



# Foster Care Guide

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## *Humane Society, Tennessee Valley*

*6717 Kingston Pike  
Knoxville, TN 37919  
(865)573-9675*

*[www.HumaneSocietyTennessee.org](http://www.HumaneSocietyTennessee.org)*

*Victoria Smith, Foster Coordinator x100*

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## Overview

### **DEAR FOSTER FAMILY,**

First and foremost, THANK YOU! You are about to embark on a life-saving adventure that you will never forget and become a hero to your foster animal! Our foster program exists to give young animals a chance to grow and to give injured, sick, or under-socialized animals an opportunity to heal. This helps us take more animals in from our partner shelters that may be at risk of euthanasia.

Foster parents are asked to provide shelter, love, and care for these animals- Humane Society, Tennessee Valley (HSTV) will supply the rest (depending on supply levels). We will supply you with a transport crate, kennel, food, potty pads/newspaper, litter, toys, bowls, playpens, medical supplies, vet treatments, and all the support you need. Since we are a non-profit, supplies may run low and we may ask for fosters to buy some supplies. Any supplies sent out by HSTV must be brought back, unless you're advised to keep them for future fosters.

### Types of Animals That Need Foster Homes

- Puppies or kittens too young to be adopted
- A mother with her litter of kittens or puppies
- Puppies during 7-10 day "quarantine" hold
- Timid dogs or cats that need socialization and love
- Injured dogs or cats recovering from surgery
- Medical needs / elderly dogs or cats



In this manual, you will find guidance and helpful tips to ensure success for the duration of your foster animal's stay. For any additional questions please email or call the foster coordinator.

## Important Contacts:

### **Victoria Smith- Volunteer and Foster Coordinator**

Office: (865)573-9675 Ext 100

Foster/Emergency Line: (865)226-9575

[foster@humanesocietytennessee.org](mailto:foster@humanesocietytennessee.org)

### **Cera Smith, Adoption Center Manager**

Office: (865)573-9675 Ext 110

[csmith@humanesocietytennessee.org](mailto:csmith@humanesocietytennessee.org)

### **Brian Neilsen, Intake/Transport Manager**

Office: (865)573-9675 Ext 108

[bneilsen@humanesocietytennessee.org](mailto:bneilsen@humanesocietytennessee.org)

### **Knoxville Adoption & PetHelp Center**

6717 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN  
37919

Main: (865)573-9675

Fax: (865)588-6840

[info@humanesocietytennessee.org](mailto:info@humanesocietytennessee.org)

### **Animal ER & Specialty Center**

10213 Kingston Pike

865-693-4440

Only PRE-APPROVED visits will be paid by HSTV! Contact our Foster Coordinator FIRST if there is an emergency.

Foster Line: 865-226-9575!

## Preparing to Foster

Prior to fostering, make sure you have completed the following steps:

- Complete the Foster Application and Orientation- [HumaneSocietyTennessee.org/Programs](https://www.humanesocietytennessee.org/Programs)
- Review this Foster Care Guide and save / bookmark / print for future reference!
- Fill out the On-Deck Form- [tinyurl.com/HSTVOnDeck](https://tinyurl.com/HSTVOnDeck) each time you're ready for new fosters
- Email the Foster Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns.

Before you bring you foster(s) home, make sure that you have a suitable place for them to stay. The room/area should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Enclosed indoor area where temperature can be controlled.
- The space is clean and can be easily disinfected between foster groups.
- Separate from other household pets (at least for the first week and for needed separations).
- Can withstand messes: spilt water or food, vomit, litter, urine, feces, etc.
- No breakable items or small items within reach.
- Electrical outlets and wires are blocked or out of animals' reach.
- Secured windows & screens (we prefer windows are kept closed unless screens are locked).
- Gate off any area the animal(s) should not be in.
- "Baby-Proof" (toilet seat down, unplug curling wand, trashcan moved, cabinets secure, etc).

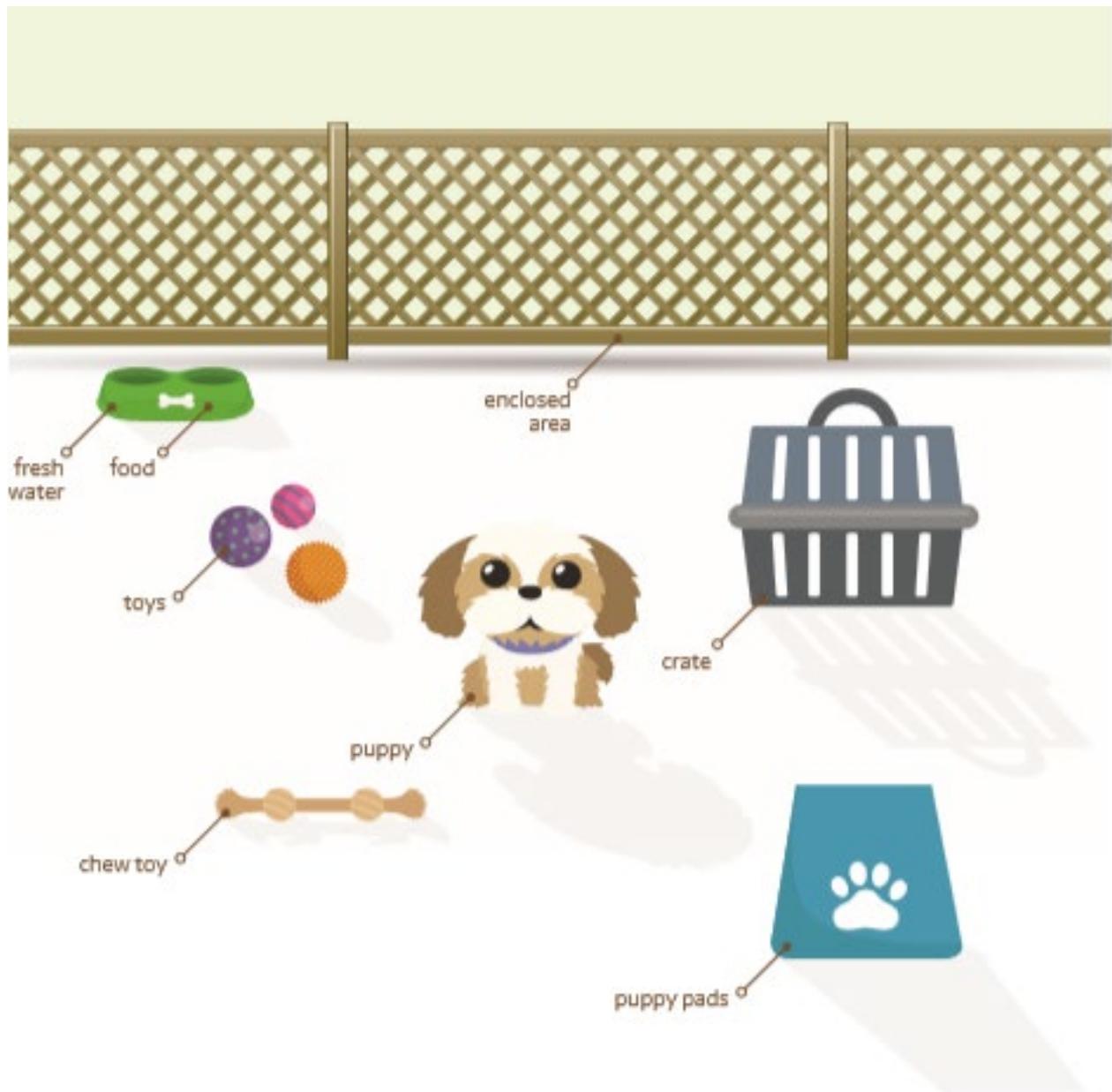


## Example Kitten Set-Up



- ❖ All cats and kittens are required to be indoors ONLY. No outside play is permitted.
- ❖ Bathrooms make a great set-up for cats/kittens as they are confined & generally easier to clean.
- ❖ Items on counters need to be safely stored away. We know how cats like to knock things off!
- ❖ Remove any plants/flowers from the foster area. Many plants can be toxic to animals.
- ❖ Secure window screens in any open window, no matter how small the opening.
- ❖ It is important to keep the kittens warm! However, it is also important that kittens have space to move away from a heat source.
- ❖ Felines like familiarity. Keep their same blankets, toys, bedding, etc. unless they are soiled and need cleaning.

## Example Puppy Set-Up



- ❖ Spare bedroom or bathrooms are great puppy set-ups as they are generally easier to clean
- ❖ Remove rugs as puppies may mistake them for potty pads.
- ❖ Always leave toys / enrichment items to prevent boredom destruction.
- ❖ Fosters are to remain in their foster home at all times unless instructed otherwise.
- ❖ Dogs and puppies are to be kept indoors and crated or in a secure room when unattended.
- ❖ Puppies are not allowed outside unless the foster coordinator instructs you that they are older and fully vaccinated. See “Puppy Quarantine” for more details.
- ❖ Fosters are not permitted to visit dog parks (including apartment dog yards) or other public venues (restaurant patios, bars, downtown, parks, etc.) without individual permission from the foster coordinator.

## Daily Care for Orphaned Pups

### Puppy Growth Milestones

<u>WEEKS</u>	<u>FEEDING</u>	<u>DEVELOPMENT</u>
<b>0-1</b>	If orphaned, bottle feed <b>1oz(30mls) of Puppy Milk Replacer per 8oz(0.5lbs)</b> of body weight <u>daily</u> . Divide that into 8 daily feedings (every 3 hours). Pups should be full but not bloated. If there is a Mom dog, make sure that all puppies are nursing. A lot of crying or activity could indicate a problem with Mom's milk supply.	At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep about 90% of the time and eat the other 10%. Puppies should be kept in a warm environment as chilling is very dangerous to newborn puppies. Orphaned puppies less than 3 weeks will need to be stimulated for elimination. See "Orphaned Puppy Care".
<b>1-2</b>	If orphaned, bottle feed (based on feeding equation above) every 3-4 hours. Overnight feedings can be every 4-6 hours	Healthy puppies should be round and warm. When you pick up a puppy they should wiggle energetically. The puppy's ear canal should open between 5 and 8 days. Eyes will open between 8 and 14 days.
<b>2-3</b>	If orphaned, bottle feed formula every 3-4 hours, until their bellies are full but not bloated.	Puppies begin to crawl around and should be almost standing. They will begin to play with each other, biting ears, tails and paws before their teeth come in. They should be teething at this period.
<b>3-4</b>	If orphaned, bottle feed formula every 4 hours until the puppies are full but not bloated. Puppies may start to lap from a bowl. You can begin offering gruel (puppy milk with canned puppy food).	Puppies begin to see well and their eyes begin to look and function like adult dog eyes. They also begin urinating/defecating on their own around 3 weeks. At three weeks, puppies are in their canine socialization period. If they have siblings, allow them to play at will.
<b>4-5</b>	If orphaned, bottle feed as needed to keep puppies from crying with hunger. Puppies usually can drink and eat from a saucer by 4 weeks. Weaning should be done gradually.	They can begin potty pad training around this age. After each feeding, place the puppy on the pad for him or her to go the bathroom. Be patient! He or she may not remember to do this every time.
<b>5-6</b>	Begin weaning off gruel onto solid food. Thicken the gruel gradually by reducing the amount of water / milk mixed with it. Introduce dry food and water. If you are fostering a litter with their mother, continue weaning.	At about 5 weeks, puppies can start to roam around the room, under supervision. Be sure to allow the puppies to have different types of toys around so they may explore and become familiar with a variety of surfaces and textures
<b>6-7</b>	By this age, puppies should be eating dry food well. Feed the puppies 3-4 meals a day. Puppies may not eat much at a single sitting; they usually like to eat in frequent intervals throughout the day.	Some puppies may be food possessive; you may need to use a second dish and leave plenty of food out. Do not use adverse or punishing correction techniques. Be sure to take the puppies to their pads after feeding, during play sessions, and after naps. These are the usual time that puppies need to eliminate.
<b>7-8</b>	Offer dry food 3 times a day. Leave a bowl of water down for them to drink at will. Do not feed the puppies table scraps	Continue playing and socializing with the puppies. You can even begin training such as sit, down, roll over and come when called
<b>8+</b>	Offer dry food 3 times a day. Leave down a bowl of water for them to drink at will.	By this time, the puppies should be ready for spay/neuter surgery and adoption.

## Neonatal Care♥

In the first few weeks of life, puppies are helpless and vulnerable. They are still developing basic reflexes, their hearing and vision is still not fully developed, they are unable to properly control their body temperatures, and they cannot potty on their own. They should therefore be confined to an isolated nursery area. Neonatal puppies will require a great amount of time and attention to successfully grow into big, healthy, thriving puppies.



**\*Please note** that very young puppies are extremely fragile, and some may not survive no matter how well you take care of them. This is often referred to as Fading Puppy Syndrome or Failure to Thrive. Monitor closely and make sure they are eating, urinating/defecating, growing, etc. If anything seems off, contact the foster manager! As difficult as it is to lose a foster pet, you should not blame yourself. It just happens sometimes- even with most experienced fosters. Just remember, you gave them a loving warm home for their final days. In the unfortunate event that your foster puppy passes away, contact the foster manager as soon as possible.

### Feeding Neonates

Never give a neonate puppy anything other than their specified puppy formula! (No cow's milk!) Puppies that are less than four weeks old are fed puppy-specific formula-either pre-mixed formula or formula powder. After a feeding, unused liquid formula can be stored for up to three days in the refrigerator or frozen for future feedings. Frozen formula will last for 6 months. The powder formula must be mixed for feeding. It is important to closely follow mixing directions: one part powder into two parts warm water (as it can cause diarrhea or constipation if not done correctly). Any reconstituted powder formula can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. After that point, it must be discarded. Opened canisters of formula must be stored in the fridge or freezer!

### Feeding Guide

- Only use clean nipples and bottles!
- Puppies should get about 1oz (30mls) per 8oz (0.5lb) of body weight each day.
- Feed puppies one at a time. Always feed them belly down with their head level. This simulates how they would nurse from a mom. Do not feed puppies while they are on their back! This can cause formula to end up in their lungs.
- Formula should be warm but not hot. Warm by placing the bottle in a mug of hot water. Test the formula on your wrist. If it feels hot on your skin it is too hot for the puppies!
- Gently open the puppy's mouth with your finger and place the nipple on the tongue.
- Pull lightly on the bottle to promote strong sucking.
- Tilt the bottle up slightly to prevent the puppy from inhaling too much air.
- Do not squeeze the bottle to force formula into the puppy's mouth. This can cause formula to move into the lungs.
- Be sure to stimulate the puppy to urinate/defecate after feeding.

## **Elimination**

If you are fostering orphaned puppies, or mom is unable to care for her babies, it is necessary to stimulate puppies less than 3 weeks of age to urinate and defecate. The voiding reflex is normally initiated by the mother licking the puppy's genital area and anus.

The foster caregiver must therefore imitate this by gently massaging the puppy's genital area and anus with a warm damp cloth or cotton ball. This should be done after each feeding, and each puppy should pass urine every time and have a bowel movement at least once a day.

## **Weaning**

Weaning can occur at 4 to 5 weeks and should be conducted gradually. Begin introducing them to food using warmed canned pate puppy food mixed with a little puppy milk replacement or water in a shallow dish. Once they are lapping it up well, decrease the amount of milk/water used until they are successfully eating just canned. Then begin slowly mixing in dry puppy kibble with the canned food. Each step may take puppies time to adjust. Be patient. If they aren't eating one meal, wait a bit and try again. No puppy will go hungry in front of a full bowl of food 😊



## **Weaned Puppies**

Once puppies have learned to eat on their own, feed them 3 times a day and always leave water out for them to drink. Follow the feeding guide in Puppy Growth Milestones. Food will be provided by HSTV. If you choose to purchase more, please keep them on the same food so their stomach doesn't become upset by the change in food.

You can begin training around this age-potty training, socializing, enrichment, etc. See the Socializing and Training section for tips on how to successfully train and socialize your puppy.

Be sure to follow the Puppy Quarantine Protocol. It is most important the first 1-2 weeks to make sure they are not harboring an illness, but the protocol is to be followed throughout the foster period.

Puppies are not permitted to be on public grounds (any ground that is not your private fully fenced yard) while in foster. This is to ensure they do not pick up any illness before they are fully vaccinated.



## Daily Care for Mom with Pups

### Preparing for Birth

The majority of births and newborn litters are trouble-free and require only your quiet supervision. Avoid interfering unless mom or kittens seem in distress. Mom needs her own space away from other animals to prepare for birth and for the fostering duration. Prepare a nesting box for her. A plastic kiddie pool from the store is a great option! Place towels inside and some cozy blankets and mom will settle in as needed. Change the bedding after birth and as needed when soiled. Be slow when trying to socialize with mom and use caution when reaching into the nesting box, especially once the pups are born.

Mom should always have water available to her and be given dry Puppy food frequently.

### Birthing

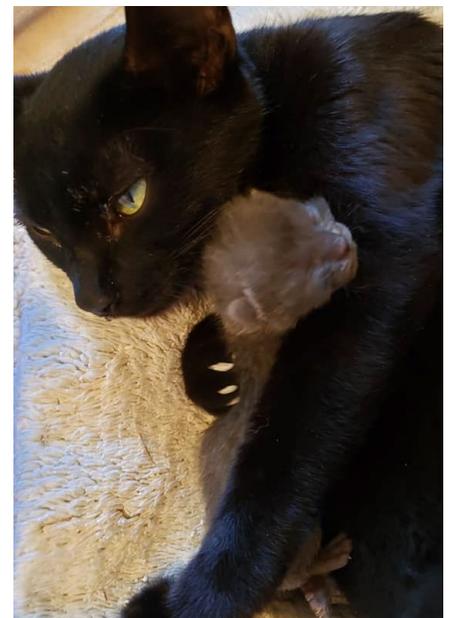
For the first few weeks after the puppies are born, mom should do everything necessary to take care of her puppies- feeding, stimulating, cleaning, etc. Puppies start nursing very soon after birth. Mom will also groom her puppies. It's best to leave the mom alone for the first two weeks except to feed and to go outside for potty breaks.

Remember, a nursing mom's nutritional needs are greater than normal when feeding a litter of puppies. Be sure to keep plenty of fresh water nearby, and feed the provided puppy food in three daily feedings. If mom seems to be decreasing in weight or activity, notify the foster manager.

### Signs of a Difficult Delivery

Most births proceed without incident, but if any of the following occur, contact the Foster Manager.

- Mother seems to be straining to having strong contractions for over 30 minutes without delivering a kitten
- Unusual discharge from mom's vulva. Normal discharge is green; abnormal can be black, cloudy, or foul-smelling.
- Mom isn't cleaning the kittens after delivery. If this occurs, use a clean cloth to remove and fluid from their nose and mouth and dry the kitten in a gentle rubbing motion.
- Kitten isn't breathing. If this occurs, rub her vigorously with a towel for several minutes all over her body to stimulate breathing.
- If the umbilical cord does not get detached, take thread or floss (no wax/mint) and tie a knot ½ in from the kittens belly and another 1 in toward mom. Cut between the two knots.



## **Possible Issues with Momma Dogs**

Maternal neglect – In some cases, about 8% of the time, puppies die from poor maternal care. There are a few causes of this. Some dogs lack maternal instinct and, in other cases, it is nature's way of handling sick or weak puppies. Environmental stress is an important factor, which is why it is important to create a calm environment for mom and the litter. Foster parents should watch for signs of maternal neglect. Refer to the "Daily Care for Orphaned Puppies" if mom isn't caring for them properly. Call the Foster manager if you notice the mom avoids feeding and grooming her puppies and ignores their cries.

Maternal Aggression – As mom protects her puppies, it is common for her to be aggressive towards humans or other animals. Do not try to introduce your household pets to your foster mom as this adds too much stress to the environment. If aggression becomes severe, call the foster manager.

**\*\*Austin Animal Center wrote up a great guide for fostering moms with puppies. Instead of copying and pasting it all, you can view the original [HERE!!](#) \*\***



## **Daily Care for Adult Dogs**

Typically, if an adult dog is placed in foster (without puppies), it has some special need. Most of the time, it is due to stress. Some animals just need some time in a home to de-stress from shelter life. We don't always know their background and they can become overwhelmed. See the "Socializing and Training" section for tips on how to work with your stressed foster dog.

See the "Relaxation ReTREAT" section to learn more about our Sleepover program for our adult dogs. Other times, the dog has a medical need that requires foster care until healed- skin condition, injury, heartworm treatment, etc. We will supply all medical supplies / treatment required. This will typically require some level of experience administering medications.

## **Adult Dog Care**

Caring for adult dogs in foster is fairly basic, pending their foster reason. Feed, water, clean, walk and love your foster dog like you would your own. HSTV will supply food for the dog- if you wish to purchase more, please keep him / her on the same food to prevent stomach upset.

Dogs are never to be off leash while outside, unless they are inside a fully fenced yard that they have already been leash walked around and have become comfortable in. Runners and tie outs are not permitted for fosters. Dog parks are off limits to fosters, as well, since we cannot guarantee their history. Fosters are only allowed to attend public events with permission from the foster manager.

Always use caution when introducing foster dogs to your current animals. Be sure they each have their own space to retreat to in times of stress. View the Helpful Resources section for added information and articles.

Using enrichment tools is a great way to help your new adult dog foster adjusts into their new environment, and can help with behavioral issues in the future. See the Socializing and Training section for more information.

## **Hospice Foster Care (Fospice)**

Occasionally, a senior dog or severe medical needs dog will come to us that isn't suited to be adopted out. These would be placed in a hospice foster. Hospice fostering is keeping the animal through his/her final times, whether it is weeks or months. Sometimes, we can find adopters willing to take on hospice level dogs, but there are some we feel are best to stay in our care in a foster home until it's their time to cross the rainbow bridge. A separate Fospice Agreement will be supplied outlining the guidelines for that specific foster. If at any point the animal's quality of life decreases, HSTV will evaluate and humanely euthanize if that is what our vet sees fit.



Can I crash  
at your place  
for a while?

## **Dog Body Language**

A dog's body language can tell you a great deal of how it's feeling. Always be mindful of what signs the dog is showing you and adjust the situation accordingly. Acknowledging these cues can prevent any unnecessary bite, fight, rough play, or other accident.

# DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"  
look away/head turn



STRESSED  
yawn



STRESSED  
nose lick



"PEACE!"  
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"  
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"  
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED  
scratching



STRESS RELEASE  
shake off



RELAXED  
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"  
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE  
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"  
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"  
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"  
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"  
play bow



"READY!"  
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS  
head tilt



HAPPY  
(or hot)



OVERJOYED  
wiggly



"MMMMM..."



"I LOVE YOU,  
DON'T STOP"

## **Relaxation ReTREAT**

Relaxation ReTREAT was launched in 2019 as a new way to get our adult dogs out for a night. Even a simple sleepover can give us so much valuable information on how they are in a home- calm, hyper, house-trained, snuggler, leash-trained, counter surfer, etc. This information is used to educate potential adopters and increase their adoption success.

Contrary to many beliefs, the dogs do not become more stressed by coming back to the shelter. Studies were done on dogs' cortisol levels in the shelter, in a home, and back at the shelter. In every case, the dogs' levels decreased doing into the home. Coming back into the shelter, their levels did go back up, but never higher than the original reported levels. This gives the dogs a chance to breathe and relax and SLEEP!

With that being said, we do not encourage introducing your ReTREAT dog to your current animals. The time frame is so short that it isn't worth the stress that can occur by trying to make sure they're friends. We recommend keeping your foster separate from your in-home animals for the night- somewhere calm and quiet for them to rest! Or give your dog some quiet time and let your foster dog snuggle on the couch with you!

Fosters can sign up for ReTREAT at [tinyclub.com/ReTREATPickUp](https://tinyclub.com/ReTREATPickUp). Pick up and drop off can be arranged through the foster coordinator.



# Daily Care for Orphaned Kittens

## Kitten Growth Milestones

<u>WEEKS</u>	<u>FEEDING</u>	<u>DEVELOPMENT</u>
<b>0-1</b>	Bottle feed ½ tablespoon of formula every 2-3 hours, overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. If there is a Mom cat, make sure that all kittens are nursing. Kittens can nurse from Mom for up to 45 minutes at a time. A lot of crying or activity could indicate a problem with Mom's milk supply.	Kittens will weigh about 2-4 oz. Umbilical cord falls off around day 2-3. Kittens will sleep 90% of the time and eat the rest of the time. Handle the kittens minimally. Newborns are deaf and blind and are unable to maintain their body temperature. Keep kittens warm with heating source. Orphaned kittens will need stimulated to eliminate their bladder/bowels.
<b>1-2</b>	Bottle feed every 2-3 hours until kittens are full but not bloated. Overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. Orphaned kittens will still need stimulated to eliminate their bladder/bowels.	Kittens will weigh about 6-8 oz. Ear canals open between 5-8 days. Eyes open between 7-10 days. Healthy kittens will be round and warm and have pink skin. They are still unable to maintain their body temperature. Keep kittens warm!
<b>2-3</b>	Bottle feed up to 1 tablespoon (15 mL) every 3-4 hours. Overnight feeding can be every 4-5 hours. Orphaned kittens will still need stimulated to eliminate their bladder/bowels.	Kittens will weigh about 8-10 oz. and will begin to crawl and stand between 18-21 days old. Baby incisors erupt. They begin to play with each other. Increase handling of kittens to get them used to human contact. Ensure that all interactions are gentle and positive.
<b>3-4</b>	Bottle feed every 3-4 hours until kittens are full but not bloated. Overnight feeding can be every 4 hours. Kittens may start lapping from a bowl. Feedings during the night are not required, unless kittens are not thriving.	Kittens will weigh about 13-16 oz. Baby canine teeth erupt. Kittens begin to see well. They may start cleaning themselves but will still need help for serious cleaning.
<b>4-5</b>	Feed 3 tablespoons of formula every 8 hours. Weaning of kittens may begin gradually.	Kittens should be at or over 1 lb. Litter box training may begin at 4 weeks of age.
<b>5-6</b>	Feed gruel 4 times a day. Introduce dry food and water.	Kittens can start to wander around the room, under supervision. Play with your kittens often!
<b>6-7</b>	Feed canned and dry food at least 3 meals daily. If any kittens are territorial with food, provide a second bowl so that everyone gets fed.	Baby premolars erupt. Kittens will start to act like actual cats: playing and washing themselves. Be sure to show them the litter box after meals, play sessions and naps.
<b>7-8</b>	Each kitten will be eating a little over one can of food per day. Offer wet food 3-4 times a day. Leave a bowl of dry food and water for kittens to use at will. DO NOT feed kitten table scraps	Continue playing and socializing with the kittens.
<b>8+</b>	Feed wet food 2 times per day. Leave a bowl of dry food and water for kittens to use at will.	Kittens should weigh about 2 pounds! When they reach this point, they are ready for adoption, and for spay/neuter.

## Neonate Care♥

\***Please note** that young kittens are extremely fragile, and some may not survive no matter how well you take care of them. This is often referred to as Fading Kitten Syndrome or Failure to Thrive. Monitor closely and make sure they are eating, urinating/defecating, growing, hydrated, etc. If anything seems off, contact the foster manager! As difficult as it is to lose a foster pet, you should not blame yourself. It just happens sometimes- even with most experienced fosters. Just remember, you gave them a loving, warm home for their final days- better than being in a cold, hard kennel at the shelter. In the unfortunate event that your foster kitten passes away, contact the foster manager as soon as possible.

### Daily Care for Newborns Using a Bottle (0-3 weeks old)

Young kittens need to be fed every 2-4 hours throughout the day and night. Bottle babies require a great deal of time and patience. Sometimes bottle feeding can be challenging, and if your kitten will not take the milk replacer from the bottle you may wait until the next feeding to try again. However, if your kitten has not eaten in two consecutive feedings, please contact us right away.



Kitten Milk Replacer (KMR) formula will be provided for all kittens requiring bottle feeding. Please follow the directions provided with the powdered KMR to mix the formula (one part formula to two parts water). Mixed formula that has not been warmed can be saved in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. The unmixed powder formula should also be kept in the refrigerator after being opened and be kept for up to 3 months.

Prepare only the amount of formula your litter of kittens will need for each feeding. Use the chart below for estimated feeding guidelines. Formula should be warmed by placing the bottle of cold KMR upright in a mug of hot water. Check the temperature of the formula on the inside of your wrist before feeding each kitten. The temperature should be warm to the touch but not hot.

## kitten weight and feeding chart

AGE	WEIGHT	AMOUNT PER FEEDING	SCHEDULE
0-1 week	50-150 grams	2-6 ml	Every 2 hours
1-2 weeks	150-250 grams	6-10 ml	Every 2-3 hours
2-3 weeks	250-350 grams	10-14 ml	Every 3-4 hours
3-4 weeks	350-450 grams	14-18 ml	Every 4-5 hours
4-5 weeks	450-550 grams	18-22 ml	Every 5-6 hours
5-8 weeks	550-850 grams	(weaning; offer ample wet food)	Every 6 hours

### Safe Feeding

It is very important to not overfeed or underfeed your kittens. Overfeeding can cause serious health problems that begin with diarrhea which causes dehydration. A kitten who is underfed won't gain weight appropriately resulting in lethargy and other health concerns.

It is very easy for kittens to aspirate (inhale fluids into the lungs) which can lead to pneumonia. If formula comes out of the kitten's nose, stop feeding immediately and wait until the kitten has completely cleared the fluid from its lungs, usually by sneezing. If crackling or popping is heard as the kittens breathes, or if you suspect your kitten may have aspirated formula, contact us immediately.

Prepare kittens for feeding by placing them on their stomachs or wrapping them in a small towel like a taco (aka Purrito) if they are fussy. If wrapped in a towel, make sure the kitten can still knead with her forelegs outside of the towel. **NEVER** place the kitten on her back to feed! This can cause aspiration of milk into her lungs. When placed on her stomach, make sure she is in an upright position with her head tilted slightly up and neck extended (as if she was nursing from mom). Support the lower body with the palm of your hand and hold the head steady with your thumb and forefinger. Never force milk down by squeezing the bottle since this can cause aspiration. Bottle feeding takes practice and patience to master.



View the Kitten Lady's instructional video [HERE](#)

## **Elimination**

If you are fostering orphaned kittens, or mom is unable to care for her babies, it is necessary to stimulate kittens less than 3 weeks of age to urinate and defecate. The voiding reflex is normally initiated by the mother licking the kitten's anogenital region. The foster caregiver must therefore imitate this by gently massaging the kitten's anogenital area with a warm damp cloth or cotton ball. This should be done after each feeding, and each kitten should pass urine and have a bowel movement at least once a day. Kittens should begin eliminating on their own around 3 weeks of age.

## **Bathing**

Kittens get messy- it's going to happen. Keep kittens clean of urine, feces, food, and other messes as this can cause illnesses. Spot clean with a warm, damp rag or baby wipe as needed. Full baths are not encouraged unless absolutely needed. If needed, make sure the water is warm, but not hot. Avoid getting water in her eyes, ears, and nose. Rinse all soap thoroughly off to avoid irritation. It is crucial the kitten stays warm after a bath- wrap her in a warm towel and/or blow-dry on low from a distance.

## **Daily Care for Kittens Transitioning to Wet Food (4-5 weeks)**

Transitioning kittens should be fed "gruel," which is a pudding-like consistency mix of KMR or water and wet kitten food. They should be fed every 4-6 hours and supplemental bottle feeding may be necessary if they are not taking to the canned food. You are welcome to experiment with different consistencies but the gruel should be gradually thickened to get them ready for solid food. Leftover gruel should be discarded within 2 hours if not eaten. Canned food that has not been made into gruel yet can be covered and refrigerated for up to 48 hours.

To encourage a kitten to eat the gruel, place a small amount on your finger and place it on the kitten's tongue or lips. If they don't take to that, you can try syringing a small amount into their mouth. Once they seem to be eating well from you, slowly lure them down to the prepared gruel. The goal is that she will eat on her own from a plate or bowl. This transition period can take days to weeks. Be Patient!



At this age, stimulating should no longer be necessary and she will begin urinating and defecating on her own. Continue until you notice urine and feces in the housing area.

Small litter boxes should be provided at this stage with non-clumping litter. Kittens will eventually learn how to use a litter box on their own but accidents are common for the first few weeks. If they defecate outside, move the feces to the litter box. You can also place kittens inside their litter box after meals. Never punish the kittens for accidents- just redirect that action into a positive.

Really start working on socializing and conditioning. Handle them often! Occasionally touch their feet, ears, and tails (gently, of course) to begin conditioning them for future exams/vet care. Start playing with different toys to see what they're interested in. At this age, we still do not recommend integrating with your in-home animals as these kittens are not old enough for vaccines.

## **Daily Care for Kittens Eating on their Own (6-8+ weeks)**

Kittens that are eating completely on their own should always have dry food and water available and will need to be fed wet food 3 times throughout the day. Do not leave wet food out for more than 2 hours, as it can build bacteria! Don't forget to clean their litter box at least once a day. If the box is messy, they will go somewhere else to do their business, which can set back their litter box training. Kittens at this age are becoming VERY curious and adventurous. Ensure they are kept in a confined area and double check all of your kitten-proofing. Make sure they have plenty of enrichment to keep them occupied and stimulated- a variety of toys, towers, treats, sounds, etc. Discourage rough play with your hands or feet! Have close friends / family come play with the kittens to get them used to new people.

We will begin vaccinations at 6 weeks old and schedule their spay/neuter surgery around 8 weeks old. Enjoy this playful phase and get them ready for their new FURever homes! See the "Good-bye is the Goal" section for more information on advertising your foster pet(s).

## Daily Care for Mom (Queens) with Kittens

### Preparing for Birth

The majority of births and newborn litters are trouble-free and require only your quiet supervision. Avoid interfering unless mom or kittens seem in distress. Mom needs her own space away from other animals to prepare for birth and for the fostering duration. Prepare a nesting box for her. This could be as simple as a cardboard box with a hole in the side for mom to enter and exit. Place towels inside and a heat source on one side (preferably a snuggle safe) and mom will settle in as needed. Change the bedding after birth and as needed when soiled.

Mom should always have dry kitten food and water available to her. Feed her canned kitten food 2-3 times daily (or more if she seems hungry!), increasing as she get closer to giving birth.

### Birthing

Normally a week or less before birthing, you may notice mom seeming restless, becoming extra vocal, over grooming, or "nesting" into the nesting box. Ensure her space is calm and secure so she doesn't try to escape. About 24 hours before delivery, her belly may appear to drop to a pear shape, and her nipples will start to swell with milk.

Once you notice reddish vaginal discharge has been emitted, kittens won't be far behind. Try not to hover over mom during this process- if stressed, queens may halt their labor for hours, even days. During birth, the queen will "cry" and sound distressed, which is completely normal! Give mom her space to do her thing and monitor from a distance. Kittens should arrive every 10 to 60 minutes. Kittens should immediately crawl over to mom's belly and begin nursing. First time moms may not "get it" right off the bat and need a little assistance. The membrane covering the kitten's face must be removed immediately so the kitten can breathe. If mom doesn't do this, gently tear open the sac covering the kitten's head so the kitten can breathe.



### Signs of Difficult Delivery

Most births proceed without incident, but if any of the following occur, contact the Foster Manager.

- Mother seems to be straining to having strong contractions for over 30 minutes without delivering a kitten
- Unusual discharge from mom's vulva. Normal discharge is green; abnormal can be black, cloudy, or foul-smelling.
- Mom isn't cleaning the kittens after delivery. If this occurs, use a clan cloth to remove and fluid from their nose and mouth and dry the kitten in a gentle rubbing motion.
- Kitten isn't breathing. If this occurs, rub her vigorously with a towel for several minutes all over her body to stimulate breathing.
- If the umbilical cord does not get detached, take thread or floss (no wax/mint) and tie a knot  $\frac{1}{2}$  in from the kittens belly and another 1 in toward mom. Cut between the two knots.



### **Young Kitten Care**

A kitten's survival depends on getting consistent nutrition and warmth. The mother's colostrum, which is the first milk produced, is vitally important to a newborn's cardiovascular system and defense against disease as it is rich in antibodies to help protect against various infections. Continued healthy nursing behavior is crucial for kitten survival. In order to tell if the kittens are nursing properly, gently pick up each kitten and feel for a round belly full of milk. A flat or concave belly indicates that the kitten may not be nursing. Visually confirm that the kittens are properly latching onto mom. Weigh the kittens 1-2 times a day at the same time to ensure they are properly gaining weight.

The room they are in should ideally be kept about 80 degrees for at least the first 2 weeks. If you aren't able to heat the whole room, you can use Snuggle Safe warming discs and make sure the nesting box is well insulated. Mom and kits should always have room to get off and away from the heat source as desired.

So-called "Fading Kitten Syndrome," when a newborn fades and dies despite adequate care, is usually due to either a genetic defect or lack of sufficient colostrum. For this reason, it is very important that newborns nurse as soon as possible after birth. If they do not find a nipple on their own, put their mouth close to one and hold them until they nurse.

### **Supplemental Feeding for Nursing Kittens with Mom**

When adequate nursing isn't possible (mom doesn't produce milk, milk becomes infected, illness/injury, rejection, etc.), supplemental feeding may be recommended, especially for any litter with more than five kittens. If kittens begin to cry excessively, they may not be getting the desired nutrition. If any kitten is completely rejected by mom, total supplementation will be required. Reference the "Daily Care for Orphaned Kitten" section for more information. Contact the foster manager immediately if mom or kittens seem to be declining in health in any way. Even a mild change in health can cause them to decline drastically.



08/2021

## Daily Care for Adult Cats

Typically, if an adult cat is placed in foster (without kittens), it has some special need-normally a medical or behavioral issue. It's recommended that fosters have experience with felines before taking on a foster cat with special needs.

Medical needs felines will typically require an experienced foster. Medicating felines can be tricky. All medical supplies and instructions will be provided by HSTV.

Behavior needs felines may or may not require an experienced foster. If the cat is just scared and needs some time to warm up, extensive experience is not required. Although, if the behavioral needs are closer to Feral levels, a more experienced foster will be needed to calm the kitty. When dealing with a borderline feral feline or highly under-socialized cat, always use your best judgment! If he/she is hissing, growling, etc., back away and try again at another time! See the "Socializing and Training" section for more information.

Care for foster felines will depend on the specific situation, but the general cat care is the same. Always have water available, and food depending on their dietary needs. Make sure the litter box is easily accessible for your new foster. Scoop the box daily to ensure he/she doesn't develop inappropriate potty behaviors. Provide a safe space (kennel, box, corner, etc.) where he/she can retreat if too stressed. Use toys as enrichment and socializing tools.

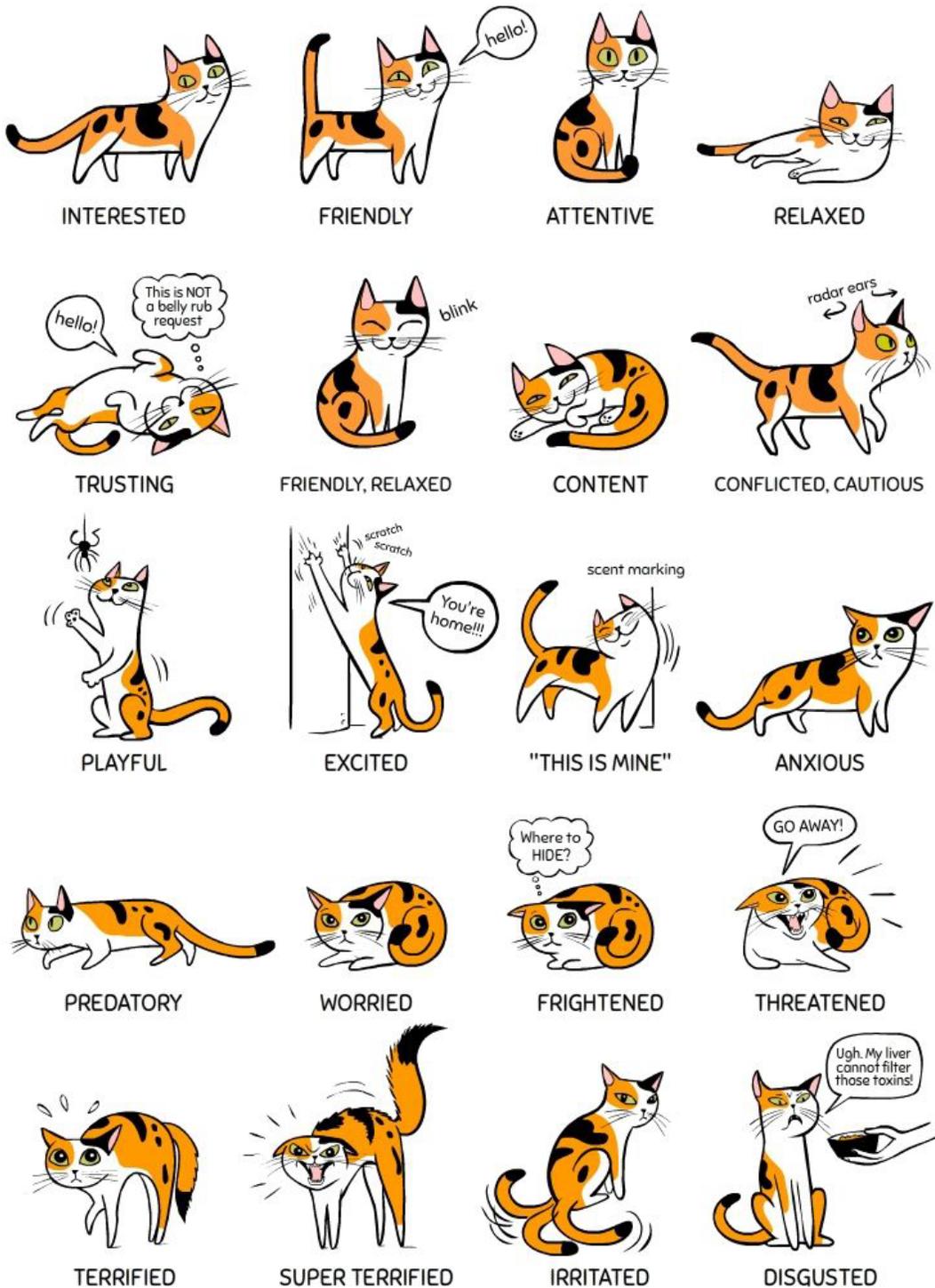
Foster cats are NEVER to be allowed outside- even in a fenced yard. They will hop that fence in no time! Be sure all window/door screens are secure with no holes or tears. Even if they are in good shape, do not leave a cat unattended near the screen. If they are scared, they can jump through it.



## Cat Body Language

A cat's body language can tell you a great deal of how it's feeling. Always be mindful of what signs the cat is showing you and adjust the situation accordingly. Acknowledging these cues can prevent any unnecessary bite, fight, rough play, or other accident.

# CAT LANGUAGE



## Socializing and Training

### Socialization

Socialization is not simply exposing them to a variety of people, places, and things, but using positive proactive socialization training. Each new person they meet should be a wonderful experience with treats and toys. When you bring home anyone new, always give them time to get adjusted to their new environment before forcing anything upon them. Take things slow if your foster seems fearful of the new person, place, or thing.

From 3 weeks to 3 months, puppies and kittens are biologically primed to learn that new sights, sounds, smells, objects, environments, and people are fun and safe. This is the most crucial and sensitive period in their lives- making it the easiest time to mold them into social butterflies.

#### Under-socialized Kittens / Cats

We do not take in truly feral cats. They are likely TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return). Under-socialized felines can be challenging but rewarding. Kittens under 3 months of age are easier to break from their “feral” ways than older kittens and cats. They may be scared, but they are still able to be molded into socialized kittens. It simply takes time and patience.

Always start slow. Set the carrier in their area and walk away (peeking in to make sure they are still alright, of course). Once they have adjusted to the surroundings, you can slowly begin socializing them to your presence. Sit in the floor near them and try to let them come to you. Bring food- bribery is encouraged! Once you feel the kittens are calm enough, try picking one up. Be very calm and gentle. If he/she gets too anxious, set him/her back down and try again later. If they are really spazzy, you can use the “Purrito” technique- wrap the kitten in a blanket or towel.

Adult cats are a little more difficult than kittens. Many cats come to us scared and could just use a little relaxing time in a foster home before being available for adoption. Be very patient with these cats. They are the way they are for a reason- abuse, neglect, lived outdoors, lack of proper interactions, etc. You will have to gain their trust slowly!

Begin by simply being present. Hang out in the general area while feeding. Do some school work, reading, coloring, etc. near him/her. Let them know you aren't there to do any harm. If he/she is comfortable enough to eat near you, gently pet the cat while eating. This will associate food with human affection

Some may take a couple days to warm up- some may take weeks. Be patient, but be persistent!

#### Timid Adult Dogs / Puppies

Generally, the same goes for shy dogs. Be patient. Understand that something has happened to make them be this way. Always reward the good behavior- never use negative reinforcement. Let them come to you and reward them when they do. Keep a treat pouch on you, so you are prepared when any good behavior occurs. Be mindful of the dog's body language and signs of stress or discomfort- lip licking, cowering, lowered head, tail tucked, fur standing up, growling, etc. Stop immediately and let them calm down before continuing.

## **Training: Positive Reinforcement**

As a foster parent, there will be many situations for you to train your animal. HSTV only promotes training using positive reinforcement. Decades of research and scientific study concludes that Positive Reinforcement training is the most humane and effective method of training.

Do not scold or punish bad behavior- this can instill fear, which can lead to aggressive behavior. When an unwanted behavior is performed re-direct with a kissy noise or toy. Praise and reward for stopping the undesired behavior and giving you attention. When a behavior is immediately followed by a positive outcome, that behavior is strengthened.

If any issue becomes severe and you're not comfortable with the animal, contact the foster manager immediately!



### **Mouthing**

Puppies are born with instincts to bite. One of the most important things they learn, as a puppy, is how to control the strength of their bite. Puppies naturally train each other how to bite. When one puppy bites another too hard, the other puppy yelps loudly and stops playing.

As a foster parent, you can play this role. Any time a puppy mouths with too much force, yelp loudly. If the puppy stops biting, then praise him/her lavishly. If the puppy continues biting, turn your back on the puppy and walk away. After ten seconds or so, resume play happily. Never scold, tap on the nose, or yell at a puppy that is biting. Simply exclaim "ouch" or "eh-eh" when a puppy bites too hard.

Never encourage play with your hands or feet. Always try to redirect any negative behavior to a positive one. If they're mouthing on your hands, feet, clothing, etc., redirect them to playing with a toy, and praise that behavior extensively.

### **Crate Training**

House training and crate training go hand in hand. A crate can be a great tool to use for your puppy, but it can also be misused. The crate should be big enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and stretch out, but not so large that it can potty in one corner and hang out in the other. You want the crate to become a safe happy space for your foster. Never use a crate as a form of punishment for your foster puppy or dog.

If you are beginning to crate train, feed your puppy in the crate, provide stuffed chew toys only in the crate, and/or play crate games to build a positive association with the crate. Keep sessions short and fun, and have your puppy in the crate for short periods of time when you are home.

### **Housetraining**

#### **Potty Pads**

If your puppies are under 6 weeks of age, or you do not have a private, fully-fenced yard, you can begin potty pad training.

Place puppies on pee pads immediately after waking up, after eating, after playing 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.

## **Housetraining (cont.)**

### **Outside**

If you have a fully fenced yard (See Puppy Quarantine) and your puppies are over 6 weeks of age, you can begin house training by taking potty breaks outside.

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). A puppy can hold his/her bladder for about one hour for each month of age (i.e.: 2 months = 2 hours, 3 months = 3 hours). When they go potty outside, praise them immensely- high pitched, very excited, “Good Job”, “Way to Go”, etc. The more ridiculous you feel that you sound the better. 😊

CONSISTENCY IS KEY! Maintain a good schedule. Wake up around the same time; meal time at the same time; potty breaks at the same time. This will get the puppies in a routine and they will begin to anticipate food time and potty time.

### **Litter Box Training**

Most kittens are trained by their mother to use the litter box. If a mother isn't present, you get to take on the role of mom! Be patient with young kittens, as this can be a process. It is best to keep them confined to a small area like a bathroom, so that the box is very close and easily accessible. After eating, drinking, playing, or napping, place the kitten in the box to let them know where they should go. Most kittens will catch on very quickly and not need further assistance. But be sure to monitor that the kitten isn't using the bathroom anywhere else.

If your foster is inappropriately pottying outside of the litter box, there are many things to consider. Is the box easily accessible? Is the box clean? Could it be a medical issue?

If you find feces outside of the litter box, pick it up and place it in the box. The scent will guide the kitten back to the box. Be sure to clean the soiled area very well to prevent him/her from going back to that location. Anytime you see them about to potty outside of the box, immediately take him/her to the box. Never punish the cat by yelling, swatting, “rubbing their nose in it”, etc. These are negative reinforcement techniques that just teach fear, not encourage training.

### **Additional Training**

While you are not required to have your foster fully trained, you're welcome begin training new commands- sit, stay, leave it, etc. Be sure you always use Positive Reinforcement Training and make this experience fun for both you and the foster pet. Treats are a very good training tool, as most pets are food motivated!

Some commands that would be beneficial for fosters are “Sit”, “Stay”, “Leave it”, “Off”, and whatever other cute “trick” you can teach them.



## Enrichment

Enrichment is the process of making the animal's living space interesting and stimulating with enticing tools so as to decrease boredom and its subsequent problems resulting in improved physical and/or psychological health.

In general, overall enrichment should include human socialization, food/treats, sounds, odors, textures, etc.

### KONGS!!!

Kongs are quite possibly the best tool for animals! They can be used for various purposes- feeding, treats, chewing, occupying their mind, etc.

For an animal that eats too quickly, Kongs can be used to help slow them down. Place their kibble in the Kong and they will have to roll it around to get their meal out. This occupies their mind and slows down their eating speed. If they're still getting through it quickly, put a layer of peanut butter over the opening to slow the rate the food rolls out. You can also use that same method with treats- place a few treats/bones inside of the Kong, and the animal will have to use his/her mind to get it out.



To keep your foster busy and calm, you can freeze peanut butter in the Kong. The frozen PB will take time for him to lick through. This technique is great for when you need to leave your foster dog crates while you're away or if they just need something to occupy their mind while you get some chores done. You can use variations of all of these techniques depending on what your foster likes!

### Puzzle / Enrichment Feeders

Puzzle / Enrichment feeders are a great tool if you have a foster that eats extremely fast. They help slow down the rate the animal is eating while also stimulating their mind. For most dogs, meal time is over in a minute or two. Then they're looking for their next thing to do. These feeders will require them to slow down and use their minds to get their food. These techniques are also very useful for feline stimulation as well!



Puzzle feeders, like the blue bowl shown on the left, make the dog work to get the food out of the crevices of the pattern. This prevents them from eating so fast and making themselves sick. This also occupies their time, so you can get some other tasks done while they are eating their meal- slowly.

Enrichment feeders, bottle shown on the right, are designed to and have them work to get the food or treat. They bottle, and tug on the rope to receive the treats enforces the animal's problem solving skills and accomplishment when they get the reward inside.



like the purple Tug-A-Jug stimulate the animals mind would need to roll the inside. This process gives them a sense of

## Toys!

There are many different styles of toys that are helpful in stimulating fosters' mental and physical growth. Toys are great for keeping fosters' minds occupied on a healthy outlet, rather than digging in the trash or scratching up the couch.

If you're fostering puppies, there are many teething toys that redirect their inappropriate chewing of shoes or your arms to a healthier, more appropriate outlet. Nylabone is a great brand for puppy teething toys. They produce different styles of puppy toys consisting of different levels of chew bones (soft with ridges for early stage teething, chewier for when their teeth are more developed, and a harder chew bone for the later stages), teething rings (resembling baby teething toys), chew toys, and much more. Kong also makes a great variety of puppy chew toys. Large dog toy ropes also make great puppy teethers. Be sure to only give toys that are appropriate for their age and developmental stage.



It may take some trial and error to find what type of toy your foster prefers. Have different types of enrichment available for them to choose from- ropes, balls, squeaky, chewy, soft, hard, etc.

## DIY Enrichment

Many of the techniques and tools listed prior can be crafted at home. Just be cautious of the materials used and the destructive level of your pet. Use your imagination! There are so many things in your home that can be great enrichment tools for your foster pets!

A few examples of homemade enrichment toys are:

- Milk jug toy - Clean out an empty milk jug, place treats inside, leave the cap off, let them play! They'll need to roll it and flip it around to get the treats out.
- Paper towel treats holder - place treats in a paper towel holder. Fold over the ends for increased difficulty.
- Boxes! Everyone loves boxes, especially cats!
- Treat / toy frozen in a bowl of water - great summer time fun!



## Cleaning & Sanitation

Sanitation of the foster area is extremely important. Foster areas need to be cleaned before and after each new litter or foster comes in- even if there were no noticeable illnesses or issues. Any area, furniture, toys, blankets, etc. will need to be sanitized with each new foster group. It is ideal to keep fosters in a room without carpet, as carpet is much harder to disinfect than wood, tile, or linoleum flooring.

Any area or item the fosters were in contact with should be disinfected to prevent the spread of any germs. Carpets should be vacuumed and sprayed with a disinfectant, and non-carpeted floors should be mopped with an Accel or disinfectant safe for animals. Any furniture should be vacuumed off and sprayed with a disinfectant spray. Any blankets, towels, toys, etc. should be washed and placed in the dryer. If any of the items were heavily soiled, they can be thrown away.

### ACCEL



We use Rescue (Accel) Disinfectant for our cleaning needs both in the shelter and in foster! It has the power to kill resilient pathogens, yet remain gentle on users, animals and equipment. Accel eliminates certain strains of bacteria, viruses, fungi, mold and mildew in a matter of minutes. It kills canine parvovirus, influenza A virus, canine distemper virus, feline herpes virus, feline calicivirus, feline panleukopenia virus, certain strains of *salmonella* and *staphylococcus*, and much more.

We purchase the concentrated (un-diluted) Rescue and dilute it down as needed. The typical dilution is 2oz per gallon of water. This concentration is increased if there is any illness outbreak. Amazon sells the Ready to Use Rescue, which does not need diluted before use. They also make Rescue in wipes.

Rescue can be used in mop water, sprayed on solid surfaces, sprayed on furniture (may affect some fabrics- test on small section), used as a skin treatment, etc.

Of course, always keep foster animals away from household cleaners, and wait for the disinfectant to dry before allowing access back into that area. (The photo on the right is cute, but animals should never be this close to cleaning equipment.)

For any added concerns about cleaning and sanitizing for your fosters, feel free to reach out to the foster coordinator for more guidance.



## Medical Information & Procedures

## Puppy Intake Quarantine

### QUARANTINE

All puppies (> 5 months of age) coming into HSTV require a 7-10 day hold before being available for surgery then adoption. This is to monitor the puppies for any illness they may be incubating or shedding from their previous location and unknown background. Here are a few guidelines to fostering puppies during their quarantine period:

- Outside Play- Outside play and public places are not allowed for the first 7 days in foster care. Puppies are placed in foster to determine if they have any illness that may affect their health or are contagious to other canines. Certain disease can last for months in grass so it is critical that puppies are not allowed on grass even if your yard is fenced until the foster coordinator clears them for play. Puppies are not vaccinated against all diseases because they are too young so it is important they are not taken to public places, dog parks or friends and neighbors houses during quarantine.
- Other animals- We strongly recommended to keep foster animals separate for the first week. We know that puppies on quarantine hold are more susceptible to disease transmission. Even if your dogs are over 6 months of age and up-to-date on all vaccines animals are on a quarantine hold and could be harboring an illness like upper respiratory or ringworm.
- Visitors- Limit visitors to ensure no new illness is brought in and that no illness is transferred out. If visitors do come and interact with the puppies, please ensure that they know and understand the quarantine protocol.

All of these guidelines are also case-by-case. Some puppies will require more isolation, some may not require as much. Younger puppies may need to be separate from in-house animals. If any animal has a noticeable injury or suspected illness, they will need isolation. We will let you know if there is anything specific that needs to be known about each foster.



## Common Medical Issues

## Upper Respiratory Infections (URI)

URIs are common and are caused by contagious viruses and bacteria. They can be very common in rescue animals with unknown backgrounds and added stress. A URI is similar to the common cold in humans.

### Signs to look for:

- Thick yellow/green discharge from eyes/nose (Primary indicator)
- Sneezing / Coughing
- Congested breathing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Dehydration

If you notice any of these signs, please contact the foster manager to schedule a recheck. If the animal is still drinking, eating, and acting overall normal, URIs can run their course with no added treatment. If it progresses, antibiotics may be needed to eliminate any infection that may have set in.

At home, there are a few remedies you can do to help with URI symptoms. Be sure to always keep their eyes and noses clear of discharge / crust. To ease congestion, place them in the bathroom with a hot, steamy shower running. You can also use a humidifier for this purpose- no additives. Make sure they continue drinking and eating normally - entice with canned food if their appetite is decreasing.

Wash your hands thoroughly after handling an animal with visible URI symptoms and before contact with any other animal as URI is extremely contagious. URI is similar to a human cold, but is generally not transmittable to people or other animal species. Any animal showing signs of an upper respiratory infection should be isolated from other animals in the household.

## Conjunctivitis

Symptoms include clear or colored eye discharge, painful eyes, eyes that are crusted shut or swollen. Ocular antibiotics and ointments are often required. Some viral upper respiratory infections can cause corneal ulcers, which are emergencies. A painful eye should always be examined by a vet. Many causes of conjunctivitis are contagious to other animals.

If any foster begins developing eye discharge, keep them clear by using a damp warm rag or pet wipe daily as needed.

Contact the foster manager for a recheck and eye ointments.



## Vomiting

Vomiting can have many different causes in foster animals- stress, change in diet, over eating, parasites, etc. Vomiting is not serious unless it happens continuously or accompanied with diarrhea which can lead to dehydration. If vomiting occurs 2-3 times in a row, call the foster manager right away.

## Diarrhea

Diarrhea is liquid stool, with or without color to it. Diarrhea is common and can be caused by parasites, viruses, bacteria, food changes, stress, overfeeding and other issues. Diarrhea must be monitored as it can lead to dehydration. If the foster is active, mild diarrhea is not a major concern. Feed the foster less at a time but more often. Probiotics (Fortiflora/Bene-Bac/Provable) can be administered to help get their gut back on track. If the diarrhea is severe, lasts more than 3-4 feedings or contains blood, collect a sample and contact the foster manager to schedule a recheck.

<b>TYPE 1</b>		Small, hard, difficult to pass	<b>Ack!</b>	
<b>TYPE 2</b>		Sausage-shaped but lumpy	<b>Uh-oh</b>	
<b>TYPE 3</b>		Sausage-shaped but cracked	<b>Meh</b>	
<b>TYPE 4</b>		Sausage-shaped, smooth, and soft	<b>Rock on</b>	
<b>TYPE 5</b>		Small and soft with defined edges	<b>Meh</b>	
<b>TYPE 6</b>		Very small, fluffy/mushy pieces with ragged edges	<b>Uh-oh</b>	
<b>TYPE 7</b>		Watery	<b>Ack!</b>	

### Parasites

Fosters are dewormed upon intake and at every recheck. Parasites are commonly found in the stool of puppies and kittens. Tapeworms may look like grains of rice. Roundworms look like spaghetti and can be seen easily in stool or vomit. Worms can be expected after initial deworming. (Better out than in!) If you notice worms, notify the foster manager.

### Dehydration

Dehydration is typically a side-effect of another issue. If your foster is not in taking enough fluids, their health can deteriorate rapidly. You can check their hydration level at home by checking their skin retention- pinch up on their scruff (back of the neck) and see how rapidly/slowly it forms back to its original position. A hydrated animal's retention should be instant. If their scruff stands up or very slowly goes back down, their hydration levels are low.

If they won't drink on their own, slowly syringe some water into their mouth. Plain Pedialyte can be used to increase their electrolytes. If the animal is simply too weak and will not take fluids on its own, contact HSTV immediately to have sub-cutaneous fluids administered.

### Lethargy (Lack of Energy)

Lethargy is also an indicator of another issue. Animals should be eating, drinking, playing, and acting like their normal selves. When they aren't, it's time to investigate why. If your foster is acting lethargic, first check his/her hydration level (see Dehydration above and follow suggestions). Read through all other common medical issues to see if any match their symptoms.

Contact HSTV if your foster has continued lethargy for administration of fluids and B12.

### Hypoglycemia

Young puppies and kittens are very susceptible to hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) and regular feeding (either by bottle or by nursing if mom is present) is vital to prevent this from happening. Most instances of hypoglycemia are the result of inadequate nutrition; either not enough or poor quality (indigestible) food.

Excessive exercise may also cause the body to use up more sugar than is available. Some illnesses can also cause episodes of hypoglycemia. The typical symptoms of hypoglycemia include lack of energy and listlessness, weakness, wobbliness and even seizures. Nutrical can be given to increase their sugar levels. Fluids and B12 may be needed if they are very lethargic.

If untreated, they are susceptible to coma, severe neurological damage, and even death. If you suspect your kitten or puppy may be hypoglycemic, offer a small amount of food and nutrical and contact the foster manager.

### **Ear Mites**

Ear mites are parasites that live in the ear canal. You may notice a bald spot behind their ears due to continuous scratching. They may also violently shake their head. The ears may smell bad and you may see brown discharge that resembles coffee grounds. Ear mites are contagious to other animals and need to be treated. Call the foster manager if you notice any of these symptoms.

### **Fleas**

Animals that have fleas will scratch themselves often. Topical flea preventatives are given to most foster over 6 weeks of age. Puppies and kittens of any age can be given a Capstar for active fleas. Consult the foster manager for instructions. If you still notice signs of fleas, you can wash the animal in a small amount of Dawn dish soap followed by using a flea comb to remove any remaining fleas. Be sure to thoroughly dry him/her following a bath. Baths should not be given more than once every 1-2 weeks. If you still notice signs of fleas, call foster manager to schedule a recheck.

### **Ringworm**

Ringworm is a contagious fungus that that can spread to other animals and humans. A sign of ringworm is thinning hair or patches of hair loss- typically beginning on the face, ears, feet, and/or tail. Ringworm can be easily treated with proper protocols. To help with prevention and spreading, maintain cleaning protocols and a good hand washing routine. Call the foster manager if you notice any hair loss. Accel will be supplied for the treatment of ringworm.



### **Mange**

Mange is caused by parasites that infect the skin of animals. Demodex is the most common and is not contagious to other animals or humans, but can reoccur with stress. Sarcoptic is contagious to other animals and humans, but is easily treated with topical flea preventions and medicated baths. The symptoms include itching, hair loss and sores. If you notice these symptoms, call the foster manager for treatment.

### **Parvovirus**

Parvovirus is a deadly and contagious virus that attacks a dog’s gastrointestinal tract. Once parvovirus is present in an environment it is difficult to remove. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated feces.

Signs to look for:

- Lethargy
- Dehydration
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain and bloating
- Fever
- Low body temperature
- Vomiting
- Severe diarrhea with or without blood

If you notice any of these signs, immediately contact the foster manager to schedule a recheck.

**Distemper**

Distemper is a highly contagious and fatal disease that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal and nervous systems. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated saliva, blood, or urine.



Signs to look for:

- Severe Upper Respiratory Infection or Pneumonia
- Lethargy
- Neurological signs such as seizure activity, convulsions, and partial or complete paralysis.

**Panleukopenia**

Panleukopenia is a viral infection that most commonly affects kittens, young cats and unvaccinated felines. Panleukopenia has a very high mortality rate, even with treatment.

Unfortunately, this illness can be frustrating to deal with because the virus can survive in the environment for years. This means that other unvaccinated cats/ kittens can become infected with Panleukopenia simply by coming into contact with places where an infected cat has been. Symptoms include fever, diarrhea, lethargy, vomiting, loss of appetite and even sudden death.

The virus is highly contagious to other cats, especially through contact with infected feces or vomit but also contact with contaminated objects such as bowls, hands, clothes, etc.

**Emergency vs. Non-Emergency**

<b>Non-Emergency</b>	<b>Emergency</b>
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<p>Monitor First. Read manual for any tips. Notify Foster Manager <u>during business hours.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Runny discharge from the eyes or nose</li><li>• Lack of appetite while transition into home</li><li>• Mild Lethargy (lack of energy)</li><li>• Diarrhea while transitioning into home</li><li>• Vomiting once or twice</li><li>• Mild weight loss</li><li>• Coughing and sneezing</li><li>• Itching</li><li>• Minor behavior issues</li></ul>	<p>Business hours: Call HSTV and come immediately. After-Hours: Contact Foster Manager via cell. <b>ONLY</b> if instructed, go to Emergency Clinic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diarrhea continuing more than 3 days</li><li>• Vomiting continuing more than 12 hours</li><li>• Loss of appetite continuing for 2 days</li><li>• Lethargy lasting more than 24 hours</li><li>• Excessive Bleeding (from body or in urine/stool)</li><li>• Trauma (hit by a car, dropped, limping, unconscious, etc.)</li><li>• Difficult breathing or labored breathing</li><li>• Animal that is not responsive</li><li>• Severe behavior issues (Biting or attempting to)</li></ul>
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**\*If taken to another vet without prior approval, no refund will be given for charges.**

If you are unsure if an issue you are experiencing is an emergency or not, feel free to reach out to HSTV or the foster manager. We would much rather you ask and make sure things are ok, than not ask and the animal needs care. Always better safe than sorry! We will never be upset with you caring too much for your foster! 😊



## Good-Bye is the Goal!

Once foster animals are old enough, big enough, healthy, socialized, altered, and/or finished quarantine, they will be ready for adoption! We are sure you've formed a bond with your foster(s) - it's hard not to- but remember "**Good-Bye is the Goal!**"! We encourage fosters to keep fostering- there are many more lives to be saved! According to statistics, adopting your first time foster animal means you're less likely to foster again and that results in less lives that we could be saving! If you're having a hard time thinking about saying Good-Bye, talk with the foster manager! We will reassure you of all the good you can do and all the many, many more lives you could save by continuing to foster! The Kitten Lady said it best- watch her video on "Foster Failing" [here](#). (Applies to all foster animals)

## Advertising Your Fosters

All foster parents are encouraged to promote the adoption of their foster pet to friends, family, and other potential adopters. Keep in mind the limitations of the animal(s) you have. (Foster animals should not leave the foster's home unless instructed otherwise.) You know these animals better than we do at this point. You are going to know what the best placement would look like for them. Adopting animals out through foster means they won't have to come back into the shelter and take up a kennel that could be utilized by another animal in need. The more animals we can adopt out in foster, the more lives are able to save! 😊

### Social Media

If posting on social media, get creative! Take cute photos, add their best characteristics, write from their point of view, or whatever you think will get them noticed! You can hashtag #HSTV, #Foster, #AdoptDontShop, #FosteringSavesLives, etc. Be sure to state that he/she is available through the Humane Society, Tennessee Valley and you can even tag HSTV so our followers can see the post as well. If your fosters are too young to be adopted yet or on medical hold, make sure to note that they will be available through HSTV in \*blank amount of time\*.

It's important to keep marketing focused on the positive. Negative information in marketing can act as "stop signs" for potential adopters, even ones who might be a perfect fit. "Stop signs" such as "must be an only pet" and "no children" inhibit the creation of emotional connections. These things are best discussed 1-on-1 with a potential adopter.

Be sure that any photo of video you use has good lighting and an appealing background setting. Brighten up the photo using an image editing app if need be, but ensure that the photo still accurately shows the characteristics of the pet. Canva is a great tool to use to make adoption flyers / posts. Even the basic editing apps on your phone can help! Add a tiara to the photo of your princess kitten, or a bowtie to that dapper dog.



## **HSTV Adoption**

All animals adopted from HSTV are examined by our Veterinarian, spay/neutered, microchipped, current on vaccines, dogs are tested for HW, cats are tested for FIV/FeLV, dewormed, given flea/tick prevention, and heartworm prevention. Adopters will also receive a donated wellness exam from one of our participating partner veterinarians and more!

## **General Adoption Guidelines**

Let any potential adopters know they still must go through HSTV's adoption process and be approved by Best Fit for adoption. They will need to fill out the adoption application at [HumaneSocietyTennessee.org/Adoption](https://HumaneSocietyTennessee.org/Adoption) and email their completed application to [foster@humanesocietytennessee.org](mailto:foster@humanesocietytennessee.org) to be processed. If the interested applicant has not yet met the animal, their application will not be on hold for that animal, but we can let the applicant know when they will be available. You may not take the animal to someone else's house without specific approval from the foster coordinator! The animal must stay in the foster's home until the animal is old enough, has had spay/neuter surgery, and the adopter has finalized the adoption process.

All of our adoption requirements can be found on our website. Keep in mind, no one is guaranteed the animal! Please do not guarantee anyone that the animal is theirs. Everyone is required to go through our adoption process, no exceptions.

## **Coming back to HSTV for adoption**

If the foster animals do not have interested applicants once they're old enough, they will come back into HSTV to be available on our adoption floor as space becomes available.

We encourage fosters to give us all information that they have on the animal(s) while in foster by completing the Foster Return Form at [tinyurl.com/HSTVFosterReturn](https://tinyurl.com/HSTVFosterReturn). This information will help people get to know them better and hopefully get them adopted quicker. This form will also include your email so the adopters can send you updates or ask questions about their time with you.

You can also make a flyer of their information to put on their kennel, notes/letter to go home with the adopters, small goody bags with a few of their favorite things, etc. All of these things make their adoption process much better for the animal and the adopters!

**HAPPY  
GOTCHA DAY**

## Helpful Resources

There are many great websites and resources available! Feel free to look up any issues or questions you may have. Always make sure the site you're viewing is reputable, and verify any new process with the Foster Coordinator.

Listed below are just a few great sites and resources that may be useful while fostering. (To visit the links, (CTRL+Click) on the link, or copy and paste into your web browser.)

**\*Maddie's Fund:** [www.maddiesfund.org](http://www.maddiesfund.org)

**\*ASPCAPro:** [www.aspcapro.org](http://www.aspcapro.org)

**\*Kitten Lady:** [www.kittenlady.org/fostering](http://www.kittenlady.org/fostering)

**\*Veterinary Partner:** [veterinarypartner.vin.com](http://veterinarypartner.vin.com)

**\*Best Friends Animal Society:** [www.bestfriends.org](http://www.bestfriends.org)



**\*Bottle**

**Feeding:** <http://www.maddiesfund.org/how-to-bottle-feed-kittens-and-puppies.htm>

**\*Fading Kitten Syndrome:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UGU51hRal0G30iYxi4w006McMp01W\\_fRwU46CXSm93A/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UGU51hRal0G30iYxi4w006McMp01W_fRwU46CXSm93A/edit?usp=sharing)

**\*Introducing Cats:** <https://www.jacksongalaxy.com/blog/the-dos-and-donts-of-introducing-cats/>

**\*Introducing Cats and Dogs:** <https://bestfriends.org/resources/how-introduce-dog-cat>

**\*Decompression Tips for New Foster Dogs:**

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/steffen-baldwin/chill-out-decompression-t b 8331986.html?ec\\_carp=8223190377173758120](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/steffen-baldwin/chill-out-decompression-t-b-8331986.html?ec_carp=8223190377173758120)

**\*Separation Anxiety:**

[https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/11\\_7/features/Canine-Separation-Anxiety\\_16044-1.html](https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/11_7/features/Canine-Separation-Anxiety_16044-1.html)

**\*House Training:** <https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/how-houstrain-your-dog-or-puppy>

**\*Dog Enrichment:** <https://positively.com/dog-wellness/dog-enrichment/>

**\*DIY Cat Toys:**

<https://chewonthis.maddiesfund.org/2018/12/feelgoodfriday-5-cheap-and-easy-cat-toys-anyone-can-make/>

**\*Marketing your foster pet:**

<https://chewonthis.maddiesfund.org/2018/12/six-guidelines-for-marketing-your-foster-pet/>

## Foster Consent Form

### (Also at the end of the Foster Application)

Please read and understand the following policies and procedures before committing to fostering:

1. All animals in the home must be above 6 months of age, altered, and current on all vaccines:

Dogs: Rabies, DAPP, Heartworm Prevention, and Flea Prevention.

Cats: Rabies, FVRCP, Flea Prevention.

2. HSTV evaluates all animals appropriately prior to placement in foster, but cannot guarantee health or temperament. It's recommended to keep fosters separate from current animals for at least the first 7-14 days (review the Quarantine Protocol for more information).

3. HSTV cannot be held responsible for any illness or injury that may occur to humans or animals in the home if animals are not kept separate and secured in their own area.

4. ALL foster animals remain property of HSTV and will be returned when requested for routine vetting including vaccines, medical treatments, check-ups, and drop off for surgery.

5. I will follow all medical instructions provided to me by HSTV.

6. Vet care will be provided by HSTV or one of our partner vet clinics. All illnesses must be reported IMMEDIATELY to HSTV for appropriate care. If taken to another vet without prior approval, no refund will be given for charges.

7. I understand that I cannot promise any particular animal to any adopter. All interested parties (including foster) must complete an adoption application and be approved through our adoption process. Please contact the HSTV Foster Coordinator for more information.

8. I understand that foster animals are to remain in their designated foster home except for check-ups at HSTV or any approved outing. Fosters should not visit other homes or public grounds.

9. If any questions arise regarding medical concerns or an injury or illness, I understand I need to contact the Foster Coordinator immediately. The Foster Coordinator will check in via email or phone to check progress and follow up on medical needs during the foster time period.

10. All equipment supplied to fosters will be returned with the foster animal. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of foster approval. We really need our supplies back to help more animals in need!

11. While we strive to supply all items necessary to foster, fosters may need to purchase food or other items as we depend primarily on donations and could run low. A tax receipt can be supplied for any items used with an HSTV foster.

12. I agree to review the Foster Care Guide prior to taking in fosters (available at [HumaneSocietyTennessee.org/Get-Involved](https://HumaneSocietyTennessee.org/Get-Involved) and select the Foster Tab).

## THANK YOU!!

### From ALL of the Staff at Humane Society, Tennessee Valley

We would not be able to save the amount of lives we do without the support of our foster families. Even if you just foster one animal, you're saving the lives of many. By fostering, you open space in the shelter that the animal came from so they can take in more and you're leaving space open in our shelter for another animal to come in from a partner shelter! You are giving that animal a chance to grow and/or heal in a home environment, rather than in the shelter. You're also gaining valuable information on that animal that will help them get adopted into a home that is best suited for them.

Back in 2017, we took in about 1550 animals. Around 370 of those animals were placed into foster homes. In 2018, we took in around 1750 and nearly 700 of those were placed into a foster home. We went from about 23% of our incoming animals utilizing our foster program to about 40%! 2019 came with many changes that affected our intake and foster, but we still managed to place about 40% of incoming animals into foster! In 2020, we are working to improve our processes and make sure we are doing the best we can for these animals in need. The more animals we can place in foster, the more we can continue to take from our partner shelters, resulting in more lives saved!

We take it very seriously when we say "Fostering Saves Lives." Our foster program has already helped so many animals, and we don't plan on stopping! Let's keep growing and keep saving lives!

