

Not only do animals provide children with enjoyment they also help with developing skills such as nurturing, responsibility and communication. Unfortunately there is also a risk of injury from animals (bites, scratches or being knocked over.). Remember that no matter how friendly the animal, all animals have the potential to injure a child by accident or if provoked.

Supervision and Playtime

Always supervise children near animals.

Teach children how to behave towards animals and when to leave them alone. Remember to model these behaviours so that children around you can see how to treat animals kindly and carefully.

Sometimes children can be unintentionally rough, and their quick, excited movements may cause animals to feel threatened.

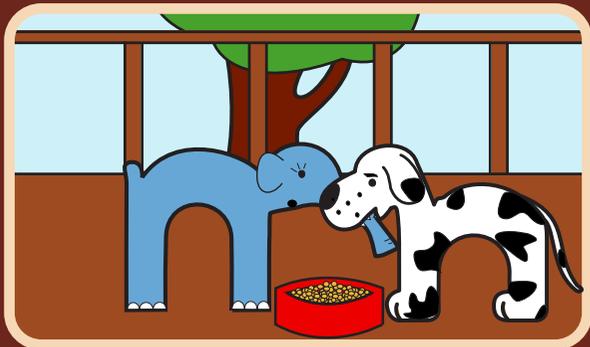
Make sure children and adults wash their hands after playing with animals.

Safety Proofing

Consider using safety gates, doors or other barriers to keep pets and children separated when you can't be there to supervise.

Using a baby monitor allows you to keep the bedroom door closed while still being able to hear the child.

A flyscreen door on a child's bedroom can be another way of keeping pets out of the room while children are sleeping, this allows you to still see and hear the child.



Caring for Your Pet

Make sure pets are exercised and played with daily.

Animals need to be up to date on vaccinations, worming and health checks. Animals that are unwell may be irritable.

Provide animals with time and space away from children, and teach children not to approach animals that are eating or sleeping.

It's important to train dogs to sit, stay and come when instructed.

Choose pets that are suited to your family's lifestyle and environment.

Talk to professionals, such as the RSPCA, about choosing, socialising and training pets.

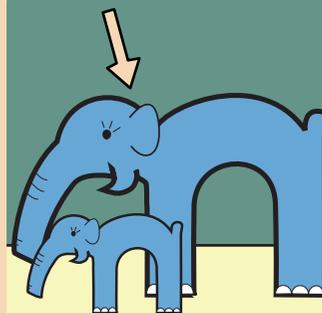
Farm Animals

Supervise children at all times when around farm animals and where possible keep children out of paddocks and stables.

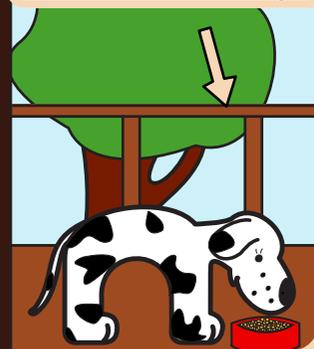
Have a securely fenced play area attached to the house for children to play in that is separate from farm animals.

If children are going to ride horses ensure that the horse is suited to the child's age and riding ability and that they always wear well fitted riding helmets and smooth soled riding boots.

Supervise young children when around animals



Keep children away from animals when eating



How Accidents can be Prevented

STEP 1 – Spot the hazards

Use this brochure and other Kidsafe resources to help you spot hazards in your home.

STEP 2 – Decide how to deal with the hazard.

When children are near animals **always actively supervise** them and keep them within arms reach.

When dealing with other hazards,

- 1. Removing the hazard** is the best option where possible (i.e. feed animals outside away from children)
- 2. Guard against the hazard** by installing and using gates and barriers (i.e. put a safety gate at the laundry entrance)
- 3. Lock or block the hazard** by using safety products to restrict or remove access to the hazards (Store animal food/feed in a cabinet secured with a child-proof latch)
- 4. Actively supervise within arms reach** when there are hazards you are unable to remove, guard or block against (i.e when visiting other peoples houses)

Never depend on telling children not to do something.

STEP 3 – Make the changes

Once you have decided how to deal with the hazard, do it straight away. You will feel more relaxed and children will be able to play more safely.

Combine any barriers you put in place with adult supervision and education.

Animal Related Injuries



For more information

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