

Activity Book

# FIDO, FRIEND OR FOE?



## **Acknowledgements**

We wish to thank Doctors Bradecamp and Freeman, the authors of “Fido, Friend or Foe?” for sharing their activity book with us and for allowing us to incorporate some updates to the original book, which dates back to 1997.

We also wish to extend our sincere appreciation to Lisa Makarchukall and Martin Murtonen, Illustrators, and Rick Helmke, Photographer.

Special thanks go to all of the volunteers who contributed to the publication of this book including Ross Jackson, Mary Jean Duncan, Terry Green, Kit Watson, Karen Paynter, Serena Comeau, Robert Paynter, Candice O’Connell, Lorraine Green, Julie More, Suzette Hafner, Lynn Rockwell, Joseph Desrosiers and Cheryl Smith.

Without the collaboration and assistance from all of these people, this project would not have been possible.

## **Disclaimer**

*“Fido, Friend or Foe?” has been designed, by professionals, to convey helpful suggestions, for teachers, parents and guardians, on ways to prevent avoidable dog bite injuries. No one can guarantee unconditionally the behavior of an animal or human; no one can guarantee the causative behavior which results from the interaction between humans and animals. The authors, publishers and sponsors, are not and cannot be held liable or responsible for any incidents that occur when humans and animals are together.*

**Preface**

Responsible Dog Owners of Canada (RDOC) is a registered non-profit organization. Its primary focus is the promotion of responsible dog ownership and the restoration and preservation of a dog-friendly society through the development of educational programs, one of which is aimed at dog bite prevention.

The vast majority of the millions of daily interactions between dogs and people are positive. However there are also too many bites. As a paediatric plastic and reconstructive surgeon, I treat countless children with bite injuries that could have been prevented. According to the Canada Safety Council, 42 Canadians are bitten every hour. Other studies show that more than 60% of all dog bites involve children under the age of nine, i.e. approximately twenty-five children are bitten every hour in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

The common thread in all dog bite statistics is that younger children sustain serious bites, more commonly to the face, and more frequently by known dogs – family and neighbouring dogs.

In order to prevent dog bites we need to understand what motivates dogs to bite. We then can reduce risk by educating children, parents, and caregivers to modify their behaviour in the presence of dogs. We echo the authors' goal of teaching children how to interact with dogs to enhance their safety and thus to enhance their enjoyment of our canine companions.

Mary Jean Duncan M.D., F.R.C.S. (C)  
Paediatric Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

<sup>1</sup> Stats presented are Canadian

**A Word from the Authors**

In 1996, we were challenged to create a product that could help improve the health of people by the year 2000. We had always known that the dog was man's best friend.

However, as veterinary students, we were alarmed when we learned of the number of people bitten every year by dogs - more than 4.7 million annually, with almost 800,000 of these bites requiring medical attention.

Approximately 1,000 people per day receive bites severe enough to require the victim to visit a hospital. In 2007, 33 fatal dog bite attacks occurred.

Unfortunately, due to their small stature and their frequent interactions with dogs, children between the ages of 5 and 9 are at the greatest risk of sustaining a dog bite, with half of these bites being on the face. These bites most often occur in the home by a family pet or a dog with which the child is familiar<sup>1</sup>

What started out as a proposal for the Healthy People 2000 Program became a passion to take our idea to fruition and create a dog bite safety activity book for children. Thanks to the great generosity of a well-known insurance company, "Fido, Friend or Foe?" has been available for more than 10 years now, free of charge to educators, parents and veterinarians to help educate children how to safely interact with dogs.

We are now very excited to work with Responsible Dog Owners of Canada and see "Fido, Friend or Foe?" continue to be used to educate children in Canada. It is our hope and goal that by teaching children how to safely interact with dogs, we can prevent them from becoming the victims of a dog bite attack.

Etta Agan Bradecamp, DVM, DACT, DABVP  
Joanna Burnette Freeman, DVM

<sup>1</sup> Stats presented are American

**Dear Teachers, Parents and Guardians:**

The purpose of this activity book is to teach children how to act responsibly and safely around dogs. It can be used as a starting point to talk to children about bite prevention. Below are suggested topics for discussion. Keep it short and simple.

**All pets should visit a veterinarian (page 1):** Dogs are living creatures and they need regular check-ups to ensure that they are healthy. Regular dental cleaning, grooming and nail clipping are also important.

**Stay calm around dogs (page 2):** Dogs can be frightened by people jumping or screaming and they may bite. It is always best to be calm and relaxed around dogs, especially strange dogs.

**Never tease or chase a dog (page 3):** Teasing or chasing a dog is very dangerous. The dog may feel threatened and defend himself by biting.

**Never pull a dog's ears or tail (page 4):** Pulling a dog's ears or tail can hurt him and he may bite to defend himself.

**Be kind to all pets (page 5):** Everyone wants to be treated with kindness, including animals. Kindness is the best way to form a bond with your pet.

**When meeting a new dog, always let the dog come to you (page 6):** Dogs have their own way of meeting new people. They use their sense of smell to understand who and what you are. Sometimes they need a little time to feel comfortable around you. If you have permission from the dog's owner to meet his dog, extend your hand with palm down and allow the dog to approach and sniff your hand.

**Never try to take away a dog's toy (page 7):** Some dogs can be very protective of a bone or a toy and may bite if they are taken away. Never bother a dog with a bone or toy.

**Always ask the owner's permission before petting a dog (page 8):** Some dogs are service animals working to help their owners and must not be distracted.

**Never reach through a fence to pet a dog (page 9):** Dogs are very protective of their home and property. They may see you as a threat and may bite your hand to protect their property.

**Never leave a baby alone with a dog (page 10):** Dogs are animals and respond to various triggers. Some dogs have a high prey drive and others may play rough. A young child can exhibit behaviors similar to a small animal and a dog may mistake it for prey. A child can accidentally hurt a pet, which may provoke the dog into biting. It is best to be safe and never leave a young child alone with any dog.

**Never touch a dog that is hurt. Get an adult to help the dog (page 11):** Injured animals may be in pain and frightened. They may bite or try to run and hide, which could cause additional injuries or make it more difficult to get them the care needed.

**Never touch a mother dog or her puppies, unless you have permission from an adult (page 12):** A mother dog will protect her puppies and do anything she can to keep them safe. If she thinks her puppies are in danger, she may bite.

**Not every dog that wags its tail is friendly (page 13):** A dog may wag its tail when happy, defensive, or stressed, and it is not always easy to know the difference. A defensive or stressed dog may bite. Be safe and never approach a strange or unattended dog, even if it is wagging its tail.

**Always approach a dog you know slowly and carefully (page 14):** When approaching any dog, walk slowly and quietly. Sudden movements may frighten or excite a dog. He may lunge, jump or bite and cause an injury. Give all dogs time and space to understand your actions.

**When a dog you don't know approaches, stand like a tree or be like a rock (page 15):** If you run, a dog may chase you. If a dog approaches, stand very still like a tree. If a dog attacks you, get down on the ground, curl up like rock and cover your head with your arms.

**Never make loud noises around dogs (page 16):** Loud noises can frighten a dog. He may jump on you or bite you.

**Never hug a dog (page 17):** Some dogs do not like to be hugged. If you hug a dog and put your face close to his, he may bite your face or neck.

**Never put your hand between two dogs (page 18):** Dogs like to play with each other. If they get overly excited, they could accidentally bite you.

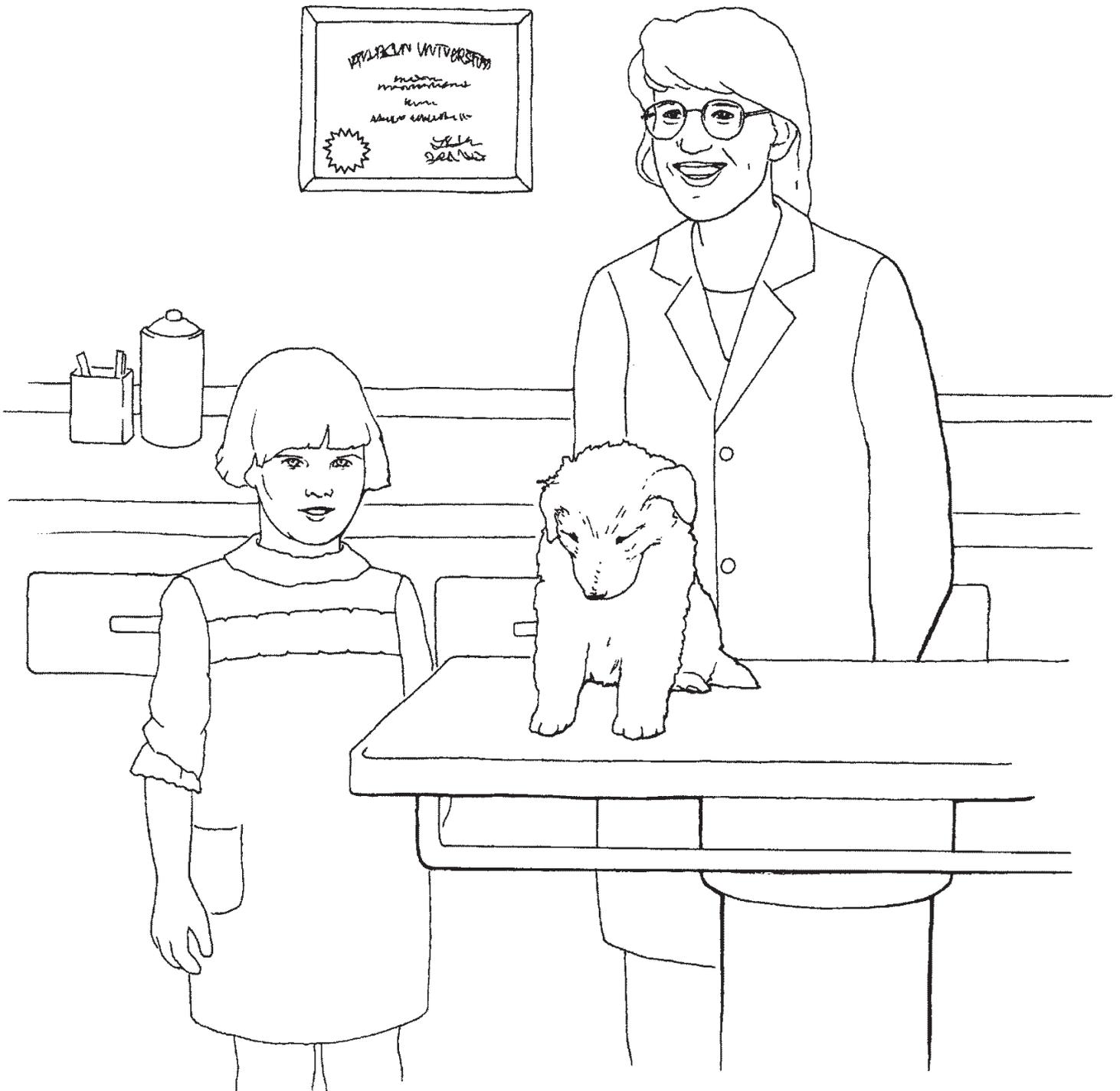
**Know where the dogs live in your neighbourhood (page 19):** You should know where all the dogs live in your neighbourhood. Tell an adult if you see a dog running loose. Do not approach a loose dog. If the dog approaches you, be very still. Remember, stand like a tree or be like a rock.

**Never wake a sleeping dog suddenly (page 20):** Waking a sleeping dog suddenly may startle him and he may bite.

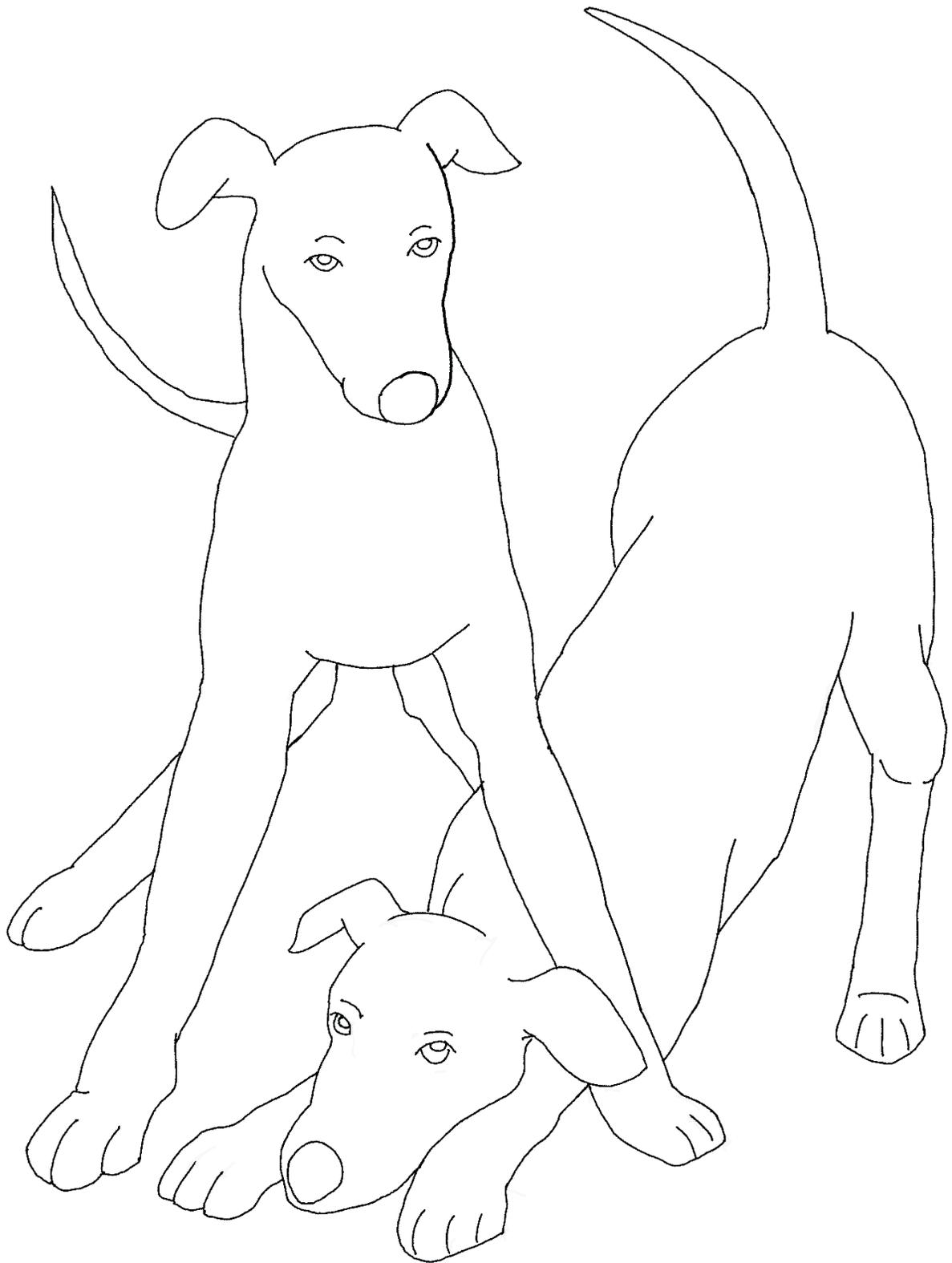
**Never bother a dog when he is eating (page 21):** Dogs can be very protective of their food. Never touch a dog or his food when he is eating.

**Always have an adult present when walking a dog (page 22):** We suggest using two leashes. An adult holds a long leash and the child holds a shorter leash in case the child has problem controlling the dog, e.g. the dog sees a cat and decides to chase it.

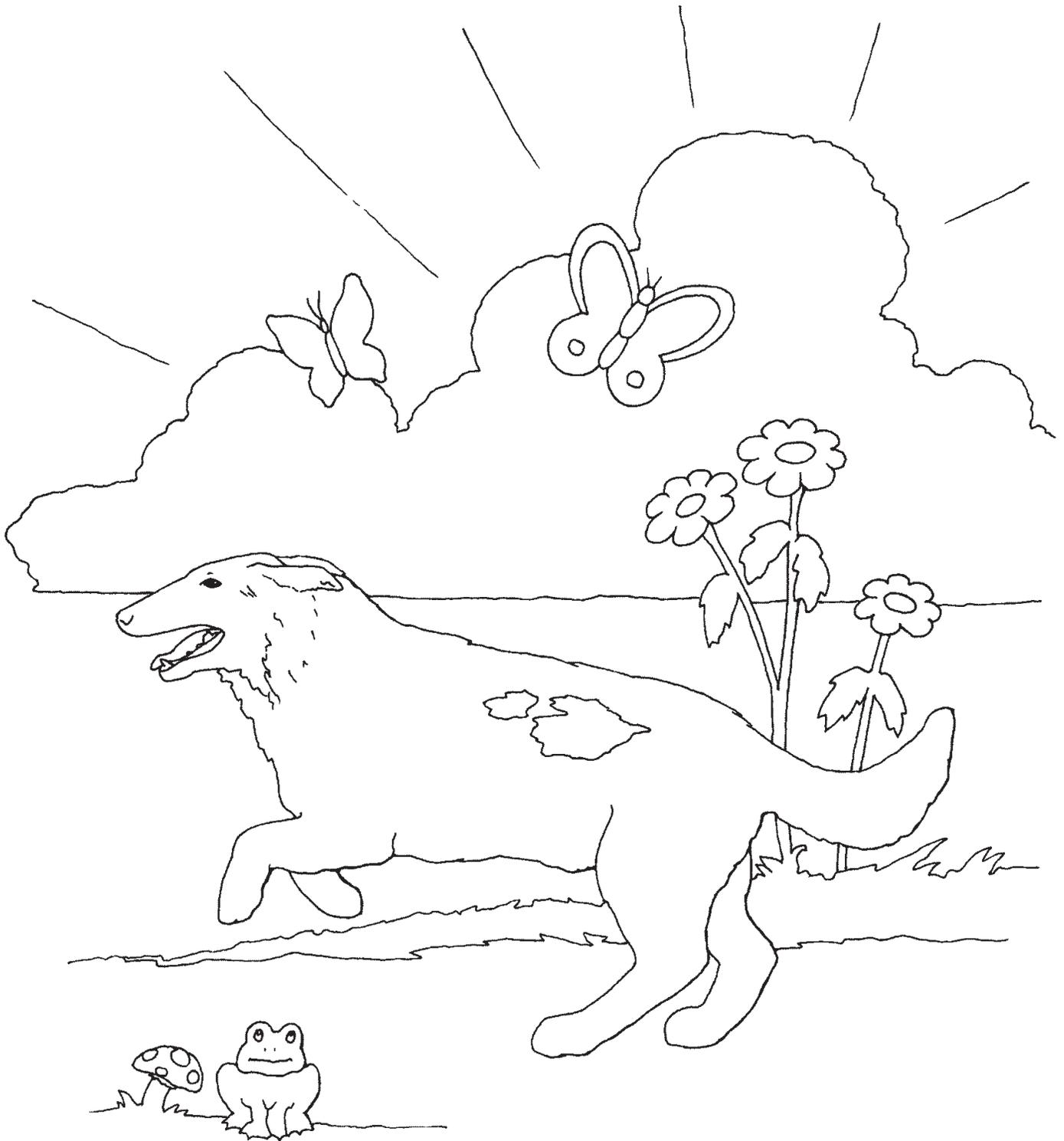
**Tell all your friends what you have learned about dog safety**



All pets should visit the veterinarian regularly.



**Stay calm around dogs.**



Never tease or chase a dog.



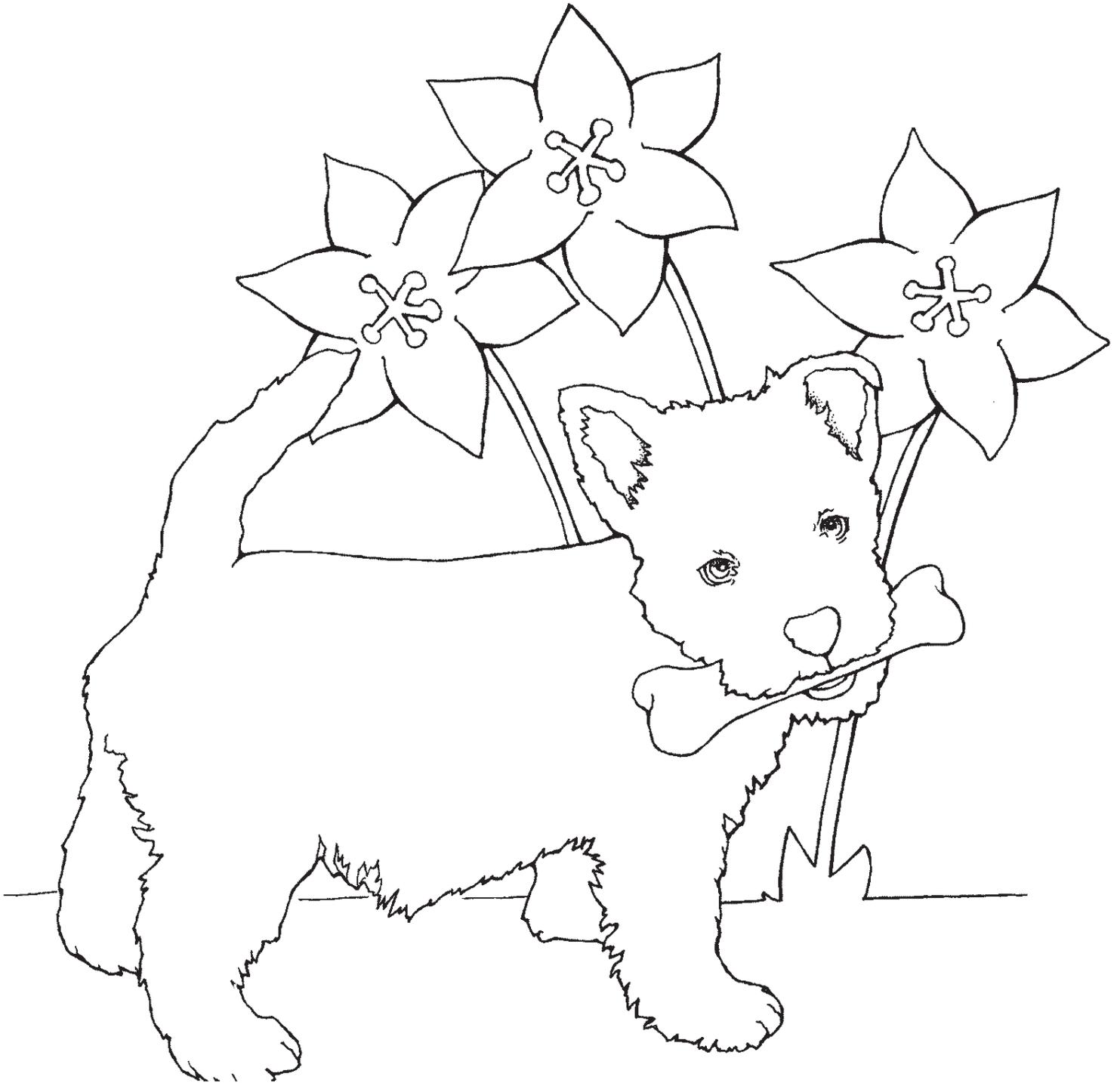
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Be kind to all animals.



When meeting a new dog, always  
let the dog come to you.



Never take away a dog's bone or toy.



Always ask the owner's permission  
before petting a dog.



Never reach through a fence to pet a dog.



**Never leave a baby or a young child  
alone with a dog.**



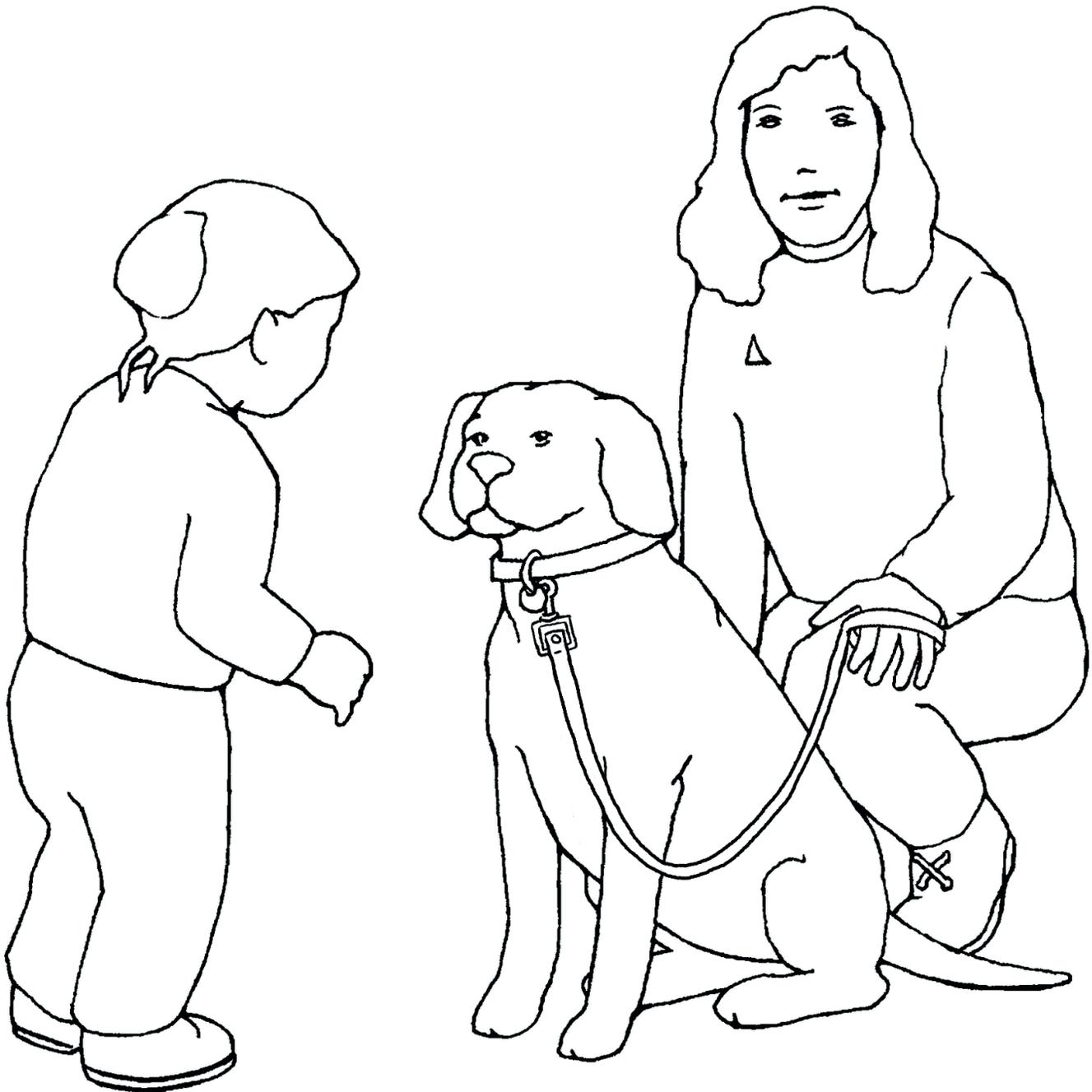
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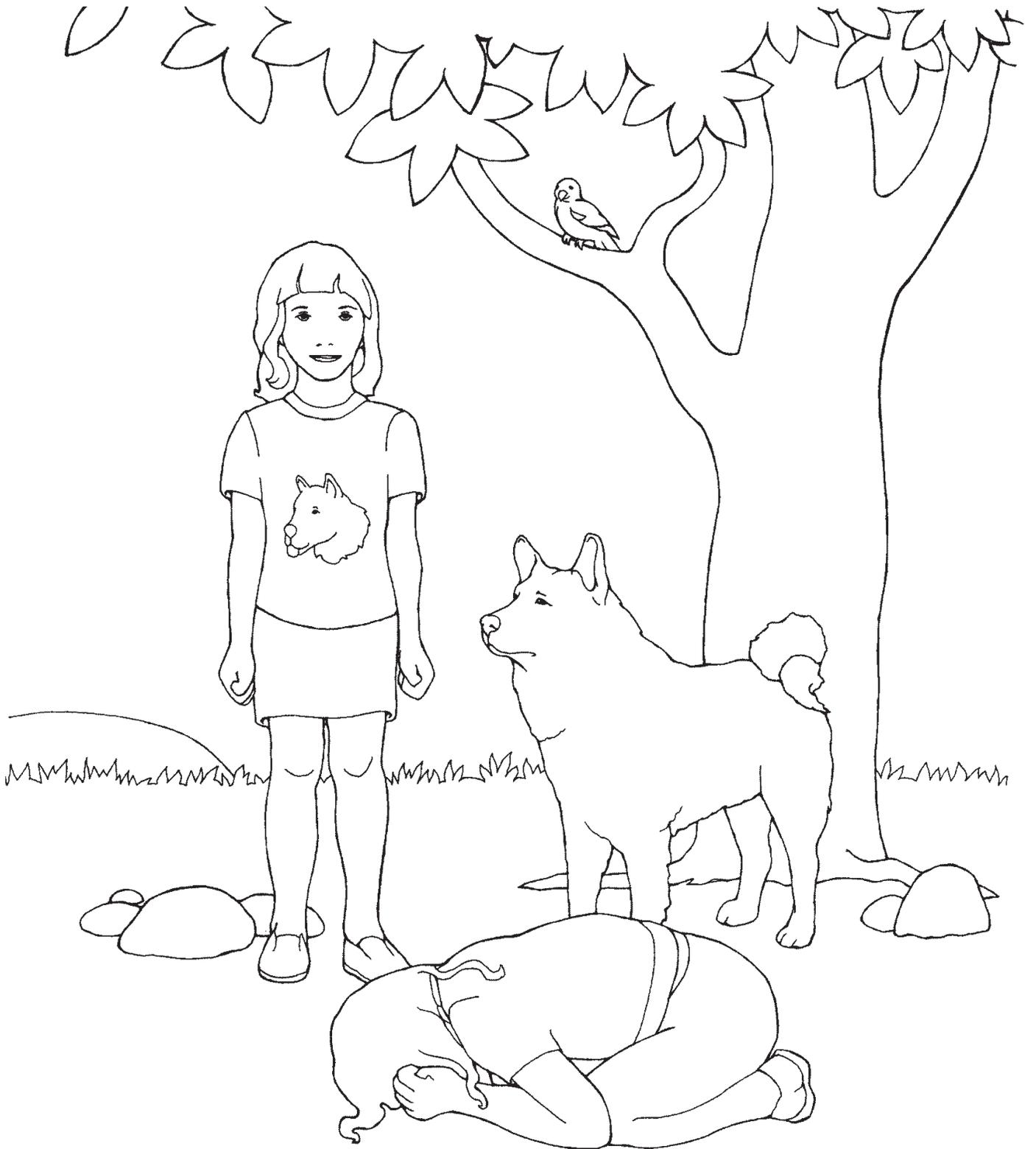
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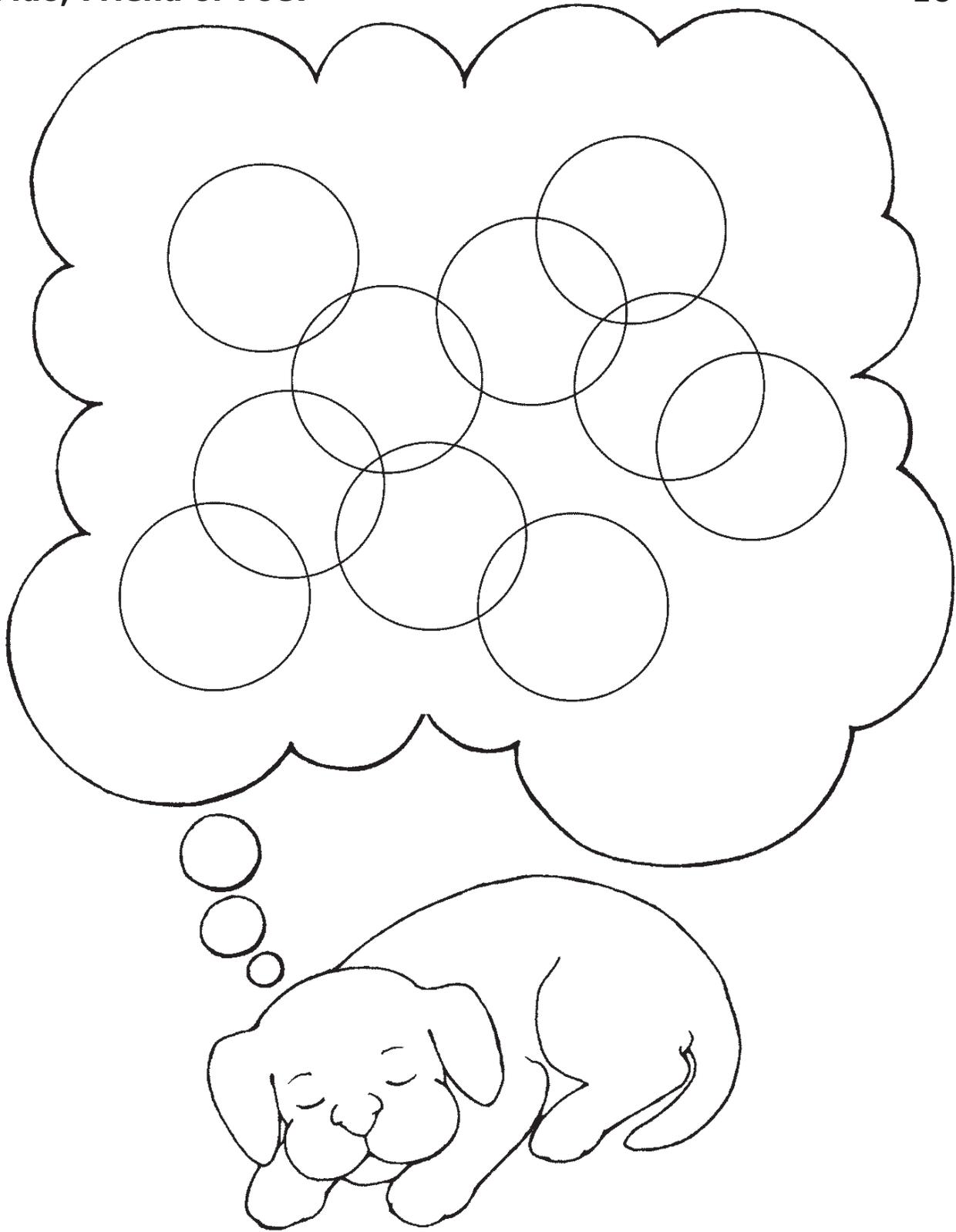
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Always approach a dog **you know** slowly.



When a dog **you do not know** comes close, stand like a tree or be like a rock.



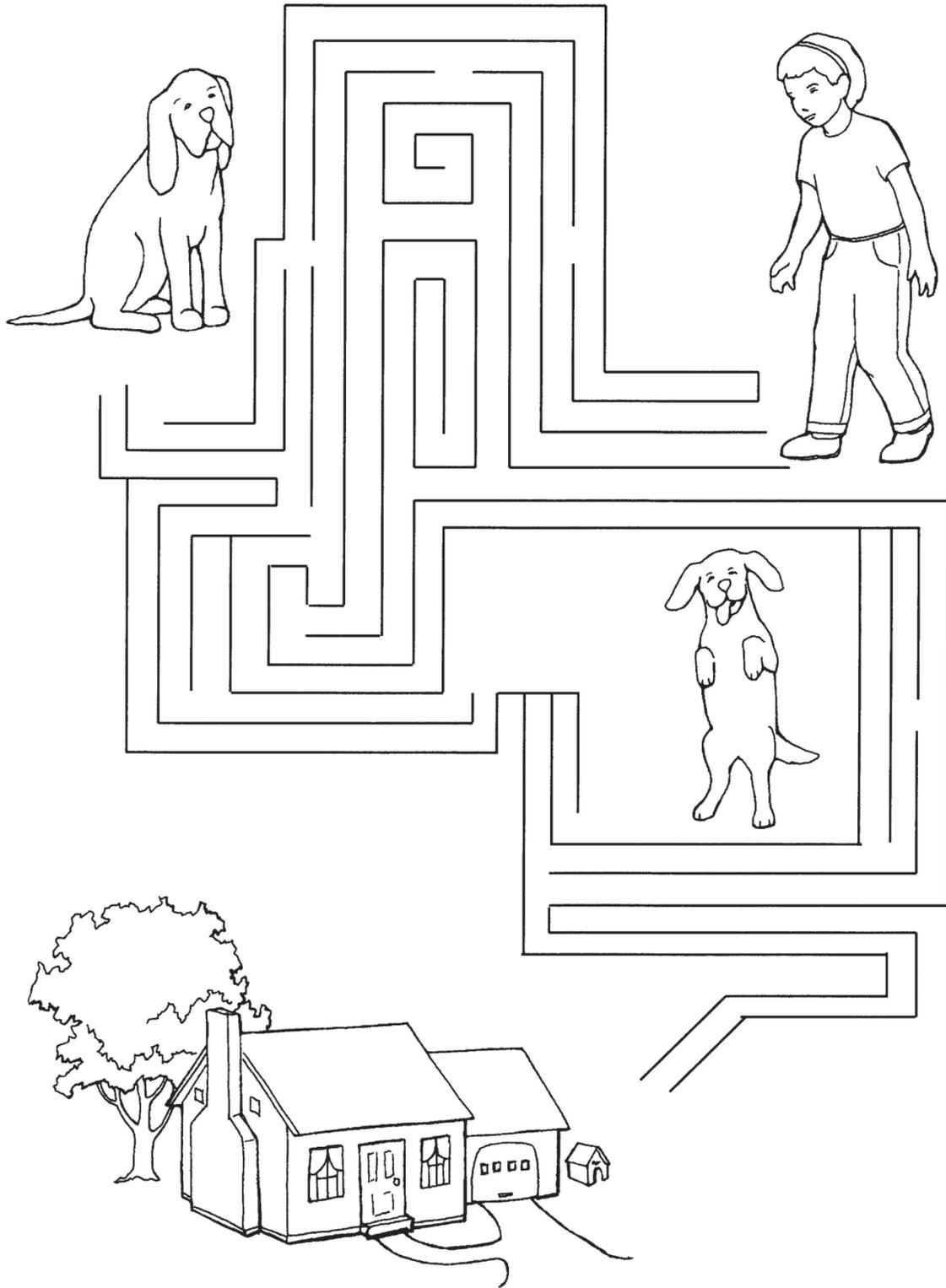
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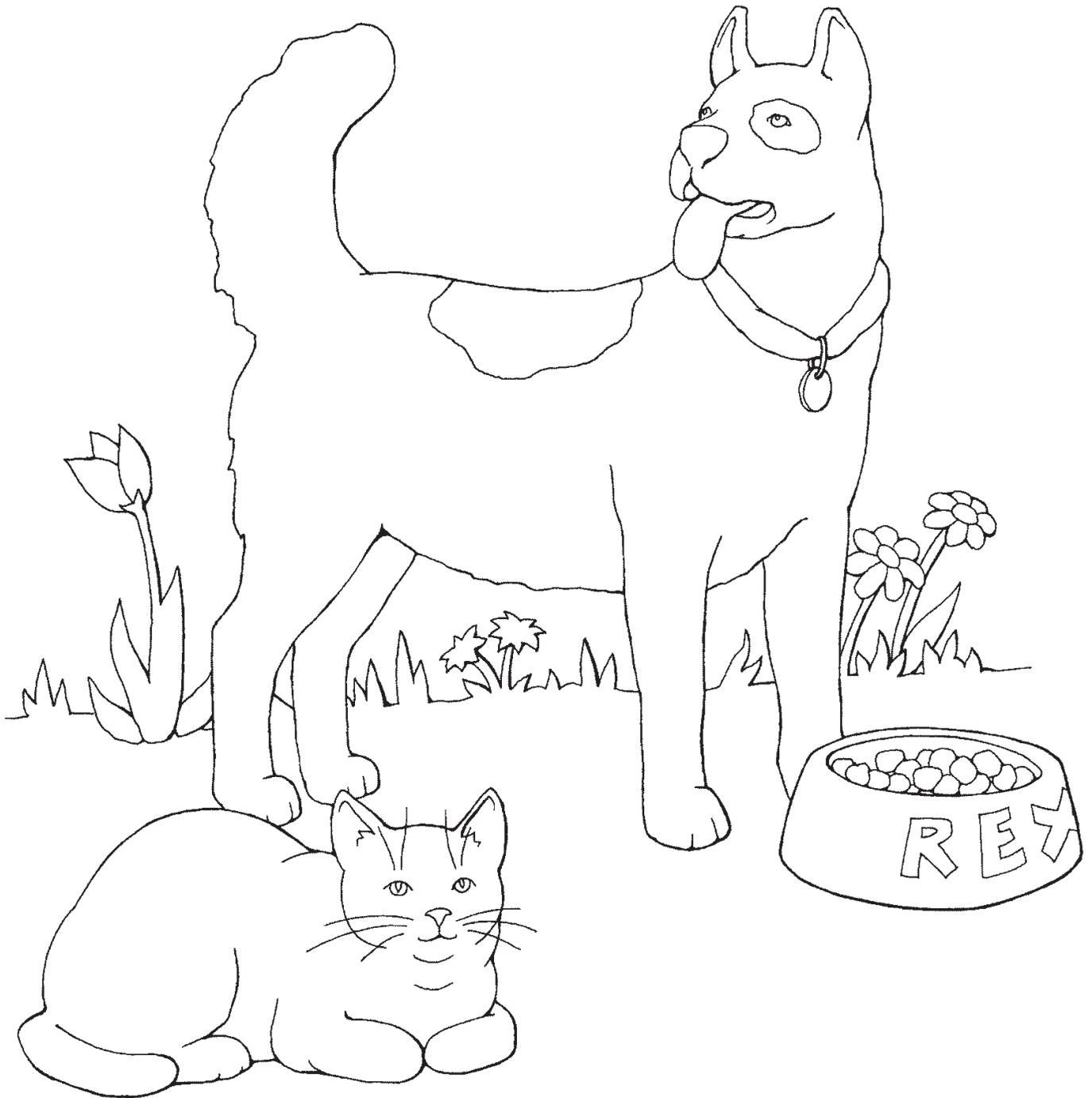
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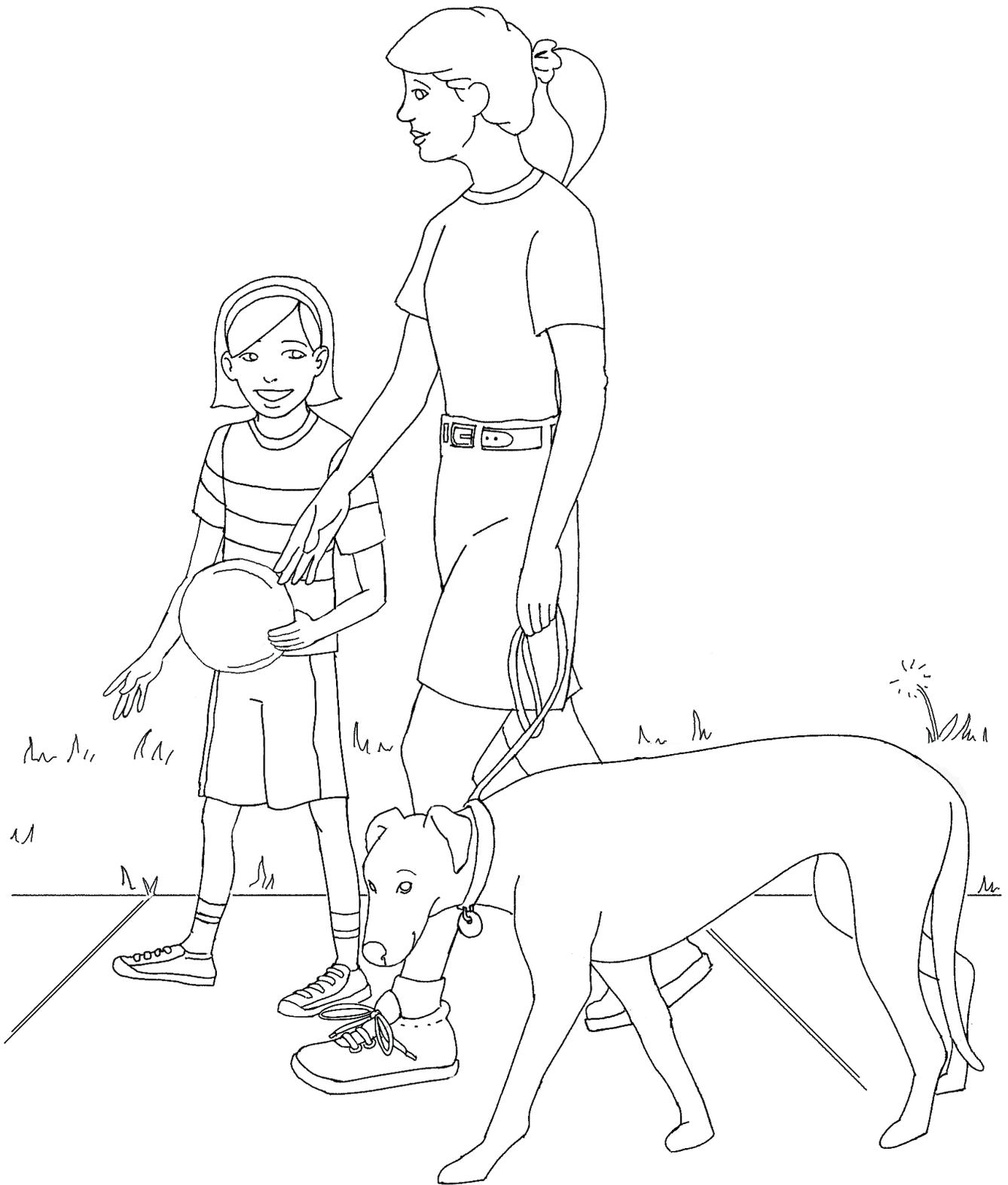
Know where dogs live in your neighborhood.



Never wake a sleeping dog suddenly.



Do not bother a dog when he is eating.



Always have an adult present  
when walking a dog.



Tell all your friends what you have learned about dog safety.

## **Do's And Don'ts of Dog Safety**

- Always ask an owner's permission before approaching or petting a dog.
- When a strange dog approaches, stand like a tree or be like a rock.
- Know where the dogs live in your neighborhood.
- An adult should always be present when walking a dog.
- All pets should visit a veterinarian regularly.
- Be kind to all animals.
- Never pull a dog's ears or tail.
- Never tease, chase or take a dog's bone or toy.
- Never bother a sleeping or eating dog.
- Never hug a dog or reach through a fence to pet a dog.
- Never leave young children alone with a dog.
- Never bother a mother dog with puppies.
- Not every dog that wags its tail is friendly.

**Tell all your friends what you  
have learned about dog safety.**

Provided in the interest of public safety by:



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Responsible Dog Owners of Canada

Association canadienne des propriétaires responsables de chiens

[www.responsibledogowners.ca](http://www.responsibledogowners.ca)