



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Dog Bite Prevention Week Kick-Off Event
Main Chicago Post Office (Outside 2nd Floor Postal Store)
433 W. Harrison St, Chicago, IL 60699 at the corner of Harrison and Canal
Thursday, May 13th, 2010
10:00 AM

National Dog Bite Prevention Week kicks off in Chicago, at the Main Post Office, 433 W. Harrison St, at the corner of Harrison and Canal, Thursday, May 13th, 2010 at 10:00 AM (free parking under the building). The not for profit organization Prevent The Bite sponsors National Dog Bite Prevention Week, May 16th – 22nd, 2010, along with the American Academy of Pediatrics, U.S. Postal Service, American Veterinary Medical Association, American Society of Plastic Surgeons, American Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery and the American Society of Maxillofacial Surgeons. Representatives from each will be speaking about the epidemic of dog bites in America and will be available for interviews. Children and mail carriers who have been victims of dog bites will share their stories, and demonstrations will be given with a dog about how to be safe around dogs.

In 1999, Kelly Voigt, then seven, was seriously injured when a neighbor's dog attacked her. She received approximately 100 stitches in her face and throat and later required treatment for post traumatic stress disorder and depression. Kelly's recovery came with a determination to help keep other children safe from dog bites. With the help of a school psychologist and animal assisted therapist, Kelly started Prevent The Bite in

order to help her recover from trauma, regain her love of dogs and keep other children safe from dog bites. She started giving dog bite prevention presentations in her school one year after her attack. Within a few years, Kelly's program became so wide spread that the nonprofit organization Prevent The Bite was formed.

To this day, Kelly continues to provide children with the educational information necessary to be safe from dog bites through presentations, a lesson plan, an educational packet and more. "Sometimes something bad has to happen in order for something good to happen," said Kelly. "I'm grateful that I have had the chance to help so many children be safe. I used to think that if I could help keep one kid safe it would be enough, but not anymore. All children need this information." Prevent The Bite information has been shared with all 37,000 Post Offices in the U.S. every year since 2004, and has been sent to all 60,000 members of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Tragically, what happened to Kelly is not uncommon:

- ✓ Nearly five million people are bitten every year in the United States, or 12,877 every day.
- ✓ Most dog bite victims are children, and most of their bites are in the face, head and neck.
- ✓ Every year there are more emergency room visits from dog bites than from skateboard, inline skate, baby walker, all-terrain vehicle and horseback riding accidents *combined*.
- ✓ Children are 900 times more likely to be bitten by a dog than a mail carrier.
- ✓ Approximately 800,000 dog bites require medical attention every year in the U.S.

Prevent The Bite has been seen on Oprah, the Today Show, in People Magazine and more. Prevent The Bite's mission is to prevent dog bites to children through education. For more information, visit: www.preventthebite.org.

Prevent The Bite

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