The Texas Department of Health states that when comparing the over-all population, spayed and intact females bite in the same proportion and that neutering males will reduce the risk of severe bites by 2.5 times.

During this 5-year period, the breeds of dogs responsible for the majority of the bites were as follows: Chow & chow crosses - 481; Rottweiler & crosses—256; German Shepherds & crosses—240; Labrador & crosses—240; Pit bulls—215; Blue Healers—44; Chihuahua—15; wolfdogs 13.

When data was included concerning circumstances surrounding an attack, it was found that the attack often followed a warning, and in many cases was provoked.

YEAR	Warning given prior to bite	Provoked attack
1996	39.6%	38.6%
1997	36.5%	44.7%
1998	40%	37.9%
1999	37.3%	210 cases
2000	38.6%	195 cases

Whether the victim required surgery, hospitalization or sutures was as follows:

Year	Surgery	Hospitalization	Sutures
1996	46	62	231
1997	19.2%	26.7%	77.8%
1998	15.4%	27.6%	74.8%
1999	12.9%	32%	55%
2000	9.6%	37%	63.2%

The reports also show that more young boys were the victim of severe bites than young girls.

Children under six were reported as receiving the majority of head wounds. This is probably because of the size of the child in relation to the size of the dog. As age increased the percentage of head trauma decreased.

Other animals involved in multiple bites over the 5-year period were as follows: Domestic cats—360; Raccoon—13; Rats and Mice—13; Bats—5; horses—4; hamsters and gerbils—3; squirrels—8; fox—4; rabbits—2; skunks—3; pigs and hogs—3; ferrets—2; wolves 2.

NOTE: Lupine Legacy did not include bite statistics concerning exotic animals such as lions, tigers, etc. Information concerning statistics was derived from the Texas Department of Health annual Severe Bite Reports.

Each year hundreds of children are bitten by dogs. If you teach your children a few simple rules, most of these incidents can be avoided.

1. Never approach an unfamiliar dog.
2. Every dog that wags its tail is not friendly.
3. Ask the owner for permission before petting a dog.
4. When meeting a new animal, let the dog come to you and see and smell you before you try to pet it.
5. Be aware of the dogs in your neighborhood.
6. Never run and scream from a dog.
7. Be still when being approached by a strange dog.
8. When knocked down by a dog, roll into a ball and remain still, cover your head, neck, and face.
9. If attacked, then give the dog your books, book bag, a shoe, or something else to chew on besides you.
10. Never try to touch a strange dog unless supervised by the adult who owns the dog.
11. Report stray dogs, or dogs acting strangely to an adult.
12. Avoid direct eye contact with a dog. (It is better to turn sideways and glance at the dog from that angle.)
13. Do not bother dogs while they are sleeping, eating, or if they have puppies.
14. Do not try to pet a dog until you are sure it has seen you and sniffed you first.
15. Do not make loud noises around dogs.
16. Do not tease, hit, kick, or throw rocks at dogs.
17. Do not put your hands between two dogs.
18. Do not reach through a fence to pet a dog.
19. Do not put your face close to a dog.
20. When a dog is hurt, find an adult to help the dog.
21. If someone has a dog in their yard, get the owner's permission before entering. It would be best to let the owner enter the yard with you.
22. Never leave a baby alone with a dog.
23. Never let your child play with dogs without adult supervision.
24. Never let your child play around a dog that is kept on a chain.

BY TEACHING YOUR CHILD HOW TO BEHAVE AROUND ANIMALS, YOU MAY BE SAVING YOUR CHILD'S LIFE.