

Children And Birds – Do They Mix?

Keep safety in mind when allowing a child and a bird to interact.

By Chris Davis

Many people have asked if birds and children can live in the same environment. They generally can when the safety of both the child and the bird are addressed. If the child is unruly or aggressive or may injure the bird, I recommend not keeping a bird. If the child is simply too young to understand rules, that type of situation can be dealt with on a temporary basis.

Courtesy Beatrice Lemos, California

The age and behavior of a child should be considered before bringing home a bird.

Will accommodating a bird and a small child be a lot of extra work? A bit more but well worth it in the long run. In a home with toddlers, a couple of quick solutions include placing a baby corral around the bird's cage or housing the bird in a home office or an adult's bedroom. If you choose the second option, you can place another cage where the family spends most of its together time. Place the bird in that cage whenever the family is together, and an adult can supervise the situation. Hanging perches are also good in more populated areas of the home. These are usually inaccessible to the child.

Generally, these steps need to be in place for a year or two, provided that the child learns to behave appropriately around the bird. Once the child understands bird "rules," the feathered family member can be brought into the busier area of the house on an increasing basis until he is there full time.

Birds and children are with us for life, and many people are under the mistaken assumption that they need to get rid of a bird because they are having a child. A little foresight and a couple of temporary measures can ensure that your avian friend will be with you long after your human child has flown the coop.

How did you handle the child-bird situation in your home? I would love to hear from you.