

## Dog Bites in Children

The Center for Safe & Healthy Children recommends consultation to social work for all cases of dog bites resulting in injury to children so that safety education can be provided, as well as the completion of any necessary reports.

Minnesota State Statute and City Ordinances include Dangerous Animal Declarations. Domestic animals that have bitten or demonstrated aggression require investigation to determine if the animal is a threat to public safety and should be declared “dangerous” or “potentially dangerous”. Minnesota Statutes 347.50 – 347.56 review the regulations in detail. In general, investigation may result in quarantine, registration of the domestic animal as “dangerous” or “potentially dangerous”, microchip identification, and additional restrictions. These statutes are enforced by animal control or law enforcement authorities (MN Statute 347.565).

What types of reports are needed with dog bites?

1. Animal Control: Contact law enforcement to facilitate a report to animal control in the jurisdiction where the bite occurred.
2. Child Protective Services: Only indicated if there are concerns for neglectful supervision or medical neglect related to the presentation for the dog bite.

NOTE: The HIPAA Privacy Rule does recognize that various agencies and public officials will need protected health information to deal effectively with public health emergencies. “Covered entities may disclose protected health information, without the individual’s authorization, to a public health authority acting as authorized by law in response to...a public health emergency” (see 45 CFR 164.512(b)).

Nancy S. Harper MD FAAP  
Director, Center for Safe & Healthy Children