



Emergency Department and Hospitalizations for Dog Bites Injuries to Children Aged 0-17 Years, 2008 - 2012



Dog bites to children are a largely preventable public health problem. In most cases the dog that bit the child was their own dog or the dog of a neighbor and the bite occurred at someone's home. This indicates that most bites to children are preventable through supervision and education of children and families.

Between 2008-2012, there were 90 hospitalizations and 4,186 emergency department (ED) visits due to dog bites to Miami-Dade County children aged 0-17 years. No deaths occurred from dog bites to this age group during this period.

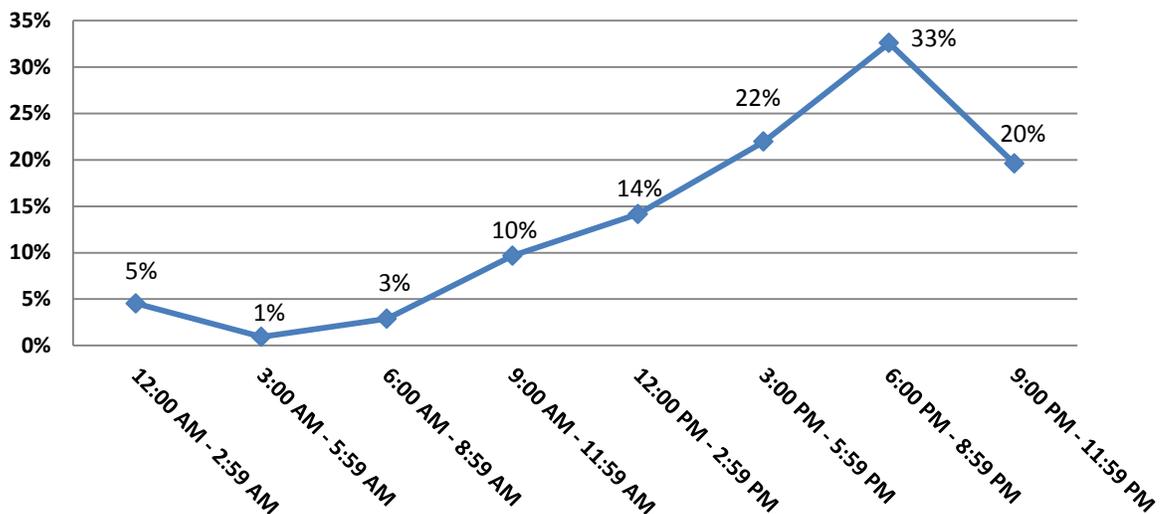
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INJURY FACTS

- The injury rate for dog bite injuries to children has increased 21% between 2008 & 2012.
- Nonfatal dog bites occurred most frequently on the weekend (38% of cases) and during the evening hours of 6pm– 9pm (33% of cases).

**Dog Bite Injury Rates
Hospitalizations and ED Visits
Miami-Dade Residents Aged 0-17 Yrs, 2008-2012**



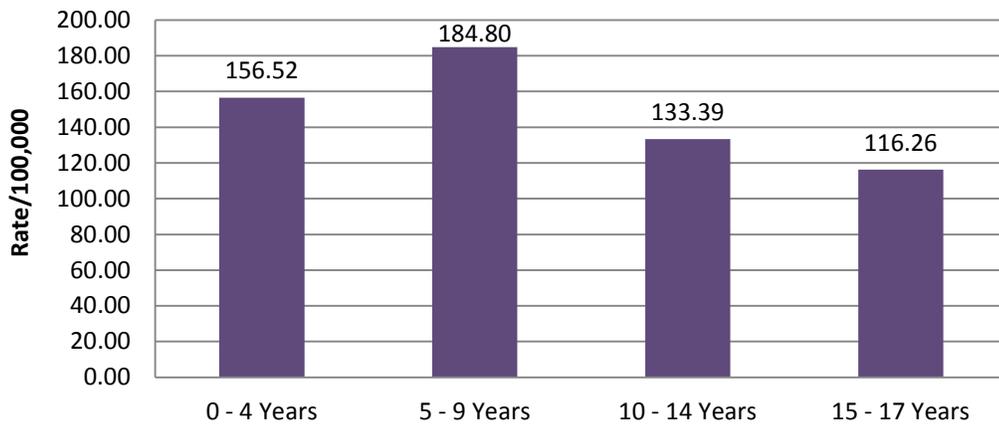
**Hour of Day for Dog Bite Injuries
Hospitalizations and ED Visits
Miami-Dade Residents Aged 0-17 Yrs, 2008 - 2012**



Who is At Risk?

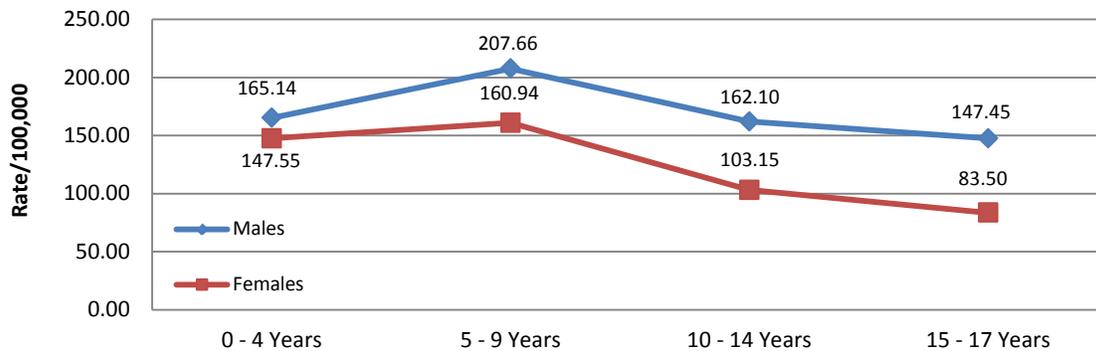
- Nonfatal dog bites occurred most often to children under 10 years of age. Children aged 5 - 9 years had the highest rate of medically-treated dog bite injuries.

**Dog Bite Injury Average Rate by Age Group
Hospitalizations & ED Visits
Miami-Dade Residents Aged 0-17 Yrs
2008-2010**



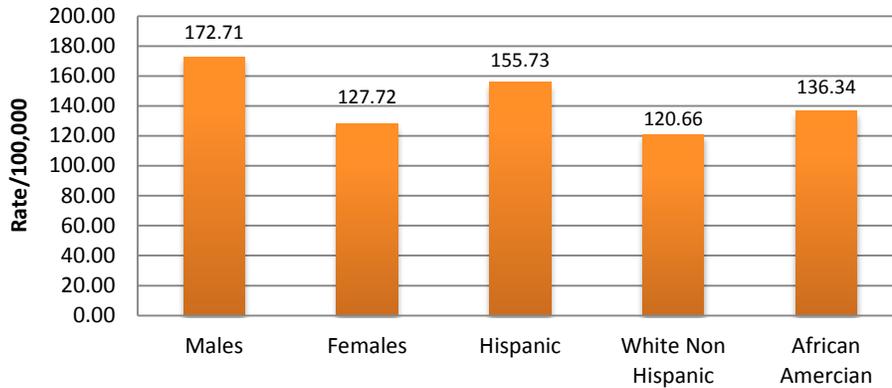
- Male children suffered 59% of nonfatal dog bites and had a dog bite rate 35% higher than female children.
- The difference in dog bite injury rates between males and females increased with age. Males aged 0 – 4 years had a dog bite rate 12% higher than females in the same age group. In contrast, among males aged 15 – 17 years, the dog bite rate was 77% higher than females of the same age.

**Dog Bite Injury Average Rates by Age Group & Gender
Hospitalizations and ED Visits
Miami-Dade Residents Aged 0-17 Yrs, 2008 - 2012**



- Dog bite rates were highest among Hispanic Children. The dog bite rate among Hispanic children was approximately 29% & 14% higher than White Non-Hispanic and African American children, respectively.

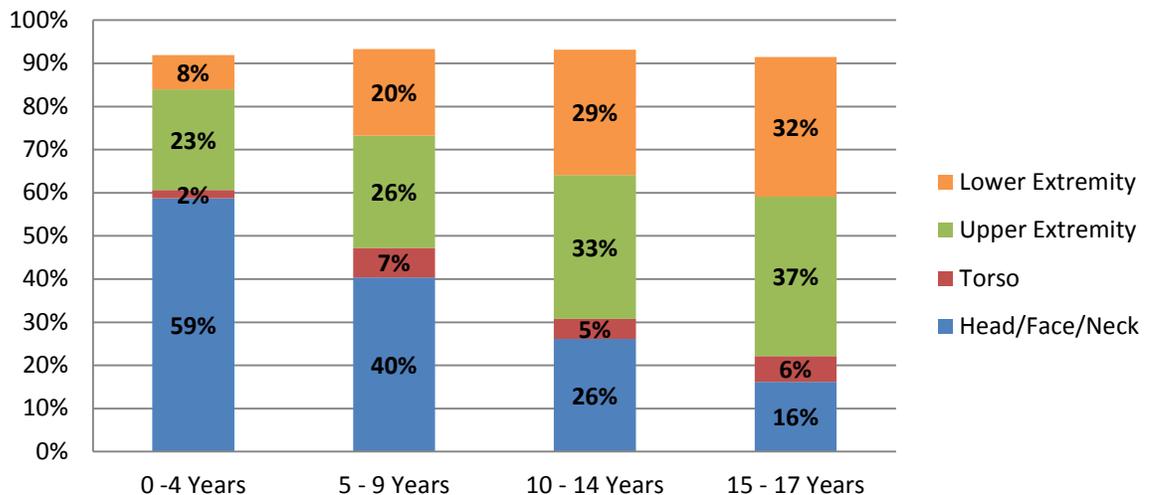
**Dog Bite Injury Average Rates
by Gender, Race and Ethnicity,
Hospitalizations & ED Visits
Miami-Dade Residents Aged 0-17 Yrs, 2008-2012**



Body Region Injured From Dog Bite Injuries

- Nearly two out of every three nonfatal dog bite injuries to children aged 0-4 years were to the child's head, face, or neck.
- As children aged, the percentage of dog bite injuries to the face or head decreased (blue bars) and injuries to the lower extremity increased (orange bars).
- 74% of dog bite injuries were open wounds and another 20% were superficial cuts and contusions.

**Percentage of Nonfatal Dog Bite Injuries
by Primary Body Region Injured & Age Group**



Preventing Dog Bites

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists several ways children can reduce their chances of being bitten by a dog (1).

Teach Children Basic Safety Around Dogs and Review Regularly:

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog. Do not run from a dog and scream.
- Remain motionless (e.g., "be still like a tree") when approached by an unfamiliar dog.
- If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (e.g., "be still like a log").
- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
- Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.
- Immediately report stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior to an adult.
- If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult.

Things to Consider Before You Get a Dog:

- Consult with a professional (e.g., veterinarian) to learn about suitable breeds of dogs for your household.
- Be sensitive to cues that a child is fearful or apprehensive about a dog and, if so, delay acquiring a dog.
- Spend time with a dog before buying or adopting it. Use caution when bringing a dog into the home of an infant or toddler. Never leave infants or young children alone with any dog.
- Spay/neuter virtually all dogs (this frequently reduces aggressive tendencies).
- Do not play aggressive games with your dog (e.g., wrestling).
- Properly socialize and train any dog entering the household. Teach the dog submissive behaviors (e.g., rolling over to expose abdomen and relinquishing food without growling).

(1) Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Injury Center, <http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/dog-bites/>