

# Best Friends urges people to never chain dogs, always spay/neuter to avoid future tragedies

**A tethered, teased dog recipe for dog bite, Camden child hurt**

*People should welcome their dogs as part of the family*

Kanab, UT (May 1, 2008) Cain the dog was set up for failure. Unneutered, living most of his life on a chain, and teased by neighborhood kids, he ended up biting a child and now his life hangs in the balance.

"The dog was not being protected from awful things that continued to happen," noted Sherry Woodard, Best Friends Animal Society animal behavior and training manager.

Best Friends, one of America's foremost animal welfare organizations, urges all dog guardians to bring their dogs into the home, give them a safe, fenced area with room to run and spend time with them every day. According to the American Veterinary Association and the Center for Disease Control, chaining or tethering a dog can contribute to aggressive behavior. A chained dog is 2.8 times more likely to bite than an unchained dog. An unaltered dog is 2.6 times more likely to bite than a dog that has been spayed or neutered. Most likely to bite are dogs that are male, un-neutered, and chained. About two-thirds of attacks by chained dogs involve children.

"In those situations where people are injured and people die - if you look at all causes - the animal is being an animal, and people who are supposed to be managing behavior are not doing their job," Woodard said. "The overall reasons are human error. Hopefully, the dog can be saved, but if it cannot be saved, at least people have learned a lesson that they failed a life and please don't do it again."

Cain is housed at the Camden, N.J. County Animal Shelter, where he will remain for a 10 day quarantine period. "After that, everything always depends on if the dog is part of a court case and might need to be legally held, and the dog's temperament evaluation," said Adrienne Christatos, president of the shelter's board of directors.

But a neighbor, Emanuel Cruz, said Cain is a dog he could pet and give treats to daily. "I was shocked," said Cruz who pointed out that Cain had never showed signs of aggression prior to this incidence. It's just the way they brought him up, with not much attention and always being outside in the yard. So he tends to bark at everybody who goes by."

The barking would attract the neighborhood children who would antagonize Cain by throwing eggs and trash at him. Cruz said that Cain had broken free of his chain previously; however, this time when the dog got free and a young boy went to retrieve him, the dog jumped up as though trying to play, but then bit the child. Cruz intervened and separated the two, but not before the nine-year old child's condition required hospitalization and more than 100 stitches

Christatos urges people to not stereotype Cain because he is a pit bull. "This is not a pit bull thing," she said. "The biggest problem that we run into is that somebody hears the breed pit bull and all of a sudden, 'oh that's an aggressive dog and that dog is not a safe dog' and that is not the case.

"It's all how a dog is raised. That's the biggest, biggest thing because we have so many of the most loveable friendly pit bulls in the shelter that are as loving as a poodle, but people just don't understand. They're not given a fair chance because of their breed."

An animal lover with two dogs of his own, Cruz said: "It's a really sad thing, I'm happy that the kid is okay and I'm happy that I was there to stop it from becoming a worse situation. I wouldn't want to see something bad happen to Cain over something that could have been avoided."