



BODY LANGUAGE CUES

We want to talk openly and honestly about what some larger well-funded shelters and many rescue orgs won't. If your dog bites - even a misdirected bite, or a snap that happens in response to situations that are so often a result of human failure - your beloved family dog now has ZERO options = euthanized. It is your job to be their advocate from Day 1 and set them up for a lifetime a success.

Dogs who growl are actually trying to avoid using their teeth. This growl is not always a sign of aggression, but most often a last ditch effort to get the human, or the other dog, to stop doing whatever they are doing and move away.

If you hear a growl, there is a good chance you are missing a bunch of other signals prior. Canine body language includes stress signals like an averted gaze, lip licking, tail tucking, a sideways look where you see the white of the eye, yawning, furrowed brow, excessive shedding, and so on. Some of our favorite resources about body language are linked [here](#) and [here](#) (second link is great to share with kiddos too!).

Sometimes these indicators do not all happen at the same time, and sometimes they are subtle. When you see any of the aforementioned, REMOVE THE DOG FROM THE STRESSOR, redirect, take a break, and assess.

DO NOT PUNISH A GROWL - a growl is a warning that your pup is uncomfortable. If a growl is punished, there is a very real possibility they may skip this early warning sign of discomfort and proceed more quickly to snapping in the future. A snap typically precedes a bite.

We work very hard to keep our pups out of the "77" and you should too - this is a must watch for your entire family: [Stop the 77](#)