Foster Program Manual
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Welcome Foster Parents to Be!

Welcome to our dedicated core of foster families. Our foster program mainly revolves around kittens and puppies under eight weeks of age, and rabbits under four months of age. Periodically, we will have a mother animal with babies, or possibly animals with medical or behavior issues, which may be more suitable in a home environment than in the animal shelter. Sometimes, an animal just needs a break from shelter life and needs a nightly get a way or in extreme cases, we may need fostering of our adoptable animals during an emergency response.

Foster families are a vital part of the animal shelter program to assist us with the live outcomes for these delicate little animals. Fostering requires an abundance of love for the animals you take into your homes. Our foster families provide basic care and tasks such as keeping track of weight, giving medication, modifying behavior, socializing, cleaning and checkups at the animal shelter.

So is it worth it? YES! Every year foster families provide over three to four hundred animals a second chance at getting adopted. But it’s more than that! Foster families tell us how much fun they are having; how fascinating it is to see these animals become more agile and interactive; the shy animals coming out of their shells and gaining confidence; learning how to navigate stairs or investigating their territory; even striking out for their individual personalities.

Every year, our foster families rise to the occasion and take on a myriad of needs. Without this tireless group of volunteers, we may not be able to give hundreds of animals a year that extra time they require to find their forever homes. Volunteers even start calling us by the third month of the year to see if we have kittens because they are so eager to get started!

We also welcome new foster families any time of the year to discover the tremendous rewards in giving animals whatever they need to become available for adoption.

Time and time again, foster families tell us how much they love their “job.” The love they give to each animal is its own reward. We would like to extend a huge heartfelt THANK YOU for their service because foster families make a difference every day!

Thank you,

Management and Staff
Becoming a foster parent is a significant undertaking so before you take those adorable babies home, here are some things to consider:

**Foster Fit:** The younger the animal, the more time involved. If you are employed outside the home, your best bet for a successful foster involves weaned animals who only need a couple of weeks of socialization, or those who are accompanied by their mom and don’t need those all-night feedings and cleanings.

**Space:** At a minimum, you will need a large enclosed crate or playpen that animals cannot escape from. Even better is a bathroom that will allow more roaming around space. An ideal space for young animals is soft, temperature controlled, easy to clean and disinfect, and apart from any other pets’ you may have. If your living situation is such that you cannot sacrifice any space, you may want to consider overnight fosters with older animals who need a break from long term living in the Shelter.

**Other Pets:** You will need to keep fosters separated from other pets in the household for at least two weeks. Animals who come in to the shelter from having been outside may carry diseases that will impact your pets. You also need to consider if your other pets will accept these fosters once they have passed two weeks and want to explore their communal space.

**Time:** A successful foster experience involves a lot of hands on time. The younger the animal, the more time is needed. Even older animals need lots of time spent with people socializing to make them good adoption candidates. In addition, you need to spend enough time with your fosters’ to recognize signs of illness or changes in behavior.

**Cost:** Luckily, this is one thing you don’t have to worry about. The Shelter provides you with everything you need to take care of your babies! (But you can buy them a stuffed mousie or two if you wish!)

**Lack of Knowledge:** There are so many wonderful resources available to help you provide the best care possible for your foster animals and the vast knowledge of the Shelter staff. Current foster parents also have a wealth of knowledge that they are happy to share, and the resources listed throughout this manual are just a sampling of what you can find in written form or online.

**Getting Attached:** Many people claim they could not foster because “I would want to keep them all”. Without foster parents who look at the big picture, these babies wouldn’t have a chance. It is helpful to remember that the goal of fostering is to prepare them for their permanent home! Be proud of that fact that you played a crucial role in your little “graduates”
becoming ready for adoption. Besides, when you foster, you will ALWAYS have cute puppies/kittens/bunnies to play with! YAY!

Thank you for considering our Foster Program!
Please fill out as completely as possible. By filling out this form, this ensures we can appropriately match you with a suitable foster animal.

Name:______________________________________________    Date:____________

Address:_______________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip__________________________________________________________________

Phone:  (h)____________________  (c)___________________ (w)_______________________

Email Address: ________________________________________________________________

Preferred method of contact?     Home          cell          work          email

Living Accommodations:     Rent          Own     If renting, can we contact landlord?     Yes     No

Landlord’s Name______________________________ Phone____________________________

Reason for fostering?____________________________________________________________

Please circle the categories of fostering that you would feel comfortable doing:

Dog-medical    Dog-behavior    Puppy-medical    Puppy-behavior    bottle baby puppies
litter of puppies    Mom and puppies    Feline-medical    Feline-behavior    bottle baby kittens
litter of kittens    Mom and kittens    Feral Mom and kittens    Rabbit-medical    Rabbit-behavior
bottle baby rabbits    litter of rabbits    Mom with bunnies    animal must be eating on their own
Other:    birds          reptiles          livestock          pocket pets          small animals          Disaster/Emergency

Are all members of your household in favor of fostering an animal?     Yes     No

How many adults in the home?______________How many individuals under 18?____________

What are the ages?______________Does anyone in the household have allergies?     Yes     No

If yes, what are they?____________________________________________________________

Have you ever fostered before?     Yes     No

If yes, please explain____________________________________________________________
Do you have companion animals now?      Yes        No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Gender S/N</th>
<th>Current on vaccines?</th>
<th>Licensed?</th>
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Do you have a separate area to house foster animals?      Yes        No

If yes, please describe area:_______________________________________________________

What kind of fencing do you have?_________________________________________________

Do you have screens on your windows?     Yes           No

Some foster animals may not be vaccinated or given treatments due to age and condition. Do you understand that any of your household pets may run the risk of exposure to any communicable disease?        Yes       No

I certify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that NCAS reserves the right to deny any foster of an NCAS animal. I certify that I understand and agree to abide by all rules and regulations pertaining to the Foster Program. I also understand that images of myself, family, and foster animals may be used for promotional purposes.

Signature:_________________________________________________________ Date:____________________

Staff Witness:_____________________________________________________ Date:____________________
Foster Care Agreement

I understand and agree to be bound by and comply with the following terms and conditions as indicated by my signature below:

1. This animal remains the sole property of Napa County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center (NCAS&AC). At no time will I assert any right of ownership over this foster animal. I will immediately return the animal to NCAS&AC when requested to.
2. I am permitted to foster only one litter or single foster animal at one time. Management must approve any exceptions to this. Based on your responses to the Foster Application, NCAS&AC will choose the appropriate foster animal for you. This animal may have been exposed to potentially infectious diseases and may become ill soon after transport to my home. I am responsible for keeping this animal separate from my own animals for no less than 14 days and if any animal shows signs of health or behavior concerns.
3. I will contact NCAS&AC immediately if I notice any signs of health or behavior concerns not already previously noted by NCAS&AC. I will follow any and all instructions when it comes to special diets, medications, and mitigation plans developed by a veterinarian or NCAS&AC.
4. This animal will be kept primarily indoors and will not be allowed to roam unrestrained and/or without constant and direct supervision while outdoors. Any puppy or kitten not fully vaccinated is not permitted outdoors.
5. Behavior assessments (when applicable) are provided as a guide only based on the history supplied to us and on our observations of the animal in the shelter. NCAS&AC, its employees and agents accept no responsibility in the event that the animal behaves differently from its description, nor are any guarantees made in respect of its future behavior.
6. NCAS&AC will provide all supplies necessary for the fostering of said animal. At no time will I assert any claim, charge or demand of any kind or nature against NCAS&AC for any charges that may have been incurred by me, including veterinarian fees, in connection with the animal, or caused by the animal.
7. Any promotion or marketing of animal must be approved by NCAS&AC. At no time will any foster animal be posted on personal social media accounts or other public media venues without the consent of NCAS&AC.
8. I will contact NCAS&AC prior to bringing the animal back to the animal shelter when my ability or desire to manage health or behavior issues that may arise in connection with the animal change or become compromised. If I perceive that the animal presents a safety risk to other people or animals, I will immediately return the animal to NCAS&AC. If I am no longer able or willing to continue to provide foster care for this animal, I will safely return it to the custody of NCAS&AC staff.
9. I will abide by all local, state and federal animal control laws when applicable including confinement, public nuisance, and identification. I will keep current means of identification on the animal at all times, and will immediately attempt to locate the animal if it becomes missing by first reporting the animal missing to the Napa County Animal Care and Adoption Center.
10. Potential adopters identified through the foster home must go through the regular NCAS&AC adoption process prior to adopting an animal.
11. I understand that this animal may not be spayed/neutered yet and must be returned to NCAS&AC when the time comes to schedule the procedure. Animals will be placed immediately for adoption unless otherwise noted by NCAS&AC or by a veterinarian.

12. I understand that any violation of this foster care agreement will result in my disqualification from the NCAS&AC Foster Care program in the future.

Name (Print): _____________________________________________________________________

Signature:_______________________________________     Date:___________________________

Staff Witness (Print):_______________________________________________________________

Signature of Staff Witness:_________________     Date:___________________________
Foster Plan

Foster Name: __________________ Foster animal ID/#/name __________________________

Date Leaving Shelter: ______________ estimated time for foster care: ________________

Date of Vaccines: _______ Weight of Animal: _______ Staff Initial _______

Feeding instructions: ______________________________________________________________

Medical instructions: _____________________________________________________________

Vet Treatment Given

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat: FVRCP</th>
<th>Pon/Sec</th>
<th>Strongid</th>
<th>Advantage Multi</th>
<th>Nail Trim</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiv/Felv Combo Test</td>
<td>Rabies</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dog: Da2PP</th>
<th>CIV</th>
<th>Boardatella</th>
<th>Strongid</th>
<th>Activyl</th>
<th>Nail Trim</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heartworm Test</td>
<td>Heartguard</td>
<td>Rabies</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>__________</td>
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Other Notes:

________________________________________________________________________________

Estimated Next Recheck Date _________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Recheck Date: ___________ Weight of Animal: ____________ Staff Initial ______

Feeding instructions: ____________________________________________________________

Medical instructions: ____________________________________________________________

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Other Notes:

________________________________________________________________________________

Estimated Next Recheck Date _________________
Recheck Date: ___________   Weight of Animal: ____________   Staff Initial_________
Feeding instructions: _________________________________________________________
Medical instructions: _______________________________________________________________________________________

Vet Treatment Given

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        Fiv/Felv Combo Test Rabies Other__________________

Dog:    Da2PP CIV Boardatella Strongid Activyl Nail Trim
        Heartworm Test Heartguard Rabies Other__________________

Other Notes:  ____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Estimated Next Recheck Date _________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

Recheck Date: ___________   Weight of Animal: ____________   Staff Initial_________
Feeding instructions: _________________________________________________________
Medical instructions: _________________________________________________________________________________________

Vet Treatment Given

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        Fiv/Felv Combo Test Rabies Other__________________

Dog:    Da2PP CIV Boardatella Strongid Activyl Nail Trim
        Heartworm Test Heartguard Rabies Other__________________

Other Notes:  ____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Estimated Next Recheck Date _________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

Recheck Date: ___________   Weight of Animal: ____________   Staff Initial_________
Feeding instructions: _________________________________________________________
Medical instructions: _________________________________________________________________________________________
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**Other Notes:**

________________________________________________________________________________________

**Estimated Next Recheck Date** _________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
Is your foster animal doing/displaying the following signs?

- Not eating?
- Not drinking?
- Lost weight?
- Coughing?
- Sneezing?
- Pale gums?
- Is he/she bright, alert, responsive?
- Lethargic?
- Eye discharge?
- Nasal discharge
- Any vomiting?
- Any diarrhea?

First Recheck Date: ____________________________  Animal ID: ____________________________

Any animal in the foster program is property of NCAS. Please do not seek treatment or care from your own veterinarian. NCAS is responsible for all medical decisions so consult the shelter for direction. Underage foster animals are not to be promoted or posted on social media without consent from NCAS. Failure to follow directions may result in being removed from the program.

If you are concerned about your foster animal, please call us.

Regular business hours are Tuesday- Sunday from 8am to 5 pm. Office number is (707)253-4382.

If it is Monday, after 5pm, or a holiday call (707) 309-1583 and ask for Erika or Kelly.

Thank You for Fostering!

NCAS Staff
Thank you for your interest in our FAN program with the Napa County Animal Shelter. Our goal is to find capable and willing volunteer fosters to take animals home for the night and then return them before 11:00 am the following day, if we are open for business. Before leaving the shelter with an animal to FAN please check with staff and fill out the FAN log sheet.

Name___________________________________________________  Date____/____/_______
Address_______________________________________________________
City/State/Zip__________________________________________________________________
Phone (h)__________________ (c)____________________ (w)__________________________
Email Address______________________________________________________________

Living Accommodations:  □ House  □ Apartment  □ Other__________________________
                      □ Rent  □ Own  □ Other__________________________

Do you have landlord’s permission to foster an animal?  □ Yes  □ No
Landlord’s name_________________________  Phone__________________________

Do you have children at home?  □ Yes  □ No  If yes, how old are they?_____________

Does anyone have allergies to animals?  □ Yes  □ No

Do you have companion animals now?  □ Yes  □ No
Breed____________  Gender S/N__________  Current on vaccines?__________  Licensed?__________
Breed____________  Gender S/N__________  Current on vaccines?__________  Licensed?__________
Breed____________  Gender S/N__________  Current on vaccines?__________  Licensed?__________

Do you have screens on your windows?  □ Yes  □ No

If you FAN a dog is your yard fenced?  □ Yes  □ No  Type of Fence?_____________________

Where would your FAN animal sleep at night?______________________________________
Are you able to keep your animal(s) and the FAN animal separate if need be? □ Yes □ No

Do you understand that the animal(s) you have in your household may be exposed to a communicable disease that the FAN animal may have? □ Yes □ No

If your FAN animal has a vet/grooming or other type of appointment are you willing to drop it off? □ Yes □ No

**Please note:** Depending on the animal you select to FAN, we may ask you to do a meet and greet with your animal here at the shelter. You must be a current volunteer or current foster parent with NCAS to be approved for FAN. This program is not available to the public.

I certify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that NCAS reserves the right to deny the FAN of an NCAS animal. I understand that I must check with NCAS staff before leaving with any FAN animal to verify I am clear to take this animal; to see if said animal has any appointments prior to 11:00 am the following day. I understand all FAN animals must be returned by 11:00 am to be available for adoption. I understand I must check out the FAN animal on the FAN log sheet, every day I take it home.

Signature_____________________________________________ Date__/__/_____

Thank you for your willingness to get involved in caring for and giving these animals a break from shelter life. The staff and the animals truly appreciate it!
# Foster at Night (FAN) Log Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print name (clearly)</th>
<th>Best phone #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Animal # &amp; name</th>
<th>√w/staff &amp; write name below</th>
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</table>
## Foster Report Card

**Animal Name:**

**Animal ID #:**

**Length of Stay:**

In my foster home, I lived with...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check all that apply:</th>
<th>Additional Notes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Dogs: ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We enjoyed each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We did not enjoy each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We did not interact with each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Cats: ___</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- We enjoyed each other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- We did not enjoy each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>- We did not interact with each other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># of Other Animals: ___</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- We enjoyed each other</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- We did not enjoy each other</td>
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<td>- We did not interact with each other</td>
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<td># of Children: ___ Ages: ___</td>
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<td>- We enjoyed each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>- We did not enjoy each other</td>
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<td>- We did not interact with each other</td>
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<td>How was I with guests? ___</td>
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<tr>
<td>- We enjoyed each other</td>
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<td>- We did not enjoy each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>- We did not interact with each other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Any behavior or medical that my adopter would need to know:

My Foster thinks you should know:

---

## Additional Info:

Am I house or litter box trained?  
- ___ Yes  ___ No

My energy level?  
- ___ High  ___ Med.  ___ Low

Do I like attention?  
- ___ All the time  ___ Sometimes I need space  ___ On my own terms

Do I play with toys?  
- ___ Yes  ___ No

Would the Foster be ok with sharing their information with adopters?  
- ___ Yes  ___ No

If Yes, Name: ____________________________  
Phone #: _______________________________

Getting an A: I was Paw-fect! Great for 1st time pet owner and for families. No major medical or behavior issues at this time. Getting a B: Not at the top of the class but still a great pet. I will need an owner with some experience because I may have some minor medical or behavior issues that an adopter needs to know about. Getting a C: Still need some help! I am ready for adoption but I do need a very experienced adopter. I have some medical or behavior issues that will require that my adopter follow through on.
Kittens
Everyone always thinks, “I do not have enough room to house foster kittens”. We think you can do it even if all you have is a single room available. Below are the different life stages that animals go through.

**Kittens 0 to 3 weeks of age:** these neonates can be housed in a top loading carrier, a cardboard carrier or even a plastic tote without the lid on it. At this age, the kittens are small, not very mobile and spend most of their day sleeping. Items needed for this age group are:

- Warm fleece like blanket
- Heating pad or disk (place on one side of the carrier so they can move away from heat) under the above mentioned blanket
- Small stuffed animal (for them to cozy up to), especially if singleton kitten or;
- Small stuffed animal with a beating heart

At around 2 ½ to 3 weeks these little kittens become more mobile, at this time you will need to switch to a bigger cage or playpen (they make small canvas playpens for pets). Although the Shelter does not provide these extras (Heartbeat animal, canvas playpens), they are a small investment to make if you intend to foster more than just once.

**Kittens 3 to 5 weeks of age:** now your kitten is mobile and sleeping a little less and starting to check out their surrounding areas. Options for housing can be a wire crate or cage, a playpen, larger plastic tote or an exercise pen (if they are climbing you may need to cover the top of the pen with a sheet and clothespin it on to keep them from climbing out. Items needed for this age group are:

- Warm fleece like blankets as many needed for the area they have available
- Potty pads
- Heating pad or disk (still under the blankets)
- Small shallow litter pan (when it is time to litterbox train them)
- Small shallow food and water dish (when they are weaned)

**Kittens 5 to 8 weeks of age:** now these kittens are fully mobile, climbing and extremely curious. Some people use rooms such as offices, bathrooms or even a spare bedroom for them. One primary question is, “Is the area safe?” Cords need to be moved so they cannot be chewed on, no holes or gaps in walls or furniture (they will find the tiniest hole and crawl in there). Can they climb up something high, fall and get hurt? Strings or cords from curtains or blinds can also be a hazard. Poisonous plants need to be removed. Is this room easy to clean and/or
disinfect if need be (ideally no carpet). We know this sounds like a lot but worth taking the time for some safety prepping. We do recommend that if you are not home to supervise these little darlings it may be best to keep them in a cage and let them loose when you are home. Items needed for this age group are:

- Bed or warm blankets to sleep
- Litter box
- Potty pads (in case there is an accident or they just get messy)
- Food and water dishes
- Toys
- Scratching post
- Climbing post

LITTER BOX TRAINING

During the first few weeks of a kittens’ life, they do not have control over their elimination functions, urinating or defecating. If they are with their mother cat, she will manage this process by provoking their bodies to “go” by using her tongue. If you are bottle feeding kittens, you will have to assist them with “going”. This is done by gently stimulating with a damp warm cloth or cotton ball at their vulva or prepuce area to make them urinate, and the same with the anus to make them defecate, always immediately after feeding time. Most kittens do not gain the ability to control their bathroom urges until they are about three weeks old.

Kittens begin to need litter boxes when they are around 4 weeks of age. Once they reach this milestone, you can encourage use by picking them up and placing them inside the litter box, right after they are through eating since this is the time they are most apt to go. You can even assist by taking their front paw and scratching at the litter. If kittens run loose in your house, you may need multiple litter boxes. We always recommend when they are unsupervised, they should be confined to a cage, exercise pen, playpen or a room with a litter box available for them.

It is crucial to ensure that the edges of the litter box are sufficiently low to make getting inside easy on their tiny sometimes clumsy little bodies. It is also important to use non-clumping, unscented clay cat litter. Kittens like babies tend to get things in their mouths and the clumping cat litter can be problematic for their little digestive systems. When the kitten successfully eliminates in the litter box, it may be smart to teach them about covering their waste by sprinkling a little litter over any wet spots or clumps. Some kittens will do this without needing any prompting. Ideas for smaller litter pans:

- Small aluminum roasting pans or cooking sheets
• Cardboard flats (similar to canned pet food flats, you can cut the front shorter for kittens to climb in
Most kittens will adapt to the litter box use easily. Covering of the waste is an instinctual behavior for many felines. There may be a few that need some training, especially if they have spent time outside while they were younger. In litter training kittens you need to make the litter box a pleasant and comfortable place for them, keep it immaculately clean (scoop out urination and defecation on a regular basis), and place the litter box in a quiet area. Also, keep an extra litter box available in case you need it.
POISONOUS PLANTS FOR CATS
A Field Guide

SAGO PALM
DAFFODILS
AUTUMN CROCUS
HYACINTH
AZALEAS
DIEFFENBACHIA
CYCLAMEN
TULIPS
OLEANDER
LILIES
RHODODENDRONS
KALANCHOE
All supplies will be provided by the Napa County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center!

**To keep them warm and cozy:**
- Cardboard carrier and “kitten den”
- Blankets and/or towels
- Heating pad *

**To keep them fed:**
- *Kitten formula
- Kitten wet food (depending on age)
- Kitten kibble
- *Nursing bottle kit

**To keep them clean:**
- *Baby wipes
- Piddle pads
- Clay litter
- Kitten-size litter box

**To keep them healthy**
- Digital food scale
- Any medications such as eye ointment, antibiotics
- Rescue Cleaner/disinfectant

*for nursing kittens up to four to five weeks old

There are a limited number of mesh sided playpens available for loaning as long as they are returned completely sanitized and ready for the next litter.

Aluminum pie plates make good shallow food dishes for multiple kittens. You may also need to use several items you already have, such as cotton balls, tissues, mild dishwashing soap or baby shampoo, and towels.
### Different Age Groups of Kittens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Newborns**   | - Umbilical cord attached  
                 - Eyes closed, ears folded  
                 - Can’t regulate body heat  
                 - Feed every two hours  
                 - 2 – 6 mls per feeding (bellies should look full not bloated) |
| **1 week old** | - Eyes closed, ears folded  
                 - No umbilical cord  
                 - Eyes open at 8 to 12 days  
                 - Feed every two to three hours  
                 - 6 – 10 mls per feeding (once again no bloated bellies) |
| **2 weeks old**| - Eyes completely open, blue in color  
                 - Wobbly on their feet  
                 - Every three to four hours  
                 - 10 – 14 mls per feeding (monitor bellies) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Developments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3 weeks   | - Incisors emerging
           | - Ears unfolding
           | - Checking out litter box
           | - Every four to five hours
           | - 14 – 18 mls per feeding
           | - May offer formula mixed with wet food (consistency of Cream of Wheat)    |
| 4 weeks   | - Canines emerging
           | - Vision improving
           | - Walking confidently
           | - Start weaning off the bottle
           | - Formula with wet food
           | - Soften dry food with warm water                                         |
| 5 weeks   | - Premolars emerging
           | - Weaning onto wet food and water moistened dry food
           | - Fully weaned off the bottle
           | - Formula with wet food
           | - Introduce dry kibble                                                   |
| 7 weeks   | - Transitioning into adult eye color
           | - Coordinated and more playful
           | - Very curious
           | - Fully eating on their own
<pre><code>       | - Dry food and wet food                                                  |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>8 weeks old</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Once they reach 2 pounds ready to get spayed/neutered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ready for adoption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time for new home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time for you to get some more foster kittens! :D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Some of this material is from the Kittenlady.org_
# Kitten Bottle Feeding and Stomach Capacity Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Kitten Age (weeks)</th>
<th>Kitten Weight (lbs, oz)</th>
<th>Kitten Weight (grams)</th>
<th>Daily Caloric Requirement* (kcal)</th>
<th>Amount of Formula per Day (ml)**</th>
<th>Amount Per Feeding (ml)*</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Feedings Per Day***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 week</td>
<td>2 oz 57 g</td>
<td>11 kcal</td>
<td>15 ml</td>
<td>2 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 oz 85 g</td>
<td>17 kcal</td>
<td>23 ml</td>
<td>3 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 oz 113 g</td>
<td>23 kcal</td>
<td>31 ml</td>
<td>5 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>5 oz 142 g</td>
<td>28 kcal</td>
<td>38 ml</td>
<td>6 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 oz 170 g</td>
<td>34 kcal</td>
<td>46 ml</td>
<td>7 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 oz 198 g</td>
<td>40 kcal</td>
<td>54 ml</td>
<td>8 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 oz 227 g</td>
<td>45 kcal</td>
<td>61 ml</td>
<td>9 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>9 oz 255 g</td>
<td>51 kcal</td>
<td>69 ml</td>
<td>10 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 oz 283 g</td>
<td>57 kcal</td>
<td>77 ml</td>
<td>11 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 oz 312 g</td>
<td>62 kcal</td>
<td>84 ml</td>
<td>12 ml</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 weeks*</td>
<td>12 oz 340 g</td>
<td>68 kcal</td>
<td>92 ml</td>
<td>14 ml</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 oz 369 g</td>
<td>74 kcal</td>
<td>100 ml</td>
<td>15 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 oz 397 g</td>
<td>79 kcal</td>
<td>107 ml</td>
<td>16 ml</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 weeks*</td>
<td>15 oz 425 g</td>
<td>85 kcal</td>
<td>115 ml</td>
<td>17 ml</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 oz (1 lb) 454 g</td>
<td>91 kcal</td>
<td>123 ml</td>
<td>18 ml</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 lb, 1 oz 482 g</td>
<td>96 kcal</td>
<td>130 ml</td>
<td>19 ml</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 lb, 2 oz 510 g</td>
<td>102 kcal</td>
<td>138 ml</td>
<td>20 ml</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 lb, 3 oz 539 g</td>
<td>108 kcal</td>
<td>146 ml</td>
<td>22 ml</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 weeks*</td>
<td>1 lb, 4 oz 567 g</td>
<td>113 kcal</td>
<td>153 ml</td>
<td>23 ml</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The daily caloric requirement was calculated using 20 kcal/100 g body weight and the amount per feeding using 4 ml/100 g body weight. The energy requirement is ~25-28 kcal/100 g body weight daily and the maximum comfortable stomach capacity is ~4 ml/100 g body weight.

** Concentration 0.74 kcal/ml. Most commercial kitten milk replacers in the US provide less than 1 kcal/ml (0.74 kcal/ml), noting to increase the volume of milk required to meet caloric needs. This can be problematic in terms of the number and size of feedings given relative to stomach capacity and more likely to result in gastrointestinal disturbances. This may also account for why bottle-fed kittens grow slower than kittens that nurse off a mother.

*** As the kitten is adjusting well to the milk and the feeding volume, you may be able to increase the volume fed to help reduce the number of feedings per day. Be aware that exceeding the stomach capacity (amount per feeding) may put the kitten at risk of aspiration, vomiting, diarrhea, and gas build-up in the stomach and intestines.

* Kittens at this age (3½–5 weeks) are usually eating some solid food, decreasing the amount of milk replacer required to meet daily caloric requirements. This may result in less frequent milk feedings.

Cited reference:


Additional references:


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Maddie’s Fund
6150 Stoneridge Mall Road, Suite 125 | Pleasanton, CA 94588
925.310.5450 | MaddiesFund.org
Because kittens arrive at the Shelter after having been orphaned or abandoned, it is not uncommon for kittens to come in to foster care with compromised immune systems that lead to various illnesses. While kittens are in your care, you should always be observant and call the shelter at once for advice and direction if you notice any of the following:

- Diarrhea or bloody stool
- Sneezing, crusty or goopy noses and/or eyes
- Vomiting
- Lethargy, especially in a normally active kitten
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Difficulty breathing
- Dehydration – you can check this by gently squeezing and lifting the skin at the nape of the neck. In a dehydrated kitten, the skin does not return to normal when released.

Never, under any circumstances, take your foster kitten to the vet unless directed to do so by the Shelter, and ONLY to the vet identified by the Shelter.

It is very important to understand that sometimes, despite the best efforts of veterinary help, staff help, and your loving care, kittens sometimes pass in foster care. While this can be a shock and is always heartbreaking, it should in no way dissuade you from continuing to foster. Always remember that you did your best and gave the kitten love and care it would not have otherwise received.

Common Illnesses – How to Identify and Treat Them

Upper Respiratory Infections: Report symptoms such as eye and nose discharge, sneezing, lethargy, etc. to Shelter, and bring kitten(s) in for a checkup. Mucous can be green, yellow, or whitish in color, collecting in the corners of eyes and outside of nostrils. The Shelter will provide antibiotics, and eye ointment if applicable. Back home, isolate the sick kitten and wash your hands after handling (or use rubber gloves) because a URI is contagious to other cats. You can help alleviate discomfort by gently cleaning eyes and noses with warm water on a cotton pad. It is also helpful to put the kitten in a bathroom and run a hot shower to provide steam, if the kitten seems congested. Make sure kittens are warm and dry before leaving the steamy warm room. If kittens are weaned, change up the food to something stinky to encourage them to eat. Be hyper vigilant of worsening symptoms.
Internal Parasites: Sometimes diarrhea and bloody stool are signs of intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, tapeworms, giardia or coccidia. These are all diagnosed through stool samples and are treated with various medications.

Ear Mites: Ear mites can appear in a kitten’s ear and look like coffee grounds. If left untreated, they can cause infection and even loss of hearing. Luckily, they are easily treated with medication that you can get from the Shelter. Treatment usually entails squeezing drops into the kitten’s ear, then gently rub the ear folds together to make sure the medicine penetrates. **Use as directed by the Shelter.**

Panleukopenia (panleuk sometimes called feline distemper): This disease is a viral infection that is highly contagious and can be fatal if not caught very early. **Shelter kittens receive their first vaccinations against panleuk at four weeks of age, and weighing one pound, so prior to that time they are vulnerable.** Symptoms include fever, diarrhea, lethargy, vomiting, loss of appetite.

Treatment may include administering subcutaneous fluids and antibiotics to prevent secondary infections, provide essential electrolytes, ward off dehydration and hypoglycemia so that the kitten can fight off the disease. This virus can survive in the environment for years, so it is very important that other animals in your household have been vaccinated, and that you are vigilant about cleaning and disinfecting everything that the kitten(s) have come in contact with. The Shelter will provide you with Rescue, which is used for cleaning and disinfecting in the Shelter.

Panleukopenia is very often fatal, but kittens can and do push through if the virus is caught early enough and if excellent cleaning and disinfecting are done to minimize the chance of spreading to other cats. Cats do get immunity once they have had Panleukopenia.

A separate section of this manual goes into more detail about cleaning and disinfecting after handling and treating sick kittens. **The importance of diligent cleaning and disinfecting in keeping your kittens, your other pets, and yourself safe from sickness and disease cannot be stressed enough!**
The Different Types of Stools of Cats/Kittens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTIPATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1</td>
<td>Separate, hard pellets or lumps (may require straining).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 2</td>
<td>Lumpy and sausage-shaped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3</td>
<td>Like a sausage with cracks on the surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4</td>
<td>Long, smooth, soft, and snake-like.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NORMAL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 5</td>
<td>Soft, distinct blobs (may be covered in mucous and pass easily).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6</td>
<td>Fluffy, ragged, and mushy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIARRHEA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 7</td>
<td>Watery; entirely liquified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 8</td>
<td>Mucous-like, bubbly, foul-smelling, and may spray out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ringworm is a common zoonotic disease that can be found during kitten season and summer when shelters are at their highest in animal population. Exposure to ringworm usually comes in the form of an animal already having it and bringing it into the shelter. It is not as common for dogs or puppies to get ringworm but it can happen. The good news is ringworm is treatable and the healthier the animal, the better the success rate in overcoming it is which is why treatment in a foster home is still ideal over treatment in a shelter environment.

If you notice a circular bald patch on your foster animal’s head, ears, or tail (the most common place) that is scaly red around the outside and hairless in the center, your foster pet may have ringworm. Other areas of the body where ringworm can be seen are the paws and face (nose, above eyes, and whisker area). In dogs and puppies, it can be around the nails.

Ringworm is actually a fungus, not a worm, highly contagious and can be passed to humans as well. However, with proper basic hygiene and completely following the Shelter’s biosecurity measures, ringworm can easily be prevented from spreading. The suspicion of ringworm can be enough to cause you to isolate your foster pet immediately (away from littermates if any), and scrub down anything that the foster pet has been in contact with. This includes any clothes that you were wearing when handling the animal, any bedding, litter, food or water, dishes, toys or anything else that the foster pet might have touched. Ideally, isolation should be an area in your household with no carpet and have floors and walls that can be easily cleaned and wiped down. The foster pet should not be free roaming in the room unless you feel you can easily clean and sanitize the entire room. If this is not the case, the animal should be set up in a crate to limit the spread of spores.

The next thing to do is call the Shelter and let a staff member know that you suspect ringworm. You will need to bring the foster pet to the Shelter so they can do some diagnostics to confirm ringworm. Until results are confirmed, you still need to continue wearing protective clothing when handling the animal, such as rubber gloves, a washable or discardable over shirt, and shoe coverings – a pair of big socks you can wash works well for this. The shelter can also provide you with some isolation gowns, hair and shoe covers and other supplies if needed. If you have long hair, tie your hair back.

Treatment usually consists of oral antifungal tablets and topical treatments that can be done in the foster home. It is again important to point out that ringworm treatment in a home environment is considered less stressful and has a higher rate of success then treating for ringworm in a shelter setting. As mentioned before, the foster pet’s quarantine area should be well away from other littermates and your own pets, and easy to clean. A playpen, kennel, or
bathroom that can be easily cleaned are ideal. In addition, all supplies you use for your isolated foster pet should be kept OUT of the area where the foster pet is kept, and only brought in when cleaning or feeding. There needs to be a minimal amount of items in the isolation area so fungal spores cannot attach to crevices or other items that can help spread or retain the spores in the room. Bowls should be disposable, and the Shelter will supply you with Rescue spray to wipe down cages and other large items with paper towels that can be disposed of in a garbage bag. If fostering kittens, litterboxes should also be disposable or of washable material (not plastic). Bedding should be disposable, such as newspapers and piddle pads. Any toys must be sprayed down with Rescue or discarded after each treatment.

It can take several weeks to beat ringworm and that means you must always be careful to sanitize EVERYTHING! Wear protective clothing when handling your foster pet, follow all instructions for medications, and keep other animals (and people!) away. With patience, time and consistency there is always a light at the end of a long tunnel when it comes to ringworm!
While most cats have a drive to keep themselves clean, kittens might need a little help here and there. Maybe they made a mess in the litter box, or got dirty at feeding time. Some kittens might need special care if they are dealing with a skin condition such as ringworm.

Kittens with their mother will generally be clean, once they become ambulatory (more mobile) is more often the time you will have to step in and help them. Kittens like to stand in their food dish, tip over the water dish or may get dirty playing with their siblings in their confined area.

Besides bathing, you can use baby wipes. If using baby wipes on kittens under the age of two weeks, you may want to warm them up with a little warm water, before applying to the neonate animals. Also, be sure to dry them off and keep them warm.

A quick bath can help a kitten stay clean and healthy, but it should be done with care. Kittens don’t have the fat reserves necessary to keep their body temperatures in check. If they get too cold during or after a bath, they may become more susceptible to illness or infection. Keeping kittens clean and dry is important, but it is a balance between how fragile they are and how important the bath is. Here is how to do bath time so no kittens or humans get hurt in the process.

First of all, you want to make sure that the kitten is social and used to being handled. Before plunking the kitten into a bath of water, you may want to take a washcloth with warm water on it, start by wiping down the paws, and then slowly work your way up the legs and trunk. Once the kitten is used to being damp you can proceed to the full bath.

Again, the key is to move slowly. Let the kitten hear the water running and splashing. Play with the kitten and show them it is a safe place. You can use a bathroom or kitchen sink or a small plastic tub similar to what you would use for dishes. You will also want a small cup to use for rinsing the kitten after the bathing. Use warm water, not too hot or too cold. You can talk to the kitten in a soothing tone of voice and cuddle with them to make them feel secure. The more relaxed and gradual the experience the more relaxed the kitten will be. Be patient.

You will only add an inch or two of water depending on the size of the kitten. The temperature of the water should be between 100 to 103 degrees (the body temperature of kittens). You also want to make sure the room you are using is warm, without drafts blowing through it. Place the kitten’s feet into the water and for kittens, once they are comfortable with that, you can place a washcloth on the bottom of the tub/sink for them to sink their claws into if they want. Having something to grip will make them feel more secure.
Keep the kitten’s face dry and above the waterline to prevent them from drowning or aspirating the water. A small cup will help you rinse off the areas that cannot be submerged in the water.

Be sure to use a kitten friendly shampoo, baby shampoo or Dawn dish soap unscented.

Mix the soap in a small dish with water and use the lather to wash the kitten, or lather the shampoo in your hand before applying to the kitten. If the kitten starts to squirm and is not enjoying the bath, let go so you are not scratched or bitten. It is easier to clean up soapy water than making a trip to the doctor. To avoid using soap around the face and the eyes, use a damp washcloth. Also, avoid rubbing the rectal area since it can cause irritation. It is best to rinse the kitten off at least two to three times to make sure there is not soap residue left on their delicate skin. When the bath is finished, pat the kitten dry with a freshly dried fluffy towel, it is best to get the kitten dry and warm as soon as possible. If you must use a hair dryer, it must be at the lowest setting and kept a good distance from the kitten, as hot blast of air could burn their delicate skin.
Socialization (For Kittens 3 weeks and up)

Congratulations on deciding to foster and socialize kittens! Spending time with these fuzzy little guys, though a lot of work, will also be a lot of fun. We have tons of tips on how to help your mini kitties feel at ease around people, and how to help them grow up to be loving companion animals. Now let’s get down to business!

Help Kittens Feel Comfortable

First things first, set up the area they will be staying at, as some cats feel safer if they are higher up where they can see their surroundings. After you bring the kittens inside and get them set up, give them an initial two-day adjustment period before trying to socialize them too much—the change of scenery can be stressful! When you do start to spend time with them, begin by moving slowly and speaking softly, and try to keep loud TV or music down. For very young kittens, a soothing technique is to wrap a ticking clock in a towel—it reminds them of their momma’s heartbeat.

After they have been with you for a few days, try leaving a TV or radio on so they can get used to people voices and sounds. If there are no other pets around, you can set them up (a crate works well) in a busy part of your home, like the living room, so they can begin to see and hear other areas of the home.

Like anyone, kittens react positively to positive experiences and negatively to negative experiences. Do not hold back! Reward kittens when they do well, like come up for snuggles, and avoid scolding.

If a litter of kittens are slow to socialize, you might want to separate the kittens into individual crates or spaces so that they can rely on people more or you can make sure to spend some quality time alone with each one. When they feel more comfortable with you, they can be reunited with their brothers and sisters.

Be patient! Spitting, hissing, and hiding are all expressions of fear, not signs of aggression.

Socialize With Food

Kittens love food (who doesn’t?!), and giving the little ones food creates an incentive for them to interact with you and also forms positive associations. Keep dry kitten food out all day, but when you feed wet food, stay in the room so they associate you with food and start to trust you. If they are scared at first, try to give them food on a spoon. Over time, move the food plate
closer to your body while you sit in the room, until the plate is in your lap and the kittens are comfortable crawling on you to get to it.

Pet the kittens for the first time while they are eating so they stay put. Start petting their little faces, chins, and behind their ears and work up to petting all over. Take your time building up to holding the kittens, and reward them with some canned cat food or chicken-flavored baby food on a spoon – kittens love people baby food! (Make sure it does not have onion—it’s toxic to cats.) Do not give kittens food on your finger though, and don’t allow them to play with your hand, or bite or scratch you. A bite from even a young kitten can be painful! Plus, it teaches the kittens that biting is OK (which it’s not!).

Socializing With Play

Playing with kittens can help them build trust for people. At least two hours a day of play (all together or broken up) can do the trick – it will go by fast, do not worry! Take time to socialize each of the kittens in a litter individually, while you are down on their level.

Once you have spent enough time with them that they let you hold them, hold the kittens as much as possible. Make sure they are close to your body so they feel your body warmth and heartbeat. If a kitten is particularly feisty, put her in a front-carrying pack or papoose (lightly, but snugly wrap) her in a towel with only the head out and hold her while doing things around the house around 3 to 4 weeks old, kittens will love to play with toys, and you should encourage that!

Once the kittens are comfortable enough to fall asleep on your lap or purr around you, they can move from the kitten room to a larger, kitten-proof room.

Introduce New Friends

The goal is to socialize the kittens so that they are comfortable around all people and pets and will be happy in their new homes, so introduce them to some new faces! As long as all are healthy, you can introduce kittens to a grownup cat, but keep a close eye to make sure everyone gets along OK.

Precautions

Kittens that were outside and are still frightened can hurt you if you are not careful, so do not hesitate to wear gloves or protective clothing if you feel it is needed.

Do not take chances. Sometimes you have to scruff kittens by the back of their neck to gain control. To do it safely, use your entire hand and gently but firmly grasp the fur on back of neck without pinching, pull the cat up, and immediately support his/her hind legs.


**Keeping Kittens Safe**

Do not use toxic cleaning products or leave them in the room with kittens.

If kittens are in your bathroom, pull the shower curtain up and out of the way, so they can’t scale it like the little monkeys they can be, close the toilet lid, remove all knick-knacks and cleaning products out of the room and don’t keep kittens in a room with a reclining chair. The kittens can be injured or killed if they go inside the chair and accidentally get closed underneath. Double check windows and vents to make sure they are securely fastened – kittens can be little escape artists!

With these tips, the litter of kittens you have taken under your wing will soon be on their way to being fuzzy, cuddly little friends!
Fading kitten syndrome is a set of symptoms that are associated with a failure to thrive in neonatal kittens so it is not a single disease. It can have many underlying causes, many of which lead to rapidly declining health or even death. Caregivers can help by monitoring for its signs and acting quickly when you observe them.

CAUSES:

Fading kitten syndrome can occur for a variety of reasons, including environmental factors, congenital defects, parasites, bacterial or viral infections, or even human error in hand raising kittens.

Due to the immaturity of a neonatal kitten’s body and immune system, even seemingly small factors can trigger a domino effect. For example, what might start as a small bout of diarrhea can quickly result in dehydration and hypothermia, causing vital bodily functions to fail.

SYMPTOMS:

- lethargy
- lack of interest in nursing
- sleeping separately from the litter
- pale or white gums
- mewing or whining
- skin is less elastic, which is a sign of dehydration
- face may appear gaunt and triangular if it is not getting adequate nutrition

Additionally, they may fail to gain weight normally or even worse lose weight, which can be determined by weighing the kittens daily. Do not wait until a kitten is in crisis to take action as time is of the essence.

With upper respiratory infections (URI), where a kitten’s nasal passage may be plugged with mucus of a green, yellow or white color, you may observe the kitten wheezing or sneezing. With the URI’s the kitten may also be suffering with a secondary symptom of dehydration or hypoglycemia. These can be addressed with supportive care if treatments are started immediately upon observing them.

In some cases, a kitten’s condition may be too advanced. Some kittens may not survive no matter what you do. Late signs of fading kitten syndrome may include abnormal breathing,
extreme lethargy, neck arching and/or odd vocalizations. If these symptoms are present, a veterinarian would determine if it is likely that the kitten may be saved. In advanced cases, humane euthanasia may be the most humane outcome.

**HOW TO HELP FADING KITTEN SYNDROME:**

Shelter staff under the direction of a veterinarian may be able to utilize some advance care skills that may save these kittens. Tube feeding for the kittens that are too weak to suckle or swallow and/or subcutaneous fluid therapy may help provide essential hydration to keep the kitten’s body functioning. Proper administration of iron, B12 or dextrose may help some kittens bounce back.

The most important thing for the foster parent is to be aware of these symptoms and contact the shelter staff as soon as you become aware of any issues.

**COPING:**

This is the most difficult part of fostering neonatal kittens. As long as you have kept these tiny kittens warm, dry, parasite free and provided proper care, know that this is more than they would have received out in the world on their own. Do not take it personally. Sometimes these little kittens come into the shelter already struggling to survive. Caring for these vulnerable little kittens can be rewarding and a challenge. It is okay to ask for help if you have any questions or concerns. It is also okay to ask for a break from fostering if need be. Just remember we appreciate you in wanting to help with these tiny small lives. We hope you will be able to come back and foster again with us and it is certainly okay to ask for some kittens that are thriving and will be an easier foster.
Cindy’s Helpful Tips!

Hi! These tips and resources have been gathered during my many years as a kitten foster mom. Hope they help you, too!


Handbook: Feline Foster Care Guide – Los Angeles SPCA: www.ASPCApro.org. On the home page in the “search site” area type “Feline Foster Care Guide” I also have a printed copy in my binder.

Book: BOTTLEKATZ: A Complete Care Guide for Orphan Kittens – Sharon Darrow. This book is available on Amazon.com. What’s neat about this book is that it lays out in chart form everything you need for kittens at every stage, from neonates (just born to 10 days) to ready to be adopted (2 pounds, 8 weeks). Sharon is located in Sacramento and even includes her phone number.

Guide, Video, and All-Around Cheerleading: The Kitten Lady. www.kittenlady.org. Hannah Shaw has a wealth of hands on information in videos, guides, and demonstrations. She even discusses why you should foster and why you can learn to let go of the adorable kittens you help raise. Highly recommended. Also, her NEW BOOK, Tiny but Mighty is a FANTASTIC read & RESOURCE!!


Video: Pets Alive! AustinPetsAlive.org/resources/pet-help/found animals

Don’t worry if some of these guides have conflicting information. There is a lot of debate about heating pads, for example. Our shelter uses them. Also, lots of discussions about litter. The Shelter provides clay litter.

SOME THINGS I HAVE LEARNED FROM MANY YEARS OF FOSTERING KITTENS:

- Powdered kitten milk can be lumpy, and if not mixed VERY THOROUGHLY, a little lump big enough to clog the nipple and frustrate your nursing kitten can occur. I have found that shaking vigorously in a glass jar with a tight lid, and/or using a tiny whisk, helps with this problem.

- I have found that swaddling a tiny kitten and holding it upright while supporting the head works for me for using the bottle. The kitten feels secure and an upright position lessens the chance of aspirating liquid.

- A couple of washable Dollar Store stuffed bears or bunnies gives tiny orphans a place to snuggle in to

- I was lucky enough to score a couple of mesh-sided portable play pen/cribs and they are WONDERFUL for babies up until about 3 weeks. I have two of them, so one is always available to loan. They are easy to clean and you can put them anywhere.

- Be ready to deal with urine and feces and accidents on the way to potty training. It’s a rare day you won’t get peed on!
Puppies
Puppies are little messy bundles of joys. Because puppies tend to be really messy the one thing all fosters need is an area that is easy to clean. Here is an outline for people who are housing puppies and what to expect at each different life stage. A lot of this information is similar to housing kittens.

**Puppies 0 to 3 weeks of age:** these neonates can be housed in a large top loading carrier or even a plastic tote without the lid on it. At this age, the puppies are small, not very mobile and spend most of their day sleeping. Items needed for this age group:

- Warm fleece like blanket
- Heating pad or disk (place on one side of the carrier so they can move away from heat) under the above mentioned blanket
- Small stuffed animal (for them to cozy up to)
- Small stuffed animal with a beating heart (battery operated to sound like mother)

At around 2 ½ to 3 weeks these little puppies become more mobile, at that time you will need to switch to a bigger cage or playpen (they make small canvas playpens for pets).

**Puppies 3 to 5 weeks of age:** now your puppies are mobile and sleeping a little less and starting to check out their surrounding areas. Options for housing can be a wire crate or cage, a playpen, larger plastic tote or an exercise pen (if they are climbing or jumping out you may need to cover the top of the pen with a sheet and clothespin it on to keep them from climbing out. Items needed for this age group:

- Warm fleece like blankets as many needed for the area they have available
- Potty pads
- Heating pad or disk (still under the blankets)
- Small shallow food and water dish (when they are weaned)

**Puppies 5 to 8 weeks of age:** now these puppies are fully mobile, climbing and extremely curious. Some people use rooms such as offices, bathrooms or even a spare bedroom for them. One primary question is, “Is the area safe and easy to clean if they have accidents?” Cords need to be moved so they cannot be chewed on and no holes or gaps in walls or furniture. Can they climb up something high, fall and get hurt? Strings or cords from curtains or blinds can also be a hazard and nothing should be left out that would be inappropriate for them to eat or chew on. Again, is this room easy to clean and/or disinfect if need be (ideally no carpet)? We know this sounds like a lot but worth taking the time for some safety prepping. We do recommend that if you are not home to supervise these little darlings it may be best to keep them in a kennel and let them loose when you are home.
Items needed for this age group:

- Bed or warm blankets to sleep
- Potty pads (in case there is an accident or they just get messy)
- Food and water dishes
- Toys
- A lot of toys to keep busy

**Potty Training**

We always want to set our puppies up for success, and doing some in the house training is essential! Puppies should have frequent breaks and be taken outside to the same spot to relieve themselves every 30 – 60 minutes when active (when waking up from a nap, after drinking or eating, and after a play session). The following can serve as a guideline: a puppy can hold his/her bladder one hour for each month of age (i.e.: 2 months = 2 hours, 3 months = 3 hours).

**Remember these five steps to successful house training:**

1. Prevent accidents
2. Reward going to the bathroom
3. Anticipate bathroom needs
4. Interrupt accidents and avoid punishing
5. Clean up accidents with enzyme cleaner

**Pee Pads**

5 weeks and under: place puppies on pee pads immediately after waking up, after eating, and about once an hour. Praise the puppy enthusiastically every time he/she urinates or defecates on the pad. Change the pads frequently, as puppies tend to chew on pee pads.

**Crate Training**

Try to make the crate a positive place to be by feeding all meals inside or providing a special treat that he/she only receives when in the crate. Try throwing treats into the crate and allow the dog to go retrieve the treat building trust that each time he/she walks in does not mean a long period of alone time. Increase this time the same way as above, one second at a time, ensuring you do not go over the dog’s comfort level and cause stress.

If the dog does become stressed in the crate, wait for a moment of calm or quiet before approaching. Returning during a stress reaction can reward or reinforce the reaction. Only return and open the crate when your pup is calm. Keep a log of the amount of time the pup stays in the crate and when signs of stress emerged. Increase the time alone by small increments. If you happen to progress too far too fast, wait for a second or two of calm before returning to the dog.
Different Age Groups of Puppies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Newborn puppies** | - Eyes & ears closed tightly  
                  | - Can’t control body temperature  
                  | - No teeth  
                  | - Can pull with front legs to nurse or seek warmth  
                  | - For feeding see chart |
| **1 week old**   | - Look plumper may double birth weight  
                  | - Face more dog like  
                  | - Still need mom or heating source  
                  | - For feeding see chart |
| **2 weeks old**  | - Eyes open or partially  
                  | - Ears open they can hear  
                  | - Time to start handling puppies if they are with their mother  
                  | - For feeding see chart |
| **3 weeks old**  | - Rear legs gain strength  
                  | - Cutting deciduous teeth  
                  | - Stand, sit or totter about  
                  | - Interactive with siblings  
                  | - Individual personalities showing  
<pre><code>              | - For feeding see chart |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>- Regulate their body temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Running, playing and wagging their tails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Introduce wet or softened food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wipe down or bathe as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Start controlling bowel movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- For feeding see charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Start to introduce wet food mixed with formula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>- Weaning from mom or bottle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Can be messy when eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wipe down or bathe as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- More active wrestling, puppy piles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Soften dry food with warm water and wet food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>- Fully weaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eating 5 to 6 small meals a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Investigating territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Start potty training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dry kibble available and some wet food throughout the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>- Eating well on their own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Very active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Very playful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Still work on potty training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dry kibble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 weeks old</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Once they reach 2 pounds ready to get spayed/neutered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ready for adoption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Time for new home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Time for you to get some more foster animals!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


## Puppy Bottle Feeding and Stomach Capacity Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puppy Weight (lbs, oz)</th>
<th>Puppy Weight (grams)</th>
<th>Daily Caloric Requirement*</th>
<th>Amount of Formula Per Day (ml)**</th>
<th>Amount Per Feeding (ml)*</th>
<th>Approximate Number of Feeds Per Day***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 oz</td>
<td>57 g</td>
<td>11 kcal</td>
<td>13 ml</td>
<td>2 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 oz</td>
<td>113 g</td>
<td>23 kcal</td>
<td>26 ml</td>
<td>5 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 oz</td>
<td>170 g</td>
<td>34 kcal</td>
<td>38 ml</td>
<td>7 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 oz</td>
<td>227 g</td>
<td>45 kcal</td>
<td>50 ml</td>
<td>9 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 oz</td>
<td>284 g</td>
<td>57 kcal</td>
<td>63 ml</td>
<td>11 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 oz</td>
<td>340 g</td>
<td>68 kcal</td>
<td>76 ml</td>
<td>14 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 oz</td>
<td>397 g</td>
<td>79 kcal</td>
<td>88 ml</td>
<td>16 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 oz (1 lb)</td>
<td>454 g</td>
<td>91 kcal</td>
<td>101 ml</td>
<td>18 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 lb</td>
<td>907 g</td>
<td>181 kcal</td>
<td>202 ml</td>
<td>36 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 lb</td>
<td>1,361 g</td>
<td>272 kcal</td>
<td>302 ml</td>
<td>54 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 lb</td>
<td>1,814 g</td>
<td>363 kcal</td>
<td>403 ml</td>
<td>73 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 lb</td>
<td>2,268 g</td>
<td>454 kcal</td>
<td>504 ml</td>
<td>91 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 lb</td>
<td>2,722 g</td>
<td>544 kcal</td>
<td>605 ml</td>
<td>109 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 lb</td>
<td>3,175 g</td>
<td>635 kcal</td>
<td>706 ml</td>
<td>127 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 lb</td>
<td>3,629 g</td>
<td>726 kcal</td>
<td>806 ml</td>
<td>145 ml</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The daily caloric requirement was calculated using 20 kcal/100 g body weight and the amount per feeding using 4 ml/100 g body weight. The energy requirement is ~20–26 kcal/100 g body weight daily and the maximum comfortable stomach capacity is ~4 ml/100 g body weight.1

** Concentration 0.9 kcal/ml. Most commercial puppy milk replacers in the US provide less than 1 kcal/ml, acting to increase the volume of milk required to meet caloric needs. This can be problematic in terms of the number and size of feedings given relative to stomach capacity and more likely to result in gastrointestinal disturbances. This may also account for why bottle fed puppies grow slower than puppies that nurse off a mother.

*** As the puppy is adjusting well to the milk and the feeding volume, you may be able to increase the volume fed to help reduce the number of feedings per day. Be aware that exceeding the stomach capacity (amount per feeding) may put the puppy at risk of aspiration, vomiting, diarrhea, and gas build-up in the stomach and intestines. Puppies at that age are usually eating some solid food, decreasing the amount of milk replacer required to meet daily caloric requirements. This may result in less frequent milk feedings.

The Different Types of Stools of Dogs/Puppies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constipation</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Diarrhea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 1</strong></td>
<td>Separate, hard pellets or lumps (may require straining).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 2</strong></td>
<td>Lumpy and sausage-shaped.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 3</strong></td>
<td>Like a sausage with cracks on the surface.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 4</strong></td>
<td>Long, smooth, soft, and snake-like.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 5</strong></td>
<td>Soft, distinct blobs (may be covered in mucous and pass easily).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 6</strong></td>
<td>Fluffy, ragged, and mushy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 7</strong></td>
<td>Watery; entirely liquified.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 8</strong></td>
<td>Mucous-like, bubbly, foul-smelling, and may spray out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bathing Puppies

Puppies with their mother will generally be clean however once they become ambulatory (mobile) is more often the time you will have to step in and help them. Puppies like to stand in their food dish, tip over the water dish or may get dirty playing with their siblings in their confined area.

Besides bathing you can use baby wipes. If using baby wipes on puppies under the age of two weeks you may want to warm them up with a little warm water before applying to the neonate animals. Also be sure to dry them off and keep them warm.

A quick bath can help a puppy stay clean and healthy, but it should be done with care. Puppies don’t have the fat reserves necessary to keep their body temperatures in check. If they get too cold during or after a bath, they may become more susceptible to illness or infection. Keeping puppies clean and dry is important, but it is a balance between how fragile they are and how important the bath is. Here is how to do bath time so no puppies or humans get harmed in the process.

First of all you want to make sure that the puppy is social and used to being handled. Before plunking the puppy into a bath of water, you may want to take a washcloth with warm water on it and start by wiping down the paws. Slowly work your way up the legs and trunk. Once the puppy is used to being damp you can proceed to the full bath.

Again, the key is to move slowly. Let the puppy hear the water running and splashing. Play with the puppy and show them it is a safe place. You can use a bathroom or kitchen sink or a small plastic tub similar to what you would use for dishes. You will also want a small cup to use for rinsing the puppy after bathing. Use warm water, not too hot or too cold. You can talk to the puppy in a soothing tone of voice and cuddle with them to make them feel secure. The more relaxed and gradual the experience the more relaxed the puppy will be. Be patient.

You will only add an inch or two of water depending on the size of the puppy. The temperature of the water should be between 100 to 103 degrees (the body temperature of puppies). You also want to make sure the room you are using is warm, without drafts blowing through it. Place the puppy’s feet into the water, once they are comfortable with that, you can place a washcloth on the bottom of the tub/sink for them to sink their nails into if they want. Having something to grip will make them feel more secure.

Keep the puppy’s face dry and above the waterline to prevent them from drowning or aspirating the water. A small cup will help you rinse off the areas that can’t be submerged in the water.

Be sure to use a puppy friendly shampoo, baby shampoo or Dawn dish soap unscented.
Mix the soap in a small dish with water and use the lather to wash the puppy, or lather the shampoo in your hand before applying. If the puppy starts to squirm and is not enjoying the bath, let go so you are not scratched or bitten. It is easier to clean up soapy water than making a trip to the doctor. To avoid using soap around the face and the eyes, use a damp washcloth. Also, avoid rubbing the rectal area as it can cause irritation. It is best to rinse the puppy off at least two to three times to make sure there is no soap residue left on their delicate skin. When the bath is finished, pat the puppy dry with a freshly dried fluffy towel, it is best to get the puppy dry and warm as soon as possible. If you must use a hair dryer, it must be at the lowest setting and kept a good distance from the puppy, as a hot blast of air could burn their delicate skin.
A puppy’s primary socialization period, the period of life when it is most important to expose him to people and other dogs, is between three and sixteen weeks. However, when a puppy arrives at a shelter, the staff often don’t know how or if a puppy was socialized to other dogs or people. So, in a shelter or a foster program, intensive efforts at socialization should be extended to 20 weeks.

If a puppy is exhibiting behaviors like growling, snapping or biting, there’s a good chance those behaviors can be reversed by implementing a comprehensive positive socialization plan while the puppy is still young. An adult dog who remains fearful due to lack of socialization can be helped through systematic desensitization and counter-conditioning, but the process can be lengthy and could be a lifelong project; shelter staff would develop a mitigation plan for any dogs or puppies requiring this. It’s so important to socialize dogs while they are young.

How to Socialize a Puppy

While socializing a puppy, watch the pup’s body language to determine if he is feeling safe and happy during these interactions. You will want to let the puppy take things at his own speed; don’t force him into situations in which he appears to be uncomfortable. As you introduce the puppy to new experiences, feed him special treats and give lots of praise. Try to avoid exposing the puppy to dogs or humans who might harshly reprimand or significantly frighten him. Discovering new things should be fun for the puppy.

When Can Puppies be Around Other Dogs?

Beginning at week three to seven, puppies (who have been isolated or quarantined for 14 days to ensure no illness) may learn to feel safe and happy around other dogs. Puppies between three and seven weeks of age must be kept with at least one other puppy and, ideally, with their mother. There are exceptions to this rule, though. For instance, a mother dog who is very aggressive toward humans is likely teaching her pups to behave fearfully toward humans, so she might not be the best role model in this regard. It’s best to find foster parents who can take care of an entire litter, rather than splitting them up. If that’s not possible, sending pups from the same litter to foster homes in groups of two or three is acceptable. Orphaned puppies should be isolated from all other puppies and adult dogs with compromised immune systems for a 14-day quarantine period. During this time, maintain socialization with people as described in, “Socializing puppies to people”. Ideally, orphaned pups should be sent to a foster home that has a friendly (and vaccinated) adult dog(s) so that the puppy can socialize with the other dog(s) once the 14 day isolation period is up.

Once they are seven weeks old and after their second set of parvo/distemper vaccinations, puppies should receive exposure to scrupulously vetted adult dogs. Orphaned puppies under 20 weeks of age will benefit significantly from daily playtime with other dogs, adult dogs can
also be good playmates, but they must have a consistent history of being patient and gentle with puppies. In all cases, interrupt play if the adult dog appears to be stressed.

**Protecting Puppies From Diseases**

How much “street exposure” should you give your foster puppies? Because puppies are vulnerable to certain diseases (such as parvo, distemper and hepatitis), you’ll want to avoid public places like sidewalks and parks frequented by other dogs. It is a good idea, however, to take puppies on car rides and carry them or push them around in a stroller around in public, so they can experience the world while having minimal exposure to pathogens. When the puppies are eight weeks old, new people and other animals who are healthy, vaccinated and friendly can come to your home, and you can work on socializing your puppies to them. Ask all new people to wash their hands before handling puppies under 12 weeks of age.

**Socializing Puppies to People**

Lots of positive exposure to people is the most important part of puppy socialization. There are several aspects of human exposure that must be provided:

- Interaction with different types of people (young, old, short, tall, calm, boisterous, etc.)
- Training to teach pups to interact with humans politely and appropriately
- Independent interaction away from other puppies

Puppies start learning how to be independent from the other pups in their litter during their socialization period. Puppies should spend as much time as possible (ideally, most of the day) with their foster person. This interaction should include:

- Play: Puppies should learn how to play nicely with people. They need to know what is and isn’t appropriate play behavior. They should be taught that playing with toys is fun and rewarding, while biting or mouthing people never results in an encouraging response from a human.
- Quiet time: Puppies must learn to enjoy petting, cuddling and calm interactions. If a puppy is not able to calm down, he needs more exercise and playtime.
- Training: Puppies can start learning at a young age how to interact politely with humans. Training puppies to sit on cue when they want something is very easy to do and teaches them how to work with people to get what they want in life. Retrieve training is also very easy to do successfully with many puppies (even before 14 weeks); it teaches pups to share and enjoy fun, positive interactions with people.

Puppies should also receive exposure to lots of different people. They should meet and briefly interact with a minimum of five new people per day, if possible.
Puppy Play Biting

Puppies bite each other in the course of normal play, and they let each other know — by yelping — when play bites are too hard. This is another reason why it’s important for puppies to experience plenty of play with their litter mates or other puppies. However, when puppies play with humans, they should be discouraged from play biting. When a puppy play bites, say “Ouch!” and get up and walk away, then encourage play with appropriate toys.

Preventing Resource Guarding

To help prevent your foster puppies from guarding food and other resources from humans, you’ll want to teach them that it’s not necessary to guard these things. To that end, practice each of these exercises several times per day with all puppies:

- Food bowl bonus: While the puppy is eating, approach him, reach for and take the bowl, feed the puppy a high-value treat (something he enjoys more than his regular food) and give the bowl back.
- Object exchanges: While the puppy is holding a toy, approach him, reach for and take the toy away, give the puppy a special treat, and give the toy back.

Exposing Puppies to Sounds, Scents, Surfaces and Objects

When puppies are between the ages of three and twenty weeks, they should be exposed to a variety of sounds, scents, surfaces and objects. The idea is to help the puppies become comfortable with typical experiences they will have in their lives as adult dogs. This is another reason that a foster home is preferable to a shelter for most puppies, since shelters don’t have the same exposure to normal household stimuli.

Alone Time for Puppies

To teach them that it is normal and appropriate to be left alone at times, puppies over eight weeks should have some “alone time” every day. Start with a short absence, not a long stretch of time. After giving the puppies enough exercise to tire them out, leave them alone in a puppy-safe enclosure. You can also put the pups in the kitchen with a baby gate preventing access to the rest of the house. Provide toys and “pee pads.” Gradually work up to leaving the puppies alone for longer periods of time.
Good Manners—The goal is to teach volunteers and other handlers how to train basic obedience behaviors using positive reinforcement. We hope to begin the path toward well mannered dogs at home that can sit and stay, come when called, greet other people and dogs without jumping or lunging, lie down and stay and walk on a leash in a controlled manner.

**Watch Me**

It is difficult to train a dog that won’t pay attention to you so the first thing we need to teach dogs is to pay attention first.

- Show dog a treat
- Hold the treat near your eyes and say “watch me”
- When dog makes eye contact, give him the treat quickly by bringing treat straight down to the dog’s mouth.
- At first, give the dog a treat every time he makes eye contact.
- Gradually ask for longer periods of eye contact

**Sit**

- To lure the sit, put the treat on the dog’s nose and move it slowly backward and up.
- When the head goes up, his butt will go down
- As soon as his bottom hits the floor, give him the treat
- When you dog is sitting smoothly for the lure, then begin to introduce the verbal command
- Say “sit” and lure the sit as described above
- Practice in both the front and heel positions
- This is just a sit command, not a stay command, so remember to release the dog from the sit quickly. The goal is a quick sit with a quick release

**Down**

- The easiest way to lure a down for most dogs is to start with the sitting position
- Put a treat near the dog’s nose, slowly lowering the treat to his chest then down to the floor and forward, making an L shaped motion with the treat (down and out)
- As soon as the dog lies down, quickly give him the treat
- When the dog is moving to the down position smoothly, you can introduce the verbal command
- Say the cue word “down” only when the dog is in the down position
- Practice in both the front and heel positions
- After you have taught the down and you are sure your dog knows the command, start fading out the hand motion and stop bending over.
• Use your release command each time to release your dog from the down, this is not a stay exercise, only a down exercise.

**Heeling**

• Encourage your dog to heel on the left side by holding some treats in your left hand and put the leash in your right hand  
• Lure the dog along your side with the treats at nose level (if too high it will encourage your dog to jump)  
• Use your voice to encourage your dog to keep up with you  
• Pop a treat into your dog’s mouth from time to time as you walk  
• When you stop, ask your dog to sit in heel position

**Jumping up**-if your dog jumps up to greet people discourage this behavior and be sure you NEVER reward your dog for jumping up-meaning no petting, no sweet talk and no attention for any dog that does not have all 4 feet on the floor.

• Teach your dog to sit to greet visitors  
• Stand on your leash, giving your dog just enough length to sit comfortably  
• If your dog jumps, give the command “off” (because you are standing on the leash your dog will get an automatic collar correction every time he jumps up  
• As soon as your dog has 4 feet on the floor, reward with a treat or pat on the head  
• Only reward when the dog is calm and 4 feet are on the floor  
• If you are consistent, you should see improvement within the week

**Come**-early impressions are very important-your dog’s early associations with the word “come” should be very, very positive ones. Always practice recalls with plenty of praise and treats and use only for good things. Never use the word “come” if it is going to be bad news for him (crate, ending a walk or play or a procedure he dislikes).

• Practice initially in low distraction areas so the dog succeeds most of the time  
• To strengthen the “come”, have two or more people take turns calling the dog to them  
• When the dog arrives, the dog must sit and have his collar touched before being rewarded  
• Keep rewards hidden in a pocket or pouch after the first couple repetitions  
• When the dog is very reliable, praise every time but give rewards intermittently

**Sit Stay**-begin in a quiet room with no distractions. Start with your dog sitting in front of you looking at your face. Periodically give him a small treat. When your dog will sit like this for about 10 seconds between treats, you are ready to start adding some distance.

• Give the command “stay” and take one step back, then come right back to your dog  
• Give him a treat and release him from stay  
• Repeat this procedure but this time take two steps back
Continue building the stay one step at a time until you can reach the end of your six-foot leash
If the dog breaks the stay before you release say “ah ah” (like no no), and put him right back into the sit
Try again but make the next trial easier (for example if he broke at 3 steps, try 2 this time)
If he fails too much, you are asking too much too soon
Once you reach the end of the 6-foot leash, add some duration to the stay
Once your dog has mastered this, move to a more distracting area and repeat the above process
Remember, do NOT give the “stay” command over and over, just give the command once-if the dog breaks before you release, say “ah ah” and put him back and try again

Heeling with sits
Start with your dog sitting in heel position-reward your dog for looking up at you
Say “heel” as you step off with your left leg
Take 2-3 steps then stop, command sit or lure the sit in heel position if you have to
Repeat
The goal is for the dog to automatically sit and heel when you stop
Note: some dogs will tend to swing out to the side or even hop to the front position when you ask them to sit at heel-likely because the dog has practiced sit from the front position more than the heel position-to correct this spend some time just rewarding the dog for sitting in heel position. If needed, heel along a fence to physically prevent the dog from going wide

Manners-get in the habit of asking your dog to do at least one command such as sit, before you do something for him-the ‘nothing for free’ rule-think of ‘sit’ as him saying please before:
Letting him out of his kennel
Opening the front door to take him for a walk
Opening to door to the kennel
Letting him off leash in the dog run

Leave it
Place a small treat between your thumb and fore finger, have another ready in your other hand behind your back
Show the first treat (he will lick, paw or nuzzle), simply ignore this and remain motionless
As soon as your dog looks away or stops harassing you, praise him and give him the treat from behind your back with an open palm
Repeat
With practice your dog will learn the best chance to win is to withdraw and wait patiently whenever he is told to “leave it”
- Once good at this, try the more difficult variation of a treat or toy on the floor (protect it so he cannot win by grabbing)

**Down Stay** train the same way as we did for a “sit stay”
- Place dog in down, command “stay” ONCE and take one step back, return to the dog and reward and release
- If he breaks, use “ah ah” and put him back
- If he failed to stay, try a half step this time
- If he successfully stayed, try two steps this time
- Proceed in this manner until he can stay on the end of the 6-foot leash, building duration up to 20 seconds

**Walk Around Sit Stay**
- Put dog in front sit position, command “stay” then take one step to the side, then step back to front, reward and release your dog
- Next, try two steps, continue in this manner until you can walk around your dog in a circle
- The most difficult part is passing behind your dog because they cannot see you, so if needed, hold a treat at your dog’s nose and let him nibble as you pass behind the first few times

Physical activity is not the only thing our dogs need. Challenging them with mental exercises like these will keep their minds active and busy and will ultimately result in a calmer experience while in the shelter. Too much physical activity can actually result in more agitated behavior in the kennels if not coupled with some mental activity as well.
While puppies are super cute and can be a lot of fun, they also can be a lot of work especially if you are fostering a pair or more at the same time. During my time as a puppy foster, I learned that even at a very young age, they can learn basic obedience such as sit, high five, lay down and stay. They can also learn boundaries and appropriate behavior; they are not too young to understand! Think of it this way, do you wait until your kids are 10 years old before you teach them some manners or do you start as soon as there is some comprehension level at say 2 years old? When my foster pups were ready for adoption, they were adopted quickly because they showed better at the shelter and I was able to demonstrate to the new family everything they learned and what is cuter than a little pup sitting politely and giving the adopter a high five?

**Teaching basic obedience:**

- You can refer to the Dog Training Take Home Reference for tips on how to do basic obedience.
- Keep in mind puppies have even shorter attention spans so you have to make yourself very interesting in order to get their attention. I did training around mealtimes when I knew they would be hungry. I used their kibble as “treats” and kept the training sessions to about 3-5 minutes. This method can also prevent food aggression from developing as well when you are hand feeding kibble in the beginning.
- For teaching “high five”, I just used the training method for “shake” but instead of marking the behavior by saying “shake”, I would say “high five” and let their paw smack my open palm like you would slap a person’s hand when high fiving. If they did the trick, I would release the treat or speak with an excited voice to get them excited and praise them.

**Basic Socialization:**

The section on how to socialize puppies in this manual has a lot of great information but I also had the benefit of having older dogs that did well with puppies and I used it to my advantage. My dog Siren was a good “mommy” dog and helped my foster pups learn boundaries and appropriate play. I would keep my foster pups separated from my dogs for 2 weeks to make sure they didn’t get sick and get my dogs sick. After the quarantine period, I would introduce the puppy to Siren (always with supervision). I would keep Siren on a leash just in case so I could keep control. I would also let Siren “correct” the puppy, so if the puppy was being too obnoxious, she would growl or snap. This was not aggression; this was just her way of communicating to the pup that he/she needs to settle down. I would also pay attention to the response of the puppy, was he/she responsive and would back off or ignore the correction and continue or escalate. When this happened, I would end playtime and do one on one sessions with the pup a little...
bit more and work on basic obedience. Older dogs can get tired of puppies too so it is essential that you give your dogs a break. It is important to note that you need to be honest with yourself. Puppies are like sponges and will pick up on everything. If your dog is not the best-behaved or still needs training, your dog interacting with the pup may not be the best idea. You don’t want the puppy picking up bad habits from any adult dog. Remember that these puppies will be adoption candidates at some point.

Overall, the 3-7 week mark is a crucial socialization period that can be contradicted with medical advice of not taking the puppy anywhere to avoid exposure to disease or parasites so what do you do? Well, if you have the benefit of already having other dogs in the household (or maybe a friend’s dog or neighbor’s dog) that are healthy, vaccinated, and behaviorally sound than that is a great way to expose your foster pup to other dogs in a safe and controlled environment. Also, while I do not recommend dog parks during this time (or ever but that is another discussion entirely) or walking the puppy on the ground, this is where a stroller can come in handy to safely “walk” the dog around the neighborhood (the Shelter has dog strollers that we can loan out if you are at this phase). This method avoids exposure to the ground but the puppy still gets to experience other sights, sounds, smells, and other humans. Of course, you can always carry the puppy too or have him/her ride around in the car with you while you run errands (DO NOT EVER LEAVE A DOG OR CHILD IN A HOT CAR!!). I’ve witnessed many puppies coming back from foster homes where the pup is still under socialized and fearful. As an adoption counselor at the time, that puppy was still a hard sell, as people are not looking for a project dog. Adopters understand about needing training but if an animal needs more than that, adoption can be a challenge even if it is a puppy.

Resources:

The following resources can be very useful for puppy training. There are plenty of YouTube channels that are great for all kinds of behavior modification and training. Just type puppy training basics in the search engine and you will come across tons of channels. Below are some examples:

Dogs 101 Videos
Leerburg Dog Training
Zak George’s Dog Training Revolution

The following websites and the resources at the end of this manual can also be useful:

https://resources.bestfriends.org/general-pet/foster-resources
https://www.thesprucepets.com/steps-to-train-your-dog-1118273#house-training-and-crate-training

Puppies are hard work but it can be very rewarding when you see the fruits of your labor being taken in by a lovely family. I remember my first foster pup being adopted and while yes, I did cry hard to where the little boy in the family asked me if I was going to be ok, knowing that I helped make an impact was the best feeling. I gave the family a good start and that puppy too. I continued to foster several puppies after that but as my adult dogs reached senior age, being around puppies was too much for them so I had to step back and switch to kittens (I use my dogs to socialize kittens too). However, I know that when I am able to do so, I would foster puppies again because witnessing and playing a part in their development is the best feeling in the world.
Bunnies
Thank you for your interest in fostering rabbits! Rabbits are individuals, just like people, cats, and dogs. They can be shy, nervous, outgoing, playful, bright, ornery, inquisitive and opinionated. Rabbit fostering is truly an easy and enjoyable experience and we appreciate foster parents who are ready to prepare these rabbits for adoption. Rabbits housed at the shelter can be very stressful for them so we are grateful to fosters for providing them a quiet environment.

**Supplies You Will Need:**
Everything you will need is given by the Napa County Animal Shelter. If you need supplies at any time please let us know and we will be happy to provide you with what you need! Items needed:

- Rabbit Cage
- X-Pen
- Alfalfa Hay
- Rabbit Pellets
- Litter Box
- Bedding for Litter Box
- Bowls
- Water Bottle
- Towels
- Toys (if available)
- Hide-A-Way Boxes (if available)
- Carrier for safe transportation of rabbits

**Set Up/Housing**
Once you take your rabbit home, you will need to set up your bunny preferably inside, in a quiet part of your house and away from your other animals. You never want to let your rabbit have free roam of the house because they can chew cords or can become stuck in small crevices of your house. Staff can instruct you on how to set up the cage but be prepared; baby rabbits are not litter box trained and can be very messy in these early stages of life. Hopefully, during their stay, they will start to understand the concept of using a litter box.

**Food and Water**
The diet of the rabbit is very important. Your rabbit must have hay and pellets at all times and even more so hay. To help with litter box training, it is encouraged that you place the hay inside the litter box. You can give your rabbits a variety of healthy fruits and veggies. The shelter can provide you a list of safe food to give to your rabbit. Also, make sure that rabbits have water at all times.
Socialization
Make sure you socialize your foster bunny daily. Rabbits need lots of attention, playtime and exercise to stay happy and healthy. When approaching your rabbit you always want to approach with care. You will want to approach them quietly and speak softly. It may even be easier to come down eye level to your bunny instead of picking up from above. You must also understand that not all rabbits want to be held right away. One must try not to force your foster rabbit to be held unless it is necessary but it is something that you can work towards. Food and toys can be a great way to socialize and a lot of toys can be made with items around your house. Here is a link to a site with some great toy ideas. https://rabbit.org/faq-toys/

Mom and Babies
The set up for a mom with her babies is similar to that of a single rabbit. The only difference is that there will be a second box provided which is where the nest is. You will care for the mom like you would any other rabbit you foster. For the first four weeks of baby rabbit life, they are completely cared for by mom. It is best at this time to let the mom do most of the care herself and not focus on socializing her or the babies. As a foster, just check in once a day to make sure the mom is caring for all the babies. Always pet mom first before touching her babies if you can. When checking the babies make sure all the babies are present, that they are warm and bellies are full. If you notice any issues with the babies, for example, they are not being fed please contact the shelter. We can instruct you on how to bottle feed, if you are comfortable, and we can give you the necessary supplies. Once the babies are moving around and leaving the nest it is okay to start socializing them. All mom rabbits will be separated from their babies at 8 weeks of age.

Medical Concerns
Rabbits are prey animals, and as such, can hide their symptoms when sick. It’s up to you to watch them carefully, and to note any slight changes in their personality and behavior that might indicate that they are sick. Any time your rabbits have diarrhea, any discharge from the eyes and nose, any growths forming or a head tilt, please inform the shelter immediately. Also, you never want to allow your rabbit to get wet or give a rabbit a bath. They are thorough groomers and water can be very dangerous to rabbits.

We will ask you to return your bunny once a month for a routine weight and health check until he/she is ready to return to the shelter.
### DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS of RABBITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Feeding and Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Newborn** | • Keep warm  
  • Preferably with mother  
  • Tube fed  
  • 2 – 2 ½ mls twice a day use KMR |
| **1 week old** | • Keep warm  
  • Preferably with mom  
  • Tube fed  
  • 2 – 2 ½ mls twice a day use KMR |
| **2 weeks old** | • Keep warm  
  • Walking, hopping jumping out of nest  
  • Syringe feed  
  • 5 – 7 mls twice a day use KMR |
| **3 weeks old** | • Syringe feed  
  • Start nibbling on hay  
  • More active  
  • Start socializing  
  • 7 – 13 mls twice a day use KMR |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4 weeks old  | - Eating on their own
              - Both pellets and hay
              - Socialize to people
              - Very active
              - 13 – 15 mls twice a day use KMR                                      |
| 8 weeks old  | - Eating on their own
              - Socialize to people
              - Begin litter train
              - Introduce rabbit toys                                                |
| 4 months old | - Over 2 pounds time to get spay/neutered
              - Ready for adoption
              - Time for new home
              - Time for you to get more foster animals!                            |
When feeding baby rabbits, there are several things that should be noted. First of all, the babies only need to be fed twice daily – morning and night. After every feeding, for at least the first 2-3 weeks, each baby will have to be stimulated to potty. It is easily done! Just gently rub or pat the genital/anal area with a warm, soft cloth until excrement and/or urine comes out. Failure to do stimulation can be fatal. Again, if you have mom, she will do the feeding and pottying but if you have orphan bunnies, below is a simple chart to guide you on how much baby bunnies are fed:

***When bunnies have to be fed a milk replacer, it is safe to use kitten milk replacer such as KMR***

0-1 week of age: 2 – 3cc per baby

1-2 weeks of age: 4 – 7cc per baby: resist over feeding and do not allow the baby to eat too fast, as this could result in aspiration or gas build up

2-3 weeks of age: 7 – 14cc per baby: start introducing hay

3-6 weeks of age: 14 – 17cc per baby: gather a cecotrope from any healthy, parasite free adult rabbit and mix it into a small amount of the formula for 2-3 consecutive days; may need to syringe-feed this as most babies do not like it and will often try to refuse to eat it... this is an important step in establishing healthy flora in the babies’ guts. After this cecotrope introduction, you can also begin offering small amounts of pellets to the babies.

***obtaining a cecotrope (type of fecal matter from overnight elimination) may not always be possible as other rabbits may not be at the shelter for this***

Help! My baby bunny is aspirating

One of the most common forms of death by hand-fed baby animals is due to aspiration. This is the term used for a baby who failed to correctly swallow formula. The liquid gets into the lungs and quickly, the baby “drowns” and dies very quickly while you watch helplessly. Guess what! You CAN save your baby. This is how: place the baby, lengthwise, on the palm of your hand (head at fingertips, tail at wrist) and close your other hand securely over the baby, so that you are cupping it in your hands. Now, standing up, raise your hands to chest level and swing downwards, between your knees. Do this swiftly, but not harshly, and be very careful not to drop the baby. Doing this acts like doing the Heimlich Maneuver, causing the fluid to be forced out and restoring the ability to breathe.
Bunnies Daily Munch

Leafy greens

1 Tbsp/2 lbs body weight
1 of 3 varieties/day
- Parsley
- Spinach
- Mustard greens
- Beet greens
- Arugula
- Carrot tops
- Cucumber leaves
- Endive
- Frisée lettuce
- Red or green lettuce
- Romaine lettuce
- Spring greens
- Turnip greens
- Dandelion greens

Non-leafy vegetables

1 Tbsp/2 lbs body weight
1 of 3 varieties/day
- Swiss chard
- Red cabbage
- Radish tops
- Broccoli florets
- Spinach
- Mustard greens
- Beet greens
- Arugula
- Carrot tops
- Cucumber leaves
- Endive
- Frisée lettuce
- Red or green lettuce
- Romaine lettuce
- Spring greens
- Turnip greens
- Dandelion greens

Fruits

- Apple (any variety)
- Cherries (any variety)
- Pear
- Peach
- Plums
- Mangoes
- Pineapple (remove skin)
- Banana
- Melons (any, can include peel + seeds)
- Star fruit
- Apricot
- Currents
- Nectarine

Leafy greens

- Kale (all types)
- Collard greens
- Turnip greens
- Escarole
- Endive
- Cabbage
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts

Non-leafy vegetables

- Parsley
- Spinach
- Mustard greens
- Beet greens
- Arugula
- Carrot tops
- Cucumber leaves
- Endive
- Frisée lettuce
- Red or green lettuce
- Romaine lettuce
- Spring greens
- Turnip greens
- Dandelion greens

Fruits

- Apple (any variety)
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- Banana
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- Star fruit
- Apricot
- Currents
- Nectarine

A small handful of good quality pellets, unlimited hay + fresh water

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The Scoop on Poop!

Your rabbit's diet should consist of unlimited access to grass hays (timothy, orchard grass, brome), a small amount of high-quality "plain" pelleted food (no fruit, seeds, etc), a large amount of fresh greens and plenty of fresh water daily. The following discusses what you might find in your rabbit's litter box, and how droppings that look a certain way can tell you about your bunny's overall intestinal health.

- Look for large, light-colored droppings. Not too dry, not too moist. These are optimal for your bunny's health. Droppings that look like these tell you that bunny is eating plenty of hay, getting a good amount of water, and his digestion is working well.

- Droppings that are hard, small, and darker in color, usually indicate that bunny is not eating enough hay. Bunny needs more grass hay and plenty of water. You might need to decrease pellets a bit and increase hay.

- Droppings that are stringed together with fur are called "string of pearls." This indicates that your rabbit is ingesting a lot of fur and the droppings are bound together. This situation could lead to a blockage of the digestive tract, so it's important to ensure you comb away loose fur, make sure bunny eats plenty of grass hay and drinks a lot of fresh water. These droppings are typically seen during times of heavy shedding.

- Moist, soft droppings can indicate that bunny's diet is too heavy in proteins or sugars. Cut back on sweets (carrots, fruit, treats, etc.) and increase fresh grass hays. This can also occur if your rabbit's pelleted food is not of high quality (contains dried fruit or seeds) or he's getting too high a quantity. Reduce high-calorie foods and increase consumption of grass hays (Timothy, Orchard Grass, etc.). Consult with your vet if this continues. There may be a secondary reason for soft droppings, such as parasitic infestation (coccidia, pin worms, etc.).

- Small clusters of shiny droppings that smell very "pungent" are cecropes (also known as cecal pellets). Rabbits ingest these droppings to reintroduce healthy bacteria to their digestive system. They are commonly called "night droppings" though rabbits can be seen ingesting them at any time of the day. If you see a lot of these lying around, it means your rabbit's diet is too rich. Time to cut back on sweets, high-fat pellets, and treats of any kind. If your rabbit is obese, he can have trouble reaching these droppings and they can become smeared on his bottom.

Note: If you find very few or no droppings in your rabbit's litter box, after several hours of providing a new box, this can indicate that a blockage may be occurring. If your rabbit is not eating well or not passing droppings, it can be a life-threatening situation. Contact your veterinarian right away to have bunny examined and treated if necessary.
Jennifer’s Helpful Bunny Tips

As a fellow bunny owner and foster, I have found the following information very helpful when it comes to bunny care and housing. Pictured at right is my beloved bunny Oswald 😊

Helpful Websites

House Rabbit Society
This is a rabbit rescue website. It has a lot of good information and articles about everything Rabbit. I would recommend looking at the link on the Rabbit 101 section. I do want to give a heads up that it can be a lot of information and be a little lengthy but with great information.
www.rabbit.org

My House Rabbit
I like this website because the information is clear and concise. I found that this website does have quite a few advertisements but the information provided is very interesting.
https://myhouserabbit.com/rabbit-care/care-pet-rabbit/

The Rabbit Haven
This is another Rabbit Rescue with a lot of information. Simple and straight to the point, very helpful information.
https://therabbithaven.org/caring-for-your-rabbit

Helpful Videos

How to take Care of a Pet Rabbit
I love this video series on Youtube! The channel is called Howcast. I chose to include this series because it’s done by professionals (bunny lover Amy Sedaris and rabbit expert Mary E. Cotter, Ed.D. LVT.). I wanted to make sure I included the knowledge of people who are trained professionals.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfrPCcrUjqU

The Bunny Lady
This is a newer channel that I found about bunny care. This individual appears very intuitive when it comes to rabbits. This is not a formal information source; I would always verify some information that she says because she is not a professional but I have enjoyed some of her ideas.
https://www.youtube.com/c/TheBunnyLady/videos
Books:
House Rabbit Handbook: *How to live with an Urban Rabbit*. 5th edition Author Marinell Harriman. I personally haven’t read this book but I wanted to include a book for those individuals who do enjoy this method of research. This book has been recommended by House Rabbit Society and other organizations.
Other Topics
Cleaning

One of the many benefits of having animals in foster homes is the decreased risk of illness due to being less stressed. It is important however, that the foster home follows all cleaning instructions provided by the Shelter to ensure proper cleaning and disinfection and prevent cross contamination and disease.

Regardless of what species of animal you are fostering, having a space in your home that is easy to clean and house your foster pet will greatly assist in keeping germ transmission down. Rooms or areas that have no carpet, have flooring, least amount of items/decorations (these are fomites), and has a good source of natural light and ventilation can be great areas to house a foster animal. If fostering a dog, a wire crate would be the best kind to use followed by a plastic crate. These type of crates can easily be cleaned with Rescue cleaner (NCAS will supply this product). Nylon and mesh crates are not highly recommended for dogs but if that is all that is available, they can still be sprayed with Rescue cleaner and allowed to air dry.

There are no special cleaning methods or techniques needed, just good old fashioned elbow grease to remove debris, hair, and any other organic material from surfaces. If your foster pet is housebroken or keeps their area pretty clean, then spot cleaning would be acceptable to do. This method allows for reducing stress and is the least disruptive in the foster pets’ living space. Spot cleaning also allows for the animals’ scent to remain, which can also aid in decreasing stress levels.

It is important to distinguish between cleaning and disinfection. Cleaning removes germs by mechanical means (scrubbing, sweeping, wiping etc.) while disinfection kills germs by use of an agent such as Rescue (both a cleaner and disinfectant). For everyday cleaning, the foster parent will want to wipe down all surfaces that the foster pet has touched: flooring, walls, bowls (if not disposable), crates, bedding and surfaces that the foster parent has touched after handling animals such as door knobs, counters, and light switches. In regards to clothing, it may be helpful to designate a set of clothes and shoes to wear only when handling fosters to minimize transfer of germs from the foster pets’ living space to the rest of your household. Washing hands every time a foster pet is handled is a must!

Disinfection (deep cleaning/after an outbreak)

Depending on how long the foster pet is living in the foster home, a deep cleaning or disinfection may be needed at some point. At NCAS, we use Rescue which is a parvocide, fungicide, and bactericide. It can be used as an everyday cleaner where one can spray then wipe or saturate the surface, leave on for 10 minutes and then wipe or rinse away. It is
important to note that surfaces must be clean in order to properly disinfect. This again means that all debris, hair and any organic material (feces, urine, nasal discharge, blood etc.) must be removed by mechanical means before applying disinfectant. Many disinfectants including bleach, deactivate once they come in contact with a dirty surface.

If an outbreak occurs such as an Upper Respiratory Infection or other contagious disease, thorough cleaning of surfaces will be even more important if the foster parent agrees to take care of the foster pet through his/her illness. Presence of organic matter can be a mode of transmission for disease and illness so removal from surfaces is necessary. If there are resident animals in the home, complete separation and quarantine is required to prevent spread of disease to the resident pets. When dealing with zoonotic diseases (disease passed from an animal to human), the Shelter will further instruct the foster parent on proper cleaning and disinfection.

**Supplies**

Items used for foster pets should be as disposable as possible. The best type of water and food dishes to use are stainless steel as this surface is the easiest to clean and disinfect. Ceramic and glass are also easy to clean and disinfect but due to the high risk of breakage, they are not usually recommended for use. Plastic is not the easiest to clean or disinfect so not usually recommended. French fry trays, small paper plates and paper bowls are also good to use for food dishes since these can be thrown away after each use. Potty pads to cover the floor or use as crate liners can also absorb urine and other messes and again can be thrown away after use. Toys that can be wiped clean for reuse for the same foster pet (think hard plastic cat toys, slinkies, ping pong balls etc.) are more sanitary than using stuffed animals however enrichment is also important so if only stuffed animals are available as toys, they can easily be thrown away after use.
Current state codes require all dogs, cats and rabbits to be spayed and neutered before leaving the Shelter once adopted and dogs and cats must be a minimum of 2 months old and weigh 2 pounds. Rabbits must be 4 months of age in order to be spayed/neutered. It is extremely important that the foster parent keep up with all scheduled checkups as it will be during these appointments that the foster pet will be weighed. Failure to bring foster pets to scheduled appointments can lead to a delay in surgery and therefore a delay in being placed for adoption. Be advised that once foster pets reach the 2 month/2 pound mark, they could immediately be placed for adoption at the Shelter.

All spay/neuters are scheduled with Napa Humane Spay/Neuter Clinic located at 3265 California Blvd, Napa, Ca 94558. Even though NCAS prefers that foster animals stay at the Shelter for adoption once ready, there are circumstances where staff will ask if a foster parent can take the foster pet to the clinic. Once the foster pet reaches 2 months/8 weeks and has “made weight” a staff member will place the kennel card in the folder entitled “Shelter and Foster Animals: Need to be Scheduled for the Clinic” and the staff member scheduling the surgeries will give the foster parent a call (if it was decided that the foster parent will drop off) to determine their availability. The procedure is as follows:

1. Determination made that foster pet is eligible for spay/neuter
2. Kennel card(s) submitted to folder
3. Staff member calls foster parent to confirm availability for drop off/pick up
4. Staff member schedules animals to go to clinic
5. Staff member scans copy of kennel card with foster parent’s name and if they are dropping off and picking up (if applicable) to Napa Humane along with clinic minutes and roster
6. Staff member may call foster parent to confirm date and time for surgery

Night Before Surgery:

It is important to follow pre surgical instructions in regards to food and water for foster pets. Certain animals and age groups will still require that they be watered and fed even the morning of surgery such as rabbits and young kittens under 5 months old. Animals older than 5 months will need to be fasted after 9 pm the night before and no food the morning of surgery, water is ok.
Day of Surgery:

Foster drop offs at Napa Humane occur between 7:30-8am and foster parents may be asked to do the transport. The foster parent will be able to be in the exam room with the veterinarian and answer any of the questions the vet may have. The vet will also confirm the foster pet’s weight at that time.

Picking Up From Surgery:

Once animals are spayed/neutered, they are immediately made available for adoption unless NCAS receives different instructions from the vet, there is a lack of current cage space (can happen during kitten season) or it is felt that the foster pet needs to be observed overnight. We need to take advantage of times during the year when adoptions demands are high such as kitten and holiday seasons and when NCAS has free adoption days so having the foster pet at the shelter as soon as possible is important to maximize the foster pet’s chances for adoption.

Please Note:

The above instructions were created under normal Pre-COVID circumstances. At this time, Napa Humane is requiring that only NCAS do the transport of foster animals to the clinic to minimize the amount of people on their property to adhere to safety and physical distancing rules. This is subject to change at any time.
Foster Program

Donation Wish List

- Heating pads
- formula (KMR, ESBILAC)
- soda flats or disposable litter pans
- Gerber baby food (meat varieties)
- potty pads
- nursing kits
- canned kitten/puppy food
- French fry trays
- receiving blankets
- toys
- pet wipes
- food scales
Much of the information in this manual is taken from various sources including personal experience from staff and foster volunteers. The following websites are also excellent sources of information for a variety of animal related questions:

https://www.aspcapro.org/
https://www.maddiesfund.org/
https://www.sheltermedicine.com/

Foster Resources | Best Friends Animal Society
Dog Training 101: How to Completely Train Your Dog (thesprucepets.com)
Training Your Kitten to Use the Litter Box | Hill's Pet

YouTube has tons of videos as well to check out. Some of the channels that NCAS follows are:

Dogs 101 Videos
Leerburg Dog Training
Million Cat Challenge
The Kitten Lady

Other Resources:

https://napahumane.org/our-work/behavior-help/behavior-help
End of Manual