

# Foster Care Program



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[eastbayspca.org](http://eastbayspca.org)



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## About the East Bay SPCA

### Our mission

The East Bay SPCA is committed to the welfare of cats and dogs in the communities we serve. We strive to eliminate animal cruelty, neglect and overpopulation by providing programs and education that support people and companion animals.

The East Bay SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) has been concerned with animal welfare for over 135 years. We have been providing shelter, health care, and adoption services for unwanted animals since 1874.

We are committed to finding homes for adoptable cats and dogs, providing affordable veterinary and spay/neuter services, and educating the public on responsible pet ownership. We serve Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and operate two Adoption and Education Centers, two Spay/Neuter Surgery Centers, a full-service Veterinary Clinic, dog training courses, dog boarding and a Humane Education department.

### How the program works

- We primarily receive our foster animals through local animal services. We are in close contact with these municipal shelters regarding their underage animal population, and when they have underage animals... that's where we lend a helping hand.
- We visit these shelters to assess which animals are appropriate to send out to foster care.
- Next they are transferred to one of our facilities where they are given physical/behavioral exams. Every animal that enters our care receives one of these exams. We are looking for any health/medical issues that need immediate attention, in addition to taking care of all of the basics, such as vaccinations.
- We then reach out to you, in hopes of placing these animals into the perfect foster home. Some homes specialize in behavioral issues while others prefer to take on medical cases. In order to make this a positive experience for all involved, we match the right animal for the right home.
- During the foster period, we will arrange check-ups and vaccinations, every week or two depending on the age and condition. These visits will be scheduled during the pick up of your foster animal.
- Depending on the age of the animal, foster periods can last from two to ten weeks.
- Your foster animal is ready to return when it is at least 8-9 weeks old (if it was underage), or healthy if she was sick, or more sociable if she was shy. The foster coordinator will give you an estimated date of return when you picked up your foster, and will call you shortly before that date to check on the animal's progress and schedule a drop-off time.



## Important Questions to Ask Yourself

**Before deciding to foster for the East Bay SPCA...**

### **Are you at least 18 years of age?**

Although children can help, adults must be the primary caregivers. You must be over 18 to participate in this program.

### **Are you capable of getting to us quickly in an emergency?**

In addition to our veterinary services, we also work with several emergency animal hospitals for urgent after hour care. Authorization must be attained prior to any visit to one of these facilities.

### **Are you able to spend quality time with your foster animals?**

On average, it is best to spend at least 2 hours a day with them.

### **What animals am I equipped to handle?**

Each foster animal will have a different need. Consider carefully your schedule, your family and other commitments prior to fostering. Experience is valuable; however, through proper training you may decide to try something new, for example, bottle feeding an orphan kitten.



### **Can you commit to appointments ranging from once a week to every three weeks whether or not they are ill?**

Many foster animals will need to come in at some point during their stay for routine care, such as vaccinations. In addition, sometimes emergencies can and do arise. In these cases, you'll need to have the flexibility to bring them in at a moments notice.

### **Are you aware of the amount of clean-up associated when you take home a foster animal?**

While extremely fun, foster animals can be very messy! Properly preparing your home can prevent most accidents and damages. The East Bay SPCA will not be held responsible for any damage incurred while fostering an animal.

### **Are you willing to work with our veterinary care system?**

Since we are responsible for these animals, it's important that our veterinarians make all treatment decisions about regarding their care. You are an intricate part of this process by making careful observations.

### **Can you keep your foster animal separate from your own pets?**

Foster animals may need to be isolated from your own companion animals. A separate room or enclosed area without carpet makes it easier to clean. Often a bathroom or laundry room would work best.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Can my foster animal interact with my pets?**

All fosters should be kept separate from your resident pets. This will help prevent spreading known or unknown illnesses to your resident animals. While it may be difficult, it is best to consider the health of all the animals under your care.

### **What do I do with my foster animals if I have to leave town?**

Let us know as soon as possible and we'll find them another foster home. Please do not have them stay with a friend or hire a pet sitter, all foster homes must first go through training with the East Bay SPCA.

### **I have a full time job, do I still qualify to foster an animal?**

Absolutely, many of our foster parents have full-time jobs. The most important factor would be having enough flexibility to bring your foster to us in case of an emergency.

### **How many animals will I be fostering?**

We like to send our fosters out in pairs, someone needs to teach these little ones manners ☺ and a littermate is perfect for this job. From time to time, we'll receive "singletons" or those in need of behavioral training. In those instances, they will go home alone.

### **How long will they be in my home?**

The length of each foster period will depend on the needs of the individual animal. Typically, a foster assignment is 2 – 8 weeks. Young kittens and puppies stay in foster care until they are approximately eight weeks old. Animals

with behavioral or medical issues will stay in foster care until they are ready for adoption.

### **How much care/time is involved in fostering?**

The amount of care and time involved is dependant on each foster pet's needs. Underage foster animals require more involved care than an adult or juvenile. Expectations of time and care will be discussed prior to placement of a foster pet in your home, and you will not be expected to foster any animal that does not fit into your lifestyle.



## Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

### What if I have never had a pet before or lack animal care experience?

Not to worry, the East Bay SPCA will provide all necessary training and information regarding your foster pet's care. Our workshops and pet specific training are designed to create confident foster parents resulting in a comfortable and rewarding foster experience.

### What if there is an emergency?

You will be able to reach us, or one of our designated veterinary partners, 24 hours a day. Foster care volunteers are given emergency phone numbers to call if an emergency arises while the animal is in your care. This number should be used for emergencies only.

### Will I need to give medications?

Some animals will require medication. They may be on medication when you take them home, or receive medication during your foster period. But have no fear, as long as you follow medication directions carefully, it will be a breeze.

### Will any of my foster animals die?

While rare, this is a possibility that you may encounter. Sometimes foster animals become ill and pass away in foster care. Although there are some foster animals we cannot save, the important thing is that we try for each and every one.

### What are the time commitments?

Commitments and responsibilities depend upon the situation and the animal.

Type of Foster	Estimated Time Commitments
Weaned kittens / puppies	1-4 weeks
Kittens / puppies with mom	2-8 weeks
URI cats or kittens	2-3 weeks
Kennel cough puppies or dogs	2-3 weeks
Injured cats / dogs	1-12 weeks
Un-socialized kittens	1-3 weeks
Behavior cases	1-6 weeks

The rate at which animals grow, heal and adjust may vary so these should be viewed as estimates only. If additional health problems develop these foster periods may vary.





## Important Contact Information

When it comes to animals, there are no silly questions. Please do not hesitate to call. Your foster team will handle any issues that arise, please do not call the adoption desk or clinic directly.

### Shelter Medicine Department

**All foster related questions or concerns  
Oakland and Dublin foster homes**

- To schedule pick-ups, drop offs, medical appointments (including vaccinations) and for any other general questions. please email us at [ShelterMed@eastbayspca.org](mailto:ShelterMed@eastbayspca.org)

### Shelter Medicine Manager

- Office: 510-563-4632



## Welcome and Introduction

### Welcome to the East Bay SPCA foster care program!

By joining our team of foster families, you'll be directly responsible for saving the lives of countless animals throughout the Bay Area. While it can be sad to part with a furry friend that has become a part of your family, you can be comforted knowing that you have given the greatest gift of all: the time necessary to offer a homeless animal a second chance.

Fostering is rewarding and is an excellent option for a family or individual who thinks they'd like to adopt animal but either the time is not right, or they are not certain.

The short term commitment of fostering can be just the experience you need to see if you are ready to have a pet 24/7. You get to help them grow from helpless little beings into confident, well-adjusted family pets. It's also pretty fun raising a kitten or puppy without the responsibility of lifetime care. But make no mistake about it, even with all of the fun, you are saving lives!

While both of our adoption centers are wonderful places for a dog or cat to find a new home, if an animal temporarily has special needs, we prefer they live in a foster home until ready for adoption. Usually these are short term situations, and a foster home is only needed for 2-4 weeks. Adopting a homeless pet is terrific and provides a home to that one pet; but our fosters are special because they save the lives of many pets!



### Animals that are typically fostered are:

**Kittens** – in a litter or alone, are fostered until they are eight weeks old and weigh two pounds. Most kittens are fostered for 2-6 weeks. These litters may or may not have the mama cat with them. In some circumstances, if the mama cat is not available, and the kittens are not weaned, the kittens may need bottle-feeding. Mama gets spayed afterwards.

**Puppies** – in a litter or alone, are fostered until they are 8 weeks old and can be altered. If the mama dog is not available, special feedings may be required for a few weeks.

**Sick animals** – that suffers from a minor common ailment, such as an upper respiratory infection, that needs to recover outside of the shelter. These are usually minor cases, but it is recommended these animals be kept from resident dogs and cats to avoid spreading the disease.

**Medical cases** – If an animal has had surgery, we generally allow the animal to recover in a foster home instead of the shelter, to ensure that animal's needs are fully met.

**Behavior candidates** – This might be a shy animal, a young animal that is "mouthy" and needs to learn proper bite inhibition or even an animal that needs to learn proper manners.

**Animals that need a vacation** – Some animals just need a little time away to relieve some stress, a couple of weeks away can do them a world of good.



## Housing and Supplies

### The foster room

All East Bay SPCA foster animals should live indoors only. Cats/kittens should never leave the confines of your home and only puppies over 4 months of age, which have been fully vaccinated, may be taken for walks outdoors. Underage puppies may be taken for potty breaks in your backyard assuming that only your fully vaccinated dog has access to the yard. They cannot visit common areas, like those found in apartments/condominiums.

The foster room should have adequate heating, cooling, good ventilation and it is very important that it is free from drafts. All foster animals should be kept in a separate room away from your own pets. Keep foster animals away from personal pets whether they are the same species or not to prevent disease transmission and possible injuries. Consider using a spare bathroom or bedroom as the safe room for your new visitor.

The room should have windows with secure screens on them, and no escape routes. Remember that animals are curious and will get into anything given the chance. Make sure to remove all medications, cleaning supplies, small ingestible items such as rubber band, pieces of string, or floss. Remove breakable items that could be knocked off of shelves. Remove any potentially toxic house plants, even those that are not toxic can wreak havoc with your fosters' digestive system so it would be best to remove all plants from the room. Block any electrical outlets and check for exposed electrical cords. (These little guys will chew through anything!) Make sure any small cracks, holes, or other potential hiding places are covered. Shy animals will often hide when they first come home.



### Contents

The room should contain everything they will need to eat, drink, eliminate, sleep and play:

- Bowls for food (one for wet and one for dry) and for water. If you have more than one foster animal then it would be best to have more than one bowl to prevent any conflict between littermates.
- You may want to use the carrier in which you took your foster home as their sleeping area, add some old towels and Voilà... you got yourself the perfect animal bed.
- Place litter boxes / puppy pads as far away as possible from all food, water and bedding.
- Toys... toys... toys. A entertained foster is a happy foster. Just make sure that it's nothing that they can swallow or break. Never give your foster dog/puppy real bones, they have the tendency to splinter and can be fatal if ingested. Also avoid rawhides, pigs ears or other chew treats that can be ingested in large chunks, they can swell in a dog's digestive system and lead to blockages.
- For kittens, make sure that you are using non clumping litter. Also some type of scratching post or cardboard scratch pad is highly recommended.



## Household items and plants that are poisonous to animals

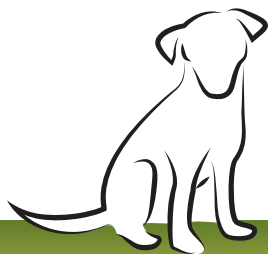
### Protect Your Foster Animal

Many common household items can pose a threat to animal companions. To protect your foster animal, simply use common sense and take the same precautions you would with a child. Although rodent poisons and insecticides are the most common sources of companion animal poisoning, the following list of common and potentially toxic agents should be avoided if at all possible.

The best way to keep a animal safe is to assume that any product that is not known to be harmless is potentially dangerous, and steps should be taken to prevent any animal's access to it. It is crucial to keep animals away from potential toxins, both inside and outside of the house. Use this list as a guideline to make your home safe. If you suspect your foster animal has been poisoned, contact us immediately.

#### Plants

Aloe Vera	Amaryllis bulb	Anemone	Anthurium	Arrow grass
Asparagus fern	Autumn crocus	Azalea	Baby's Breath	Balsam
Baneberry	Begonia	Bird of Paradise	Bittersweet	Black-Eyed Susan
Black Locust	Bleeding Heart	Bloodroot	Boxwood	Buckeye
Burning Bush	Buttercup	Bracken Fern	Cactus	Caladium
Calla Lilly	Castor Bean	Ceriman	Ch. Evergreen	Ceriman
Chinese Sacred	Christmas Rose	Chrysanthemum	Clematis	Cordatum
Corn Plant	Coincya	Cornstalk Plant	Crocus bulb	Croton
Cuban Laurel	Cycads	Cyclamen	Daffodil	Daphne
Delphinium	Dieffenbachia	Dragon Tree	Dumb Cane	Elaine
	Elderberry	Elephant's Ear	Emerald Feather	English Ivy
	Euonymus	Fiddle-leaf	Florida Beauty	Four o'clock
	Foxglove	Geranium	Golden Glow	Henbane
	Hemlock	Hibiscus	Holly	Honeysuckle
	Horse Chestnut	Hurricane Plant	Hyacinth	Hydrangea
	Indian Laurel	Iris	Jack in the pulpit	Japanese Plum



## Plants (continued)

Jerusalem Cherry	Jimson Weed	Jonquil	Kalanchoe	Lantana
Lily of the Valley	Lily (most forms)	Locoweed	Lupine species	Madagascar
Marble Queen	Marigold	Mistletoe	Milkweed	Monkshood
Morning Glory	Mountain Laurel	Narcissus	Nephtytis	Nightshade
Oleander	Peony	Periwinkle	Philodendron	Pimpernel
Pikeberry	Plumosa Fern	Poinsettia	Poison Ivy	Poison Oak
Pokeweed	Poppy	Pothos	Precatory Bean	Primrose
Privet	Red Emerald	Red Princess	Rhododendron	Rhubarb
Ribbon Plant	Rubber Plant	Sago Palm	Scheera	Scotch Broom
Shamrock	Skunk Cabbage	Spurge	Star of Bethlehem	String of Pearls
Sumac	Sweet pea	Taro Vine	Thorn Apple	Tulip
Virginia Creeping	Weeping Fig	Wild Barley	Wisteria	Yew

## Foods

Almonds	Apple seeds	Apricot	Caffeine	Cherry
Chocolate	Eggplant	Fig	Flax	Garlic
Java Beans	Mushrooms	Nutmeg	Onion	Peach
Pear	Potato	Tomato	Walnut	Grapes / Raisins

## Drugs and Other Products

Advil	Alcohol	Antifreeze	Herbicides	Insecticides
Marijuana	Rodent Poison	Snail Bait	Tobacco	Tylenol

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## Pickup and Return Procedures

### Picking up fosters

- Requests for animals in need of foster will be sent via email or in some cases, by phone.
- You may respond via email or phone, we will then schedule a convenient time to pick up your foster animals.
- Pickups will occur during the East Bay SPCA's hours of operation.

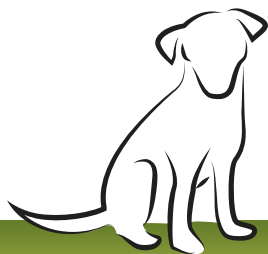
### Returning fosters

- Returning your foster to find her "forever" home is one of the hardest, but also one of the most rewarding, aspects of being a foster parent. Your foster animal is ready to come back when he/she is at least 8 weeks of age if it was underage, or healthy if it was sick, or more sociable if it was shy.
- If your foster has not yet been spayed or neutered, we appreciate you scheduling their return sometime between Tuesday and Friday. Our surgery centers are only open on specific days and we wouldn't want to have them waiting around if they don't have an appointment available.

- It is normal to feel sad when you return your foster animal. You need to remember what a wonderful thing you did for your little foster. You gave them your time, your attention, and your love, and you made it possible for them to go to a new loving home with a family of their very own. You are a special person to have done all that for the little stranger who came to your door.

### Preparing for the next litter

- After returning one litter of foster animals, please wash bowls and litter box thoroughly to prevent spread of infection from one litter to the next.
- It's also important to clean the floor of the foster room.
- The EBSPCA recommends disinfecting it with a mixture of 1 part bleach, 32 parts water or other cleanser with bleach and allow to dry and air out.
- Any bedding or toys should be thoroughly bleached between litters as well. (For greater detail, see Cleaning section)



## Daily Care

### Feeding

Please feed your fosters a pet store quality food. Stay away from supermarket brand foods, and other cheap foods. They contain low-grade ingredients and can often cause digestive issues.

Look for specific kitten/puppy formulas of both wet and dry food for fosters less than 10 weeks and/or nursing moms. These are usually easier to digest, and contain the nutrients that underage animals need to grow! Some human foods can be toxic to them, so it is best not to experiment.

If your foster refuses to eat, contact us on the Emergency Foster Cell phone immediately. The person you speak with will help you determine whether this is a medical problem or a preference issue. You will be advised of the next steps to take, please do not make this decision yourself.

### Grooming

Animals over 5 weeks old appreciate daily brushing with a soft bristle brush. Brushing is especially important for long-haired animals. If you are comfortable doing so, please trim your foster animal's nails as well... or you can always ask us to do so during one of their regularly scheduled visits.



### Health monitoring

It is important to monitor your fosters health and weight daily. You will be given a monitor sheet where you should record each kitten's weight, appetite and overall health. If you do not have a scale capable of weighing to the nearest ounce, please let us know and we can lend you one if available.



## Daily Care (Continued)

### Socialization

One of the best ways to set your foster animal up for success is by daily handling. The more comfortable they are with being held, the more social they'll become with potential adopters. Our favorite way to help a animal exercise choice is to employ Consent Checks. This simple tool will allow your foster to better communicate with you and give you greater insight into what they do and do not find enjoyable in your interactions.

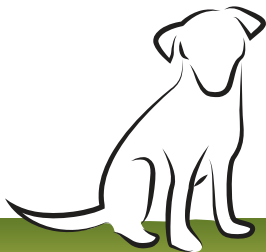
- Touch your foster animal's paws: Touch all four paws, one at a time, and hold each one for several seconds. If they try to pull away, move your hand with theirs as they pull instead of pulling back.
  - Engage in the interaction for 3-5 seconds, then stop and retract your hands 5 seconds. If the animal reengages, continue the interaction. If the animal disengages, don't reengage. Instead try a different activity or offer them a treat or a toy
- Touch their ears and tail. Try to look inside their ears as well. Not only is it a good way to prepare them for future Veterinary examinations but it's also a good time to check and make sure that they are clean.
  - Engage in the interaction for 3-5 seconds, then stop and retract your hands 5 seconds. If the animal reengages, continue the interaction. If the animal disengages, don't reengage. Instead try a different activity or offer them a treat or a toy
- By doing each of these simple steps on a daily basis, you'll be well on your way to making your foster animal a well adjusted, social and trusting pet.

### Signs for reengaging

Moving towards you  
 Reinitiating touch  
 Nudging or licking  
 Rubbing body against you  
 Leaning into touch  
 Gently pawing you

### Signs for disengaging

Staring at your hand  
 Not moving towards you  
 Moving away  
 Looking away Tail twitching  
 Leaning away during touch





## Cleaning

When housing an animal it is important to consider all objects the animal may have contact with and disinfect them accordingly. This will help protect your animals and future foster animals. It is also important to consider what cleaning agents are safe to use on certain surfaces. While all surfaces may not be able to be cleaned, the simple action of decreasing the numbers of environmental pathogens through washing and/or vacuuming daily helps.

**REMEMBER THE RULE OF THUMB...IF IT CANNOT BE BLEACHED (1:10 RATIO) OR HEATED TO OVER 110 DEGREES, IT SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR FOSTER ANIMALS OR TO HOUSE FOSTER ANIMALS.**

- The most common organisms we deal with in a shelter are viruses, bacteria, parasites and fungi. To be effective against each of these organisms a cleaning agent and a disinfectant both must be used properly in the correct strength and for the proper contact time.
- Cleaning - the act of removing any dirt, fecal matter, fur or other organic impurities from the item.
- Disinfecting - the process that actually eliminates the disease—causing organisms.

### Step one: Cleaning

- Clean the item thoroughly with a type of anti-bacterial soap and warm water.
- Make sure that all organic material is removed because bleach, the disinfectant, is inactivated when it comes in contact with organic material and will not do its job. So, make sure the item is clean before you disinfect.

### Step two: Rinse well

- Rinse all soap from the item

### Step three: Disinfecting

- Disinfect it thoroughly with the proper bleach solution for 10 minutes.
- Bleach is inexpensive and it acts rapidly against the majority of organisms that your foster animal may have been exposed to but it requires time to do the job and it must be made fresh to be the most effective.
- Rinse thoroughly, bleach is toxic to animals if ingested. Lysol, Pinesol and other "sol" type products are toxic to cats also.
- Bleach must be mixed appropriately at a 1:10 ratio—MORE is not better it will just make you and the animal sick! Also, please note that bleach is a respiratory irritant to cats so it is helpful to air out the area before housing cats in it after cleaning.
- If your bleach solution is 5.25% then this equals 1 1/2 cup of bleach to one gallon of water.
- If it is 6% then it is 1 cup + 2 Tbsp per gallon of water.
- For full disinfection bleach each area/item, with the 1:10 solution, a total of 3 times.



## Cleaning (Continued)

### BEST PRACTICE:

#### Plastic toys, litter pans, cages, crates,

- Remove any solid matter from the item
- Clean with warm soapy water
- Remove all specks of organic material and rinse
- Disinfect: Bleach, 1/2 cup bleach, 1 gallon water, for 10 minutes, rinse well and dry
- Mop or vacuum floors

#### Bedding, soft toys, etc.

- Wash separately from other household items
- Add bleach per manufacture's instructions
- Dry on high heat

#### Food and water bowl, toys, etc.

- Rinse thoroughly and place in dishwasher for cleaning
- Wash on sterile cycle

## Daily Schedule Checklist

### Feeding

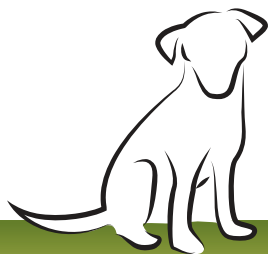
- Fosters 6-9 weeks old should be fed at least 3 times a day.
- Pick up dirty wet food dishes.
- Monitor appetites.

### Cleaning schedule (Kittens/Cats)

- Scoop litterbox at least 2 times daily. Make sure to use only non-clumping litter.
- Monitor for diarrhea.
- Clay litter should be dumped and changed every other day for 2 kittens, daily for more than 2 kittens or if kittens have diarrhea.

### Health check

- Look over your foster everyday for any changes or potential medical problems.
- Check body and fur.
- Look closely at eyes, in mouth and ears.
- Check collars.
- Weigh them.
- Check energy levels.



## Playtime & mental stimulation

- Fosters should receive one to two play sessions daily with interactive toys (or more!).
- Remember to discourage play with hands.
- Interactive toys should not be left unattended with your foster animals.
- Change up the environment in small ways.
- Cardboard boxes.
- Move things around in the kittens' room.

## Socialization

- Socialize a minimum of 2-3 20-minute visits daily.
- Undersocialized kittens/puppies 3-4 20-minute visits daily.
- Encourage affectionate behavior.

- They should meet new people a few times weekly if possible.

## Handling & gentling

- Brushing them a little every day.
- Gently handling paws in preparation for nail trimming.
- Exposure to being picked up.



## Socialization and Training

Young animals are hardwired to learn about the world, and what they learn from the ages of five to sixteen weeks will help form their decisions for the rest of their lives. Spend as much time with them as you can each and every day.

Foster animals four weeks and older should want to play with you. Sit on the floor with them, pet them and play with them. Discourage overly rough play with people. It may appear cute, especially at this small size, but when they become an adult this behavior will be greatly frowned upon. Avoid using your hands as toys. This can confuse your foster about the appropriate use of teeth and claws.

If they want to mouth you or your cloths, say “ouch!” loud enough to startle them. You may then offer them an appropriate toy. If they become over stimulated, a “time-out” may be in order. Turn your back on them and ignore them for a while, you can even leave the room if they are being particularly naughty.

When you bring your new foster puppy home, it is important to get it accustomed to different sites and sounds. Slowly introduce it to the things in your household. If your puppy growls at an object or person, do not pick him up and cuddle him. This reaction will be rewarding to your puppy, and will intensify the dog’s behavior. It will teach him that the appropriate reaction to fear is to growl.



## Puppy Mouthing

It is very normal for a puppy to start exploring his world using his mouth. Puppies generally spend a great deal of their day playing, chewing and investigating objects.

When playing with people, they will often chew and mouth our hands, limbs and clothing. Even though this behavior is normal, it should not be encouraged. Teaching the puppy bite inhibition is one of the most important aspects of any puppy’s education. The puppy learns how to control his mouth when interacting with people and animals.

There are numerous ways to teach this important lesson. Your ultimate goal should be to train the puppy to stop mouthing and biting people altogether.

If the puppy starts getting mouthy while playing, immediately say “Too Bad” in a normal tone and stop interacting with the puppy. Be still and avoid eye contact. Wait 10 seconds and then resume play with the puppy only when he or she is calm and quiet. You are teaching two things here. You are first teaching the puppy that play ends each and every time he places his mouth on you and when the puppy is calm and quiet, play will resume. Our rule of thumb is to try this 3 times. If the puppy still resumes biting your hand then the play interaction ends and he or she is placed in a confinement self for 30 minutes to settle down.

### Other ways to prevent puppy mouthing include:

Give the puppy outlets for his mouthing, such as stuffed Kongs and chew toys. Puppy play teaches your puppy bite inhibition and how to engage with others using a soft mouth.

## Behavior Red Flags

If you notice any of the following behaviors, please contact us as soon as possible: The sooner we are aware of any issues, the sooner we'll be able to start your foster animal on a behavior plan that will get him right back on the road to becoming a perfect pet.

- Growling, lip curling, snarling, snapping or biting directed towards a human.
- Avoidance or hiding from people, animals, or objects: avoidance is an indication of fear which may progress to aggression during adolescence and social maturity.
- Alarm barking, lunging, putting "hackles" up in response to people or animals
- Possessiveness, tension or guarding behavior around high value items such as food or toys.
- Reluctant to be touched or handled on certain areas of the body. Signs to watch for are nipping, whining, fearfulness, a quick whip of the head to look and see what you're doing, or a stiffening of the body.



With foster cats/kittens, note if they refuse to use their litter box. Accidents will happen from time to time, especially for those that are under 8 weeks of age. You can curb these accidents by following these simple steps.

- Make sure that they have quick access to the litter box, if they get too far away or have to go in search of it then that are more likely to have an accident.
- Keep their box clean. Make sure that you clean the litter box every day, especially if you have more than one foster kitten.
- Check that the litter you're using does not have a strong odor that may be unpleasant to your kitten.
- Clean up any accidents with an pet specific odor neutralizer. Even if you can't smell it, they still can and they may be drawn to the same spot again.



## Misbehaving

Many of the behaviors that we find problematic – such as barking, whining, digging, chewing, scavenging and hunting other animals – are really just normal dog behaviors and can be explained as “dogs being dogs.” The easiest way to coexist with our canine companions is to provide more appropriate outlets for these behaviors.

If your foster dog is exhibiting any behavioral issues, ask yourself the questions below:

- Is my foster dog getting enough exercise?
- Is he being left alone for long periods of time?
- Does he have interesting toys to keep his mind engaged and stimulated?
- Is he getting enough attention and playtime?
- Am I reinforcing bad behavior? Some examples include verbally scolding a dog when he is seeking attention or engaging the dog when he uses bad manners to get you to play.
- Does my foster dog have a safe place that is dog-proofed with appropriate chew toys, or am I leaving my own belongings within reach?
- Am I providing specific outlets based on his natural instincts and drives?

We don't expect foster parents to be miracle workers. If your foster dog requires more attention, exercise or training than you can provide, contact us – another foster home might be best for both you and the dog. Regardless of the issue, we don't condone punishment, which will not address the cause of the behavior and in fact it may worsen behavior that's motivated by fear or anxiety.

Punishment may also cause anxiety in dogs who aren't currently fearful. People often believe their dog makes the connection to discipline because he runs and hides or “looks guilty.” But dogs display submissive postures like cowering, running away or hiding when they feel threatened by an angry tone of voice, body posture, or facial expression. Your dog doesn't know what he's done wrong; he only knows that you're upset. Punishment after the fact will not only fail to eliminate the undesirable behavior, but may provoke other undesirable behaviors, too.





## Housetraining

Be patient with your foster dog. Even housetrained adult dogs will make mistakes, especially if they've been at the shelter for a long time and have been eliminating in their kennel. If there are smells in your house from another dog or cat, some foster dogs may "mark" their territory. This action should be redirected immediately with a calm "Oops" – then escort him outside where he can finish. You will then want to use some odor neutralizer (like Nature's Miracle) on the areas where the dog "marked" to insure he will not smell and mark that area again.

You can begin to housetrain a puppy at 8 weeks of age. Even if you bring home an adult dog who is housebroken, you will want to follow these guidelines until your foster dog adjusts to his new situation and to your schedule.

Determine where you want your foster dog to eliminate – it could be the backyard, side yard or an indoor spot such as a Pup Head, litter system or one you have designed. Then take him there every time with a spoken command (such as "do your business"). Take him out when he wakes up, after he eats or drinks, after a play session, or at least every 2 hours. Puppies should go out every 45 minutes until you learn their pattern.

Stand with him for 5 minutes. If he eliminates, reward him (with treats, praise, a favorite game and your own special happy dance). If he doesn't go in 5 minutes, take him back inside and try every 15 minutes until he goes. Every time he goes, make sure you reward him!

Supervise the puppy closely while you're inside. If he starts to sniff the floor, or even squats to go, interrupt with a calm "Oops," scoop him up quickly and take him to the approved spot and praise when he finishes. If he eliminates in the house while you're not paying attention, don't correct him – it's not his fault. Clean it up and go back to your schedule. Use an odor neutralizer to get rid of the smell. Never put the dog's face in his mess or yell at him; he won't understand you, and you will only be teaching him fear.



## Interim Visits and Veterinary Visits

Many foster animals will need to come into the shelter at some point during their stay with you for routine medical care, like a vaccination. They may also need to come in for a veterinary check if they show signs of illness.

### Veterinary visits

- When you call with medical issues, we will determine if your fosters need to be seen by a shelter veterinarian.
- If your animal needs to see the veterinarian, we will schedule a time for you to come in. In general, you will need to drop off the animal before animal rounds and pick them up later that day (to ensure the pharmacy has time to fill any prescriptions).

### Interim visits

- When picking up your foster animal, if necessary, we will give you an appointment for their second (or third) set of vaccinations. In general, vaccination visits are between 15 minutes – 30 minutes, and you can wait in the adoption gallery (if we are open), or in the foster waiting area.



## General Criteria for Emergencies

If your foster animal appears abnormally lethargic, begins to have very labored breathing, begins vomiting uncontrollably, becomes severely dehydrated or escapes after 5pm, please call the foster emergency cell phone. In general, most other symptoms can wait until after 8am before calling us – but if you are not sure whether your foster animal’s symptoms are life threatening, please err on the side of caution and call us!

### Emergency situations

- Continuous weight loss
- Continuous diarrhea
- Continuous vomiting
- Bleeding of any kind—nose, urine, stool
- Any trauma—hit by a car, dropped, limp, stepped on, unconscious
- Difficulty in breathing/blocked airway
- Lethargy
- Dehydration

### Non – Emergencies

- If the animal has vomiting or diarrhea, but is still active, eating and drinking, it can probably wait until the next day to receive help. However, if the animal is lethargic and shows no interest in food or water, it is wise to seek emergency help at this time.
- Coughing or sneezing should pose no immediate problems unless accompanied by blood or symptoms such as lethargy or dehydration.

## Sick Fosters And What To Do

Due to the shelter environment and the fact that underage animals have very fragile immune systems, they are prone to catching colds and other sicknesses. These illnesses range from mild to life-threatening in nature. We will provide treatment for any illnesses that occur.

### How do I know if they are sick?

Healthy animals have a lot of energy when they are awake, they are extremely playful. The eyes and nose should be generally free of any discharge. The stool will be firm and well-shaped. They will eat a lot, but the amount they drink depends on how much wet food they consume (the more wet food, the less water). They may also sneeze occasionally. They may also scratch a little. These are normal animal behaviors. It is not always obvious when they are sick. In nature, animals will hide any sickness so they don't appear vulnerable.

### Sneezing or nasal discharge

Occasional sneezing is quite common in animals. If the sneezing becomes frequent, and accompanied by goopy eyes, congestion, or a runny nose, please give us a call that day. Also, be sure that they are still eating, as a animal won't eat what he or she can't smell.

### Lethargy

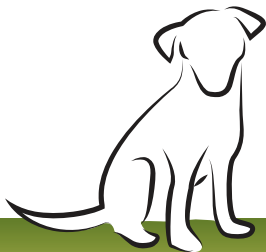
Is described as a sudden decrease in activity level. It may be noticed suddenly or over time, in either case its a sign that your foster needs attention. Healthy animals are normally active when they are awake. Sick animals may have low energy and want to just sit in your lap. If you are unsure whether they're lethargic or just being quiet, please give us a call.

### Weight loss

Underage animals should be constantly growing. If you notice weight loss or if the animal is maintaining the same weight, please contact us. Even if no other symptoms are present.

### Worms (roundworms & tapeworms)

Worms are common in animals. Your foster animals are de-wormed and vaccinated when they first arrive at our facility. The adult form of Roundworms resemble spaghetti that may vomited or seen in feces. Tapeworms can be diagnosed by finding the segments (look like grains of rice) in your foster animal's feces or in bedding or around the anus. If you see any evidence of worms in their stool, notify us immediately.



## Diarrhea

### Stool Examples



**Normal**



**Soft**



**Diarrhea**

### How to take a stool sample



**Lift cap & remove green insert.**



**Push small end of green insert into stool sample.**



**Replace green insert, close cap & bring sample to the appointment**

**ALWAYS** bring a fecal sample to any medical appointment involving diarrhea. If you are unable to bring in a sample immediately, you can place it in the refrigerator for a few hours before dropping it off.



## Sick Fosters and What To Do (Continued)

### Vomiting

If an animal vomits soon after eating, they may be eating too much or too fast. But if it happens more than once or they start vomiting liquid or bile, please call us immediately.

### Eye discharge

If discharge is greenish/yellowish and goopy gently wipe away any discharge with a washcloth and warm water. While not an emergency, the animal may need medication so please contact us for treatment.

### Fleas & ear mites

Every animal over 4 weeks receives a flea treatment upon arrival. For those under 4 weeks of age, daily bedding changes and brushing with the flea comb and will reduce and maybe even eliminate the fleas. For animals with ear mites, you'll notice them scratching their ears or shaking their heads. Inside the ear will have a discharge, very similar to coffee grounds. For both instances, please contact us for treatment.

### Hair loss

This can be caused by something simple, such as a flea allergy to something more serious like ringworm. Please contact us at the first sign of any hair loss. Below are some common causes.

### Flea allergy dermatitis

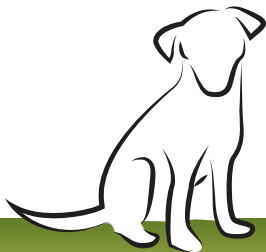
Affected animals develop allergic reactions to chemicals in flea saliva. Symptoms include redness, papules bumps, scabs as well as hair loss in affected area. Animals with a flea allergy will be on a preventive flea treatment on a regular basis.

### Demodex

This is a type of mite that most commonly affects puppies / adolescents under the age of two years old. It will usually present as hair loss over small patches of skin. Generalized hair loss over large portions of the body can be a sign of a less common

### Sarcoptic mange

This is a contagious skin disease found in dogs, caused by the *sarcoptes scabiei* mite. These mites will burrow through the skin causing intense itching, a rash to develop, crusty skin and hair loss in the affected area.





## Sick Fosters and What To Do (Continued)

### Ringworm

This is a fungus that can infect the skin of animals and humans. In animals, the classic ringworm lesions are patchy areas of hair loss and scaliness, usually with very little inflammation or redness. While it can appear anywhere, it is most notably located on the fur around the lips, eyelids and ears. Please contact us immediately at the first sign of hair loss.

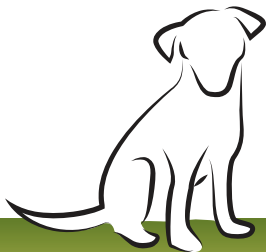
#### Symptoms Cheat Sheet

SITUATION	WHAT TO DO
Losing weight, not very energetic and/or are having diarrhea	Make a medical appointment to have them seen AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. At this age, they are so small that any weight loss is significant. You should call the Emergency Line to determine if this is an emergency
Liquid diarrhea for more than 12 hours	Make a medical appointment to have them seen right away. Bring a stool sample, diarrhea can cause dehydration which can be fatal. If they are having liquid diarrhea, not eating well and are not energetic, this could be an emergency and you should the Foster Emergency Line immediately.
Bloody Stool	Because of the possibility of Parvovirus, collect a fecal sample and call us immediately.
Not eating, don't seem interested in food but are energetic	Try adding a meat based baby food (without onion powder) and call the foster coordinator. Do not give your foster animals any food that is not recommended by the EBSPCA. If the animal is not eating after 12 hours, regardless of energy level, please give us a call.
Very soft stool but are eating and energetic	Collect a fecal sample. The fresher the sample, the better, and if you are unable to bring the sample in immediately, please place it in the refrigerator before your visit. If there are any parasites, you will be given the appropriate medication.



## Symptoms Cheat Sheet (Continued)

SITUATION	WHAT TO DO
Neither losing weight nor gaining weight	If they are energetic, eating well and not having diarrhea, keep monitoring the them and if they do not gain weight in 24 hours or if their appetite or energy level drops, contact the foster coordinator
Sneezing with thick or yellow/green discharge	Make a medical appointment. Warm up the wet food, if they can't smell the food they won't eat.
Weepy eyes, red eyes or having green/yellow discharge	Make a medical appointment. In the meantime, use a cotton ball or soft cloth to gently clean their eyes (don't rub!) of any discharge and apply a warm compress for a few minutes once or twice a day.
Due for vaccinations	Make a revaccination appointment. You can make the appointment for up to two days after the due date, but no later. If they are late on their vaccinations they are susceptible to diseases which can be lethal.
Hair Loss	Please give us a call at the first sign of hair loss.
Vomiting	If it happens immediately after eating, your foster animal may be eating too fast. Please monitor your animal and call us if it happens again. If vomit is frequent or foamy, call us immediately.



## Infection Control

### Introduction

Foster animals must remain isolated from your resident pets. This is very important, the majority of these animals are transferred into our care without an extensive medical history. Some animals do not show traditional signs of illness. Since we do not know the current health status of most of the animals, we recommend that you keep your foster(s) separated from your own pets. This will ensure that transmission of any potential unknown infectious diseases will be kept to a minimum.

In the case of foster dogs/puppies, you should also bring them to a separate area to go to the bathroom if at all possible. Be sure to keep your foster dog feces cleaned up in the yard to ensure if they have any illnesses, that they will not be spread that way. All personal pets must be up to date on shots before a foster animal enters your home. Always let the attending veterinarian know that you have other pets in your home, that way you can be advised by the veterinarian if he/she feels that a booster is recommended for your own pets.

In case of any foster emergency, please contact us immediately and someone will be able to address your concern

By taking these simple steps, it will not only add to the overall health of the animals that are in your care but also will help to make your fostering experience a positive one.

### Guiding principles

Homeless animals always present a risk for transmission and/or development of infectious disease.

Basic infection control relies on understanding:

- Disease transmission
- Application of routine practices for preventing disease transmission as a standard of care
- Preventive health-care practices that help animals resist disease



## Modes of Disease Transmission

### Direct contact

Involves direct body surface to body surface — from one animal to another or from an animal to a human.

### Indirect contact or fomite

Contact between susceptible animal and a contaminated inanimate object (a fomite), such as equipment, clothing, or surfaces. Often the result of poorly washed hands.

### Droplet

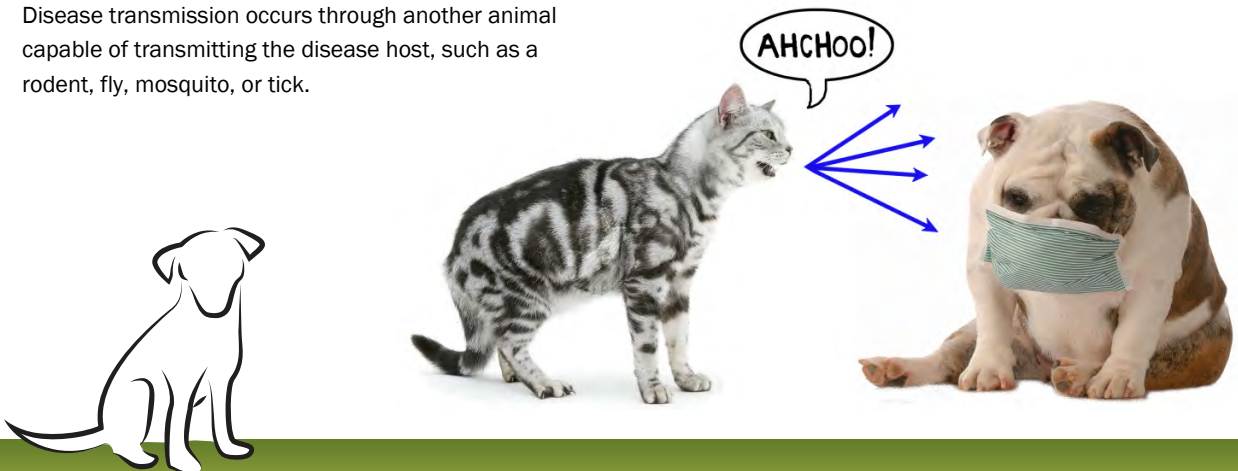
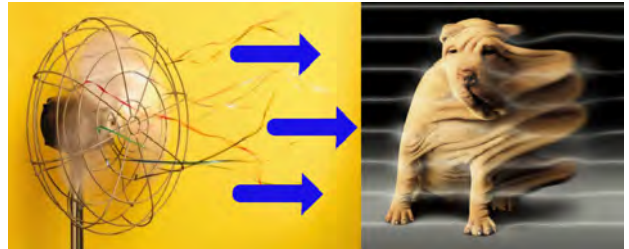
Small infectious droplets that do not remain suspended in the air but travel a short distance through the air and deposit on host's mucosal surfaces. Droplets can also land in the environment and lead to indirect contact transmission.

### Airborne

Infectious residue from dried droplets or dust remains suspended and able to travel distances through the air. This residue is infectious for long periods of time.

### Vector

Disease transmission occurs through another animal capable of transmitting the disease host, such as a rodent, fly, mosquito, or tick.



## Routine Practices in the Home

### To control disease transmission:

- Setting up an isolation area for the foster animals
- Wash your hands with an anti-bacterial soap after handling your foster animal, whether or not it is ill. This will help prevent spreading known or unknown illnesses to your resident pets. Instant Hand-Sanitizers are also a good idea for the foster room.
- Cleaning and disinfecting items in the isolation area using the appropriate agents. The EBSPCA recommends disinfecting it with a mixture of 1 part bleach, 32 parts water or other cleanser with bleach. Allow items to dry and air out. Any bedding or toys should be thoroughly bleached between litters as well.

### Setting up an isolation area

- House them in a small room, such as a bathroom, that you can keep closed off from the rest of your house
- Choose a room with surfaces that are easy to disinfect, vinyl or tile floor — no carpet
- The room should have adequate heating or cooling and good ventilation.



### Pet proofing

- Remove any potentially toxic plants, or hang them out of reach.
- Check for exposed electrical cords.
- Remove breakable items that could be knocked off shelves (you can buy museum putty to stick down breakable items).
- Remove small, ingestible items such as string, twist ties, or magnets that are low on the fridge.
- Secure all medications and cleaning supplies (anything that can be toxic)
- Cover or stow away all garbage cans
- Low human foot traffic



## Proper Hand Hygiene

Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid spreading germs to your foster animals. Always make sure to wash up both before and after handling them. The last thing you want to do is run the risk of spreading any disease.

### What is the right way to wash your hands?

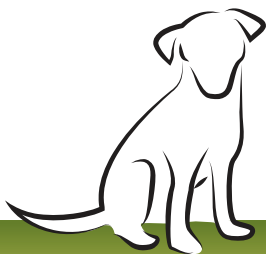
- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

### What if I don't have soap and clean, running water?

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations, but sanitizers do not eliminate all types of germs. Hand sanitizers are not effective when hands are visibly dirty.

### How do you use hand sanitizers?

- Apply the product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub your hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.





## Cleaning vs. Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting are not the same thing. In most cases, cleaning with soap and water is adequate. It removes dirt and most of the germs. However, in other situations disinfecting provides an extra margin of safety.

### Soaps and detergents

These are used for cleaning because pure water can't remove oily, organic soiling. They clean by acting as an emulsifier. Basically, soap/detergent allows oil and water to mix so that oily grime can be removed during rinsing. They should be used for cleaning purposes only and not for the killing of germs. Dish and laundry soaps are common examples of detergents.

### Disinfectants

This is any chemical agent used chiefly on inanimate objects to destroy or inhibit the growth of harmful organisms/germs. Users should read labels carefully to ensure the correct product is selected for the intended use and applied efficiently.



## Foster Parent to Foster Parent

These foster families were once in your exact same position so we asked them if they had any words of wisdom to share with you. Below are a few gems that should help you get up to speed.

### Bottle feeding

One thing I have learned is to write down the ounces that each kitten eats, per feeding. Every ounce counts! In doing so I will be more aware of how much everyone is eating and will be more aware of anyone who consistently consumes a small amount of food.

- Theresa Dorr

### Keeping them warm

Until I bought the microwave "heating disk" my life was so stressful. You warm it up for a few minutes, place it in their carrier/kennel and they're snug as a bug in a rug. - Adrienne Hilgert

### Socialization

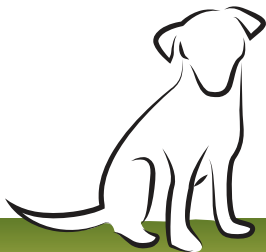
Need a little help bringing them out of their shell? Try warm chicken.

- Joanne Anderson

### Feeding

Feed them in separate dishes, not the same. Mix dry and wet, don't spoil them on wet alone because eventually they will have to eat the dry.

- Adrienne Cummings



### Litter boxes

Since we get most fosters at the age where they are just getting more mobile and independent, we have one large litter box in the room in their crate area and then buy a few small shoe box sized plastic bins and put them in the corners of the "kitty room" so they always have access to fresh litter boxes and have less accidents.

- Eddie and Karen Ramirez

### Picky eater

Try out a homemade Turkey and Chicken Baby Food recipes.

- 1 cup cold and cooked boneless turkey or chicken -chopped into no bigger than 1 inch pieces
  - 1/4 cup cooking juice or plain water
  - Blend and serve
- Cathy Barnes

### Health & safety

Even if the kittens seemed perfectly healthy, be sure to thoroughly clean the kitten area after a each litter. Every inch of floor (best is to remove any rugs before the litter!) Bleach litter pans. Clean perches, scratching posts.

- Jon Krueger



## Adopting Your Foster

If you decide you just can't part with your foster kitty and you want to adopt her, please inform the foster coordinator before your scheduled return date. Your kitty will still need to go to our spay/neuter clinic to be altered, and all normal adoption fee of \$50 per cat and adoption counseling will apply.

- Fosters and their immediate families have priority to adopt. Priority adopters will have until the end of the first open day after the kittens come back from Spay/Neuter to adopt. Unfortunately, we cannot hold them past this time. There will be an over-the-phone adoption counseling done by the foster coordinator, or an in-person adoption counseling by a feline associate depending on the circumstances.
- For the foster or immediate family members living in the same house: Everyone in the house should have met the foster animal and agreed on the adoption. Only the adopter needs to come to do the adoption paperwork and pick up the animal.
- Friends, acquaintances and extended family members do not have priority to adopt. If someone you know is interested in adopting please refer them our website for more information. <http://www.eastbay.sPCA.org>.





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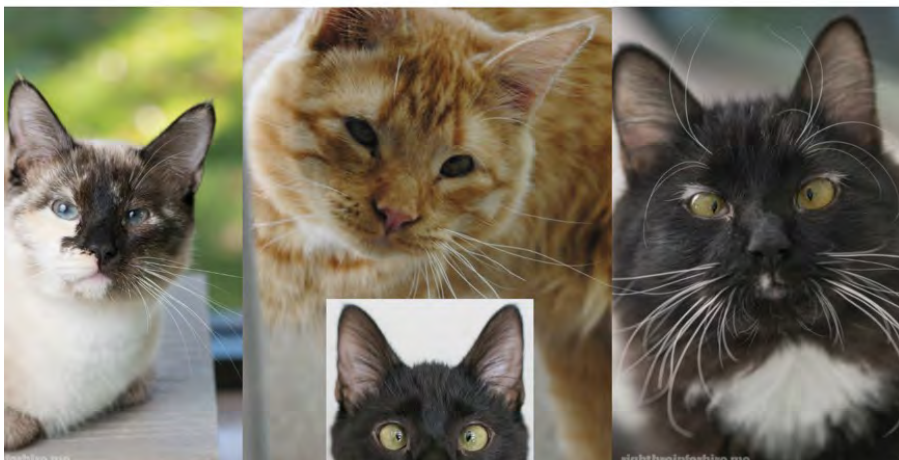




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