



# FOSTER CARE HANDBOOK

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Foster Home Q & A

- ❖ What do foster homes do?
- ❖ What are the requirements for becoming a foster home?
- ❖ How long do animals spend in foster care?
- ❖ How do foster animals find permanent adoptive homes?

### **What do foster homes do?**

Foster homes allow our shelter to rescue more homeless and unwanted animals by providing them with temporary care and shelter until they are adopted. Some animals adjust quickly to the shelter setting while others find it very stressful. We are looking to provide the animals with the best possible environment while awaiting adoption.

Foster homes are asked to provide foster animals with adequate food, water, shelter, exercise and of course plenty of love. Administering medication may also be necessary. In addition to providing the basics, foster home may also be asked to transport foster animals to veterinary appointment and adoption events. Supplies such as food, litter and toys will need to be provided by the foster home. These items are however a donation to the Humane Society so keep receipts for tax purposes.

If a vet visit is planned it needs to be first approved by the Humane Society in order to have the visit paid. If the foster home wishes to provide veterinary care for the animal out-of-pocket that is acceptable and greatly appreciated. Not all vet visits will be approved as we are a small organization without a lot of income. You must also bring your foster care # card with you to each visit so that the vet's office may reference the number.

Foster homes play a crucial role in rehabilitating rescued animals. They are in a unique position to help abused or neglected animals learn how to trust again. Foster homes can help these animals become more adoptable by providing socialization and basic training. By teaching or re-teaching an animal how to live in a home setting, foster homes help to increase the likeliness of a smooth and successful transition into a permanent adoptive home. It is also easier for people to visualize an animal in their home when viewed in a home setting than it is in a sometimes loud kennel environment.

In the case of orphaned baby animals, foster homes provide surrogate parenting and round-the-clock care for tiny animals that are too young to survive on their own. By providing orphaned animals with plenty of nutrition, stimulation and love during their first 8 weeks of life, foster homes help to ensure they are given a chance to become healthy, well-adjusted adults.

No matter how you look at it foster homes play a crucial role in saving lives.

### **What are the requirements for becoming a foster home?**

Our shelter is always looking for more foster homes. The only general requirements are that you love animals and have the time and resources to provide a foster animal with adequate care. Other requirements will vary depending upon the specific needs of a given foster animal. Some animals, for example, will need fenced yards, extra time commitments (as is the case with orphaned newborns), isolation from personal pets, etc. The Humane Society makes efforts to match foster homes with an appropriate animal.

## **What kinds of animals need foster care?**

Animals needing foster care include dogs, cats, and occasionally small and furry or feathered. Foster homes are needed for adults, babies, moms with newborns, and orphaned newborns. Foster homes are also needed for animals who are ill and/or need medical care. Many foster homes choose to specialize in fostering a specific kind of animal, while others choose to foster whatever animal is in need.

The majority of animals in need are strays that have been brought into the shelter. Dogs usually need help with basic training and sometimes need a little refresher in house training. Many foster animals will need plenty of love and reassurance that humans are not to be feared.

## **How long do animals spend in foster care?**

The time an animal needs to spend in foster care ranges from a few days to several months. Any time commitment a foster home can make is desperately needed and appreciated. Most of our animals will be more long-term.

## **How do foster animals find permanent adoptive homes?**

Our Humane Society takes full responsibility for finding permanent adoptive homes for foster animals. Foster homes are encouraged to let people know that their foster animals are available for adoption, but any person interested in adopting an animal needs to contact the Humane Society to complete the adoption application process.

Adoptions are handled on a case-by-case basis and every effort is made to match animals with homes that meet their specific needs. Foster homes can help immensely with this process by providing information regarding an animal's personality, training, time requirements and other needs. Any input given by a foster home is appreciated and taken into consideration during adoption. It is also helpful to periodically provide cute photos of the animal looking happy and in their home setting via email to post on our webpage.

Once we are set up to hold adoption venues on or offsite, foster homes will be asked to bring their foster animals to these adoption events.

## Chapter 2

### CATS & KITTENS (over 8 weeks)

Many people find cats and kittens the easiest to foster. They don't require a lot of time and still give plenty of love and entertainment in return. Many foster home find that they are even comfortable fostering more than one cat at a time. Whether you are interested in fostering one cat or many cats over time, the information in this chapter will be helpful to familiarize yourself with some of the common needs, behavioral issues and health concerns that are associated with fostering cats and kittens.

#### NEEDED SUPPLIES

Please check over the following list of items needed to foster a cat/kitten. Check with the Humane Society to see which supplies they are able to provide.

#### Checklist

- Separate room or large kennel to keep foster kitty separate from personal pets for at least one week.
- Litter Box (the general rule of thumb is one for each cat plus one)
- Litter
- Food and water bowls
- Scratching post and/or toys to help keep your foster kitty busy
- Cat or kitten food (better quality = better health and less shedding)
- Cat bed, blankets, or towels to provide your foster kitty with a comfortable place to sleep.

#### BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

It is common for a cat to experience some behavioral problems and need a period of adjustment when placed into a new environment. The following is a list of common behavioral problems and the suggested modifications.

##### **Problem 1: Aggression toward other cats**

**Solution:** Prevent aggression before it occurs by introducing cats gradually. For instance, try placing the two cats on opposite sides of a door. (You may need a 2<sup>nd</sup> person for this) Let them get used to each other's smells and sounds before opening the door. You may even want to try pushing small treats under the door from one cat to another. You may also want to try feeding them on each side of the door. Rub each cat with a towel and then place that towel in the opposite cat's area to get used to the scent. You may also rub cat one cat with the towel, then rub the other cat and back to the first cat. This makes each cat have a similar smell and seem less threatening. For cats that really seem to have more trouble adjusting you can touch the tip of your finger into a little vanilla and dab behind each cat's neck. You may also choose to allow the new cat to roam the home while the other is kenneled briefly so that they are able to familiarize themselves with the environment first and place their scent on a few things by rubbing against furniture etc.

Upon physical introduction try to make sure that they are away from an area in the home where one cat may feel territorial (I.e. a favorite sleeping or eating place, or a favorite toy). Also be sure that it is in an open area so neither cat feels trapped. Taking these extra steps in the beginning will help to ensure a smooth transition into your home.

##### **Problem 2: Scratching furniture or carpet**

**Solution:** Provide something appropriate for the cat to scratch. All cats scratch whether declawed or not. They have scent glands in their feet and it is a way for them to not only shed nail layers, but to also claim something as theirs. It is very difficult to teach a cat not to scratch at all, it is quite easy to redirect the cat's scratching to a designated scratching post. Cats like to do most of their scratching activity upon waking. Keep this in mind and make sure that the scratching post you provide is near

where the cat naps. If the cat insists on scratching in an inappropriate place, try using a squirt bottle to deter them. For behavior modifications to be successful, do not scold them. Just provide a quick squirt with the bottle. You want the cat to associate the squirt with scratching the inappropriate place, not you. They are after all a cat and not a dog. You can also try to place double-sided tape on the area where the cat likes to scratch. Cats don't like the sticky surfaces and will usually leave the area alone.

From personal experience cats are individuals and prefer different types of surfaces to scratch. There really is no other way to find this out than trial and error. Different types of scratching surfaces are: carpet, cardboard, rope and wood.

### **Problem 3: Not using the litter box**

**Solution:** There are several common reasons why cats don't use their litter boxes. When introduced to a new environment, a cat may simply not know or remember where the litter box is located. Make sure to confine a new foster cat to a small area (like a laundry room or bathroom) for several days before allowing the cat to have more space. This will help ensure that the cat knows where to find the litter box when needed. It is also very important to keep the litter box clean. In general, cats are extremely clean animals and most will do their business elsewhere if their litter box becomes too soiled or if the litter box is too close to their food and water. If more than one cat is using the same litter box, it may be necessary to provide extra litter boxes to give each cat their own. Remember the rule of thumb: one litter box per cat plus one.

**Personal experience suggestions tried and true are:** Large cats may not be comfortable in even the largest covered litter boxes so an under bed storage tote may do the trick. Also not all cats are comfortable using a covered litter box so just removing the cover may help. Having the cover on sometimes makes them feel trapped. Having the box next to the furnace or washing machine may startle them and make a cat not want to use the litter box because it's associated with fear. Some cats are particular to a certain type of litter and a simple switch can divert them from the box. If these suggestions aren't helping there could be a medical reason. Have urine tested, if the pH is too high it's time to switch to a food lower in phosphorus like Science Diet Indoor or Purina One Urinary Tract Health. It could also be a urinary tract infection which also needs testing to confirm. Plugged tom cat syndrome is fairly common as well. If you notice your foster cat vocalizing when trying to use the litter box with no results it's time to seek veterinary attention. He could potentially have tiny crystals that have developed and are blocking his urethra.

### **Problem 4: Chewing on plants or other inappropriate items**

**Solution:** There are a number of taste deterrents available on the market. Some are specially formulated for furniture, plants, etc. You may also try using a spray bottle. Be aware that many plants such as Easter lilies are toxic to cats when ingested. It is very important that these plants are out of the cat's reach or removed completely from the environment. You may visit the following website for a complete list: <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/plant-list-cats.html?print=t>

**NOTE:** Cats do not respond to spanking and punishment. This damages their bond with us. Focus on the behavioral modification aspect and remember that cats are independent creatures so some parts of their behavior is just the norm in having a cat.

## HEALTH ISSUES

All of our foster cats will have spent at least a small amount of time in the shelter it is very difficult to ensure that they will be healthy. Many of our animals are strays from a rural environment with no vaccination of previous history available. A cat that appears healthy initially could easily begin to show signs of illness several days later, even after having been vaccinated. For this reason, it is very important that foster homes keep their own cats up to date on vaccinations. Cats are relatively easy to keep separate so we encourage foster home to isolate foster cats in a separate room or large kennel for a period of at least one week, preferable two following the rescue. Most illnesses should be apparent within the two week time frame. We also suggest that foster homes provide foster cats with separate food bowls, water bowls, and litter boxes for the duration of their stay.

### Common Illnesses in Cats

The following information is intended to help you better understand and recognize some of the more common illnesses in cats.

#### **Panleukopenia (Feline Distemper)**

Panleukopenia is a viral infection that most commonly affects kittens and young cats. Left untreated, panleukopenia is almost always fatal. Even with intensive treatment, the majority of cats showing signs of panleukopenia will die. Unfortunately, this illness can be frustrating to deal with because the virus can survive in the environment for up to one year. This means that other unvaccinated cats can become infected with panleukopenia simply by coming into contact with places where an infected cat has been. A bleach solution is the best way to disinfect areas that may have been contaminated. The vaccine for panleukopenia is considered to be very effective.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms :</b>	Sneezing, runny nose and eyes, fever
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including antibiotics
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats, especially through contact with infected feces or vomit.

#### **Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)**

The term "upper respiratory infection" is used to refer to any illness that affects a cat's upper respiratory system. URIs are very common in shelter cats. Some of the more serious URIs are listed separately in this section. Following is information that applies to all URIs.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Sneezing, runny nose and eyes, fever
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary Care, including antibiotics
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats

#### **Rhinotracheitis**

Rhinotracheitis is a type of upper respiratory infection. It often infects cats that also have calicivirus. The vaccine for rhinotracheitis is considered very effective.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Sneezing, coughing, fever, runny nose and eyes
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including antibiotics
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats

## Calicivirus

Calicivirus is a virus that attacks the lungs and lower respiratory tract, usually causing pneumonia. Ulcers are often seen on the tongue and lips. The vaccine for calicivirus is considered very effective.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Loss of appetite, sneezing, runny nose and eyes
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including antibiotics
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats

## Chlamydia

Also called pneumonitis, Chlamydia attacks the respiratory tract and produces conjunctivitis. Chlamydia is a bacterium. The vaccine for Chlamydia is considered very effective.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Loss of appetite, fever, nasal discharge, red eyes
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including antibiotics
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats

## Ear Mites

Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal. They are very prevalent in stray cats and transmittable to other cats and dogs.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Itching, scratching, head-shaking, dark brown/black discharge in ears
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including ear meds
<b>Transmission:</b>	Contagious to other cats and dogs, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal

## Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungus related to athlete's foot, not actually a worm.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Irregularly shaped areas of hair loss, the skin in these areas will usually appear rough and scaly
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including and injection and/or topical treatment
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats, dogs and people, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal.

## Fleas

Fleas are tiny insects that feed on the blood of cats, dogs, humans and other animals. Although each flea only consumes a small drop of blood they usually attack in large numbers.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Intense itching and scratching, can often see on skin/hair
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including and injection and/or topical treatment
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other cats, dogs and people

## Round, Tape and Hook Worms

Worms affect a cat's digestive system. They are most commonly seen in kittens, young cats and those that have been outside for some time.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Large belly, diarrhea, an inability to gain weight, may see in feces, around anal area or in severe infestations in vomit
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including de-worming medication
<b>Transmission:</b>	Contagious to other cats and dogs, but only through contact with (and subsequent ingestion of) feces

## Cleaning Procedures

It is important that all items and area used by a sick foster animal be cleaned thoroughly. You can use a 10% bleach solution to reliably kill most viruses and bacteria. Items to be cleaned should be thoroughly wetted with the bleach solution and allowed to stand for several minutes before rinsing. Foster home that have recently fostered a cat or kitten with panleukopenia (feline distemper) or another extremely contagious disease may be asked to wait several months or more before fostering another unvaccinated cat or kitten.

## Safety

To help ensure the health and safety of your foster cat, the Humane Society asks that you adhere to the guidelines set forth, including the following:

1. Keep your foster cat indoors at all times. Going outside only on a harness or into a secure cattery.
2. Let the Humane Society know if you are no longer able to care for your foster cat. Do not give your foster cat to another person or agency without first receiving permission from the Humane Society.
3. Do not keep collars on your foster cat unless they are break-away. They could become hung up on something and injure or accidentally hang themselves.

## Routine Veterinary Care

Each cat/kitten will be provided with routine veterinary care prior to placement in permanent adoptive homes. The following schedule outlines the various types of routine care provided.

Procedure	Schedule
<b>Distemper Vaccine (Panleukopenia, rhinotracheitis &amp; Calicivirus)</b>	* Initial dose given shortly after rescue to cats 8 weeks and older not on any medication. * Booster given 3-4 weeks later
<b>De-worm</b>	Initial dose given upon arrival, 2nd dose given 10 days later
<b>Ear Mite Treatment</b>	Will be treated upon arrival if mites present. 2nd treatment as medication instructs.
<b>Spay/Neuter</b>	Done only when there are monies available.

## Chapter 3

### DOG & PUPPIES (over 8 weeks)

Fostering a dog or puppy can be an extremely rewarding experience. While perhaps slightly more involved than fostering a cat, fostering a dog can be very satisfying and a lot of fun. By providing a little training and a lot of love, foster homes can drastically affect the “adoptability” of the dogs they foster. The information in this chapter will help you familiarize yourself with some of the needs, behavioral issues and health concerns that are associated with fostering dogs and puppies.

#### NEEDED SUPPLIES

The following is a checklist of items that you will need to foster a dog or puppy. Check with the Humane Society to see which supplies they are able to provide.

#### Checklist

- Food and water bowls
- Leash
- Chew toys
- Crate or kennel (for keeping dog safe and out of trouble while you’re away and also to aid in house-training)
- Dog or puppy food (better quality = better health, less shedding and less pooping)
- Dog bed, blankets, or towels to provide your foster dog with a comfortable place to sleep.

#### BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

It is common for a dog to experience some behavioral problems and need a period of adjustment when placed into a new environment. Foster homes are unique in a unique position to help increase the “adoptability” of their foster dogs by providing some basic training. The following is a list of common behavioral problems and the suggested modifications.

#### Lack of House-Training

Chances are that your foster dog will need at least a refresher course in house-training if not the whole lesson plan. Many shelter dogs have come as strays and we have no history of house habits, only what we see in their kennel. Other dogs may have once been house-trained, but may still have an accident of two when transitioning into a new home.

The most important element of effective house-training is extensive supervision. Correcting a dog for eliminating in the house is only effective if the dog is caught in the act. Otherwise they will have no idea what you are scolding them for. For this reason, it is essential that the dog be under your supervision at all times. There will, of course, be times when you are unable to watch the dog constantly. During these times, you can confine the dog to a crate. The crate should be big enough for the dog to comfortably stand up, turn around and lie down. Generally a dog will not try to soil where they sleep, they usually will not urinate or defecate in a crate. **(See page 13 for notes on crate training)**

When the dog is allowed out of the crate, they should immediately taken outside. If the dog eliminates outside give them lots of praise. There is a 1-3 second window to do this, otherwise they will not know what you are praising them for. If the dog does not eliminate, it is important to supervise them closely after re-entering your home, don’t put them back into the crate. If you catch the dog having an accident in the house tell them “NO” in a firm (but not angry) voice. Take the dog straight outside and give them a chance to finish eliminating outside. If the dog does eliminate, give lots of praise.

When house-training a dog use common sense. Give the dog a chance to eliminate outside following meals, naps and times of play. Pay attention to behavioral signals, If you observe the dog circling, sniffing the floor, or moving toward the door, take the dog outside.

### **House-Training Don'ts:**

- ❖ Do not rub the dog's nose in it! This method of training has been proven ineffective by trainers and behaviorists. The only message the dog received from this is that you are angry. The dog will likely not learn to eliminate outside and instead to fear you.
- ❖ Do not correct the dog after the fact! This method of training has also been proven ineffective by trainers and behaviorists. Punishing a dog for something they did wrong much earlier will not yield the results you are looking for. The dog will behave submissively and perhaps look guilty, but this is because they know you are angry, not because earlier they did something wrong.

House-training is not a process that happens overnight. Be patient. Any progress you make with your foster dog on house-training will make your life easier and help to improve the dog's chances for successful adoption. Any time a dog is unsupervised and does something wrong it's your fault for not being there to redirect the behavior onto something positive.

### **Chewing**

Destructive chewing is a phase that all puppies go through. It usually starts around 3 months and can last until the dog is over 1 year old. During this time, the dog's adult teeth are coming in and chewing helps to relieve the pain. Adult dogs may also have problems with chewing, but for different reasons. Adult dogs usually chew on inappropriate things because they are anxious or bored, or because they have never been taught what is inappropriate to chew on.

The best solution for destructive chewing is providing your foster dog with something that is acceptable to chew on. Have plenty of chew toys available at all times. If you catch the dog chewing on something inappropriate, tell the dog "NO" in a firm (but not angry) voice, and replace the item with something more appropriate.

If the destructive chewing occurs when you are away, consider confining the dog to a crate. A crate will help keep both the dog and your home safe. **(See page 13 for notes on crate training)** It is also important that your foster dog is getting plenty of exercise. A well exercised dog is a well-behaved dog. If they are bored then any attention will do, good or bad.

Any time a dog is unsupervised and does something wrong it's your fault for not being there to redirect the behavior onto something positive. There have been shoes and wood trim to bear the mark of my own inattentiveness to my puppies. To train yourself, pick up your belongings. If you prefer not to do that slap yourself with whatever they were chewing and say "Bad Owner" over and over until it gets through. ☺

### **Separating anxiety**

It is quite common for foster dogs to experience some separation anxiety when left alone. The severity of the anxiety can range from pacing and whining to much more destructive behavior. A dog may experience separation anxiety simply because they have a very dependent personality, or because they are reacting to a history of abuse or abandonment. Whatever the reason, separation anxiety can be difficult to deal with because you are not around when it happens.

The most common sign that a dog may be suffering from separation anxiety is destructive behavior when left alone. A dog may scratch frantically at the door or make other attempts to get out of the house, or the dog may chew on things or engage in other destructive behaviors. If you have reason to suspect that your foster dog is suffering from separation anxiety while you are away, consider confining

the dog to a crate. If used appropriately, the crate will help the dog feel safe and secure, hopefully relieving some of the anxiety. Until the separation anxiety itself can be worked with, a crate will help to keep both the dog and your home safe. **(See page 13 for notes on crate training.)**

There are several things you can try to alleviate separation anxiety. Start out by leaving the dog in your home for very short intervals. Tell the dog to wait, then walk outside for a few minutes before returning. When you return to the house, praise the dog for waiting. Begin to gradually leave the dog for longer and longer periods of time. It is important that, when you leave you remain calm and don't make a big deal out of leaving. It is also important that you don't become excited upon returning. You need to praise the dog, but in a calm manner. If you are excited upon return they will anxiously await it. One of the most effective treatments for separation anxiety is time. Be patient. To a dog when you leave it's final as they live in the moment. We can condition them to understand we're someone that they can rely on to never leave them permanently as has been done at least once before.

Some destructive behavior that appears to be related to separation anxiety may actually be the result of boredom. Try providing chew toys or other play items that will entertain your foster dog while you are away. There are many foraging toys that make dogs work for food or treats. We keep a toy box with a variety of items to play with. You may want to rotate toys also so that when one is put back into the box it's more exciting for the dog.

Don't forget to make sure that your foster dog gets plenty of exercise. A tired dog is much less likely to engage in behaviors associated with anxiety or boredom. An exercised dog is a well-behaved dog.

## **NOTES ON CRATE TRAINING**

A crate is a great way to keep both your foster dog and your home safe. If you decide to use a crate, make sure that the crate is always a positive place for your dog. Never use a crate for punishment. When introducing a dog to a crate, use a happy tone of voice and tell the dog to "kennel up". Once the dog has entered the crate, give lots of praise and perhaps a small treat as a reward. If you have a difficult time getting the dog to enter the crate, or if they seem afraid, try leaving the crate door open and placing the food and water just inside the door. Allow the dog to wander into the crate and eat at their leisure. Once the dog seems more comfortable with the crate, you can try confining the dog to the crate for short intervals. Even just 10 seconds to start is good.

**Never confine a puppy to a crate for longer than 4 hours at a time, or an adult for longer than 8 hours at a time.** Remember dogs will not want to soil where they sleep and will need to relieve themselves.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

Most foster dogs have come to the shelter as strays it's difficult for us to ensure that they will always be healthy. Their vaccination history is unknown. They may appear healthy initially, but could easily begin to show signs of illness days later. For this reason, it is very important that foster homes keep their own dogs up to date on vaccinations.

## **Common Illnesses in Dogs**

The following information is intended to help you better understand and recognize some of the more common illnesses in dogs.

## Canine Distemper

Canine Distemper is a viral disease that is often fatal. Distemper is most commonly seen in puppies 3-6 months of age. Early signs resemble a severe cold. The vaccine for canine distemper is considered very effective.

**Signs & Symptoms :** Eye congestion and discharge, loss of appetite, weight loss, vomiting, nasal discharge, and diarrhea  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including antibiotics and fluid therapy  
**Transmission:** Very contagious

## Parvovirus

Parvo is a disease that is most common in puppies and young dogs. It causes the sloughing of the lining of the intestinal tract. Parvo can survive in the environment for 6 months or longer. This means that other unvaccinated dogs can become infected by simply coming into contact with places or objects that an infected dog has. A bleach solution is the best way to disinfect contaminated areas. The vaccine for parvovirus is considered very effective.

**Signs & Symptoms :** Lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including antibiotics and fluid therapy  
**Transmission:** Very contagious

## Bordetella

Kennel Cough is a respiratory tract infection that has been linked to several different viral and bacterial causes. Coughing is usually stimulated by physical exertion or by touching the throat area. Kennel cough is self-limiting, usually lasting 1-3 weeks. Antibiotics are often given to prevent secondary infections. Kennel cough is very common in shelters and other boarding facilities. There is a vaccine available. The Humane Society uses an intranasal vaccine.

**Signs & Symptoms :** Cough, runny nose and eyes  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including antibiotics  
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs

## Ear Mites

Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal. They are transmittable to other dogs and cats.

**Signs & Symptoms:** Itching, scratching, head-shaking, dark brown/black discharge in ears  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including ear meds  
**Transmission:** Contagious to other dogs and cats, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal

## Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungus related to athlete's foot, not actually a worm.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Irregularly shaped areas of hair loss, the skin in these areas will usually appear rough and scaly
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including and injection and/or topical treatment
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other dogs, cats and people, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal.

## Fleas

Fleas are tiny insects that feed on the blood of cats, dogs, humans and other animals. Although each flea only consumes a small drop of blood they usually attack in large numbers.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Intense itching and scratching, can often see on skin/hair
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including and injection and/or topical treatment
<b>Transmission:</b>	Very contagious to other dogs, cats and people

## Round, Tape and Hook Worms

Worms affect a dog's digestive system. They are most commonly seen in puppies, young dogs and those that have been outside for some time.

<b>Signs &amp; Symptoms:</b>	Large belly, diarrhea, an inability to gain weight, may see in feces
<b>Treatment:</b>	Veterinary care, including de-worming medication
<b>Transmission:</b>	Contagious to other dogs and cats, but only through contact with (and subsequent ingestion of) feces

## Cleaning Procedures

It is important that all items and area used by a sick foster animal be cleaned thoroughly. You can use a 10% bleach solution to reliably kill most viruses and bacteria. Items to be cleaned should be thoroughly wetted with the bleach solution and allowed to stand for several minutes before rinsing. Foster home that have recently fostered a dog or puppy with parvo or another extremely contagious disease may be asked to wait several months or more before fostering another unvaccinated dog or puppy.

## Routine Veterinary Care

Each puppy/dog will be provided with routine veterinary care prior to placement in permanent adoptive homes. The following schedule outlines the various types of routine care provided.

<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
<b>Distemper combo" vaccine (Vanguard 5) Canine Distemper, Adenovirus Type - 2, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus. (MLV)</b>	Initial dose given shortly after arrival to puppies at least 6 weeks of age, but under 6 months.
<b>Distemper Combo" vaccine (Solojec 7 Plus) Canine Distemper, Adenovirus Type - 2, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus, (MLV) Leptospira Bacterin (2 strains KV)</b>	Initial dose given shortly after arrival to puppies at least 6 months of age and adults. Booster given 3-4 weeks later (also as a booster to Vanguard 5 in puppies) Additional booster given 3-4 weeks after 2nd dose in dogs under 1 year
<b>Rabies Vaccine</b>	One dose given shortly after arrival to dogs at least 12 weeks of age. Under 12 weeks adopter must give when age appropriate
<b>Bordetella Vaccine "Kennel Cough"</b>	One dose given intranasally shortly after arrival to puppies 6 weeks of age and up
<b>De-worm</b>	* Initial dose given shortly after arrival * 2nd dose given 2 weeks later

## **Safety**

To help ensure the health and safety of your foster dog, the Humane Society asks that you adhere to the guidelines set forth, including the following:

1. Always keep an ID tag attached to a properly fitted collar that will remain on your foster dog at all times
2. Let the Humane Society know if you are no longer able to care for your foster dog. Do not give your foster dog to another person or agency without first receiving permission from the Humane Society.
3. Keep your foster dog under your control at all times, going outside only on a leash or into a securely fenced area.

## **Chapter 4 NEWBORN KITTENS (under 8 weeks)**

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ Needed Supplies
- ❖ The first 8 weeks of life
- ❖ Caring for orphaned kittens
- ❖ Health issues

### **INTRODUCTION**

Newborns, regardless of whether or not they are with their mother, have very little chance of surviving in a shelter environment. Foster homes that foster mother cats with newborns provide a safe and healthy place for the kittens to grow and learn until they are old enough to be adopted. Foster homes that work with orphaned newborns provide everything a mothering cat would provide. Orphaned kittens require 24-hour supervision and round-the-clock care. Fostering newborns of any kind is sure to be a challenging yet extremely rewarding experience.

## NEEDED SUPPLIES

Please check over the following list of items needed to foster newborn kittens. Check with the Humane Society to see which supplies they are able to provide.

### Checklist

- Separate room or large kennel to keep foster kittens separate from personal pets
- Nest box large enough for mom and kittens. Sides need to be tall enough to keep kittens in, but allow mom easy in and out.
- Blankets and/or towels (lots of them)
- Litter Box you may need to use something with small sides for the kittens when they are old enough and a separate one for mom
- Litter
- Food and water bowls
- Milk replacer (KMR is the best brand)
- Kitten food - a nursing mom needs to eat this (better quality = better health and less shedding)
- Bottles and syringes (for feeding orphaned or rejected kittens)
- Heating pad or water bottle (do not use ones designed for humans as they can cause burns)
- Scale (not completely necessary, but a food or postal scale is helpful in monitoring kittens' growth)
- Toys

## THE FIRST 8 WEEKS OF LIFE

### **Week 1**

- A nursing mother can not be overfed. Food requirements can increase up to 3 times the normal amount. Leave food out for the mother cat at ALL times.
- The floor temperature of the nest box should be between 85-90 degrees.
- The kittens' ear canals open when they are between 5-8 days old.
- Kittens should weigh about 4 ounces and be handles minimally
- Kittens will sleep 90% of the time and nurse from their mother the other 10%. They should nurse vigorously and littermates should compete for food.
- Chilling is very dangerous to newborn kittens, so keep them warm.
- Make sure each kitten is nursing and there is not too much maneuvering for position. When the mother re-enters the nest box, there should be fussing for only a few minutes before the kittens settle down. If it continues this could indicate a problem with milk flow or quality.

### **Week 2**

- Floor temperature of the nest box should now be 80-85 degrees
- The kittens should now weigh about 7 ounces
- The kittens' eyes will open between 8-14 days. They open gradually starting from the nose outward. Short-haired cats' eyes usually open earlier than those with longer hair.
- All newborn kittens have blue eyes and initially no pupils can be distinguished. The eye color is a solid, dark blue.

### **Week 3**

- The mother cat will begin to spend more time out of the nest.
- Floor temperature of the nest box should be 73-80 degrees.
- Kittens should weigh about 10 ounces
- The kittens' ears will begin to stand erect
- The kittens should now be spending only 60-70% of their time sleeping.
- Kittens generally begin to crawl around day 18 and can usually stand by day 21.
- The kittens' milk teeth will begin to cut.

- Kittens will begin to play with each other, learn to sit, and will start trying to touch objects with their paws.
- During week 3, kittens should begin their socialization phase. Start to increase the amount of handling the kittens receive and try to accustom them to human contact. Avoid exposing them to anything frightening. \* **See page 19 for notes on socialization.**

#### **Week 4**

- Floor temperature of the nest box should be 70-75 degrees from this point forward.
- The kittens should now weigh about 13 ounces.
- Adult eye color will begin to appear, although it may not be final for another 9-12 weeks. The kittens will begin to develop complete sound and sight orientation.
- Kittens will begin to clean themselves, although their mother will continue to do most of the serious cleaning.
- Kittens can begin to eat from a shallow dish and should be weaned gradually from their mother's milk. The mother cat will usually begin to discourage her kittens from nursing.
- \* **See page 20 for notes on weaning.**
- Sometimes, nursing activity is done just for comfort. Even if the kittens appear to be nursing, they may not be receiving all the nutrition they need. Make sure they are eating and gaining weight.
- At this time, kittens will begin eliminating on their own. Supply a small, low litter box and fill it with clay litter. DO NOT use the clumping variety it is harmful if ingested.  
\* **See page 20 for notes on litter box training.**

#### **Week 5**

- Kittens should now weigh about 1 pound.
- The kittens should be very active and be able to get out of the nest.
- Weaning and litter box training should continue.

#### **Week 6**

- Kittens should weigh about 1.25 pounds.
- The kittens should have complete visual abilities. They will imitate their mother, use scratching posts, and explore the world around them.
- Continue the weaning process by thickening the gruel. Begin to introduce solid food.

#### **Week 7**

- Kittens should weigh about 1.5 pounds.
- Nursing sessions should be brief and infrequent, if they take place at all.
- The kittens should now eat undiluted kitten food. Continue to encourage the kittens to eat dry food. Canned food can be more for a treat in the mornings.

#### **Week 8**

- By the end of week 8, the kittens should weigh 2 pounds and be ready to be adopted.

**Kitten Weight Chart**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>At birth</b>	<b>3.0 - 3.7 oz. (90 - 1010 g)</b>
<b>2 weeks old</b>	<b>7.0 - 11.0 oz. (200 - 300 g)</b>
<b>3-4 weeks old</b>	<b>11.7 - 15.0 oz. 350 - 450 g)</b>
<b>5-7 weeks old</b>	<b>1 - 1.5 lbs (450 - 700 g)</b>
<b>8 weeks old</b>	<b>1.7 - 2 lbs (800 - 900 g)</b>

## ORPHANED KITTENS

Newborn kittens are sometimes orphaned. Success raising these newborns is based on how you follow the basic procedures and keep the important elements in mind. Successful rearing of orphaned kittens requires providing them with a suitable environment, the correct quantities of nutrients for different stages of growth, and a regular schedule of feeding, sleeping, grooming and exercise. You must also provide the stimulus for urination and defecation during the first 18-21 days of life. Do this by massaging the abdomen and peri-anal area after each feeding with a cotton ball, very soft washcloth or paper towel. Whichever you decide to use first dampen with warm water (otherwise you will irritate the area). Kittens can usually eliminate without assistance after 4 weeks of age.

You must also maintain their body warmth, since they are unable to regulate and control their body temperature on their own. Keep them out of drafts. If you use a heating pad, place it in front of their sleeping area, at the opening of the crate and cover it with several layers of dry towels. The key to a heating pad is that any animal needs to be able to get away from the heat source if they choose.

Kitten bedding must be changed daily, usually multiple times a day. Wash dirty bedding with a little bleach to disinfect.

Kittens need exercise to promote muscular and circulatory development. However, care should be taken in the first 2 weeks of life because their internal organs and limbs are extremely fragile. Play with and handle them prior to feeding. At least twice a week, and more often if possible or needed, the babies need to be groomed with a soft, warm, moist cloth, wiping gently in imitation of the mother's grooming licks.

You may purchase kitten milk replacer at most area retail stores (KMR is best and found at Fleet Farm. Hartz also makes a good one and can be purchased at Wal-Mart). DO NOT feed them cow's milk, cats are actually lactose intolerant and there are not enough nutrients for kittens, they will slowly starve to death. Test the temperature of the milk replacer before feeding. It should be warm, but not hot. Don't boil or microwave, this will destroy the nutritional value. You can warm the bottle by placing it in hot water for a few minutes.

If constipation occurs, add 1 drop of vegetable oil to each kitten's feeding no more than once daily until the problem ceases. Don't over feed, since it can cause diarrhea and other problems.

Hand-feeding can be challenging and very rewarding at the same time. Once you've done it you will develop a method that works best for you. Keep the kitten in a position similar to what mom would - NEVER turn them and feed on their backs. Keep the bottle or syringe at a 45-degree angle to reduce the amount of air consumed.

### Kitten Feeding

Feeding equipment needs to be washed before and after feedings. Wash your hands also. Feedings should occur every 2 hours until week 3; after that, do feeding every 4 hours a night (for your sanity). Below are general guidelines for how much and when to feed:

<b>Week of life</b>	<b>Amount to feed</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> week	3.7 cc's per ounce of body weight
2 <sup>nd</sup> week	4.9 cc's per ounce of body weight
3 <sup>rd</sup> week	5.7 cc's per ounce of body weight
4 <sup>th</sup> week	6.3 cc's per ounce of body weight

As long as the kittens do not cry excessively, gain weight, and feels firm to the touch, the diet is meeting

their nutritional needs.

After each feeding session, you should give each kitten a full-body once over with a barely damp washcloth, using short strokes like mom would use. This activity keeps the kittens' hair clean, teaches them how to groom, and gives them the attention and mothering they crave and need.

**NOTES: Here is some additional information on techniques for socializing, weaning and litter box training.**

### **Socialization**

It is your job to help convince the kittens that humans are kind and loving. Some kittens will adjust to you and their new environment quickly, while others will be frightened and intimidated. To help the get used to you sit in the middle of the room while making phone calls. They will hear your voice, but to be threatened by it. Familiarize them with the sound of the television and radio.

When the kittens are nearly 4 weeks old, they are ready to socialize with you and each other. Try to play with them daily. Outgoing and friendly kittens will be easy to play with. Some may need encouragement. If they are afraid and run away when you approach, try sitting or lying on the floor near them and allow them to approach you. When you pick a kitten up, stroke gently and speak in a soft tone. You want this to be a positive and pleasant experience.

### **Weaning**

At about 4 weeks of age, the kittens will probably start showing interest in their mom's food. Introduce the kittens to solid food by offering warmed canned food mixed into a thin gruel with a little bit of milk replacer. Place food in a shallow dish. Some kittens will begin lapping right away, while others will prefer to lick it from your fingers. Allow them to do so and slowly lower your finger to the dish. The kittens may bite the edge of the plate or walk in the good. Sometimes it takes 2-3 meals or more before they really catch on. If a kitten doesn't seem interested in the gruel at all, gently open it's mouth and place a tiny amount on the tongue. Be patient; the weaning process takes time. As the kittens catch on, thicken the gruel. Remember that as you thicken the gruel, you will need to make sure the kittens always have access to fresh water in a low spill-resistant bowl.

By about 6 weeks of age, the kittens should be getting most of their nutrition from the food you are providing. They should be fed at least 3 meals a day. Their stomachs are small (roughly the size of an acorn) and so they may not eat much at a single sitting. They need small, frequent feedings to receive adequate nutrition. Gradually introduce the kittens to dry food by mixing it in with their gruel. By the end of week 8 they need to be content to eat dry food alone.

### **Litter Box Training**

When the kittens reach about 4 weeks of age, they will begin to eliminate on their own. You can create a small litter box out of a drawer organizer, old cake pan, Tupperware, just be sure it is something you won't be using for humans again. Avoid exposing kittens to clumping litter this early because it's dangerous if ingested and they may try to eat it. Most kittens learn from watching mom and will use the litter box right away.

You can encourage kittens by showing them the litter box several times a day, especially after naps and meals. Gently take a paw and scratch at the litter. Be sure to praise the kittens when they start using the litter box. It is, of course, common for them to make mistakes. If you find feces outside of the litter box, pick up and place inside the litter box. It is a good idea to confine them to a relatively small area because they may forget where the litter box is located if they

have too much room. Make sure to always keep the litter box cleaned and away from their food and water.

## HEALTH ISSUES

These are the same for foster cats and can be read on page 6 of the Handbook.

**Common Illnesses** in Newborn Kittens are: Panleukopenia, Upper Respiratory Infection, Ear Mites, Ringworm, Fleas, Round, Tape and Hook Worms. These are listed on pages 6-8 in the Handbook.

### Fading Kitten Syndrome

Once in awhile, one or more kittens will begin to “fade” after sever weeks of life despite having been vigorous at birth. They will stop growing, begin to lose weight, stop nursing and crawling. They may be pushed out of the nest. Kittens fade very quickly. Most will not recover without intensive nursing care. This has been linked to birth defects, environmental stress, and infectious disease. Even with all of the care available many of these kittens will die.

## Routine Veterinary Care

See page 9 under cat fostering.

## Chapter 5 NEWBORN PUPPIES (under 8 weeks)

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ Supplies needed
- ❖ The first 8 weeks of life
- ❖ Caring for orphaned puppies
- ❖ Health issues

## INTRODUCTION

Newborns, regardless of whether or not they are with their mother, have very little chance of surviving in a shelter environment. Foster homes that foster mother dogs with newborns provide a safe and healthy place for the puppies to grow and learn until they are old enough to be adopted. Foster homes that work with orphaned newborns provide everything a mother dog would provide. Orphaned puppies require 24-hour supervision and round-the-clock care. Fostering newborns of any kind is sure to be a challenging yet extremely rewarding experience.

## NEEDED SUPPLIES

Please check over the following list of items needed to foster newborn puppies. Check with the Humane Society to see which supplies they are able to provide.

### Checklist

- Separate room or large kennel to keep foster puppies separate from personal pets
- Nest box large enough for mom and puppies. Sides need to be tall enough to keep puppies in, but allow mom easy in and out.
- Blankets and/or towels (lots of them)
- Food and water bowls
- Milk replacer (Esbilac is the best brand)
- Puppy food - a nursing mom needs to eat this (better quality = better health and less shedding)
- Bottles and syringes (for feeding orphaned or rejected puppies)
- Heating pad or water bottle (do not use ones designed for humans as they can cause burns)

- Scale (not completely necessary, but a food or postal scale is helpful in monitoring puppies' growth)
- Toys

## THE FIRST 8 WEEKS OF LIFE

### Week 1

- A nursing mother can not be overfed. Food requirements can increase up to 3 times the normal amount. Leave food out for the mother dog at ALL times.
- The floor temperature of the nest box should be between 96-100 degrees.
- The puppies' ear canals open when they are between 13-17 days old.
- The puppies' weight will vary according to their breed, but they should be gaining about 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. They should be handled as little as possible.
- Puppies will sleep 90% of the time and nurse from their mother the other 10%. They should nurse vigorously and littermates should compete for food. They can nurse for up to 45 minutes at a time.
- Chilling is very dangerous to newborns, so keep them warm.
- Make sure each puppy is nursing and there is not too much maneuvering for position. When the mother re-enters the nest box, there should be fussing for only a few minutes before the puppies settle down. If it continues this could indicate a problem with milk flow or quality.

### Week 2

- Floor temperature of the nest box should now be 90-95 degrees
- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
- The puppies' eyes will open between 10-14 days. They open gradually starting from the nose outward.
- All newborn kittens have blue eyes and initially no pupils can be distinguished. The eye color is a solid, dark blue.

### Week 3

- The mother dog will begin to spend more time out of the nest.
- Floor temperature of the nest box should be 85-90 degrees.
- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
- The puppies should now be spending only 60-70% of their time sleeping.
- Puppies generally begin to stand around day 15 and can usually crawl by day 21.
- The puppies' milk teeth will begin to cut.
- Puppies will begin to play with each other, learn to sit, and will start trying to touch objects with their paws.
- During week 3, puppies should begin their socialization phase. Start to increase the amount of handling the puppies receive and try to accustom them to human contact. Avoid exposing them to anything frightening. **\* See page 24 for notes on socialization.**

### Week 4

- Floor temperature of the nest box should be 75-80 degrees from this point forward.
- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
- Adult eye color will begin to appear, although it may not be final for another 9-12 weeks. The puppies will begin to develop complete sound and sight orientation.
- Puppies will begin to clean themselves, although their mother will continue to do most of the serious cleaning.

- Puppies can begin to eat from a shallow dish and should be weaned gradually from their mother's milk. The mother will usually begin to discourage her puppies from nursing.
- **\* See page 24 for notes on weaning.**
- Sometimes, nursing activity is done just for comfort. Even if the puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be receiving all the nutrition they need. Make sure they are eating and gaining weight.
- At this time, puppies will begin eliminating on their own. Supply a newspaper or puppy training pads and encourage them to use this area  
**\* See page 25 for notes on house-training.**

### **Week 5**

- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
- The puppies should be very active and be able to get out of the nest.
- Weaning and house-training should continue.

### **Week 6**

- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
- The puppies should have complete visual abilities. They will imitate their mother, play with toys, and explore the world around them.
- Continue the weaning process by thickening the gruel. Begin to introduce solid food.

### **Week 7**

- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
- Nursing sessions should be brief and infrequent, if they take place at all.
- The puppies should now eat undiluted puppy food. Continue to encourage the puppies to eat dry food. Canned food can be more for a treat in the mornings.

### **Week 8**

- The puppies should continue to gain 1 - 1 ½ grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.

## **ORPHANED PUPPIES**

Newborn puppies are sometimes orphaned. Success raising these newborns is based on how you follow the basic procedures and keep the important elements in mind. Successful rearing of orphaned puppies requires providing them with a suitable environment, the correct quantities of nutrients for different stages of growth, and a regular schedule of feeding, sleeping, grooming and exercise.

You must also provide the stimulus for urination and defecation during the first 18-21 days of life. Do this by massaging the abdomen and peri-anal area after each feeding with a cotton ball, very soft washcloth or paper towel. Whichever you decide to use first dampen with warm water (otherwise you will irritate the area). Puppies can usually eliminate without assistance after 4 weeks of age.

You must also maintain their body warmth, since they are unable to regulate and control their body temperature on their own. Keep them out of drafts. If you use a heating pad, place it in front of their sleeping area, at the opening of the crate and cover it with several layers of dry towels. The key to a heating pad is that any animal needs to be able to get away from the heat source if they choose.

Puppy bedding must be changed daily, usually multiple times a day. Wash dirty bedding with a little bleach to disinfect.

Puppies need exercise to promote muscular and circulatory development. However, care should be

taken in the first 2 weeks of life because their internal organs and limbs are extremely fragile. Play with and handle them prior to feeding. At least twice a week, and more often if possible or needed, the babies need to be groomed with a soft, warm, moist cloth, wiping gently in imitation of the mother's grooming licks.

You may purchase puppy milk replacer at most area retail stores (Esbilac is best and found at Fleet Farm. DO NOT feed them cow's milk, there is not enough nutrients for puppies, they will slowly starve to death. Test the temperature of the milk replacer before feeding. It should be warm, but not hot. Don't boil or microwave, this will destroy the nutritional value. You can warm the bottle by placing it in hot water for a few minutes.

If constipation occurs, add 1 drop of vegetable oil to each puppy's feeding no more than once daily until the problem ceases. Don't over feed, since it can cause diarrhea and other problems.

Hand-feeding can be challenging and very rewarding at the same time. Once you've done it you will develop a method that works best for you. Keep the puppy in a position similar to what mom would - NEVER turn them and feed on their backs. Keep the bottle or syringe at a 45-degree angle to reduce the amount of air consumed.

### **Puppy Feeding**

Feeding equipment needs to be washed before and after feedings. Wash your hands also. Feedings should occur every 2 hours until week 3; after that, do feeding ever 4 hours a night (for your sanity). Below are general guidelines for how much and when to feed:

<b>Week of life</b>	<b>Amount to feed</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> week	60 ml per pound of body weight	4 times a day
2 <sup>nd</sup> week	70 ml per pound of body weight	3 times a day
3 <sup>rd</sup> week	80 ml per pound of body weight	3 times a day
4 <sup>th</sup> week	90 ml per pound of body weight	3 times a day

As long as the puppies do not cry excessively, gain weight, and feels firm to the touch, the diet is meeting their nutritional needs.

After each feeding session, you should give each puppy a full-body once over with a barely damp washcloth, using short strokes like mom would use. This activity keeps the kittens' hair clean, teaches them how to groom, and gives them the attention and mothering they crave and need.

**NOTES: Here is some additional information on techniques for socializing, weaning and house-training.**

### **Socialization**

It is your job to help convince puppies that humans are kind and loving. Some puppies will adjust to you and their new environment quickly, while others will be frightened and intimidated. To help the get used to you sit in the middle of the room while making phone calls. They will hear your voice, but to be threatened by it. Familiarize them with the sound of the television and radio.

When the puppies are nearly 4 weeks old, they are ready to socialize with you and each other. Try to play with them daily. The outgoing and friendly puppies will be easy to play with, but some may need encouragement. If they are afraid and run away when you approach, try sitting

of lying on the floor near them and allow them to approach you. When you pick a puppy up, stroke gently and speak in a soft tone. You want this to be a positive and pleasant experience.

## **Weaning**

At about 4 weeks of age, the kittens will probably start showing interest in their mom's food. Introduce the puppies to solid food by offering warmed canned food mixed into a thin gruel with a little bit of milk replacer. Place food in a shallow dish. Some puppies will begin lapping right away, while others will prefer to lick it from your fingers. Allow them to do so and slowly lower your finger to the dish. The puppies may bite the edge of the plate or walk in the food. Sometimes it takes 2-3 meals or more before they really catch on. If a puppy doesn't seem interested in the gruel at all, gently open its mouth and place a tiny amount on the tongue. Be patient; the weaning process takes time. As the puppies catch on, thicken the gruel. Remember that as you thicken the gruel, you will need to make sure they always have access to fresh water in a low spill-resistant bowl.

By about 6 weeks of age, the puppies should be getting most of their nutrition from the food you are providing. They should be fed at least 3 meals a day. Their stomachs are small so they may not eat much at a single sitting. They need small, frequent feedings to receive adequate nutrition. Gradually introduce the kittens to dry food by mixing it in with their gruel. By the end of week 8 they need to be content to eat dry food alone.

## **House-Training**

When the puppies reach about 4 weeks of age, they will begin to eliminate on their own. You can create an elimination area with newspapers or puppy training pads. You can encourage puppies by showing them the newspapers or pads several times a day, especially after naps and meals. Gently put the puppy on the pad and praise if they use the spot to eliminate. It is, of course, common for them to make mistakes. If you find feces outside of appropriate area, take them to the appropriate area and set down. This should help remind the puppies where they are supposed to eliminate. It is a good idea to confine them to a relatively small area because they may forget where to eliminate if they have too much room. Make sure to always keep the area cleaned and away from their food and water.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

Foster puppies have the same concerns as adult dogs and can be read on page 12.

**Common Illnesses** in Newborn Puppies are: Canine Distemper, Parvovirus, Kennel Cough, Ear Mites, Ringworm, Fleas, Round, Tape and Hook Worms. These are listed on pages 12-14 in the Handbook

## **Routine Veterinary Care**

See page 15 for vaccination schedule.

## **Chapter 6**

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

What constitutes an emergency?

An emergency is any situation in which a foster animal's life is in danger. The following are specific examples of emergency situations.

**Illness** - If your foster animal becomes severely ill, please contact the Humane Society right away. Indications of severe illness include lethargy, severe vomiting and/or diarrhea, or signs that an animal

is in pain.

**Trauma** - If your foster animal sustains any kind of traumatic injury, please contact your rescue partner as soon as possible, If the injuries are severe, please take the foster animal immediately to the nearest veterinarian.

**Loss** - If your foster animal becomes lost, please contact your rescue partner as soon as possible. They will help you contact local animal control facilities. Also contact area veterinary clinics. We are a very large county and sometimes animals will be brought to vet clinics for us to pick up.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

The following contact information is provided to help should you encounter an emergency with your foster animal.

**Humane Society 218-739-3494.**

**Shelter Manager Ericka Stoltenberg's Home Number 218-826-6406.** This is to be used only in an emergency and not to ask general questions.

## **Chapter 7 ANIMAL PLACEMENT**

We are currently working on a location to hold adoption events on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. All of our adoptable pets can be viewed via our website at [www.humanesocietyotc.org](http://www.humanesocietyotc.org) or at our shelter located at 1933 W. Fir Avenue, Fergus Falls, MN.

Our business hours are:

Monday 10-4

Tuesday 10-5:30

Saturday 10-3

We accept applications for adoption in person, via e-mail or fax. People can pick them up from the shelter, our webpage or have them e-mailed upon request.

Shelter employees welcome your input and impressions of people interested in your foster animal. You may see or hear something we do not that will sway the application either way. Under no circumstances is an animal to be sent with someone without prior approval from the a Humane Society Employee. Paperwork needs to be completed and the adoption fee needs to be paid.