



THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

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Dear Play at the Park,

Throughout Ontario, a significant number of emergency room visits are precipitated by children being attacked or assaulted by dogs many of which are off-leash.

The Ontario College of Family Physicians supports the following recommendations by the Hospital for Sick Children and the University of Toronto, Department of Paediatrics; namely,

1. The City of Toronto should implement sound, well thought out public policy that would facilitate the cohabitation of people and dogs in Toronto's urban environment.
2. The creation of safe and properly maintained enclosures for dogs in large parks or space where there are limited opportunities for conflict. The Department of Public Health should conduct annual reviews of these enclosures to ensure that they are properly managed.
3. Adequate enforcement mechanisms to ensure that dogs are properly licensed & vaccinated. These mechanisms must also work to reduce, if not eliminate, the chances of dogs running freely Off Leash in playgrounds and parks where children, teens & adults have the right to congregate for recreational purposes free from any potential threat from Off Leash dogs.

We agree that this issue creates many challenges to local politicians as they try to develop sound public policy on this issue. If necessary, we would be prepared to work with the City and our colleagues in pursuit of sound public policy on this issue.

Sincerely,

Jan Kasperski, RN, MHSc, CHE
Chief Executive Officer