

About The Alaskan Malamute HELP League

We are a Canada-wide registered charity dedicated to working with shelters, rescue groups and the public, to provide: education; information; support of responsible dog ownership and achievement; assistance in placing Alaskan Malamutes at risk, and providing hands-on rescue in Canada wherever possible.



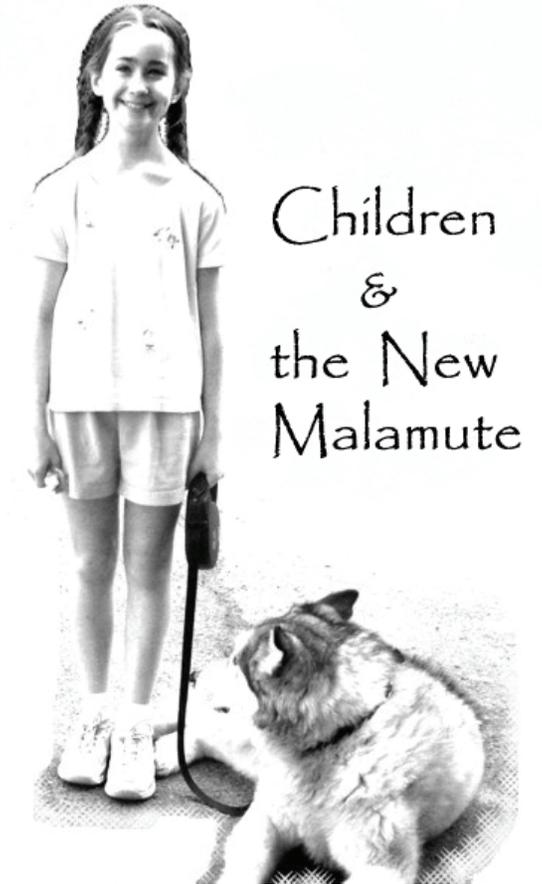
Alaskan Malamute HELP League *Responsible Dog Ownership Series*

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Federal Canadian charitable organization
Number 86712 3895 RR0001.



**Pointers for families with kids who
adopt an Alaskan Malamute**

Pointers

Whether you are planning to adopt a Malamute from rescue, a shelter or a breeder, if you have kids or have kids visit, we hope these pointers will be helpful.:

- No child should ever be left alone with your new Malamute—ever! Malamutes are not baby setters! Select a different breed if you cannot take the time to teach your kids and your new dog how to behave together!
- Never take a “wait & see” approach. Supervision does not mean standing back & watching your child run to hug the new dog, while you hold your breath!
- Create successful outcomes — much like a band leader is in control of every instrument, be in control of kids and your new dog to create brief positive and harmonious introductions and encounters.
- You start and end all encounters, NOT the new dog and NOT a child. Keep sessions very brief, always ending on a positive.
- New dogs need space from exuberant kids — and some Malamutes may not be able to tolerate the loud yells and quick movements of excited children! Many do not like their hair or tails pulled or being grabbed!
- Follow the advice of your AMHL Rescue Coordinator. Follow the advice of your breeder when purchasing a puppy—**Remember:** puppies grow faster than kids!
- Being “a leader” does NOT mean forcing the new dog into a belly up position and bringing a child over for introductions! This is irresponsible as well as dangerous.

Be responsible:

Be present!

Be involved!

Be in control!

Be positive!



Teach & support your child!

Being a responsible Malamute owner does not mean being the loudest, biggest, or the most threatening. Indeed, many Mals have been the victim of outdated and barbaric training advice (e.g., forced “flip & rollovers”) leaving the new dog frightened, confused, and unable to trust or readily bond with those in his or her new home. This is neither leadership nor how to teach kids to behave respectfully towards a Malamute ***that is, or soon will be, 80lbs or more!***

Use common sense in training and in play. With kids, pre-teens or young teens, you cannot responsibly teach your Malamute behaviors you would teach as if you had no kids at all! For example, with young kids in the home it is not appropriate to teach a dog to “paw” for food and attention. How do people teach this behavior? By eventually giving in when a dog “paws” for food or attention — pawing is rewarded so it increases. Similarly, teaching the new dog mouthing & play fighting with your hands is **out** if you have small kids in your home! Sadly, dogs learn these behaviors from us and then we turn around and complain, punish and blame them? **Think about it! Make sense?**

- Teach kids how you feed; by making the Mal Sit and wait for the “OK”.
- Provide the new Mal with a “safe place” where kids are not allowed — it could be a carpet in a corner, open crate (they make nice long end tables!), or behind a baby gate.
- Demonstrate appropriate relationships: Greet kids first when you come home, not the Mal, who must Sit & Wait. Avoid creating competition between kids & the new Mal for affection, food, toys, or greetings.
- Remember: dogs have bad days too!

The reality is that we now live in a culture where dogs are considered family; even the cost of their accessories, food and medical care often exceed our own. We call them “fur-kids” — but we must never forget that dogs are first canines and they come with canine instincts!

“Never be afraid to ask us for Help!”

What Choice Will You Make?

We hope you choose to be a responsible dog owner by training your Malamute and partnering with your kids in mutual respect and compassion for the magnificent Malamute you adopted; by establishing boundaries and rules and by applying those rules consistently; by seeking advice from experienced Malamute owners and expert trainers. The rewards are a loving and well behaved companion who will provide you with many years of loyalty and love in return. Their life is in your hands; please keep it in your heart.