

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Our mission to help keep people safe continues...

National Dog Bite Prevention Week **May 19th – 25th 2013**

Dog bites are a public health and safety issue of epidemic proportion. That is why we have joined forces with the American Academy of Pediatrics, The United States Postal Service, The American Veterinary Medical Association, The Insurance Information Institute, The American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery, State Farm Insurance and The American Humane Association during National Dog Bite Prevention Week, May 19 – 25th, 2013. Prevent The Bite is part of a coalition of advocates that work together to **raise awareness of dog bite prevention and work to educate the public**. Together we are stronger and better able to make a lasting impact in the reduction of dog bites.

- Dog bites accounted for more than one-third of all homeowners insurance liability claim dollars paid out in 2012, costing nearly \$490 million, according to the Insurance Information Institute (I.I.I.) and State Farm®, the largest writer of homeowners insurance in the United States.
- The United States Postal Service reports that 5,879 postal carriers were bitten or attacked by dogs in 2012. That is an increase of 274 dog bites compared to 2011.

Fiscal Year 2012 U.S. Postal Service Dog Attack City Ranking

Ranking	City, State	Attacks
1	Los Angeles, CA	69
2	San Antonio, TX and Seattle, WA	42
3	Chicago, IL	41

- The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates the U.S. dog population was approximately 70 million at the end of 2011, down from approximately 72 million in 2006, yet the number of dog bite incidents continues to increase.
- As reported by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control CDC, from 2001 – 2011, dog bites were the ninth leading cause of unintentional injury to children ages 5 – 9 (512,638) and the tenth leading cause of injury to children ages 10 – 14 (412,895).
- According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, there were 27,752 reconstructive procedures to repair dog bites in 2012.
- The American Humane Association states that unsupervised newborns are 370 times more likely to be killed by a dog than an adult.
- In 2012, State Farm had 3,670 dog bite claims and paid more than \$108 million as a result of dog bites.

Top States for State Farm Dog Bite Claims in 2012

<u>State</u>	<u>Number of claims</u>	<u>Claims paid (estimated)</u>
California	451	\$17.1 million
Illinois	337	\$9.0 million
Texas	236	\$4.3 million

Keep your family and community safe by following these simple tips:

DO

- teach your children to Wait to make sure the dog looks friendly, Ask the owner's permission to pet the dog, Invoke the dog to sniff you before petting and Touch the dog gently on the back, away from the face and tail
- spay/neuter your dog
- begin socializing your dog at a very young age to make him comfortable around males and females, young and old
- use only positive reinforcement when training or disciplining your dog
- stand like a tree or lie like a rock if approached by a stray dog

DON'T

- allow children to approach a dog unattended
- place an infant next to a dog, even if you are right there
- play teasing games with your dog, like keep-away or tug-of-war
- allow children to hug a dog or put their face near a dog's face
- take anything out of a dog's mouth
- go near a dog that is sleeping, eating or sick

Responsible Dog Ownership Tips:

DO

- train and socialize your dog - It's important for your dog to know basic commands such as "come" and "stay". These commands will keep your dog, and others, safe. It's important for your dog to spend time with people of all ages from the time he is old enough to leave the house.
- make regular visits to the veterinarian for shots and check-ups.
- use positive reinforcement - Never hit or yell at your dog. Praise your dog with affection and/or treats when he does what you asked, even if you had to ask him ten times.

DON'T

- chain your dog or keep him tied up outside - It can make him unhappy, anxious and aggressive, and therefore more likely to bite.
- play aggressive games with your dog, like keep-away and tug-of-war.

Coalition Partners:

Prevent The Bite (PTB), www.preventthebite.org, The Postal Service, www.usps.com, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), www.aap.org; the American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery (ASRM), www.microsurg.org; the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), www.avma.org; the Insurance Information Institute (III), www.iii.org, the American Humane Association, www.americanhumane.org and State Farm Insurance, www.statefarm.com.

A nonprofit organization devoted to keeping children safe from dog bites, Prevent The Bite meets the national standards of education, and makes it possible for anyone to teach children how to avoid being bitten. They have appeared on Oprah, the Today Show and People Magazine. Dog attack victim Kelly Voigt is available for interviews. *Contact: Kathy Voigt, kathy@preventthebite.org, www.preventthebite.org 847-322-4179*

Prevent The Bite P.O. Box 2101, Palatine, IL 60078 www.PreventTheBite.org

*All dog safety information is meant to be regarded as suggestions only.
There is no way to guarantee that these techniques will prevent injury or death.*