



THE
NATIONAL HUMANE EDUCATION SOCIETY
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Race for Safe

Goal: Students will understand that some common household items can be harmful to dogs.

Grade Levels: 1st–6th grade

Time: 20 minutes

Audience Size: 10–20 students

Objectives:

1. Students will name at least two common household items that should be kept away from dogs.
2. Students will describe what they should do if they think their dog has ingested something harmful.

Materials (one of each object per group):

- Medium-sized box
- Small pet bed
- Leash
- Dog Brush
- Baby carrot
- Empty box of flea medicine
- Fake grapes
- Onion
- Chocolate bar
- Empty bottle of Motrin or ibuprofen
- Stick of sugar-free gum

Introduction:

All types of pets can get hurt or sick when they swallow something they aren't supposed to. Dogs often do this, so today we're going to play a game to teach us the items in our homes that may be safe for humans, but are dangerous to dogs.

Procedure:

1. Mark a start line. Put the dog beds just behind the start line.
2. Mark a finish line. Put the boxes filled with objects behind the finish line.
3. Divide players into groups of five.
4. Ask each group to line up behind the start line.

5. Instruct players to run to the box directly across from their bed, choose an object from the box, and carry it relay-style back to the dog bed at the start line. If they think the object is good for dogs, ask them to put the object on the dog bed. If the object is harmful to dogs, have them put the object just outside the dog bed.
6. At the end of the race, evaluate where each team put their objects and discuss the safety of each item.
7. The team that finished the relay first is the winner if there were no mistakes. If there was a mistake, see if the 2nd-place runners made any mistakes, and so on.

Summary:

Discuss other common threats that weren't included in the race. Examples might include cooked chicken bones that can splinter and puncture organs, antifreeze, which is a deadly poison, and small toys or objects that can cause a pet to choke.

The best way to keep pets safe is to keep them away from the items that might hurt them. However, we all know accidents happen, so we should also know what to do if we think our pet may have swallowed something harmful.

1. Make sure your veterinarian's and poison control center's phone numbers are posted in your house or programmed into a phone.
2. If you think your pet may have swallowed something harmful, stay calm but tell an adult immediately.
3. Try to determine what the animal swallowed and how much. Look at the clock and remember the time the object was ingested so that you can share this information with the veterinarian.