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The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Member, U.S. House of Representatives  
20 South Main Street, Suite 10  
Janesville, WI 53545

July 24, 2014

**“If the existing system fails to track critical data then fix the system so that it does.”** *–DogsBite.org*

*CDC Director, Dr. Thomas Frieden, once said: “We live and die in public health based on how good our data is,” a statement echoed and embraced by all public health officials. Thus, it is unknown why the CDC fails to collect a richer data set for children and adults disfigured, maimed and killed by dogs. Why also is the CDC making it “so difficult” to collect this critical data?*

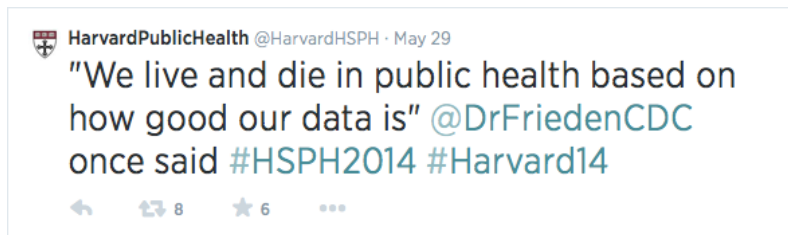
**In February 2014**, Jeff Borchardt, the founder of *Daxton's Friends for Canine Education and Awareness*, submitted a heartfelt letter to his representative, Congressman Paul Ryan. Mr. Borchardt's 14-month old son was brutally attacked and killed by his babysitter's two pit bulls on March 6, 2013 in a prolonged, horrific attack. Included in his submission to his congressman was a lengthy document by DogsBite.org, a 501(c)(3) national dog bite victims' organization, that outlined a number of remedies the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) could provide to reduce the hurdles faced by victims' advocacy groups, municipalities and law enforcement agencies seeking to prevent grievous and fatal injuries consistently inflicted by a handful of well-documented dangerous dog breeds.

The primary remedy asks the CDC to resume the tracking of human dog bite fatalities—without interference by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)—in the same “spirit” as it tracks human rabies fatalities. The last year the CDC collected and examined a rich data set about these incidents, including circumstances, breed of dog and more, is 1998. Despite Congressman Ryan's request that the CDC give “full and fair consideration” to our request that they resume efforts in collecting and quantifying this data, the CDC ignored it. The response letter from Director Frieden states, “Unfortunately, specific dog breeds cannot be identified in this system.” Yet, dog breeds can be identified, many appellate court rulings agree.

Our solution to the CDC's artificial response is simple: "If the existing system fails to track critical data then fix the system so that it does." Young children all over the country are suffering life-altering injuries by a group of well-recognized dangerous dog breeds every single day. By pit bull-type dogs alone, these "worst case scenario" mauling and maiming injuries have flown off the charts since 2007.

The CDC is fully aware that they are not providing sufficient information to the American public about this critical issue, and the CDC, whose mission is to protect America from health, safety and security threats, is turning a blind eye to a known danger that victimizes children the most. The CDC is also fully aware that their recommendation and reliance upon the AVMA about this issue—a private professional association, whose "research" and "positioning" is biased toward *animal* welfare—is counterproductive to the CDC's mission of saving human lives.

*Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) on May 29, 2014.  
Director Frieden was the HSPH Centennial Commencement Speaker.*



#### **Related source documents:**

Congressman's Inquiry Letter to the CDC (March 13, 2014)  
<http://www.daxtonsfriends.com/wp-content/uploads/congressman-inquiry-letter-03-13-2014.pdf>

Jeff Borchardt's Enclosed Letter to His Congressman  
<http://www.daxtonsfriends.com/wp-content/uploads/jeff-borchardt-letter-02-04-2014.pdf>

DogsBite.org's Enclosed Remedy Document and Attachments  
<http://www.dogsbite.org/pdf/dogsbiteorg-cdc-remedies-dog-maulings-and-fatalities.pdf>

CDC Director, Dr. Thomas Frieden's Response (April 28, 2014)  
<http://www.daxtonsfriends.com/wp-content/uploads/cdc-director-response-04-28-2014.pdf>



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# Opinion: There is no need for pit bulls

By Dr. David A. Billmire 5:36 p.m. EDT June 29, 2014



(Photo: Provided)

*Dr. Billmire is professor and director of the Division of Craniofacial and Pediatric Plastic Surgery at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.*

As one who, for the last 30 years, has been on the receiving end of the dog-bite injuries that pass through the Children's Hospital Emergency Room, as well as on the staff at the Shriners Hospitals for Children where we see the late effects of these injuries from across the nation, I can categorically tell you that the problems associated with dog bites are indeed breed-specific.

When I started my career, the most common dog-bite injuries were from German shepherds and occasionally retrievers. These injuries were almost always provoked, such as food-related or stepping on the dog, and in almost every instance, the dog reacted with a single snap and release – essentially a warning shot. There were no pack attacks.

Starting about 25 years ago, my colleagues and I started to see disturbingly different types of injuries. Instead of a warning bite, we saw wounds where the flesh was torn from the victim. There were multiple bite wounds covering many different anatomical sites. The attacks were generally unprovoked, persistent and often involved more than one dog. In every instance the dog involved was a pit bull or a pit bull mix.

Now, I am a dog lover and virtually every one of my family members has a dog. But it is a fact that different dogs have always been bred for specific qualities. My sheltie herded, my daughter's setter flushes birds and my pug sits on my lap – this is what they are bred for. Pit bulls were bred to fight and kill and, unfortunately, many current breeders favor these aggressive traits. There is no need for any dog with the characteristics.



**Many pit bulls and their owners took part in the "Responsible Pit Bull Dog Ownership Walk," hosted by Cincinnati Pit Crew at Washington Park this month.**

(Photo: The Enquirer/Liz Dufour)

I recently gave a talk summarizing my 30 years of practice in pediatric plastic and reconstructive surgery, and one segment was titled "Why I Hate Pit Bulls." I watched a child bleed to death one night in our operating room because a pit bull had torn his throat out. I have had to rebuild the skull of a child who had his ears and entire scalp torn off. I am currently reconstructing the face of a child, half of whose face has been torn off down to the bone. I have had to rebuild noses, lips, eyelids, jaws and cheeks of numerous children. On older children, I have had to reconstruct legs and hands. The unfortunate young victim whose recent attack has initiated this discussion will bear the scars of this attack for the rest of her life.

Based on my extensive experience, I believe that the risk posed by pit bulls is equivalent to placing a loaded gun with the safety off on the coffee table. In my opinion, these dogs should be banned. I know this is an unpopular stand in some circles, but how many mauled children do we have to see before we realize the folly of allowing these dogs to exist?

The arguments made by advocates of these dogs are the same arguments made by people who feel that assault weapons are an essential part of daily living. There are plenty of breeds available that peacefully coexist with human society. There is no need for pit bulls.

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