

# EXPECTING A BABY? DOG OWNERS' CHECKLIST

## Time

- Yes / No Do I need to change my dog(s)'s current feeding routine?
  - Yes / No Do I need to change my dog(s)'s current exercise routine?
  - Yes / No Have I organised a check-up at the veterinarian prior to the arrival of the baby?
  - Yes / No Have I organised who is going to look after my dog(s) when I am in hospital?
- \* Council's **Going on Holiday - What to do with your Pet** fact sheet can provide you with ideas of care for your pet in your absence.
- Yes / No Have I organised someone to exercise the dog(s), if I am unable?
  - Yes / No Have I organised someone to help with grooming my dog(s) if I am unable?

## Environment

Set up the nursery as early as possible so your dog(s) get used to it. Identify which areas are going to be pet free zones and get them used to it. How are you going to stop/train your dog(s) from entering these areas?

- Yes / No Is the area where my dog(s) sleep going to change when the baby arrives? If so set this up prior and get them use to it.
- Yes / No Is my dog(s) going to spend more time outside?
- Yes / No Is the property secure from escape?
- Yes / No Do I need to build / purchase a run or enclosure?
- Yes / No Are there outdoor areas I don't want my dog(s) to access?
- Yes / No Are there plants which may be poisonous to dogs?

## Behaviour modification

Do we need to train our dog(s) to:

- Yes / No Understand basic commands such as sit, drop, and stay?
- Yes / No Walk comfortably on a loose lead?
- Yes / No Sit calmly while in a harness in the car?
- Yes / No Walk comfortably on leash to the side and behind the wheels of the pram?

The Dog Owners' Checklist will assist you and your pet in preparation for the new addition to your family.

*My Pet. My Responsibility. My Maranoa.*



### HOW TO CONTACT COUNCIL

If you require any further information about this, please call Council's Community Safety team on 1300 007 662 or visit

[www.mymaranoa.org.au](http://www.mymaranoa.org.au)

# CHILDREN & DOGS

INFORMATION FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS



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## DEVELOPING FRIENDSHIPS

Children turn to pets when they need a friend, confidante or protector. Children often refer to their family pet as their 'best friend'. Pets do not judge children or get angry at them, children often trust them with their secrets and private thoughts.

## HEALTHY LIVING

Pets provide an incentive to participate in walking and exercising which has the added benefit of extra physical activity for the whole family.

## TIME SPENT AS A FAMILY

We often forget that the time we spend together as a family improves our overall wellbeing.

Unfortunately, not all childhood experiences with dogs are positive ones and research clearly shows that children in the 0-4 age bracket are at the greatest risk of hospitalisation due to dog-related injuries.

Parents are the first and most influential educators in their child's life journey. Teaching your child about the joys and responsibilities of pet ownership begins from an early age. Ensuring that the experience is not only a physically and emotionally enriching one, but a safe one as well.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- 🐾 63% of Australian households own a pet
- 🐾 Of these, 40% are dogs

Our four legged friends have long been recognised as 'man's best friend' and valuable members of our own family. Pets are often well established in the family unit before a baby comes along, so it is important to plan in preparation for your family to grow.

Dogs and children can form a wonderful close bond and it is heart-warming to watch them interact. Apart from the obvious companionship and affection, there are many other benefits for children sharing their lives with a pet.

## TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY

Children learn about responsible pet ownership and what it means to keep a dog healthy and safe.

## AIDING CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Developing positive feelings about your pets can aid self-esteem and compassion as well as, facilitating verbal communication.

## TEACHING LIFE LESSONS

The loss of a pet is often the first experience a child has with death and grieving.

