



# AVHS FOSTER INFO

## Cats/Kittens

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# How are you helping?



- Increasing Availability of Kennel Space at the Shelter
- Insight in behavior of animal in home environment
- Socialization
- Better Medical Care
- Saving Lives!

# Who Needs a Foster Home?

- Kittens and Puppies that are too young for adoption
- Animals Recovering from a surgery or illness
- Long term shelter residents
- Training, Socialization, or other special care
- Any cat lingering at the shelter – getting a break from the kennel environment is beneficial for all!

# Does your home meet the criteria needed to foster?

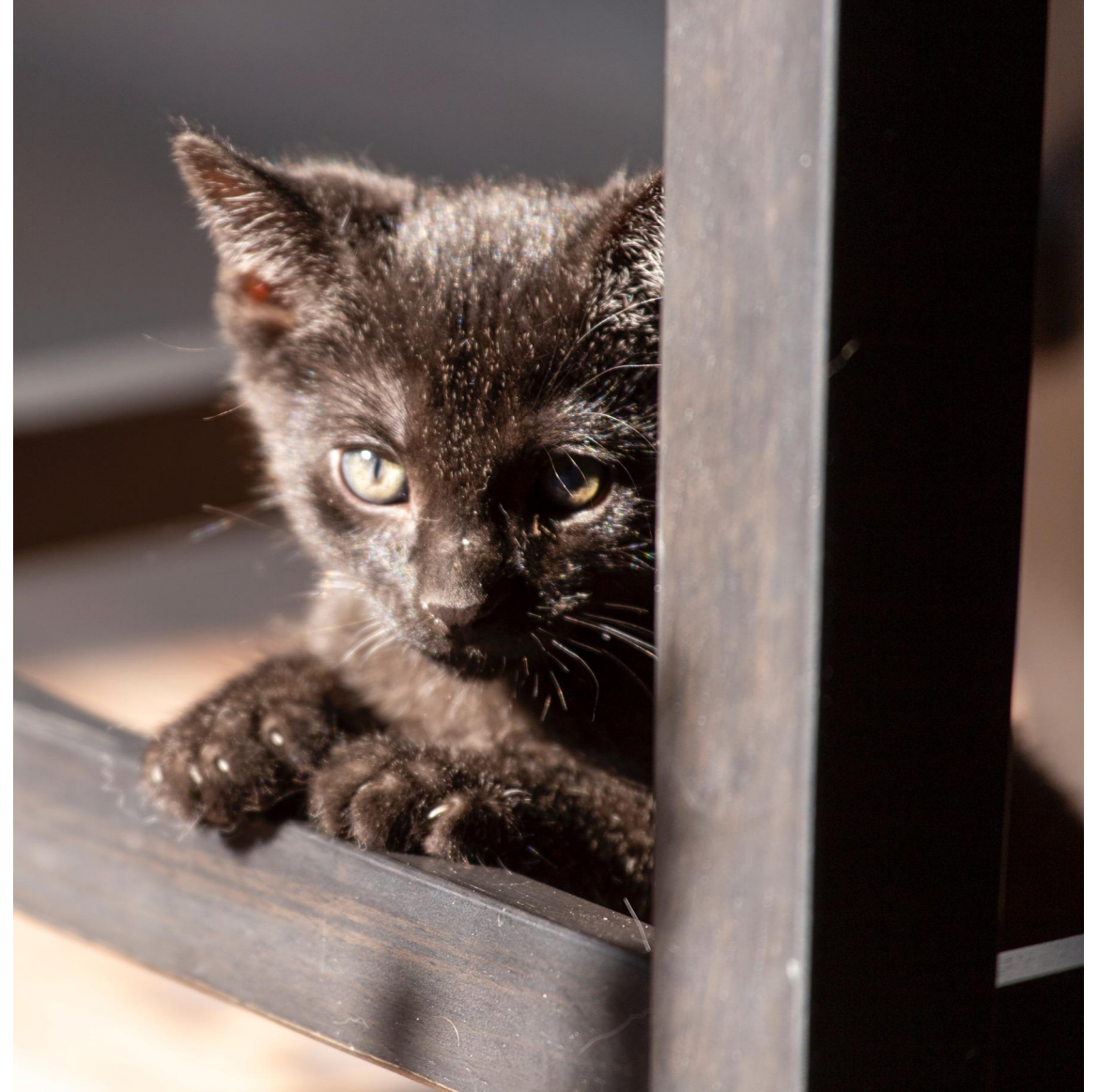
- Are you able to provide a comfortable, clean & warm place to sleep?
- Are you able to drive to and from the Buena Vista Shelter as needed
  - To pick up foster animal
  - To pick up for food/meds for foster animal
  - To bring foster animal back to meet potential adopters
- Can you provide adequate socialization?





# Does your home meet the criteria needed to foster? (cont'd)

- Foster Cats must be kept indoors at all times
- Always keep in mind the needs of your personal animals as well as the foster animal.
- We are required to do a home visit per PACFA regulations every year.



# Keep in Mind...

- Fostering can be so fun! But it is a lot of work.
- Not every animal will thrive-some illnesses and injuries are not treatable, there is, unfortunately, a possibility of death or euthanasia
- Animals that thrive in the foster environment are more likely to be adopted quickly.



# Housing Recommendations

- Start off by keeping the pets separated until they feel comfortable together.
  - \*\*Please Note, kittens and pregnant/nursing mothers cannot be combo tested (test for FIV/FELV) until 8 weeks old/ when they're done nursing. Letting them interact with your own pets can put your pets at risk.
- If you need to leave the foster animal, and you're unsure of how he/she will react, place them in a room that is easily cleaned and can be disinfected, with minimal hiding places.
- Make sure the foster animal can't escape.
- Make sure they are free from hazardous materials.
- Kittens: Make sure it is a warm environment, offer a heating pad for them to cuddle up on, especially for orphaned kittens.



# Basic Foster Supplies

- AVHS will provide the necessary supplies and food/meds needed for your foster animal
- If you decide to supply the items yourself, your donation is considered tax deductible
- CAT/KITTEN SPECIFIC SUPPLIES:  
Towels, blankets, litter, litter boxes, and scoops, food and water bowls, food (wet/dry), and other supplies as needed.





# Top Tips for Cat Foster Parents

- Check in regularly with your coordinator.
- Take the Maddie's Pet Assistant surveys!
- Ask for advice if your cat/kitten has stopped eating.
- Kittens crash fast, so alert your coordinator early if you see behavior changes.
- If your cat seems sick, check immediately for hydration – she should be drinking water, using the litter box, have elastic skin tone and a moist mouth.
- Never use clumping litter for kittens under six months of age.
- Wash your hands and change your shirt after handling sick animals to prevent spread of illness.
- Never let your cat run loose outside; guard against escapes.

# Outdoor/Indoor Hazards

- Outdoor: gasoline, oil, paint, fertilizers, pesticides, other chemicals.
- Pools, ponds, hot tubs, drain pipes
- Fire pits/barbecues/gas grills
- Broken glass, nails, other sharp objects
- Indoor: Some plants are toxic to pets
- Electrical cords/cables/wires
- Candles/fireplaces/woodstoves/
- Open windows/doors



# Protect Your Pets!

- Vaccinate your own pets! Talk to your vet if you haven't
- Quarantine fosters
- Please note: there are no vaccines for Roundworm, Tapeworm, Hookworm, Ringworm, and Mange (but these are treatable)

Practice good hygiene with pets and foster pets. Wash your hands and your children's hands!

# Orphaned Kitten Care

- If no mom is present, extra kitten care will need to be done by the foster parent
- Care Routine:
  - Gently stimulate to pee and poop (using wet wipes or warm wash cloth)
  - Bottle feed.
  - Wipe the kitten down to ensure that the face and genitals are clean
  - Monitor the kitten's weight, record.
  - Place the kitten back in their warm and safe space
  - \*\*Frequency of Care Routine will depend on their age\*\*



# 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

# Healthy & Wellness

- **Veterinary Visits**

- All vet visits must be pre-authorized unless you are willing to pay for the visit yourself. Check with manager on duty first.
- We must be very cautious when deciding whether or not a foster animal needs to go to the vet, as office visits add up very quickly. Each case will be evaluated individually by what is best for the animal as well as economically feasible for the shelter.

# Health & Wellness I

- **URIs**
- Upper respiratory infections (URIs) are very similar to human colds. The cat is often congested and cannot smell their food. Tempting your foster cat with smelly canned cat food, Hills A/D food (purchased at a veterinarian's office), baby food (no onions in ingredients) will often get her eating again. Use your fingers and smear on lips or nose.
- If your foster cat has not eaten for more than two days, let your coordinator know – feeding her with a syringe may be necessary. Cat Slurry- a mix of KMR, baby food, and wet food, can help increase appetite.
- Steam from a vaporizer or hot shower often helps clear the nasal passages. Keep the nose and eyes clear of discharge with warm, damp cotton balls or cloth. A cat who doesn't feel well appreciates some extra petting and quiet time in your lap. If you can coax your foster cat to eat, and she's drinking water, the infection will usually run its course and no additional treatment is necessary.
- If nasal discharge is thick and yellowish-green (vs. clear and watery), this may be an indication that a bacterial infection has set in, and antibiotics may be necessary. Ask Emy about medicine.

# Health & Wellness II



## Dehydration

- Watch carefully to see if your foster cat is drinking water. You may have to monitor the level of the water bowl and keep track of litter box activity. You can check for dehydration by pulling the skin up just a little lower than the back of the neck. It should be taut and snap back down. If it stands up or takes some time to go back down, the cat may be dehydrated.
- A lethargic cat is often dehydrated. Subcutaneous fluids may be necessary. Please contact us right away if you think your cat is dehydrated. We may arrange a home visit, direct you to the shelter for fluids or to one of the local veterinarians who bill the shelter directly. Kittens crash fast, often due to dehydration, so we take this very seriously.
- If your foster cat is extremely lethargic, has a fever (over 103 degrees F, rectally, constitutes a fever), and/or a bacterial infection, let Emy know immediately.



# What if my foster animal becomes sick?

- Call the Shelter Phone 719-395-2737. Staff are in the building 8 AM- 6 PM, 7 days a week.
- Have information ready: animal's name, symptoms and duration of illness.
- After Business Hours: For kittens, call the Emergency numbers list provided by email \*Please note you will be calling on staff's own time, so please be certain it can't wait till the morning.
- Always leave a message or text about the animal's sickness/injury/illness.

# What's Considered an Emergency?

- Uncontrollable diarrhea
- Continuous vomiting
- Bleeding of any kind
- Trauma-hit by a car, dropped, stepped on, fight with animal, etc.
- Difficulty breathing
- Unconsciousness
- When in doubt, contact your Animal Ambassador sooner rather than later, especially during normal business hours.
- If you choose to take an animal to the vet without prior authorization from AVHS, we may be unable to reimburse you for any charges.

# Socialization

- The ideal time for socializing kittens is from two to seven weeks of age. Socialization after this age range is still possible, but becomes more difficult. Attempting socialization after 12 to 14 weeks of age will have more limited success.
- Cats and kittens are individuals and each will respond differently to socializing techniques. Some cats can be genetically friendly but feral by experience.
- Eye contact should be quickly broken. Staring at a kitten is threatening. When fearful or stimulated, a cat's eye will dilate. Be aware of the eyes, since you may see them dilate as a first (fear) reaction, but as the kittens get familiar with you, the pupils will quickly return to a normal size.
- Keep the kitten in a room with no inaccessible hiding spots. Making frequent visits to the room and just sitting gets kitty used to your presence.
- Holding the kitten in a blanket when they are extremely fearful can help them feel safe.
- Next, using a stick or dowel with feathers attached to one end, provide visual stimulation and distraction. A second stick or dowel with a soft fabric on it can be used to touch. As kitty gets comfortable with your presence, try moving closer each time.
- Do this when kitty eats, perhaps just laying your hand nearby, progressing to being able to hand feed and later to touching kitty. At this point, when you are able to touch, use a finger to make small 1¼-inch clockwise circles all around kitty's shoulders, head and upper back. Make the circles small and quick and leave the body after each time.
- **Food is your best socialization tool, so become familiar with these simple techniques:**
- **[ASPCapro.org/resource/saving-lives-behavior-enrichment/using-food-successful-kitten-socialization](https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/saving-lives-behavior-enrichment/using-food-successful-kitten-socialization)**

# Getting the Word Out



- Pictures are a must! Please text them to 719-395-2737 or email [hmills@ark-valley.org](mailto:hmills@ark-valley.org) so that we can post them to AVHS' Facebook page.
- Insight into the animal's personality/funny quirks is very important.
- Videos are great too.





# Thank you!

- Thank you so much for fostering an AVHS animal. This is extremely beneficial to the animal and the shelter. You are doing a wonderful thing by fostering and we are so thankful.
- Any questions please email Heather at [hmills@ark-valley.org](mailto:hmills@ark-valley.org) .