



DOG SAFETY DETECTIVES

Parent-led activity

Length: 30 minutes to 1 hour

Suggested ages: 4 - 7 years old

What you need:

- Just the presentation, plus imaginary detective hats and cloaks!

Key words

- What Woody Wants
- Stand like a statue
- Be a tortoise

Useful web page if you'd like to know more
woodgreen.org.uk/pet-advice/article/how-to-keep-children-safe-around-dogs



PRESENTATION GUIDE

SLIDE 1. Introduce Wood Green, The Animals Charity. Explain Wood Green is an animal charity, helping thousands of pets every year. Ask your child: what pets do you think might be staying at Wood Green, looking for a loving new home?

SLIDE 2. Listen to their ideas and share with them all the animals that stay at Wood Green – everything from cats and dogs to rats, guinea pigs, chinchillas, degus, chickens, ferrets, hamsters, mice, gerbils and rabbits. Explain all of the animals at Wood Green are homeless and are looking for a new owner to look after them. Introduce the session as being all about dogs.

Main section

Explain staying safe around dogs is important for everybody whether we have our own dog at home or not. Introduce a dog safety game – show sentences on the screen and ask your child if the sentence is true (thumbs up), or false (thumbs down).

SLIDE 3. "Dogs like walks" – **true**. A warm-up question to check they are awake!

SLIDE 4. "Dogs like being picked up" – **false**. Explain dogs much prefer having all of their paws on the ground, being picked up can be a little scary for a dog.

SLIDE 5. “Dogs like kisses and cuddles” – **false**. Explain most dogs prefer not to be kissed and have tight cuddles. They’d much rather play with a toy with you, even your own dog. Dogs don’t kiss and cuddle their best doggy friends, they prefer to play with them, so the best way they can be their dog’s best friend is to do this as well.

Playing with your dog

Explain now your child knows dogs don’t like kisses and cuddles and would prefer to play instead, ask how we can get a dog to play with us. Be clear that this would be their own or a friend’s dog – dogs the children see out on a walk that they don’t know would probably prefer just to carry on enjoying their walk and having some lovely sniffs, rather than meet a stranger for some playtime.

Ask your child to act out how they would get a dog to play. If you like, have a go too and ask your child to be a Dog Safety Detective and feedback how safe it looks!

SLIDE 6. Explain Wood Green has a really simple and safe way to play with a dog, named after Woody, the dog shown on the screen. It’s called What Woody Wants. Firstly, Woody wants us to make sure a grown up can watch us play. If they can, we can follow the three Ws of dog safety with Woody:

SLIDE 7. Wait for the dog to come to you
Watch for a
Wag

Explain that letting the dog come to you is brilliant to remember even for your own dog if you have one. And if they wag their tail, just remember to play where a grown up can watch. Some dogs can get a bit excited at playtime – the grown up can ask them to stop and calm down, just the same as a teacher might do if someone got a bit too excited in the playground! If the dog doesn’t come over to you then the dog doesn’t want to play, it might be busy doing something else, and is best left alone.

Ask your child to now act out the three W’s to see if they can remember all three steps, and if you have more than one child ask them to pretend to put on imaginary detective hats and cloaks and feedback their thoughts.

SLIDE 8. Introduce the dog safety animation that will show them What Woody Wants in action as well as times a dog might not want to play. Can your child be a Dog Safety Detective and put on their hat and cloak if they haven’t already, and spot in the animation five times a dog would rather be left alone?

When you have watched it, ask your child to feedback the different times a dog would prefer to be left alone and with each scenario where possible, refer to how they would feel in the same situation as the dog:

1 **Sleeping:** “How would you like to be woken up in the middle of a good sleep?”

2 **Poorly:** “How would you feel if you were poorly and all your friends come over to play?”

3 Tied up: "If you were worried by something and couldn't get away, it might make you feel more worried"

4 Eating: "How would you like it if someone came right up to you while you were eating your favourite chocolate bar?"

5 Hiding: "Dogs like to hide in their safe space until they feel ready to come to us"

SLIDE 9. Show an image from the film of Wiggles the dog growling. Explain this is one way a dog tells us they would like to be left alone. Growls are very clever as they tell us very clearly to go away. Explain that if a dog ever growls at them, to tell a grown up. It's then the grown up's job to work out what made the dog growl to help make sure they don't feel that worried to growl again in the future.

Leave me alone!

Explain that now they know there are times a dog would rather be left alone, what about times when they are outside playing and **they** would like to be left alone? Ask your child to pretend they are playing in the park or in a friend's garden and a bouncy dog comes running over – you or another child could be the bouncy dog. What would your child do? How would they get the dog to leave them alone?

SLIDE 10. Show 'Stand like a statue' with arms folded and give yourself a hug. Explain this is a great way to get a dog giving you unwanted attention to leave you alone. Can they spot the child looking away and ignoring the dog with their eyes? This is a clever way to show a dog you're not interested in them. Ask your child to stand up and show you how to stand like a statue.

Ask your child to then act out what they would do if the dog knocked them to the floor.

SLIDE 11. Show 'Be a tortoise' on the screen and then ask your child to be a tortoise – you can do it too. Explain that by tucking in their head, arms and legs, the dog has nothing to play with so it's a great way to get a dog to leave you alone.

Ending

Quick thumbs-up - do dogs like kisses and cuddles?

Can your child remind you what the three W's stand for when staying safe with Woody?

SLIDE 12. Thank your child for being a dog safety detective and ask them to share everything they have learnt today with their family and friends. If they detect someone not being safe around dogs they can now share their new dog safety knowledge to keep everybody safe and dogs happy.



**WHY NOT HAVE A GO AT OUR
DOG SAFETY CHALLENGE
ACTIVITY SHEET?**



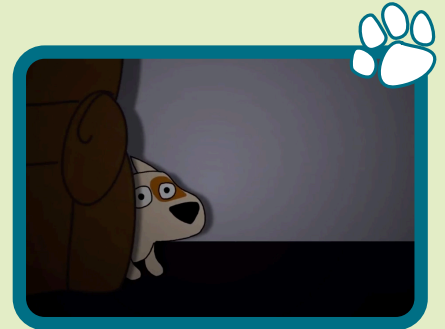
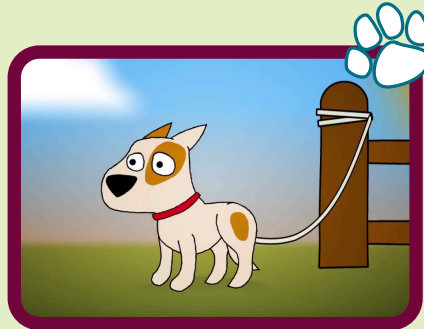
SAFE SPACES

All dogs need safe spaces in their home to eat, sleep, rest and feel comfortable. These spaces also help to keep us safe too.

Can you work out which dogs in the pictures below would like some safe space and want to be left alone?



ACTIVITY SHEET



When a dog is sleeping, it is _____ to leave them to rest.

If a dog is hiding, _____ for them to come to you rather than go up to them.

Dogs which are eating would prefer to be left _____.

_____ and tight cuddles are best for soft toys rather than real dogs!

Can you add the missing words into these sentences about staying safe?

kisses

best

alone

wait

Staying safe around DOGS

What WOODY
WANTS...



To stay safe when playing with a dog, once you've checked with the owner and made sure there's a grown-up who can watch you, you can follow the three W's of dog safety, named after me, Woody!

What do the 3 **W**s stand for when
staying **SAFE** around dogs?

W _____ for the dog to come to you

W _____ for a

W _____

Waiting for the dog come to you is the best thing to do – even for a dog you know well. If they don't come, that means they would rather not play, so leave them to rest.



Activity 3 - Wait for the dog to come to you. Watch for a Wag.



LEAVE ME ALONE – FOR YOU

How to show a dog you want to be left alone

What about if you want to be alone and do not want to play with a dog? If you are playing in the park and a dog tries to join in, **what could you do?**

Stand like a statue!

Stand like a statue and fold your arms. This will show the dog you do not want to play.

Be a tortoise!

If you are on the ground, the best way to show a dog you want them to leave you alone is to **be a tortoise!** Roll up in a ball and tuck your arms and legs in.

Can you **DRAW** someone **standing like a STATUE** and being a **TORTOISE** in the park so a dog will leave them alone?