



## Dogs, Babies, and Expectations – Getting You Ready!

Here are some suggestions to help you prepare your dog for Baby's arrival:

1. Review and firm up your dog's obedience skills.
  - a. Practice giving commands comfortably in any position. Try sitting back on a couch, lying in bed, or sitting on the floor.
  - b. Be consistent with commands.
2. Socialize your dog around children in a positive and controlled environment.
3. Take note of how your dog seeks your attention.
4. Know your dog's sensitivities. Research his breed or mixture of breeds. Observe whether the dog startles with fast motion, noises, or other sudden events.
5. Begin a "baby schedule" that includes:
  - a. Varying feeding times;
  - b. Crating or "dog zone" times;
  - c. Varying exercise routines;
  - d. Ignoring attention seeking behavior.
6. Allow your dog to become familiar with the baby equipment, and instead of simply stopping him from behaving inappropriately, focus on teaching him how you would like him to behave near the baby. Doing this ahead makes a world of difference!
7. Put a teddy bear in the baby's carrier and move through the house and yard with it, including doorways and in and out of the car, to get the feeling of what it will be like to use this equipment around your dog. Practice training your dog while you are using the carrier.
8. Walk your dog with an empty stroller – or put a heavy doll or a bag of flour in it for a more realistic feel – to learn more about the skills your dog needs to learn before a baby occupies the seat.
9. Use a CD of baby noises to introduce the sounds and create a positive experience prior to the baby's arrival. You can purchase dog expert Terry Ryan's baby sounds CDs by visiting <http://www.legacycanine.com>.
10. Put the scent of baby lotion on the baby carrier, car seat, the teddy you carry in the sling, and any other items that your dog will associate with the new baby so he can learn to recognize this new, interesting smell. Bring the same lotion with you to the hospital so that you can put that familiar scent on the baby's clothing.
11. Have Dad bring home a blanket with the baby's scent on it. (Dad will smell like the baby, too.) Let the dog become accustomed to the scent in positive ways.
12. If your dog is due for his yearly check-up and vaccinations, schedule your visit well ahead of time, and be sure to stock up on all necessary medications and supplies.
13. Familiarize your dog with the person that may care for them.
14. Find a good and safe spot for your diaper pail.
15. Attend a Dogs & Storks workshop early in your pregnancy.
16. Recommend Dogs&Storks to your family and friends.
17. Have fun and enjoy your family!