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Children and adults in costumes, toys and gadgets that make ghostly sounds, and a never-ending trail of people ringing the doorbell can be unsettling for your four-legged friends during the Halloween season.

The website Doggone Safe, <http://www.doggonesafe.com>, is a non-profit organization dedicated to dog bite prevention through education and dog bite victim support. Doggone Safe offer the following tips for dog owners as well as for children and their parents.

Dog owners:

- Secure your dog behind a closed door or in a crate in a room away from the front door or from the party if you are hosting at your house.
- Give your pet a Kong or other hollow chew toy stuffed with soft dog treats or give your pet a favorite chew toy.
- Play music or leave a TV or radio playing in the dog's room to help mask the sounds of the activity at the front door.
- Close drapes and blinds so the dog doesn't see people coming and going.
- If you have a dog that barks at the sound of the doorbell, disconnect it or watch for trick-or-treaters so that they do not have to ring or knock.
- Puppies and dogs that like to chase can get overly excited by costumes with dangly bits or streaming material. Supervise very carefully if you have a dog that may try to play with your children's costumes while they are wearing them. Teach children to Be a Tree and stand still if the dog does start nipping at their costume since the more they move, the more excited the dog will get.
- Keep your dogs (and cats) indoors around Halloween time. Pets have been stolen, injured or poisoned as part of Halloween pranks or other rituals.

Kids and Parents:

- Avoid houses if you can hear a dog barking behind the door, you can see a dog behind a screen door or you see a dog tied up in the yard or barking behind a fence.
- Never approach any dog, even if you know him. The dog may not recognize you in your costume.
- If an owner opens the door and there is a dog there, just stay still and wait for the dog owner to put the dog away. You can tell them you do not want

to come near the dog. Do not move toward the person and dog. Wait for them to come to you to give you your candy. Wait for them to close the door before you turn and leave.

- If a dog escapes just stand still and Be a Tree (hands folded in front, watching your feet). He will just sniff you and then move on. Wait for the owner to come and get the dog before you turn away.
- If you meet a loose dog, Be a Tree and wait until the dog goes away.
- It is best to ignore other people's dogs on Halloween if you meet them out walking. The dog may be worried about all the strange creatures that are out and about. Even if you know the dog, the dog may not recognize you in your costume.