

**Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority**

A Dog's Day Out - Program Outline

- Topic:** Safety of dogs, park visitors and surrounding wildlife
- Audience:** Dogs Owners
- Theme:** **The responsible behavior of dog owners plays a crucial role in protecting and preserving our local natural areas.**
- Sub themes:**
- 1) Dog waste left on the trail, is not only unsightly, but also extremely dangerous, transmitting disease to wildlife and people.
 - 2) Park visitors are safer when dogs are on leash.
 - 3) The surrounding wildlife is safer when dogs are on leash.
 - 4) Our dogs are safer when they are on leash.
- Goals:**
- 1) Increase awareness of how dangerous leaving dog waste on the trail can be for people and surrounding wildlife.
 - 2) Increase knowledge of why it is safer for everyone when dogs are on leash.
- Objectives:** **(Objectives are measured by a question and answered period)**
- 1) 80% of the audience will be able to give at least two reasons why dog waste should not be left on the trail.
 - 2) 80% of the audience will be able to give at least two reasons why our parks are safer when all dogs are on leash.
- Conclusion:** Today we have discovered how important it is that dog owners act responsibly. Can anyone tell me at least two reasons why dog waste should not be left on the trail? Can anyone tell me at least two reasons why dogs should be on leash? Now you know what to do, and why. Dogs that are leashed and cleaned up after help keep our parks healthy, and safe for everyone to enjoy.
- Total Program Time:** 1.5 hrs. Set-up: - Clean-up: -
- Program Supplies:** Extra Dog Bags, Dog Owners handout, Dog & Coyote Waste Replicas

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Theme	“The responsible behavior of dog owners plays a crucial role in protecting and preserving our local natural areas.”
<p>Guide: Begin your program by introducing yourself, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and the park you are conducting this program at. Announce where the park facilities are located, how long, and how strenuous of a program you will be conducting. Be sure that all dogs are leashed, and that you have extra bags. Allow audience to ask questions before you begin.</p>	<p>Guide: (State Program Theme) <u>“The responsible behavior of dog owners plays a crucial role in protecting and preserving our local natural areas.”</u></p> <p>“I see that everyone here has their dogs on leash, and baggies ready to go. I have extra if anyone needs one. Thank you for acting responsibly, protecting your dog, fellow trail users and the surrounding wildlife. I'd like for our dogs and us to get to know each other. Let's take a few moments to share with the group your name, your dog's name, how old they are, and something special about them.” <i>[Audience Response]</i></p> <p><i>“Acquiring a dog may be the only opportunity a human ever has to choose a relative.” - Mordecai Siegal</i></p> <p>“The Los Angeles Almanac estimates there are over 990,000 households in L.A. County with at least one dog. That's a lot of dogs in Los Angeles who use our trails. As a park user, you have seen dogs in the park—most on leash, but some off. How many of you have seen dog waste left on the trail?” <i>[Audience Response]</i></p> <p>“Today we will share reasons why these are not only park rules, but are ways to help keep our parks safe and clean for everyone to enjoy.”</p> <p>“Let's begin our walk, making sure to allow enough space between us so that we don't feel crowded, and we avoid any leash lock-ups. I ask that everyone stay behind me, and to let me know if anyone leaves the group. Does anyone have any questions before we get started? <i>[Audience Response]</i> Let's go!”</p>

Guide: Chose a location to stop, gather your group and state program sub theme 1.

Tie-in: Sub Theme 1	“Dog waste left on the trail, is not only unsightly, but also extremely dangerous, transmitting disease to wildlife and people.”
<p>Guide: Use the Dog Owners handout to point out two pictures: Bag Dispensers, and the ocean.</p> <p>Supplies: Strategically place the <u>Dog & Coyote Waste Replicas</u> on the trail, or have ready for demonstration.</p> <p>Location: Flexible</p>	<p>“Have you seen it, smelled it, or even stepped in it? Yuck, dog waste left on the trail is not only unsightly, but also extremely dangerous. It contains harmful parasites, bacteria, and odors that wild animal waste does not.”</p> <p>“Can anyone guess why domestic dog waste left on the trail is different then wild animal waste (Scat)?” <i>[Audience Response]</i> Show or</p> <p>“Does anyone here feed his or her dog fresh meat and vegetables? What do we normally feed our dogs?” <i>[Audience Response]</i></p> <p>“Dog food is not considered a fresh diet, it has been processed, containing preservatives and dyes, therefore dog waste is not natural. What do coyotes naturally eat? (Rabbits, rodents, insects and reptiles). Their diet is fresh, therefore, their waste (scat), is natural.”</p> <p>“Taking the short cut of chucking dog waste over the side of the trail, or burying it into the sand to get it out of the way of other people, doesn't prevent it from harming plants, animals, and people in the long run.”</p> <p>Guide: Use the Dog Owners handout to point out that we have dog bag dispensers located throughout our parks.</p>

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	<p><u>Here are some good reasons to pick up your dogs waste.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parvovirus affects other canines in the wild, and was the source for wolf pup mortality in Glacier National Park in the early 1990's. • Children or a person with a weakened immune system can get toxicaris, a disease caused by the eggs of round worms, which can lead to permanent blindness. • Parasites such as ticks, keds, tapeworms, and fleas are common problems in dogs that can be passed to other wildlife. • Dog waste left on the trail adds significant amounts of nitrogen to the soil, encouraging the growth of non-native plants. <p>Guide: Lead group to another stopping location, allow for a water break</p> <p>“Along with dog food, what else do we provide for our dogs? Fresh water! Do we need fresh water to live? All living organisms depend on healthy waterways to survive.”</p> <p>“If owners do not clean up after their dog, it gets washed down our storm drains, rivers, lakes, streams, and into our beaches and ocean?”</p> <p>Guide: Show picture of the ocean.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nutrients in dog waste can contribute to toxic algae blooms in our waterways, which affect water quality and health of marine organisms that contribute to the health of our waterways. Children play in the swash zone where fecal contamination is greatest.”
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Guide: Chose a location to stop, gather your group and state program sub theme 2.

Tie-in: Sub Theme 2	“Park visitors are safer when dogs are on leash.”
<p>Location: <i>Flexible</i></p>	<p>“By a show of hands or paws, how many of you like to play fetch? What other games do you and your dog like to play? Can these games be played while your dogs are on leash?” <i>[Audience Response]</i></p> <p>“How many of you have a yard or areas where your dog can run free, exploring endless sights and smells?” <i>[Audience Response]</i> “Many people, especially who live in Los Angeles, have limited opportunities to hang up the leash and let their dogs run free. Hiking on wilderness trails is rewarding for both our dogs and us, we can even see a blissful grin on their face. Leaving the leash at home, in the car, or even in-hand, can be tempting, however, there are some real safety reasons why all dogs should be on leash.”</p> <p>“Has anyone here ever been approached by a dog off leash? What was your first response?” <i>[Audience Response]</i></p> <p>“The quality of experience for many visitors will decrease, if a dog is off leash and running at, getting in close quarters with, or jumping on a visitor who is afraid of, or does not appreciate that kind of behavior from dogs. Dog attacks on people happen. Dogs fights happen.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The CDC estimates that nearly 2% of the U.S. population is bitten by a dog each year. That is more than 4.7 million people per year, most of whom are children. Everyone is safer when dogs are on leash.”

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Guide: Chose a location to stop, gather your group and state program sub theme 3.

Tie-in: Sub Theme 3	The surrounding wildlife is safer when dogs are on leash.
<p>Guide: Use the Dog Owners handout to point out three pictures: Squirrel, Rattlesnake and Poison Oak</p> <p>Location: Flexible</p>	<p>“Dogs occasionally kill or injure wildlife.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Even when dogs are unsuccessful in catching the object of their chase, the potential prey has had to expend significant energy in order to save their life. Expenditure of energy may push them over the edge to malnutrition and allow other predators to kill them. Pregnant wildlife and newborn animals do not have the reserves to repeatedly expend in avoiding dogs. Dogs can dig up nesting grounds or burrowing sites of sensitive wildlife habitat.” <p>“Plants also fall victim to trampling and digging by unleashed dogs.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “How many of your dogs know what poison oak looks like? They don’t, do you?” (Guide: Show picture) “Poison oak has leaves that grow in bunches of three. It can grow thick like a shrub, or singly along the ground. It’s commonly found in shady areas along the trails. Dogs often brush up against it, or even run through it, causing the toxic oils to get on their fur. This oil can easily be transferred from their fur to your skin, producing an irritating skin rash. Stay safe by keeping your dog on the trail, and leashed at all times. Leaves of Three, Let them Be!” <p>Guide: Lead group to another stopping location.</p>

Guide: Chose a location to stop, gather your group and state program sub theme 4.

Tie-in: Sub Theme 4	“Our dogs are safer when they are on leash.”
<p>Guide: Use the Dog Owners handout to point out three pictures: Squirrel, Rattlesnake and Poison Oak</p> <p>Location: Flexible</p>	<p>“No one wants to think about, or even hear about dog fatalities that can happen on the trail. Can anyone think of a potential danger for your dog on the trail? Even whesdxxn dogs are well behaved and stay close to their owners, other animals can feel threateded and strike.”</p> <p>“Rattlesnakes and other wild animals have been known to strike or bite dogs when they feel threatened.” (Guide: Show picture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Rattlesnake venom is extremely potent. One bite can kill your dog due to their small size. If bitten, immediately take your dog to the nearest animal hospital. Keep your dog alive and on leash!” <p>Guide: Lead group to another stopping location.</p>

Guide: Chose a location to stop, gather your group and restate program theme.

Tie-in: Theme & Conclusion	The responsible behavior of dog owners plays a crucial role in protecting and preserving our local natural areas.
<p>Method to measure: Question & Answer</p> <p>Location: Final Stop Flexible</p>	<p>“Today we have discovered how important it is that dog owners act responsibly. Can anyone tell me at least two reasons why our parks are safer when all dogs are on leash?”</p> <p>Can anyone tell me at least two reasons why dog waste should not be left on the trail? Can anyone tell me at least two reasons why our parks are safer when all dogs are on leash?</p> <p>Now you know what to do, and why. Dogs that are leashed and cleaned up after help keep our parks healthy, and safe for everyone to enjoy.”</p>