



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Be BiteSmart<sup>SM</sup> Initiative Accepted into Thomson Reuters Foundation TrustLaw Global Network**

SALISBURY, Connecticut — March 25, 2026 —

The Be BiteSmart<sup>SM</sup> (BBS) Initiative, a global child-safety education program of the Center for Canine Behavior Studies, has been accepted into TrustLaw, the world's largest pro bono legal network operated by the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

TrustLaw connects NGOs and social enterprises with leading law firms and corporate legal teams that provide pro bono legal assistance to help civil society organisations and social enterprises achieve their missions. Through this global network of more than 120,000 lawyers in 190 countries, Be BiteSmart will receive legal support as it expands its U.S. child-safety education programs internationally.

Be BiteSmart is developing age-appropriate educational media that teaches children how to safely interact with dogs, helping reduce the risk of pediatric dog bite injuries. These resources—including animated videos and digital learning tools—are designed for free global distribution, initially in English and Spanish, with additional languages planned.

Dog bites remain one of the most common preventable injuries affecting children worldwide. In many regions they also carry a far more serious risk.

According to the World Health Organization, rabies causes approximately 59,000 deaths globally each year, nearly 40 percent of them children, most following dog bites. A significant share of these deaths occur in Asia and Africa, particularly in India, where children often live in close proximity to both family dogs and community or street dogs. In these regions, a bite from an infected dog can be fatal.

Public-health experts widely recognize that education is one of the most effective tools for preventing dog bites, especially among children who may not yet understand canine behavior.

In many parts of the world, children grow up around both family dogs and community or street dogs. Teaching children simple safety behaviors—such as recognizing warning signals, not disturbing dogs while eating or sleeping, and knowing when to walk away—can significantly reduce the situations that lead to bites.

“Children are not born understanding how dogs communicate,” said Dr. Nicholas H. Dodman, veterinary behaviorist and co-founder of the Center for Canine Behavior Studies. “Many bites occur because children unknowingly approach dogs in ways that frighten or threaten them. Teaching children when to give a dog space is one of the most important steps we can take to prevent these injuries.”

The Be BiteSmart initiative uses animated storytelling and child-friendly educational media to deliver simple, memorable safety lessons that help children understand how to safely interact with dogs.

Educational resources are designed for free global distribution through schools, public health agencies, governments, pediatric healthcare systems, and child-injury prevention organizations, helping ensure that practical safety education reaches children wherever dogs and people live together.

“Dog bite injuries to children are largely preventable,” said Chris Janelli, co-founder and Chairman of the Center for Canine Behavior Studies. “Our goal is to provide simple safety education that can be shared freely around the world through educators, healthcare professionals, and public-health programs.”

The Thomson Reuters Foundation is headquartered in London with regional hubs in New York, Nairobi, Manila and Buenos Aires. Through free legal assistance, data platforms, media development and events, the Foundation's professional services empower key actors to build free, fair and informed societies.

### **About Be BiteSmart**

Be BiteSmart is a global educational initiative of the Center for Canine Behavior Studies dedicated to reducing pediatric dog bite injuries through age-appropriate safety education for children, parents, caregivers, and educators.

Its animated “Paws to Prevent” educational series teaches simple behaviors that help children understand dogs and avoid situations that can lead to bites.

Educational materials are designed for free global distribution through schools, healthcare systems, public-health agencies, and child-safety organizations.

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### **Sources**

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Be BiteSmart<sup>SM</sup> is a service mark of the Center for Canine Behavior Studies, Inc.