



Success Stations

A success station is any designated spot where a dog is limited to some degree so that they have no other options but to succeed. This spot must be introduced in a positive manner and used for limited periods of time. This handout covers three types of success stations that new and expectant families may find helpful as management options for family dogs. If these options don't work in your home, there are plenty of other possible choices to create safe and effective management for your family!

Three Types of success stations:

1. Indoor Tethering
2. Crates
3. Gates

Indoor Tethering

Tethering is a great way to include dogs in the daily routines during the initial Homecoming Phase. Many new parents feel more comfortable with their dog in their "success station." Caretakers are able to move around and toss treats while the dog is able to observe the infant without any type of physical barrier. Caretakers can choose how close or far away they get to the dog based on the dog's behavior. This is especially helpful in those first days home when the dog may be most interested in the new arrival. Tethers allow dogs to safely observe without being too close. We encourage families to practice with a tether prior to needing it. This means getting the dog comfortable with the tether prior to baby's arrival if at all possible.

There are times when a tether is *not* recommended based on the dog's comfort level. As well, it is never safe to leave a baby in the room with a dog tethered – we always require awake adult supervision! We emphasize that the use of tethers is **NOT** appropriate once your baby is rolling or moving around in any way, or if there are older mobile children in the house.

Crating

Crates can be wonderful cozy condos for dogs. There are many types of crates, and it can be helpful to find the right one for your dog. Crating is a great option for some dogs, but can be an inappropriate fit for other dogs. We encourage you to consider your dog's emotional state while in the crate. Depending on the location or style of the crate, you may not be able to observe how your dog is handling situations. In some cases, the barrier may make your dog feel more confined or may increase stress, so it is important to either directly observe or videotape your dog in the crate while you interact with your baby or children. If your dog is exhibiting stress, then consider contacting your local Family Paws Parent Educator (<https://www.familypaws.com/member-directory/>) or calling our support line at 877-247-3407.



You may also consider the location of the crate or select a different management choice. Be sure that your children do not have direct access to the crate. Sometimes a second barrier is beneficial to help children respect your dog's space. If possible, it is nice to include dogs in the same room as long as the proximity does not increase stress for your dog. Offer your dog a stuffed Kong or something safe for him to chew on while in the crate. If you notice your dog is not interested in the food or is otherwise uncomfortable, you may need to try a new location with some white noise or soft music, which may help your dog relax. Some dogs also love it when their crate is covered with a blanket or sheet. Again, see what works for your dog. The idea is that this is a positive and comfy place for them to relax while you tend to your children or baby.

Gates

Gates can really come in handy at times to set up a boundary for children and dogs. Please consider the type of gates available before you purchase one. Many dogs can easily push the pedal on some gates or push other gates open with their nose. The plain wood pressure-locked gates are often more stable. Again, be sure to video or observe your dog's response to the activity when they are separated. Do you notice scratching, licking, lots of yawning, etc? When using gates, be sure that little toddlers do not stick fingers through or throw things over at the dog. However, it's great for adults to walk by and toss treats over the gate every now and then.

Success stations work best if rotated. We encourage short periods of time in each type throughout the day. We suggest measuring and setting aside your dog's daily food and then using it throughout the day for reinforcing time spent in these stations (unless medically contraindicated as per your veterinarian).

The more options you have with your dog, the better and easier it will be. It is ideal to introduce any success station gradually and positively long before you need it. As your baby grows, the levels of management will need to be adjusted. Always remember: **babies grow, dogs age...adjust at every stage.**

If the above management options don't work in your home, please do not hesitate to contact us at familypaws.com. We've discovered many creative ways to help families succeed over the years. With proper expectations and management, dogs and kids under the same roof can be a wonderful learning and loving experience.