

Dog Bite Injuries to Children in Maine

What parents should do after a child is hurt by a dog

When a dog bites a child, the emergency does not end after medical care. Parents are left dealing with long-term health concerns, emotional trauma, and financial questions that deserve real answers.

Under Maine law, dog owners are strictly liable for injuries their pets cause. But securing compensation is not automatic. It takes prompt reporting, clear documentation, and strong legal strategy. Families who wait or rely on verbal promises from a dog owner often face challenges later.

A [Maine dog bite injury lawyer](#) can help families take the right steps early on. From preserving evidence to dealing with insurance, legal support gives families the clarity and structure they need to protect their child's future and hold the right party accountable.

Common injuries children suffer from dog bites in Maine

When a dog bites a child, the injuries are often more serious than those sustained by adults. That's not just because children are smaller or more vulnerable. It's because the nature of the injuries often involves delicate, fast-growing tissue, visible areas like the face and hands, and a much longer window for complications or emotional trauma to unfold.

Certain injuries are seen more frequently in child victims. Understanding what these injuries are can help parents recognize the seriousness of a bite and take the right steps for long-term protection and legal recovery. Common dog bite injuries in children include:

- **Facial lacerations and puncture wounds:** The most common site of injury in children is the face, especially the lips, cheeks, nose, and around the eyes. These areas may require reconstructive or plastic surgery.
- **Infections and cellulitis:** Even minor bites can become infected, particularly when bacteria from the dog's mouth enters the wound. Children are more prone to rapid spread of infection.
- **Nerve damage and loss of function:** Deep bites may sever nerves or tendons, leading to long-term impairment in facial movement, hand function, or limb use.
- **Scarring and disfigurement:** Visible scars can grow and stretch as a child ages, often requiring additional treatment over time and leading to psychological impact.
- **Fractures or crushed bones:** Strong jaws can break small bones, particularly in the hands, arms, or facial structure, depending on the size of the dog and force of the bite.

- **Post-traumatic stress and emotional trauma:** Children often develop intense fear, nightmares, and anxiety after a dog attack, sometimes needing therapy or support services.

Even when the wound seems small, internal damage or long-term implications may exist. It's important for parents to seek follow-up care and consult a child dog bite lawyer who understands how these injuries can affect both short-term recovery and future quality of life.

What happens when a dog bites a child in Maine

When a dog bites a child in Maine, the law provides a clear framework for determining responsibility. Maine is considered a "strict liability" state when it comes to dog bites, which means that the owner may be held legally responsible even if the dog had never shown signs of aggression before. This is especially important in cases involving children, who are often more vulnerable and less likely to be viewed as having provoked the dog.

However, strict liability is not the same as automatic compensation. Parents must still present evidence that the bite occurred, that the injuries are real, and that the child had a legal right to be where they were when the bite happened. This can become more complicated if the attack occurred in a shared space, rental property, or a family friend's home.

To understand how Maine law may apply to a child dog bite case, it helps to review the specific legal standards involved:

- **Strict liability for dog bites:** Maine holds dog owners responsible for injuries their dogs cause, regardless of the animal's history of aggression.
- **Lawful presence matters:** The child must have been lawfully on the property where the bite occurred, whether public or private.
- **Provocation defense:** Dog owners may try to argue that the child provoked the dog, which could limit or defeat a claim.
- **Additional negligence claims:** In some cases, parents can pursue claims for negligent supervision or failure to control the dog, especially when the dog was loose or left unattended.
- **Time limits apply:** Maine has a six-year statute of limitations for injury claims (though that may be paused in cases involving minors), but prompt legal action is still recommended – especially when evidence needs to be preserved.

These laws offer important protections for child victims, but the process of proving fault and recovering compensation can still be challenging. A lawyer familiar with Maine's dog bite laws can help families take the right steps and avoid missteps that could reduce their child's recovery.

Medical care and early documentation matter more than parents realize

Medical treatment is always the first priority after a dog bite. Even shallow wounds can lead to infection, scarring, or deeper tissue damage. Pediatric care creates records that later become the foundation of any injury claim.

Beyond treatment, documentation should begin immediately. Photos of the wound, medical instructions, and follow up visits all help establish the seriousness of the injury. Emotional symptoms such as fear, sleep disruption, or anxiety should also be noted and discussed with a provider.

Parents often underestimate how quickly evidence fades. Early documentation protects the child's future options and reduces the ability of insurers to downplay the injury later.

Reporting the dog bite creates legal protection

Reporting a dog bite is important, even if it feels uncomfortable. Local animal control or police departments create official records that verify what happened, where it happened, and which dog was involved.

Reports also serve a public safety purpose. If the dog has bitten before or violated leash rules, that history can strengthen a legal claim. Reporting may also trigger rabies verification and protective measures for other children.

When families choose not to report, insurers often argue that the incident was minor or never happened. Creating a formal record removes that argument and supports accountability. If reporting feels unclear or difficult, legal guidance can help ensure it is handled correctly.

What parents should preserve after a dog bite incident

Once the immediate crisis has passed, preserving evidence becomes critical. These details often determine whether compensation is possible months or years later. Parents should think of this stage as protecting their child's future rather than preparing for a lawsuit. Important items to preserve include:

- **Medical records and bills:** Include ER notes, follow-ups, prescriptions, and treatment recommendations.
- **Photographs of injuries over time:** Take clear photos at different healing stages to show the full scope of physical damage.
- **Clothing worn during the attack:** Save torn or bloodied clothes, which may be used as physical evidence.
- **Witness names and contact information:** Anyone who saw the incident can help confirm what happened.

- **Animal control or police reports:** These reports establish an official record and help show the dog was reported properly.
- **Messages or statements from the dog owner:** Save texts, emails, or written apologies that could imply fault or acknowledgment.

A child dog bite lawyer can later use this information to build a strong case and relieve families from managing it alone.

How insurance companies handle child dog bite claims

Most dog bite claims are handled through homeowners or renters insurance. While these policies exist to cover injuries, insurers often act defensively when children are involved.

Common tactics include minimizing the injury, suggesting the child caused the incident, or offering quick settlements before long term effects are known. These strategies are designed to reduce payouts, not to support recovery.

When a child dog bite lawyer becomes involved, the tone often changes. Insurers know that future medical needs, scarring, and emotional trauma must be considered. Legal representation shifts the balance and protects families from being pressured into unfair outcomes.

Compensation is about protection, not blame

In Maine, compensation after a dog bite serves a practical purpose: to cover the costs a family faces when a child is injured. These are not small expenses. Depending on the severity of the bite, recovery may involve surgery, therapy, and long-term emotional care. The goal of a claim is not to punish the dog owner, it is to make sure the child's future is supported. Eligible damages in a Maine dog bite claim may include:

- **Medical expenses:** Emergency care, hospitalization, surgery, medication, follow-up visits, and any future procedures – especially for facial injuries or infections.
- **Psychological treatment:** Counseling or therapy for trauma, anxiety, or PTSD related to the incident.
- **Pain and suffering:** Compensation for the child's physical pain, fear, emotional distress, and long-term effects on confidence or social interaction.
- **Disfigurement and scarring:** When a dog bite causes visible or permanent damage, especially to the face, this significantly increases claim value.
- **Future care and developmental impact:** Children may require corrective procedures, orthodontics, or mental health support as they grow. A good claim accounts for these future costs now.

Each case is different, and not all damages are immediately obvious. A skilled child dog bite lawyer can help families calculate what full compensation looks like and push back against low settlement offers that overlook future needs. The right legal strategy protects the child's recovery, not just medically, but financially and emotionally.

Why Romanow Law Group is the right law firm for your family

When a child is bitten by a dog, the legal process can feel overwhelming. The injuries are serious, the emotional trauma is real, and the stakes are high. You need someone who understands how Maine law works and who can make the system work for your child.

[Romanow Law Group](#) offers free consultations and charges no legal fees unless they win. Our team builds strong, evidence-backed claims that account for medical costs, future care, emotional harm, and long-term recovery. We do not back down when insurance companies try to minimize a child's suffering.

You have one chance to get this right. Talk to Romanow Law Group about what happened and find out how we can help you move forward. [Contact us](#) for a free consultation today.