

BE A TREE

Teaching children to “be a tree” is a great safety technique. Encourage the children to stand with their feet planted hip-width apart (for “strong roots”). Tell them to “fold their branches,” by clasping their hands together in front of their bodies. Then they should “watch their roots grow,” by looking at their feet and counting to the highest number they know.

This technique keeps the children’s minds, hands, and eyes busy doing a specific task that requires no decision making, very little movement, and is not subject to interpretation. While the children are occupied with that task, the dog has time to relax and walk away.



Colleen Pelar, CPDT, is the author of *Living with Kids and Dogs . . . Without Losing Your Mind*. For additional information about safe interactions between kids and dogs, please visit www.LIVINGwithKIDSandDOGS.com.