



A Night Out for Mom & Dad

Is your babysitter watching the kids and your k9 family member?

It is Saturday night and you have planned for a babysitter to entertain and care for your children while you have a date with your spouse. Aaaahhh adult time! Your sitter arrives and greets the kids and your eager dog. As you go over the rules, meal plan and emergency numbers your furry family member follows your every move. He even almost models how to diaper the youngest one. He is excited and not sure what is going on, but he is thrilled to have a new person to pay attention to him. You give hugs, kiss the kids Goodnight and give a pat to your pup as you head out. In your car you mentally go over the details to be sure you told the sitter everything. You drive off confident you have covered it all.

But have you? What about your dog? Do you know how this babysitter feels about dogs? Have you provided an area where the dog can be put so that they can focus full attention on the kids? What about if there is a thunderstorm? How will your dog react and what should the babysitter do?

It is important that parents learn about safe kid & k9 interaction so that they can help plan and prepare anyone who will be responsible for their children while they are away from home. When parents leave the home the dynamics change. This can create confusion for some dogs. Planning ahead sets everyone up for success. I suggest that parents find a quiet and secure spot for their k9 companion while away from home. Provide a stuffed kong or some kind of unique treat for these times. This will allow your babysitter to focus their full attention on the kids. If confining your dog is not an option then I encourage you to educate your babysitter about safe kid & k9 interaction.

Dogs and kids often share a unique bond. This is something to cherish. It is important to remember that they are dogs and perceive things very differently than we do. Learning about canine body language and behavior helps you to ensure a safe and loving bond between your canine and all family members.

For more information please visit www.familypaws.com or email Jen@familypaws.com.

Jennifer Shryock is a canine behavior consultant that specializes in safe Kid & K9 interaction. Jennifer has a duo degree in Special Education/Elem Ed from Kutztown University and is currently enrolled in Cynology College where she will obtain a diploma as a Canine Behavior Theorist.