LESSON: Dog Safety
PROGRAM: Online presentation
AGE GROUP/GRADE LEVEL: K-5th

OBJECTIVE:
To teach students how to properly approach a dog.

PURPOSE:
To teach students precautions to take before approaching a dog they don't know and how to prevent getting bit. Also, to teach students how to protect themselves from stray dogs.

TIME FRAME: 20 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:
- Laptop
- Projector
- Extension cord or power strip
- Stuffed toy dog for practice

OPENING:
Leaders should begin by opening up with a discussion on why it is important to be safe around animals.

PROCEDURE:
- Set up laptop and projector
- Select PowerPoint presentation
- Give a brief description of spcaLA
    - Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Los Angeles protects animals from abuse, harm, and neglect; finds homes for animals; and educates the public. The spcaLA has been around since 1877.
- Begin Presentation

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF SLIDES:
- **Slide 5**- Dogs have a natural instinct to chase. That is why when people run from a dog, the dog will often chase them.
- **Slides 6-9**- Have students practice standing like a tree and laying like a rock.
- **Slide 14**- **Stop and ask the owner.** This is how you will find out if the dog is friendly and if it's OKAY to pet the dog. Say "May I please pet your dog?"

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Always ask first! Remember: the dog may not like kids or the owner may not want you to pet his or her dog for another reason. Perhaps the dog is dirty, needs to see the vet, or needs training. There are many reasons why an owner may not want you to pet their dog, so there is no need to get offended when someone says "no."

- **Slide 15**- **Talk softly**. Let the dog come to you. They will decide if they would like to be pet. Also be sure to have a soft, friendly voice. Some dogs may be a little shy and need some time to adjust to a new person before approaching. If the dog is small, you can bend down and let the dog come to you. Small dogs may be scared if you tower over them. By bending down for smaller dogs, you will help them feel safe. If the dog is tall, it's okay to remain standing. However, if you stand to your side, this will help the dog feel comfortable around you.
- **Slide 16- Offer your hand, let the dog sniff your fist.** Dogs have a wonderful sense of smell, and they greet each other by sniffing. They can learn all kinds of information about you with just one sniff. Allowing them to sniff you is your way of introducing yourself. Make a soft fist so that fingers don't accidentally poke the dog's face and so the dog does not think your fingers are yummy treats.
- **Slide 17**- **Pet the dog gently under the chin or on the chest**. Dogs can get uncomfortable when they are pet on the head. Do not pat the dog on the head; most dogs dislike this. It can also worry a dog if your hand reaches over his/her head because they cannot see where your hand is going. Some dogs have had bad experiences with hands and may be afraid if you pat or pet them on their head. Instead, a nice pet on the chin or chest will allow the dog to really enjoy meeting you. Petting the dog where they can still see your hand makes them feel more comfortable.
- Once completing an explanation of S.T.O.P., have students practice with a stuffed animal dog or a safe and friendly live dog.

CLOSING:

Close the presentation by asking for questions.

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