

Runner/Biker/Walker Safety
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The Safe Kids/Safe Dogs Project
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Part of runner/biker safety requires understanding dogs. Dogs are animals. Many will have varying degrees of chase drive triggered by movement. You need to be prepared and alert while out exercising. When I was learning to ride a motorcycle, the instructors taught **S.E.E.**: Scan, Evaluate, and Execute. As you exercise, you must **scan** your environment, **evaluate** potential situations and **execute** an “escape.” A few things you must remember/do for safer outdoor exercising are:

- **Be alert!** You need your vision and hearing clear to help look for possible danger.
- **Any** dog will bite regardless of what the owner says. Many bites occur in play.
- Fast motions can incite a chase. Many dogs seek the exciting.
- Never assume you can outrun or bike a dog. Most dogs will be able to catch you.
- Big dogs bite big, small dogs bite small due to mouth size. **Any bite can infect.**
- Carry a cell phone at all times and know the number for animal control.
- If your community has walking/biking trails, ask some to be designated “No Dogs” and some trails “Bike Free” and dog friendly.
- Respect dog walkers. No matter how well an owner trains a dog and manages a dog, your behavior makes a difference.

If you see a dog that could pose a problem (loose, behind a low fence, behind flags indicating an electric fence, being walked by a child, on an extending lead, etc), stop and think. Avoid risk when you can, do not make yourself a victim.

- If the dog has not seen you, **change** direction and **leave** the area. Why risk the chase if you can avoid that area?
- If the dog looks interested but is not approaching **stop** running, or get off your bike, and **walk**. Cross a street if possible to help limit the “temptation.”
- Keep the dog in your sights but **do not stare him down** or otherwise threaten him.
- If the dog approaches, **freeze**, avert your gaze and look to the ground. Keep the dog in your field of vision but be as low-threat as possible. Try to keep a bag or your bike between the dog and you.
- If the dog attacks, fighting may excite the behaviors. Curl up fetal position with your hands behind your neck and protect your softer areas and face. Call for help: though screaming may escalate the dog, you need help!
- Seek medical attention for even a small bite. You do not know the vaccine history of the dog and infection is always a worry.
- Report any dog attack, this is necessary if there is a break in the skin.