

## Babies, kids and dogs



*This is a much more appropriate interaction, with the dog looking comfortable and at ease. Children should be encouraged to stroke dogs in this way.*

*Although this is positive interaction, there is a danger that the dog may mistakenly nip the baby's fingers when trying to get at the food she is holding.*



*Show your child how to hold his hand open and flat to stroke your dog, preventing him from grabbing at his hair.*





*Large dogs can thief food from highchairs, so take care to supervise, or separate them during mealtimes.*

your dog. Hopefully, having completed Exercise 9, your dog should be able to leave food when requested, and gently and politely take appropriate food that is offered to him.

### **FLOOR PLAY**

When you and your children are playing on the floor, try and ensure your dog also receives attention and, where safe to do so, include him in what you are doing. Have him settle

on his bed with a Kong™ in the same area, for example, or provide toys for him to chew, or simply just talk to him during your play so that he feels part of it. Make sure that his physical and mental needs have been met beforehand, though – he has been walked, had a game of ball in the garden, done some training, etc, to reduce the chances of him becoming over-excited whilst your toddler is on the floor.



*Show your dog a treat in your hand, and slowly move your hand to the right or left – whichever is your preference.*

*As he moves his head to follow, keep moving your hand until you have completed a full circle around his head.*

*Your dog should turn and follow as you do this.*

*As he moves his head to follow, reward him with a small treat, then move your hand further round and do the same again. Continue in this way until he completes a full circle (spin).*

*Once he has mastered several full spins with a reward, begin to add in your cue word.*

*Playing tricks provides skills and mental stimulation for both trainer and dog, and, more importantly, establishes bonds.*



to a hand signal than a verbal cue, so use your hand to signal a spin, but not all the way around his head, just in front of him.

- You may find it easier at this stage to show your dog the treat in the hand that you're not using to signal a spin. Then reward him from this hand once he has completed the full circle.

### GIVE A PAW

- Ask your dog to sit, and let him know you have some tasty treats in a closed fist.
- Hold this hand close to one of his paws.
- He is likely to use this paw to touch your hand, as he knows the treat is there, and if he does, give him the treat. If he doesn't do this, try touching his paw with your other hand to see if he will lift it.
- Continue to do this until he raises the same paw reliably. You may need to encourage him to raise his paw higher each time by waiting for a slightly higher paw lift each time until you reward him.

**Note:** If you wish – and are confident he will be happy to do so – you can allow your child to hold out his hand and 'catch' your dog's paw when he lifts it up.

When he is reliably lifting his paw (8/10 times) you can then add in a 'give paw' cue.

### TARGET CONE TOUCH

Target training can be a great trick for any dog (but particularly those who know a few tricks already), and is an excellent way to teach a dog to focus. It can be very useful when a dog's becoming overexcited, or when there's the possibility of a reaction to another dog in the environment. A small cone is ideal but most object you might find in the garden will suffice: a turned over plant pot, for example.

- Get your dog's attention, and place the cone (or other object) close to him. If he investigates this, mark the behaviour by saying 'good boy' as soon as he is close to or touching the object, then reward him with a treat.



*Encourage your dog to come to the target by pointing at it, or showing him a treat in your hand ...*

*... and, as he leans forward to touch the target, praise him and give him the treat.*



## Babies, kids and dogs



*Next, pour water into each ice cub within their tray to surround the treats ...*

*... and pop in the freezer for several hours. A crunchy and novel reward for your dog, especially on a hot day.*

### STUFFING KONGS™

This is an excellent way in which to involve your child, which will help him learn about the importance of stimulation for your dog. Stuff a Kong™ with your chosen ingredients (avoiding anything that is unhealthy or potentially toxic), then either give the Kong™ to your dog straight away to settle with, or freeze it for an extra level of difficulty, or to have available at busy times.

A few recipes for you to try are included at the end of this chapter, or you can simply use your dog's usual food (soaked in a little warm water if it is dry). Or try topping off the Kong™ with a little soft cheese or paté.

*Gather the ingredients together and begin spooning them into the Kong™ ...*

*... filling it right to the top, pressing down as you go.*

*The Kong™ is then ready to give to your dog ... or you could pop it in the freezer for a couple of hours so that the filling will last longer.*

