

Join the P²AC!

Welcome to the
Prairie Paws Adoption Center
Foster Care Program

Fostering and Pet Care Manual



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Introduction

The goal of the Prairie Paws Adoption Center Foster Care Program is to reduce the unnecessary euthanasia of potentially adoptable animals by providing them a safe environment in which to mature, develop social skills, or recover from injury or illness. We appreciate your efforts in helping make this goal a reality. One note, however, to be a foster parent, you must be at least 18 years old and have a suitable home for pets.

Why is foster care needed?

Pet overpopulation is a serious problem animal shelters across the United States face every day. The Humane Society for the United States estimates that four to six million cats and dogs are taken to shelters in the U.S. each year. Here in Grand Prairie, an average of 8,000 kittens, puppies, cats and dogs come in our doors every year with about 2,500 of those pets being adopted or returned home. Because there are so many healthy animals that are immediately adoptable, there is no space or time in most shelters for special needs animals like the sick, injured, or too young.

As a result most of these special needs animals are euthanized. It sounds harsh, but to give an example, an orphaned three-week-old puppy would require at least four weeks of hands-on care. If that puppy were housed an animal shelter for four weeks that could prevent the adoption of about eight, socialized puppies who would have also been housed in that same space and had the opportunity to find homes. This is where the important job of fostering comes in.

What is a foster parent's job?

As a critical component of a successful animal adoption facility, the foster parent assumes the responsibility of caring for a special needs animal or orphaned litter until they are physically and socially ready to be adopted into a permanent home. The foster parent provides the time, space, physical care, financial support, and social attention necessary for the development of these special-needs animals.

Is fostering for me?

Being a foster parent can be a wonderfully fulfilling experience. Knowing that you have contributed to saving the life of an animal is a rewarding feeling that you will enjoy (and rightfully so!). Although many underage or sick animals are able to be raised by people and grow to be happy, healthy pets, it is imperative that each foster parent know that this **is not always the case**.

Puppies and kittens are meant to be cared for by their mothers until about eight weeks of age, during which time they are able to get the nourishment needed to build a strong immune system and allow them grow up sleek and healthy. Puppies and especially kittens that have not had the advantage of being raised by their mothers are highly susceptible to diseases and parasites and despite devoted, round-the-clock care, they may not live. It is important that foster parents know that, unfortunately, this is a possibility. The situation is similar with sick or unsocialized adult animals. Not all will recover and become adoptable. With your help, however, more animals will get a second chance.

Fostering can also mean a significant contribution of time, especially when taking care of an abandoned litter or sick animal. The chart below gives you an idea of how much time will be necessary to devote to caring for your foster.

Foster type	Time in your home	Hours per day commitment
Orphaned kittens/puppies	6 – 8 weeks	~8 hours a day
Mom with kittens/puppies	2 – 8 weeks	~3 hours per day
Weaned kittens/puppies	1 – 4 weeks	3 – 6 hours per day
Adult pet – special case	2-3 weeks	1 – 2 hours per day
Medical/Injury	1-2 weeks	1 - 3 hours per day
Socialization cases	1-2 weeks	~3 hours per day

What about my pets?

Although foster animals are given health checks by Center staff before being placed into foster homes, many viruses have an incubation of seven to 14 days, so there is a risk that you are exposing your own pets to disease. Whenever possible, foster animals should be separated from household pets for at least two weeks. This means that you should also prohibit the sharing of food and water bowls and toys. Fostering safely also means washing your hands with soap and water before handling your own animals or children and routine disinfection the foster animals living area. It is possible even with these precautions that your pets could be exposed to mild infections. Ask Center staff for more information if this is a concern.

You are responsible for the cost of veterinary care for your pets.

Volunteer Foster Parent Job Description

Primary Goal

Provide temporary shelter and care for animals in the volunteer's home.

Responsibilities

- Feed, socialize, medicate, groom, and train fostered animals according to the guidelines of the foster program.
- Isolate foster pets from household pets as necessary for the health and safety of the animals.
- Ensure the safety of all foster animals under the foster parent's care.
- Ensure that the foster parent's own pets are currently vaccinated according to the guidelines of your veterinarian.
- Observe and report any problems to the Center staff in a timely manner.
- Return animals to Prairie Paws Adoption Center at the scheduled time(s).
- Comply with Prairie Paws Adoption Center policies and procedures for care.
- Return foster animals to Prairie Paws Adoption Center if you are unable to care for them (never turn care over to a third party).

Qualifications:

- A willingness to learn and follow the standards of care established by Prairie Paws Adoption Center.
- All foster parents must pass an annual home inspection performed by an Animal Services staff member.
- A background in animal care is desirable.

Training

Completion of a Foster Parent Training class is required prior to taking foster animals.

Commitment

Each foster contract typically lasts between one week and two months.

Supervision

Direct supervision by the Volunteer Coordinator and indirect supervision by all other Center personnel.

General Policies and Procedures

To provide maximum support to our foster parents and to ensure the health and safety of foster animals, we require your cooperation with the following:

- 1) Please make an appointment for picking up and returning animals and call immediately you will not be able to make this appointment.
- 2) Call the Center if a foster animal becomes sick or injured and follow staff's instructions for care, treatment, and/or transportation of the animal.
- 3) **ANY** arrangements for routine and/or emergency health care need to be made through the Prairie Paws Adoption Center. If you take a foster animal to a veterinarian without prior authorization from Prairie Paws Adoption Center, you **WILL NOT** be reimbursed for expenses.
- 4) Cats and kittens are to be kept indoors only. No outdoor time is allowed, even if supervised.
- 5) Immediately inform Prairie Paws Adoption Center of any changes in address or phone number.
- 6) If leaving town or unable to care for your foster animals for any reason, the animals must be returned to Prairie Paws Adoption Center. Please call as soon as you know of such a situation so that we can arrange for their continuing care. It is acceptable for a spouse to care for the animals, but DO NOT relinquishes their care to a friend, relative, pet sitter, etc.
- 7) Cats, kittens, and puppies must be confined in a carrier while in a vehicle. Cats and kittens must also be confined in a carrier while being carried to and from the vehicle. Please do not carry them in your arms out-of-doors or let them ride loose in your car! Adult dogs must wear a collar and leash while in vehicles. The leash needs to be held by a passenger or the leash can be secured to a door handle, etc., to prevent the dog from moving around the vehicle.
- 8) Notify Prairie Paws Adoption Center immediately if a foster animal gets lost.
- 9) To report problems or ask questions, call the Center at 972-237-8575.
- 10) **For after-hours emergencies, call Grand Prairie Police Department at 972-237-8700.** Let them know you are fostering an animal for us and that you require the On-Call Officer to contact you as soon as possible. They will contact a staff member who will be able to assist you. That officer will make any decisions concerning emergency care.

Suggested Supplies for Foster Parents

The Prairie Paws Adoption Center will attempt to provide foster parents with the basics they might need. However, because our supplies are limited, all supplies belonging to the Center must be returned between foster engagements. The products listed below were recommended by experienced foster parents as supplies that you may wish to keep on hand.

- Baby food in jars for finicky youngsters or very sick cats. Use turkey or chicken flavor without sodium added. If warmed in the microwave, be sure to check for hot spots before feeding.
- Blankets and towels for warmth and comfort. No open-weave blankets or bedding with holes that little paws can get caught in. No frayed edges with strings that can be ingested.
- Brushes and nail clippers for grooming.
- Cat carrier or crate, baby gate, exercise pen, or playpens to restrict activity and restrict access to off limits areas.
- Ceramic or weighted bowls help reduce spills and messes.
- Digital thermometer and Vaseline to lubricate it.
- Heating pad for warming young or ill fosters (to be used on LOW setting only).
- Milk replacer (such as KMR for kittens and Esbilac for puppies) for feeding newborns that aren't being nursed by a mother.
- Newborn animal baby bottles or syringes without needles.
- Newspapers for protecting the floor or lining litter boxes.
- Notebook to record daily feeding patterns, weights, temperatures, behaviors, questions, etc.
- Plastic bottles to use as hot water bottles for young or ill fosters.
- Stain and odor remover for accidents (such as Nature's Miracle or Get Serious).
- Toys that are disposable or that can be sanitized between foster groups.
- White rice or baby rice cereal for mixing in with regular food if stools are soft. Rice should be prepared without added salt or butter.







Raising Orphaned Kittens and Puppies

Caring for newborns is the most difficult and time-consuming of all foster care commitments. It requires nighttime feedings and constant attention to their needs. Even with diligent care, some of the babies may get sick or even die. It is a tough, tiring, and selfless job. However, the job is also infinitely satisfying and rewarding when your little ones survive and are placed in loving homes. By following the guidelines below, you can give bottle-fed infants their best chance of survival.

Housing

Bottle-fed babies must be protected from drafts and noise. Newborn kittens should be kept in a small flip-top carrier or box lined with soft bedding. Puppies should be kept in a dog crate or box large enough for them to move a short distance from their siblings. Line the crate with newspaper and then cover it in soft bedding. Never place newborns in loose bedding such as straw, hay, or shavings; these materials can obstruct breathing and cause respiratory infections if inhaled. Kittens and puppies benefit from having stuffed animals available to snuggle up against. Because they are unable to regulate their own body temperature, newborns are susceptible to extremes in their environment. Avoid placing their bedding in areas of direct sunlight, against windows or other areas in the home with temperature fluctuations, or on concrete.

For the first few weeks of life, a steady ambient temperature of 85 to 90° F is needed. Over the next few weeks, the temperature can gradually be lowered to and maintained at 75° F. An electric heating pad wrapped in a towel and on the lowest setting can be placed under one corner of the bedding (hot water bottles can be used as a temporary measure, but as the water cools, it may actually conduct heat away from the newborns and so should only be considered a very temporary measure). Give the infants the option of moving away from the heat source should they get too warm. Soiled bedding should be changed immediately. Your fosters' world is limited to the nest you have provided. If it is wet or smells bad, you can be sure it is affecting their well-being. Wet bedding may also be enough to give them a chill. Expect to change bedding at least once a day for kittens and at least four times a day for puppies.

Quiet is very important too. Infants need a lot of sleep to keep up with their bodies' developmental demands. If they are unable to get an adequate amount of rest due to the noise and disturbances of the household, they may develop physical or psychological problems. It is always best to keep newborns in the part of your home that is used the least (provided that it is draft free). It is vital that handling of newborns be limited to what is required to keep them clean and well-fed. Over handling in the first few weeks of life can lead to the infants becoming stressed and/or chilled. Children should never handle young puppies and kittens unsupervised and contact with the extremely young should be very limited.

Resist the temptation to hold and cuddle the newborns. Instead, add stuffed animals to their nest to provide the warmth and cuddling they need. Over handled kittens do not thrive and may even die! As the newborns mature, you can gradually increase the size and activity level of their world and cuddle with them more too. As kittens and puppies become mobile, they can be moved into increasingly larger enclosures. At six weeks of age, kittens are usually ready to have free roam of a large cage or a small room, such as a bathroom. Puppies can be baby-gated into a kitchen or laundry room with their nest set up in one corner. Be careful to baby-proof all areas that your foster(s) will have access to. For example, unplug electrical cords, tie up drapery blinds, remove toilet paper rolls, keep toilet lids closed, and remove all plants from the area.

Feeding

Kittens are normally two to four ounces when born. Puppies may be a bit bigger, depending on the breed. Both should typically gain 1/4 to 1/3 pound each week, reaching two pounds for kittens and three to four pounds or more for puppies at about eight weeks of age (different puppy breeds may vary considerably in their weight at eight weeks). Bottle babies are generally slower to gain weight than those being nursed by a healthy mother. It is important to weigh bottle-fed infants daily (using a kitchen or postage scale) to monitor weight gain.

Milk replacer is used to feed orphans four weeks or younger. These commercially prepared formulas simulate the mother's milk and have been used with good success. **NEVER FEED COW'S MILK!** It may cause diarrhea and weight loss. When preparing the formula, always follow the manufacturer's directions on the label. Do not prepare more than a 48-hour supply of formula at a time and store the unused portions in the refrigerator until needed. Once it is prepared, formula is only good for 72 hours. The puppy or kitten should receive the following approximate amounts of formula every 24 hours:

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1^{\text{st}} week of life = 3\frac{1}{2} to 4 cc's per ounce of body weight. Feed every 2-3 hours. 2^{\text{nd}} week of life = 5 cc's per ounce of body weight. Feed every 3-4 hours. 3^{\text{rd}} week of life = 5\frac{1}{2} to 6 cc's per ounce of body weight. Feed every 4-5 hours. 4^{\text{th}} week of life = 6 to 6\frac{1}{2} cc's per ounce of body weight. Feed every 5-6 hours.
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These amounts of formula should be fed in equal portions divided between the appropriate number of daily feedings. Before each feeding, the formula should be warmed to around 100 degrees. When held upside down, the hole in the nursing bottle's nipple should not leak. When the bottle is held upside down and you are applying gentle pressure to the bottle, small drops should come out. Milk replacer coming out of the bottle too fast can harm the babies by allowing formula into the lungs. Place the bottle in a pan of warm water to heat the milk; do not use a microwave. When a formula is fed for the very first time, less than the prescribed amount should be given. The amount should slowly be increased to the recommended feeding amount by the second or third day. After each feeding, the abdomen should be enlarged but not tight or distended and a well fed puppy or kitten should quiet down quickly after being fed.

When feeding, a newborn should be on its stomach with its head lifted up; never on its back (this could cause formula to enter the lungs). The bottle should be held at about a 45-degree angle. You may need to gently squeeze the bottle at first to release a small amount of milk replacer into the mouth to encourage suckling. Milk replacer dries like glue, so be sure to gently wipe their faces with a damp cloth after each feeding. Newborns also benefit from having a dry cloth rubbed over all them after meal time (this helps stimulate evacuation and helps mimic what their mother would have done, thus aiding in digestion and even "burping." To burp a puppy or kitten, place them gently over your shoulder just as you would a human baby and rub or pat their back gently.

"Potty Time"

Newborn kittens and puppies cannot evacuate their bowl or bladder without help and if they fail to do so, it can be toxic to them. After each feeding, with the newborn on a towel on your lap, lightly rub their body with a rough, dry washcloth. With a generous handful of soft tissues, gently stroke the newborn's behind. They should then oblige by urinating onto the tissue (a wastebasket and plenty of extra tissues are a good idea at this point). Another method to stimulate evacuation is to use a tissue or washcloth moistened with warm water instead of a dry cloth or to apply a moistened Q-tip to the

anal area. Hold the newborn over a sink or folded towel with this method. Kittens and puppies should also be washed gently with a soft cloth dampened with warm water for general cleansing of the skin about once a week. More frequent "spot cleanings" can be done as needed.

The Urge to Nurse

Newborns have a strong instinct to suckle and will nurse for as many as eight hours a day. It is not surprising, then, that bottle-raised babies may end up suckling on each other. Besides being messy, this type of suckling can cause serious health problems, especially if they begin suckling each others' genitalia. If you see evidence of suckling, first try spraying the areas being sucked with Bitter Apple, a commercial taste deterrent. If this doesn't work, the suckers will have to be separated from the rest of the litter. Do not allow them to continue nursing on each other!

Singlets

Sometimes a single newborn will come in and need a foster home. Unfortunately, this "only child" does not get the social interaction and discipline that it should receive from its mother and littermates. These singles can grow up to be very demanding of people and intolerant of their own species. For this reason, we try to put singles in with another litter as soon as possible. In the meantime, it is important to treat the solo puppy or kitten as if it were with a litter. Do not over handle the baby; instead, provide her with plenty of stuffed animals to keep her company. Do not tolerate suckling on your hands, neck, etc. If your little one starts to play roughly as she gets older, call the Center for more information. It is important to address these behavior problems as soon as they appear.

Keeping them Safe

Puppies and kittens should never live outside. Neither is fully protected from disease until after they have completed their respective series of vaccinations (~four to five months old). To prevent disease and parasites, do not let puppies play or go to the bathroom in outdoor areas where other dogs may have been (at the park, etc.). Kittens should always be kept indoors.

Overfeeding is as dangerous as underfeeding! Keep an eye on your litter at feeding time and monitor how much each is eating. If you see signs of diarrhea, separate them until you find out which one is sick. Your puppies or kittens will generally regulate their own food intake. If they need more food, they may whine or suck on their litter mates. A good indication that they are getting enough to eat is the size of their bellies - they should be filled out after a meal, but not bloated.

Grooming

A mother works hard to keep her babies clean and grooms them thoroughly to remove any sticky messes they may get into, such as food or feces. Keeping kittens and puppies clean in the absence of their mother can be a messy business, but it is extremely important. A flea comb will get rid of dried feces in the fur. You can also stroke them with a warm, damp cloth, using short strokes to mimic a mother's tongue. Be sure to dry them well to prevent a chill! Sometimes dried feces can become caked on the underside of the tail or between the toes. This may be softened and removed by dipping the kitten or puppy's back end into a basin of warm water. Many may not even notice that they are partially wet, but be prepared for a cry of protest!

What to Expect

The following information provides general guidelines for the stages of development of puppies and kittens. Individuals and litters will differ somewhat in their development. If you are fostering a mom and her babies, much of this, such as feeding and keeping them warm, will be done by Mom.

Birth – One Week

Eyes and ear canals are closed and there is little ability or coordination to move around the nest. Puppies and kittens will need to nurse every two to three hours around the clock. A lot of crying and activity is an indication that they are not getting enough food. Chill is a serious concern for babies this young. The temperature of the nest box should be nice and warm, between 85 - 90° F. At this age, puppies and kittens should be handled minimally. They will sleep 90% of the time and eat the other 10%.

One - Two Weeks

Ear canals will open by the eighth day and eyes by the end of two weeks (eye color won't change from blue for several weeks). Feeding is still every two to three hours around the clock. The nest box temperature should be between 80 - 85° F. Healthy puppies and kittens will be round and warm with pink skin. When pinched gently the skin should spring right back and if you pick one up, it should wriggle energetically. A healthy kitten or puppy will rarely cry continuously.

At this age, you may be able to tell the gender of your litter. To determine, hold the kitten or puppy tummy-up in your hand. In females, the vulva is a vertical slit above the anus; they are very close together. In males, the penile opening is above the anus, but they are separated by a raised scrotal sac and thus seem farther apart. It is easiest to see the differences between the sexes if you examine the entire litter and then find two who don't have matching equipment. Don't worry if it is still unclear; by the time the litter is ready for permanent homes, their sex will be obvious.

Two - Three Weeks

Feeding can be reduced to every three to four hours and nest box temperature kept between 75 - 80° F degrees. Coordination is improving and kittens and puppies will spend more time playing and socializing with their litter mates. Handling should increase at this time to help socialize, however, this is not a job for young children. It is important not to expose them to anything frightening; children may seem intimidating and should be supervised closely while visiting to ensure gentle handling.

Three - Four Weeks

Feedings should take place every four hours. Nest box temperature should be at 70 - 75° F (this can 75 - 80° F in the summer) from this point on. Continue to socialize and play with your litter. Although, they will begin to themselves, they will still need help with most of the bathing.

Four - Five Weeks

Bottle feed every four to five hours. The senses of smell and sight are almost fully developed and puppies and kittens can usually drink and eat from a saucer by four weeks. Begin by placing a shallow pan of formula in the bottom of their nest box in lieu of the expected pet nurser. It may take

a few tries before they get the idea. Kittens will often "discover" the formula by walking through it and then licking it off of their paws (puppies may need more help). This method is messy but effective. Bath time often becomes a daily task when weaning little ones! Your fosters need to have fresh water available at all times once the weaning process begins.

Once your fosters are drinking formula from a pan, you can gradually mix canned kitten or puppy food in with it. The texture should initially be gruel-like or soupy. You can begin by placing one puppy or kitten by the plate of canned food gruel and hope for the best – if she starts eating, great! Her littermates will probably copy her and do the same. But without the Mom around to show them, many puppies or kittens do not have a clue about feeding time. They will tend to walk in it, slide in it, and track it all over the place. If your litter is slow to learn to eat, start by taking one of the puppies or kittens and placing a bit of food/gruel on your finger tip and holding it to their mouth and nose. For the truly confused, you may need to gently open their mouth and place a little inside. When the puppy or kitten is licking your finger, slowly lower your finger to the plate and hold it to the food. It may take two or three meals to catch on. Make sure they are eating food and gaining weight.

*Once again, be sure that the puppies or kittens have access to fresh water in a low, stable bowl.

With puppies, begin house training at four weeks using a pile of newspaper in a corner. After each feeding, place the puppy on the newspapers or outside to give him a chance to go to the bathroom. Be patient! He may not remember to do this every time or he may forget where to find the papers, but he will learn quickly. Be sure to give the puppies lots of praise when they use the papers or when they go to the bathroom outside. It is a good idea to confine the puppies to a relatively small space, because the larger the area the puppies have to play in, the more likely they will forget where the papers are. If possible, especially when there are only one or two pups, use a crate to train them. Keep the papers clean and away from their food.

For an orphaned litter of kittens, you need to be the mom and show them how to use the litterbox (kittens generally catch on much faster than puppies, so this isn't as much of a chore as one might think). Put the kitten into the litterbox 15 minutes or so after a meal. You may want to stimulate it by guiding its paws in a digging motion in the litter. If the kitten hops right back out, put it right back in again, at least for a time or two. That and the occasional reminder is generally all that is necessary. If there is an accident, put the feces in the litterbox to help redirect the kitten. These are still little kittens with little bladders and short attention spans, so don't put them in a room where the litterbox is out of sight or too much of a hike to get to. **Never use clumping litter with young kittens!** At this age they may eat the litter and the clumping kind can block their intestines.

Five - Six Weeks

Puppies and kittens should be fed a gradually thickened gruel four times a day. Once they are eating wet food without formula mixed in, begin offering free-choice dry food. If they aren't eating the dry food on their own after a few days, then mix some canned food in with the dry and pour a little warm water over the mixture. Once they are eating dry food, slowly decrease the amount of wet food offered over the next one or two weeks until your fosters are eating dry food only.

At about five weeks, puppies and kittens can start to roam around the room under supervision. The strongest and most curious will figure out how to get out of nest box and the others will quickly follow. Play with your puppies or kittens daily. You can get them used to your presence by sitting in the middle of the room making phone calls or just talking; this way they hear your voice but should

not feel threatened. Make them an important part of your household activities and accustom them to the sounds of the TV, vacuum cleaner, and other household sounds.

Keep reinforcing the house training with the puppies. Kittens are generally old enough now to move to a full size litterbox.

Six – Seven Weeks

Kittens and puppies should be doing fine on three meals a day and eating mostly dry food. Should one of your litter appear food-possessive, use a second dish with plenty of food to ensure everyone is eating enough. Stomachs at this age are still small so a puppy or kitten may not eat a lot at one time and may prefer to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day.

At this age they are becoming mini-cats and mini-dogs. They will wash themselves, interact with their littermates and you, play games, and show definite signs of individual personalities. Be sure to reintroduce them to their papers or the outdoors for puppies and the litterbox for kittens after meals, during play sessions, and after naps. These are the usual times that they need to use the bathroom.

Seven – Eight Weeks

Offer dry food three to four times a day and leave a bowl of water for them at all times. **Do not feed puppies or kittens table scraps.** By eight weeks the puppies or kittens should be physically and socially ready to live in new homes. Take a deep breath, and prepare yourself to return them to the Center so that they may find their new homes.

For more information on socialization, see page 15.

Caring for a Mother and Litter

Whelping or Nest Box Environment

A clean, warm, quiet, and dry site must be provided for rearing of newborns. A whelping or nest box needs to be large enough for the mother to comfortably lie away from the litter if she chooses but small enough so the newborns are easy to reach. The sides should high enough to prevent the young from wandering but low enough for Mom to be able to come and go with ease. The bottom portion of a plastic dog crate works well as a nesting box and is easy to disinfect. Cardboard

boxes can also be used if a door is cut at one end at the mother's chest height. Unlike plastic boxes, cardboard is not reusable. Crates can be disinfected with a bleach and water solution and re-used for the next litter.

The nest box should be lined with newspaper and then covered with clean, dry bedding such as blankets, mattress pads, or towels. Make sure bedding is of a tight-woven fabric free of holes or frayed edges. Never place newborns in loose bedding such as straw, hay, or shavings; these materials can obstruct breathing and cause respiratory infections if inhaled. Do not place the nest box directly on concrete; this will draw a large amount of heat from the box and make sure that the nest box is in an area that is free of drafts

Caring for the Mother

Anything that influences the mother's health will affect the health of her newborns, so it is vital that Mom gets adequate nutrition. Because milk production requires so much energy, the mother's food should be increased to two to four times her normal intake. A high quality canned food should be mixed with the dry food to increase calories and palatability. Fresh water should be available at all times and fresh food should be offered three to four times a day. Place food and water dishes just outside of the nest box where the mother will be able to reach them easily without moving far from her newborns.

For cats, make sure the litter box is placed outside of but nearby the nest box. Take mother dogs out to eliminate three to four times per day. Take her out on leash or to a securely fenced area. Do not try to take her too far from her newborns. It's a good idea to place several layers of newspaper in a corner several feet away from the whelping box in case the mother needs to eliminate between outdoor potty breaks.

Weaning and Feeding Puppies and Kittens

Weaning time depends upon the size of the litter, the condition of the mother, and the availability of mother's milk. Generally, it is best to start weaning at about four weeks of age. Weaning should be a gradual process that is completed when the litter reaches six to eight weeks of age.

Begin introducing four week old puppies and kittens to semi-solid gruel made from one part canned food with three parts warm water three to four timed daily. Make sure the gruel is warm but not hot. Mash the food well with a fork or puree it in a blender, then place it in a shallow dish (aluminum pie tins work well for puppies, flat saucers work well for kittens) for serving. You may need to dip your finger into the gruel and let the puppy or kitten lick at it or smear a small amount on the animal's mouth to encourage them to start eating. Youngsters will often start following their mother to the food dish and eating her canned food on their own. Once weaning begins, also make sure that there is a shallow, weighted water dish available that the babies can reach.

At around five weeks of age, puppies and kittens should be reducing their intake of mother's milk and consuming more gruel. Once they are eating the gruel well, gradually decrease the amount of water used to make the gruel. All changes in amounts and consistency of food should be gradual to prevent digestive upset. Always provide plenty of fresh water in clean bowls. **Never give cow's milk**, as many puppies and kittens do not tolerate milk (it may cause diarrhea and weight loss).

Some kittens and puppies take longer to acclimate to the supplemental feedings. It is important to always watch everyone in the litter to make sure all are eating a good amount of food. Also, it is a good idea to feel their tummies to see if they are full after eating.

Supplemental Feeding Guidelines for Puppies and Kittens with a Mother

	Kittens	Puppies
3 - 6 weeks old	Gruel 3 – 4 times per day	Gruel 3 times per day
	Dry kitten food always available	Dry puppy food always available
6-8 weeks old	Canned food 2 times per day	Canned food 3 times per day
	Dry kitten food always available	Dry puppy food always available

Mastitis

Mastitis is an inflammation involving one or more of the mammary glands. If it occurs, it is usually within six weeks of giving birth. Mastitis can cause fever, listlessness, loss of appetite, and neglect of the young. Affected mammary glands are usually swollen, warm, and painful to the touch with firm nodules within the tissue. Frequently the cause is from a bacterial infection in the mammary gland and may require antibiotic treatment. Hot-packing the affected glands will encourage drainage. If you suspect that your foster animal has mastitis, call the Center and set up an appointment for the animal to be evaluated and treated.

Non-septic mastitis results from a buildup of milk and most commonly occurs after weaning. Lactation can be stopped by withholding food for 24 hours, then slowly reintroducing food over the next four days (25% of normal on Day 1, 50% on Day 2, 75% on Day 3, and a full ration on Day 4).

Maternal Protective Aggression

Females with young may show a strong protective reaction toward their offspring. This is an instinctive / hormonal reaction and is not necessarily a reflection of the animal's normal temperament. Distress cries from their babies are often the trigger for maternal aggression, but the mere approach of a person or another animal may be enough to initiate the

response. Over time the intensity of the reaction should decrease as the mother's hormone levels return to normal and the offspring become more self-sufficient.

To decrease the possibility of maternal aggression, nursing mothers should be housed away from any other household pets and only adults should work with the mother and litter during the first few weeks of life. Notify the Center immediately if your foster animal shows signs of maternal aggression. We will evaluate the situation and set up an environment in which

the mother will be able to safely raise her offspring.

Socialization

A great deal of time and effort is required to properly socialize puppies and kittens. The prime "socialization window" is thought to last from four to 12 weeks of age. Daily socialization sessions are genuinely important in shaping the animal's future personality and emotional growth. Well-socialized mothers are more likely to have well-socialized offspring since young animals "feed" off of their mothers' calm or fearful attitude toward people. It's also vital to include petting, talking and playing in order to build good "people-skills." Kittens and puppies that are handled 15 to 40 minutes

a day (in 5-10 minute sessions) during the first seven weeks are more likely to develop larger brains. They're more exploratory, more playful and are better learners. Skills not acquired during the first twelve weeks may be lost forever.

The environment should be mentally stimulating to help the puppies and kittens develop properly. Provide foster objects such as cardboard boxes, tennis balls, squeaky rubber toys, stuffed toys, paper bags (without handles), etc., to play with and explore. Avoid string toys and toys with small pieces that can be chewed off and swallowed. Allow fosters to explore a variety of flooring surfaces, such as carpeting, hardwood floors, cement, linoleum, and tile. Puppies should also have dirt and grass surfaces to walk on (secure areas where other dogs haven't been). Expose your fosters to as many sounds as possible. Blow whistles, clap your hands, jingle bells, turn on the vacuum cleaner, etc. Encourage puppies and kittens to explore and sniff the noisemakers.

From four weeks of age on, puppies and kittens should be handled individually by different people: men, women, and supervised children. At first, keep handling session's short- about 5 to 10 minutes per session for a total of 40 minutes per day. As they mature and become accustomed to handling, these sessions can become longer and more frequent. Let the animal's reaction to the interactions guide you. Combine your play sessions with handling and restraint exercises. This familiarizes the animals with having their paws touched, mouths opened, muzzles held, and ears touched. Combining this with regular training sessions and body massages helps prevent aversion to touch. Whenever you are introducing an animal to something new, maintain a casual and matter-of-fact attitude. Do not force an animal to approach anything they are afraid of, but also do not coddle a kitten or puppy that shows fear. Making sure that puppies and kittens have positive experiences with a variety of sights, sounds, textures, and people will help prevent fearful or nervous reactions later in life.

Ideally, kittens and puppies should stay with their littermates (or other role-model animals) for at least eight weeks. Offspring are usually weaned at six or seven weeks, but may continue to suckle for comfort as their mother gradually leaves them more and more. Orphans, or those weaned too soon, are more likely to exhibit inappropriate suckling behaviors later in life. In addition, animals that are orphaned or separated from their mother and/or littermates too early often fail to develop appropriate "social skills," such as learning how to send and receive signals, what an "inhibited bite" means and how far to go in play. Please call the Center immediately if your orphans are developing behaviors that concern you. We may be able to provide you with exercises to improve your foster's behavior and make them a more adoptable animal.

Healthy and Happy Babies

The following provide some general guidelines for recognizing illness in your foster. Please remember, **any** arrangements for routine and/or emergency health care need to be made through the Prairie Paws Adoption Center. If you take a foster animal to a veterinarian without prior authorization from Prairie Paws Adoption Center, you **WILL NOT** be reimbursed for expenses. If you suspect illness in your foster pet, call the Center immediately at 972-237-8575.

Some of the typical signs of illness in kittens and puppies are:

- 1) Frequent crying
- 2) Restlessness
- 3) Weakness
- 4) Low body temperature or fever
- 5) Diarrhea
- 6) Dehydration (dry gums, loss of skin elasticity, dark yellow urine)
- 7) Altered respirations (labored or shallow breathing)
- 8) Pale, white, or bluish color of mucous membranes
- 9) Blood present in the urine



Listed below is more detail to help you determine if your foster needs medical care.

General Appearance

Animal SHOULD be bright, alert, responsive, skin is elastic (springs back immediately after a gentle squeeze), temperature normal, interested in its surrounding, and oriented.

Animal SHOULD NOT be very thin or obese, have wounds or abscesses, swelling lumps or bumps, have an umbilical hernia, mammary glands that are swollen or oozing discharge, skin that does not spring back (a sign of dehydration), appear uncoordinated, tilt head continuously, repeatedly turn around in circles, have a bloated abdomen, abnormal temperature, appear lethargic, hyperactive, or disorientated.

Eyes

SHOULD be clean, clear, bright, and responsive to stimuli.

SHOULD NOT be watery, red, filmy, cloudy, discolored, showing third/middle eyelid, dry, swollen, hypersensitive to light, painful, itchy, or showing discharge. Pupils should not be different sizes, overly dilated, or constricted.

Ears

SHOULD be clean (both outer ear and canal), the inner ear should be pink, and the ears should be responsive to noise.

SHOULD NOT be showing discharge, be crusty, inflamed, red, scabby, or itchy (the animal will shake its head or repeatedly being scratched).

Nose

SHOULD be clean and free of discharge.

SHOULD NOT be scabbed, crusty, cracked, congested, blocked, or showing discharge (clear, mucous, blood, or pus).

Mouth

SHOULD be free of putrid odor, teeth should be clean and gums should be pink, pink gum color returns within one to two seconds after being pressed with finger, and the animals appears to swallow normally.

SHOULD NOT be unusually red or pale, drooling, characterized by a foul odor, showing discharge, have inflamed gums, teeth should not be broken, loose, or covered with tartar, and the animal should not have trouble swallowing.

Breathing

SHOULD be clear-sounding with a normal respiration rate.

SHOULD NOT be irregular or rapid, shallow, labored, coughing, wheezing, or excessive sneezing.

Skin and Fur

SHOULD be bright, glossy, and appears well-groomed, skin is clean, free of oil, swelling, lumps, and lesions.

SHOULD NOT be dull, oily, or dirty, coat should not be thinning or matted, skin should not be dry, flaking, red, irritated, scabbed, or bleeding, and should not be infested with parasites.

Legs and Feet

SHOULD be functioning normally, pads should be clean and smooth, and nails should look healthy.

SHOULD NOT be limping, weak, or uncoordinated, pads that are cracked or hard, pads with matted fur between them, or nails too long.

Anal/Genital Area

SHOULD be clean and free of discharge, stool is normal.

SHOULD NOT have discharge, lumps or swelling, stool should not be bloody or watery, and animal should not be constipated.

Management of Illness

- 1) Be attentive. Familiarize yourself with your fosters' normal habits so that you will recognize any changes in behavior right away.
- 2) Look for specific clues. Center staff and veterinarians will want to know details such as time of onset, how often the problem occurs, the color and consistency of feces, etc.
- 3) Watch the clock. If mild symptoms do not disappear in 24 hours, call the Center for advice.
- 4) **If symptoms are severe, immediate care is required.** Call the Center at 972-237-8575 for help. For after-hours emergencies, call Grand Prairie Police Department at 972-237-8700. Let them know you are fostering an animal for us and that you require the On-Call Officer to contact you as soon as possible. They will contact a staff member who will be able to assist you. That officer will make any emergency decisions.

Potential Problems

Fading Puppy / Kitten Syndrome

A "fading" kitten or puppy is one that appears healthy at birth but fails to survive beyond 12 weeks of age. Losses generally occur because of one of the following:

- 1) congenital defect(s)
- 2) low birth weight
- 3) nutritional diseases (resulting from inadequate diet fed to the mother)
- 4) infectious diseases

Kitten and puppy losses due to "fading" are somewhat common and most times are unavoidable. Raising fosters can be very rewarding, but there is always the chance of a heartbreak, too.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is a common ailment among young kittens and puppies. It is a potentially serious condition because increased loss of water and electrolytes can quickly lead to dehydration and death in a young animal. The causes of diarrhea include overeating, bacterial, or viral infections, parasite infections, intestinal diseases, and stress. A sudden change in diet, eating table scraps or rich snacks, ingesting plants, or scavenging spoiled food from the trash can also cause diarrhea.

Normal stools for bottle-fed babies will be yellowish-brown and pasty. If your bottle babies develop diarrhea, first try cutting the formula in half with unflavored Pedialyte. You can also add a little baby rice cereal to the bottle. As the diarrhea improves, slowly return the milk to full strength. If diarrhea persists through two feedings, call the Center immediately. Diarrhea can kill young animals quickly!

Overeating is a common cause of diarrhea in young animals and is easily remedied. We aned kittens and puppies with diarrhea should have their wet food rations cut in half and have baby rice cereal mixed in with it. If diarrhea persists more than 24 hours, call the Center for an appointment. Bring in a fresh sample of the feces in a plastic bag so Center staff can check for parasites.

Internal Parasites

Roundworm, whip worm, and hook worm are all intestinal parasites that can cause diarrhea in animals. Runny or bloody diarrhea is a general indication that deworming is necessary. Tape worm, which is caused by the bite of an infected flea does not usually cause diarrhea. It is however, still a serious infection that can leach vital nutrients from a puppy, kitten, or adult animal and should be treated promptly. Tape worm are most easily recognized by the small rice-sized segments near the anus of the infected pet. When fresh, these segments are living and will move. When dried out and dead, the segments are often visible on bedding and other places puppies and kittens have been. Puppies and kittens with intestinal parasites can frequently be recognized by their swollen bellies (whether or not they've been recently fed) and disproportionately thin legs.

Although not common in puppies or kittens, **heartworm** is another internal parasite. Spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes, heartworm is diagnosed through a blood test. Heartworm infection is often sneaky because it can cause major damage to vital organs before you spot any warning signs. If your foster animal has a chronic cough or a poor appetite, tires after even moderate exercise, or is losing weight, contact the Center for advice.

External Parasites

Fleas and ear mites are two of the most common external parasites you may have to deal with as a foster parent. Flea infestations on puppies and kittens are particularly dangerous and cause anemia and even death. Signs of fleas include not only seeing the fleas themselves, but also black specks (flea dirt) in the fur. Some animals are sensitive to flea saliva and will develop hair loss and scabby skin. If you suspect that your foster animal has fleas, please call the Center for an appointment. **DO NOT** treat the animals yourself. Many flea control products contain ingredients that can be harmful to pets and especially puppies and kittens.

Ear mites are tiny white parasites that live on the surface of the ear canal and feed upon skin cells and debris. Ear mites produce a flaky, dark brown, sometimes waxy discharge in the ear canal. Puppies and kittens can get ear mites from their mother while still nursing. Infected animals will shake their heads and scratch or rub their ears. If you suspect your foster animal has ear mites, please call the Center for advice.

Another common external parasite, the **tick**, looks like a flat, spider-like bug. After feeding on the blood of an animal, ticks become engorged and expand to many times their normal size. The brown dog tick is primarily a parasite of dogs, although humans and other animals are also susceptible. Preventing the animal from roaming in open wooded areas and around livestock helps reduce the chance of getting ticks. If you suspect that your foster animal has ticks, please call the Center advice. **DO NOT** treat the animal yourself, since many tick-control products could be harmful to the animal.

Ringworm

One of the more problematic external conditions is a fungal infection and not a parasite. Ringworm produces dry, scaly, hairless patches, usually around earflaps, face, and toenails. Transmission occurs by contact with fungal spores in the soil and infected hair of other animals. Dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and humans are all susceptible to ringworm. The minimum incubation period for developing ringworm lesions is two weeks. Children and immune-compromised individuals are especially at risk of acquiring ringworm from an infected animal. Simple ringworm is not normally

itchy, however, in advanced cases where scabs and lesions appear, the animal may lick and/or scratch the area.

Ringworm is contagious to humans and other animals and requires extensive, time-consuming treatment. If you suspect your foster animal has ringworm:

- 1) Isolate the animal immediately.
- 2) Limit your handling of the animal. Wash thoroughly and change clothes after handling the animal.
- 3) Call the Center immediately.
- 4) Discard all toys, towels, blankets, etc., that the animal has had contact with.
- 5) Disinfect all food and water bowls, carriers, etc. by soaking them in a solution of one cup of bleach per one gallon of water for 20 minutes.
- 6) Vacuum all upholstery and rugs thoroughly.

Administering Medication & General Care

Proper administration of medications is essential for the recovery of an injured or ill foster animal. It is very important that medications be given as prescribed and until the full treatment time has been completed, even if the pet starts to look and act better. With cats, it may be necessary to have an assistant hold the animal or you may need to wrap the cat securely in a towel or pillowcase.

Pills

When giving pills, tilt the animal's head back, gently open the mouth (reach over the animal's muzzle, grasping one side of the upper jaw with your thumb and the other side with your forefinger; gently lift the upper jaw while holding the front of the lower jaw still with the middle finger of the hand that is holding the pill), and drop the pill to the back of the throat. Gently hold the mouth closed, with the head pointed straight upwards and blow on the nose to get the pet to swallow. As an easy alternative for dogs, pills can usually be given in a small piece of cheese, hot dog, or canned food.

Pastes

The easiest way to administer a paste is to place the appropriate amount on your finger, open the animal's mouth, and smear the paste on the roof of the animal's mouth. If the paste is pre-measured in a syringe, it may be placed on the animals' tongue where it will adhere and be swallowed.

Liquids

Tilt the animal's head back, open the mouth, and slowly dribble the liquid from a syringe or dropper onto the back of the tongue. If the animal coughs or sputters, decrease the amount of head tilt and/or give the medication more slowly. If the medication is bitter tasting, the animal may foam at the mouth.



Eye Drops and Ointment

To administer drops, tilt the animal's head back slightly. Bring the bottle of drops over the eye and drop in the prescribed amount. To administer ointment, tilt the head back slightly. Squeeze a small amount of ointment inside the lower eyelid. Close the eyes to distribute the ointment evenly over the surface of the eye.

Ear Drops and Ointment

Grasp the tip of the ear with one hand and hold the earflap open. With the other hand, drop in the prescribed number of drops or amount of the ointment. Continue to hold the ear firmly (to prevent head shaking) and massage the base of the ear to work the medication down inside the ear canal.

Checking Heart Rate and Pulse

Normal heart rates in cats range from 60 to 140 beats per minute. Normal heart rates in dogs range from 80 to 140 beats per minute.

Each animal has its own normal heart rate. To know what is normal for your foster animal, it is a good idea to check when the animal is resting quietly. To feel the pulse, place a finger (not your thumb) on the inside of the thigh in the groin area. The femoral artery is located in this area just below the skin. If you cannot find this pulse, you can feel for the animal's heartbeat by placing your hand on the chest of the animal just behind the left elbow. Count the number of beats felt for a period of 15 seconds and multiply by four. This will give you the pulse/heart rate of the animal. If it is outside of normal range, report this to the Center.

Taking a Temperature

The normal temperature for cats is from 100 to 102.5° F. The normal temperature for dogs is from 101 to 102.5° F t.

To take your foster animal's temperature, you will need a rectal thermometer. Digital thermometers are best, as there is little chance of breakage or misreading. Use petroleum jelly to lubricate the end of the thermometer. Place the thermometer ½ to 1 inch (depending on the animal's size) into the rectum of the animal and leave it in until the digital model beeps. For a glass thermometer, leave it in for about one minute. Use a tissue dipped in rubbing alcohol to clean the end of the thermometer and read the temperature displayed. Contact the Center staff immediately if the temperature is 103° F or higher.

Grooming

Coat and skin care start from the inside. Proper nutrition, exercise, and medical attention ensure a healthy animal with a full, glossy coat and supple skin. A dry, lackluster coat or excessive shedding indicates an animal that is not receiving proper attention or is possibly ill. Establish a grooming routine with your foster animal. A young animal may not have enough coats to make this necessary, but accustoming him to the procedure will be worth the effort. In a few months, he will need regular grooming and will also be able to put up a serious struggle if he doesn't like the idea! Keep first grooming sessions short. Keep one hand on the animal during grooming to provide reassurance and give you better control. Praise him and pet him during grooming. Repeat this daily and he'll soon react to grooming as a pleasant time when he receives extra attention. He'll also learn to enjoy the sensation of being brushed.

Mats and tangles are best removed by slowly working them loose with the fingers, helped with a wide-toothed comb. Don't yank at a tangle. Do not use scissors to remove mats – you could easily end up cutting the animal's skin. Frequent grooming will prevent mats from forming.

Get your foster accustomed to having his mouth opened for inspection and his ears handled. Pick up one foot at a time, touching the paws. Later, when his nails need clipping or his teeth and ears must be cleaned, he will be used to the handling. This training also makes animals more easily examined by vets.

Bathing

Pets should only be bathed as needed. Too frequent bathing removes natural oils that protect the animal's skin and coat. Bathing a young or ill animal can lead to a chill and health complications. A healthy cat will usually keep itself clean and will only need to be bathed if it gets into something messy. Dogs should only be bathed if they get dirty or have a strong "doggy" odor. Many properly brushed and tended animals remain clean and sweet smelling without ever needing a bath.

When a bath is necessary, first place a rubber mat in the bathtub or sink to provide secure footing. Steel wool over the drain will prevent clogging with loose hair. Place a cotton plug in each ear (the pet's, not yours) to protect them. Wet the animal with lukewarm water, use your fingers to work shampoo into the coat, then rinse thoroughly. The Center will provide you with an appropriate shampoo if your foster animal needs a bath. Wash the animal's face with clean water only.

Brush out snarls before bathing your foster. Do not try to comb out a wet coat. Let dogs shake themselves off first before patting them dry with a towel. A hand-held hairdryer is helpful for quicker drying. A quick drying is essential if you are bathing a young or sick animal. Keep your foster indoors and away from drafts for at least three hours after a bath.

If you want to avoid a soap and water bath, commercial foam shampoos, dry shampoos, or cornstarch rubbed into the animal's coat are somewhat effective.

Eye Cleaning

To keep your foster's eyes clean of any discharge, wipe the eyes with a soft cloth moistened in a mild saline solution. Work from the eye corner out, never across the eye. White animals and animals with white face markings may have unsightly stains caused by tearing, unless their eyes are kept

scrupulously clean. However, excessive, continuous weeping may be caused by ingrown eyelashes, eye disease, or deformity, and will need to be checked by Center staff.

Ear Cleaning

Check your foster's ears at least once a week (this applies more to dogs than cats). Carefully clean any wax deposits from the inside of the earflap with a cloth-wrapped finger or a cotton-tipped swab dipped in baby oil. Never, ever probe deeply into the ear, as you may permanently injure the canal or other delicate inner parts. If the ears are red, inflamed, have a foul odor, or are full of debris, call the Center for an appointment. Do not attempt to clean ears in this condition yourself.

Nail Trimming

Nails grow continuously and when not worn down naturally by activity, need to be trimmed. Human nail clippers or special-made cat nail trimmers work well on cat nails. Heavy-duty animal nail clippers are best for use on dogs. Just like ours, a pet's nails are made of keratin (a fibrous protein) encased in a hard sheath, the cuticle. Beneath the cuticle is the quick, the pink portion of the nail which contains blood vessels and nerves. Should you accidentally cut the quick, the animal will feel pain and the nail will bleed. Apply pressure over the bleeding nail with a cotton ball for a couple of minutes until the bleeding stops. Do not apply pressure to the toe by squeezing, as this will cause the nail to keep bleeding. If bleeding persists, dip the nail in flour, cornstarch, or a commercial styptic powder such as quick-stop to stop the bleeding. If you are uncomfortable trimming nails, do not attempt it. Ask for assistance from the Center staff.

Cats

Cutting off the sharp tip of a cat's claws will dull the nail and help prevent damage to household objects and skin. Apply a small amount of pressure to the cat's paw with your thumb on top of the paw and your index finger under the paw. This will extend the claws. Cut the white tip off keeping well in front of the pink quick.

Dogs

A dog's nails should be just off of the ground when the dog is standing squarely. To trim a dog's nails, lift up the paw and squeeze a toe between your thumb and finger. Observe where the quick is located and cut the nail well in front of the quick. The quick may be difficult or impossible to see on dark nails. In that case, cut the nail just in front of where it starts to curve downward. Clipping the tip of the nail is usually sufficient for a dog that has received regular nail trims. Remember to trim the dewclaws, which grow above the paws on the inner legs. Because dewclaws are not worn down naturally, they will curl and grow into a dog's skin if they are not trimmed. Some dogs are born without dewclaws or they may have been surgically removed.



Training

Cats

Litterbox Training – Although litterbox use comes naturally to most cats, the tips outlined below can help reinforce the message to cat that may have 'forgotten' or teach the idea to an orphaned kitten.

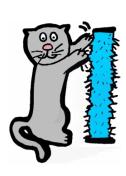
- Start by placing your cat or kitten in an enclosed area, such as a bathroom, at night.
- Provide your cat with an open litter box, food, water, and a place to sleep.
- This will give your kitten fewer choices about where to go to the bathroom.
- During the day, when your kitten is exploring the house, occasionally pick him/her up and place him in the litter box. Hold the kitten there for 10 seconds. They will either do their business or scamper out. Do this about once an hour and after meals. It may help to hold the kitten's paw and show him to scratch the first few times.



- If the kitten goes outside the litter box, clean the area well. If smells linger, the chances that your kitten will use that spot again increase.
- Reward the kitten with cuddling or a treat when he uses the litter box.
- * Keep the box clean to encourage consistent use.
- Some cats are picky about their litter. Usually litters with a sand-like consistency are best.
- If you have several cats in your household, provide several litter boxes.
- And as a rule, where litter boxes are concerned, bigger is better.

Feline Scratching

- Scratching is a normal behavior for all cats.
- Scratching shortens and conditions the claws.
- Cats scratch to mark their territory and to stretch.
- Even de-clawed cats scratch with their paws.
- Cats require an area for scratching.
- Scratching posts should be set up in prominent areas of the house, with at least one post near the cat's sleeping quarters.
- Make sure your scratching post is sturdy enough that it doesn't topple when being used.
- Posts may be horizontal or vertical, depending on your cat's preference.
- Choose a post covered in a material those appeals to your cat. Materials include: carpet, sisal, rope, corrugated cardboard, and wood.
- To lure your cat to his/her post, place a few play toys, cardboard boxes, catnip treats, or even the food bowl nearby. Turn the scratching post into an interesting and desirable play center.
- What to do if your cat displays inappropriate scratching:



- > All forms of physical punishment should be avoided since they can cause fear or aggression toward the owners.
- > A spray bottle with water may be useful for some animals.
- > The simplest approach is to cover the scratched surface with less appealing material: plastic, aluminum foil, double-sided tape, etc.)
- Most importantly, provide your cat with an appealing alternate scratching area.

Dogs - Housetraining

General Tips

- ❖ Feeding a dog on a schedule will help them eliminate on schedule.
- * Keep the dog's diet consistent. High quality, dry kibble produces the least amount of waste.
- Some people choose to paper train their dogs and puppies. They set aside an area in a room and cover it with newspapers or absorbable pads and teach the dog to eliminate there. *Keep in mind, however, that paper training risks only partial housetraining because a dog/puppy learns that it is acceptable to relieve itself indoors.

Puppies

- ❖ Housetraining puppies calls for vigilance, patience, and plenty of commitment.
- Don't expect the house training process to be completed until your puppy is at least six months of age or older.
- ❖ By following the procedures outlined below, you can minimize house soiling incidents, but virtually every puppy will have an accident in the house, and more likely, several. Expect accidents.
- ❖ If you allow your puppy to eliminate frequently in the house, he'll get confused about where he's supposed to eliminate, which will prolong the housetraining process.

Establish a routine:

- ❖ The more consistent you are in following the basic housetraining procedures, the faster your puppy will learn acceptable behavior.
- Puppies need to be taken outside to eliminate immediately after meals, naps, and bursts of play.
- ❖ Pick a bathroom spot near the door. Always take your puppy to this spot. Pace back and forth, and chant an encouraging phrase ("Go Potty!"). Only go for longer walks after elimination has occurred.
- ❖ Praise your puppy lavishly each time he eliminates outdoors. You may give treats immediately after he's finished. Reward him/her before coming indoors. It is important that your pup recognizes that the reward is for eliminating outdoors.

***** Keep a close watch:

- > Don't give your puppy the opportunity to soil in the house. Keep an eye on him whenever he's indoors.
- > Tether him to you with a six-foot leash.
- > Use baby gates to keep him in the room where you are.
- ➤ Watch for signs that he needs to eliminate circling, sniffing, etc.
- ➤ When you see these signs, immediately take him outside to his bathroom spot.

Confinement

- When you are unable to watch your puppy at all times, he should be confined to an area small enough that he won't want to eliminate in.
- This space should be big enough for your puppy to comfortably stand, lie down, and turn around.
- * Crate training is an appropriate means of confinement. Please refer to the section on crating.
- To estimate the time period a puppy can be expected to "hold it," take their age in months and add one. For example, a four month old puppy can be expected to "hold it" for a maximum of five hours.
- ❖ Immediately after confinement, take your puppy directly to his bathroom spot.

OOPS!

- ❖ Expect your puppy to have a few accidents in the house it's a normal part of housetraining.
- ❖ If you catch puppy in the act of eliminating in the house, interrupt him by making a startling, but not too scary noise. Immediately take him to his bathroom spot and praise him if he finishes eliminating there.
- ❖ If you find a soiled area, it's too late to administer correction. Just clean it up. Avoid rubbing your puppy's nose in it, scolding him, or any other punishment; you may make him afraid of you or afraid to eliminate in your presence.
- Clean the soiled area well, as puppies are highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like urine or feces.

Adult dogs

- ❖ Adult dogs have better bladder control and can "hold it" for longer periods of time.
- Remember **do not** punish accidents. Ignore them. Reward Successes.
- ❖ Again, choose an area, outside, where you wish your dog to potty.
- ❖ Take your dog on leash to the area, pace back and forth, and chant an encouraging phrase ("Do your business" or "Go potty")
- Repeat this activity for only three minutes:
- ❖ If he eliminates, praise him, and play
- ❖ If he doesn't, go back indoors, and either keep him contained on a leash with you or place him in his crate.
- Try again in an hour.
- After each success, allow 15 minutes of freedom in the house before placing dog on a lead or in a crate.
- ❖ After three consecutive days of success, increase freedom by 15 minutes.
- ❖ If there is an accident, decrease freedom by 15 minutes for three days.

Crate Training

- ★ Advantages of crate training:
- ★ Peace of mind when leaving your dog home alone.
- ★ Expedites the process of housebreaking.
- ★ The crate can travel with your dog and serve as his "security blanket."
- ★ Gives your dog a "den" to which he can retreat when tired, stressed, or ill.
- ★ A crate is a rectangular enclosure with a top and a door, made in a variety of sizes proportioned to fit any type of dog.

- ★ A crate should always be large enough to permit any age dog to stretch out flat on his side without being cramped and to sit up without hitting his head on top.
- ★ For an adult dog: measure the distance from tip of the nose to base of the tail to determine your crate's length.
- ★ For a puppy, measure as above, then add 12 inches for anticipated, rapid growth.
- ★ Crates should be placed close to a "people area" kitchen, family room, etc.
- ★ To provide your dog with a sense of den security and privacy, place the crate in a corner and/or have the sides and back loosely draped with a sheet or large towel.
- ★ Crates are NOT intended for frequent, long-hours usage for the convenience of an absent owner.

Crating a Puppy

- ❖ Establish a "crate routine" immediately, closing the puppy in at regular one to two hour intervals during the day and whenever he must be left alone for three to four hours.
- Remember when establishing your routine: take their age in months, add one, and that is the number of hours the puppy can "hold it" during the day.
- Give him a safe chew toy.
- * Remove collar and tags; they might get caught in an opening.

Crating an Adult Dog

- ❖ Many problem behaviors of adult dogs arise from the lack of a feeling of security when left alone. Hopefully, a crate can fulfill this need.
- Start by securing the door in an open position.
- Encourage the dog to investigate the crate by tossing "special" treats inside (for example cheese or bits of hotdog).
- ❖ When the dog enters and comes back out, praise him enthusiastically.
- ❖ When he begins to enter the crate confidently, place his bedding and something of yours inside. Coax him to lie down and relax. Continue to use food if necessary.
- Shut the door briefly while you sit beside him or when people are visible and/or audible nearby.
- ❖ When you are confident the dog will remain quietly in the crate, you may leave him alone.
- ❖ Give him a chew toy or safe bone to attract his attention.
- ❖ Start with brief stays in the crate (1/2 to one hour) until he has accepted the crate as his "special place."

Basic Training Commands

Choose a reward word ("Yes" or "Good boy/girl"). Begin teaching your dog this word by saying the word and then giving a treat. Treats should be small and easily chewed/swallowed. Small pieces of hot dog or soft, moist dog treats work nicely. Test whether or not each dog knows the reward word. If he looks at you when you say it, he is beginning to learn it. Once the dog knows the reward word, use it to reward desired behaviors. The most desired behavior to reward initially is the dog looking at you. All further training requires that he look at you (so that you have his attention).

"Gotcha"

Touch the dog's neck (as though to take him by the collar) and say "Gotcha." Use your reward word and give him a treat. Do this from various positions – sitting, standing, and walking. The goal is for the dog to welcome you to reach for him and take him by the collar.

"Come"

It is important to say your dog's name, and "Come!" in a cheerful but authoritative tone. Take older puppies and adult dogs out on a long line. The line between you and your dog may be as short as a normal 6-foot leash or up to a 30-foot long line. Allow him to get 6-10 feet from you and then say your dog's name and "Come!" If he does not come, pop the leash toward you, and then back up until he catches up with you; do not reach for him! You may kneel down to encourage him to come all the way to you. Then, have him sit and do the "Gotcha" command. Eventually, add "Down." Gradually let him wander further away on his long line before calling him back to you, thus increasing the distance he comes. Walk toward another person, dog, or toy. When he is distracted by something other than you, call him. If he does not turn to you immediately, pop the leash, and continue as described above.

"Sit"

Hold a food treat right above the dog's nose and move it slowly backwards to lure him into the sit position (he should fold into a sit), while at the same time saying "sit." As soon as he sits give the reward word and the food reward.

"Down"

Once the dog has learned "sit," begin working on "down." From a sit position, lure the dog with a food treat starting at his nose and guiding him down to the ground by moving the food treat straight down to the ground. At the same time, say "down." Putting the treat on the ground between his front legs may help the dog learn to lie down.

"Okay"

After the dog has learned sit and down, it is time for him to learn a *release* word. This is one word to mean an exercise is over. Use the word "*okay*." Do not allow the dog to break a command until you give the release word. The goal is for your dog to remain under command until he or she hears the release word.



Chew Toys

- **Chewing** is a normal behavior for dogs.
- Puppies, like human babies, naturally explore their surroundings by putting things in their mouths.
- Puppies also chew to relieve their gums, develop strong jaws and help the adult teeth come in.
- When dogs feel confined, bored, isolated, or stressed they may engage in destructive behaviors such as chewing.
- For these reasons, you should provide a variety of toys appropriate for your dog's size and age. Four or five should be available at a time.
- Praise your dog each time they approach and pick up the chew toy.
- Make toys a part of play.
- Always be safe in choosing a toy. As a general rule, if your dog can fit the whole toy in his mouth, the toy is too small and could be unsafe.
- And don't forget, cats and kittens like toys too! Ping pong balls, crumpled paper, ribbon to chase after, and the occasional catnip mouse are all great toys for felines!



Castor Bean

Chinese Evergreen

Christmas Rose

Chrysanthemum

Ceriman

Cineraria

Clematis Cordatum

Corn Plant

Cornflower

Cherry

Common Poisonous Plants



Following is a list of the most common plants and flowers which may be deadly for your dog or cat if ingested. In some cases, only certain parts of these are poisonous. Use this list as a guideline to make your home safe and secure for pets. A note of caution: even non-toxic plants may cause physical irritation to the gastrointestinal system. Also, plants that have been sprayed with insecticides or treated with fertilizers can be toxic to pets. If you suspect your foster has been poisoned, call the PPAC immediately.

Aloe Vera Cornstalk Plant Almond Crocus, Autumn Anemone Croton Amaryllis Cuban Laurel Apple Seeds Cycads Apricot Cyclamen Arrow grass Daffodil Asparagus fern Daphne Avocado Delphinium Azalea Dieffenbachia Baby's Breath Dragon Tree Balsam **Dumb Cane** Baneberry **Eggplant** Bird of Paradise Elaine Elderberry Bittersweet Black-Eved Susan Elephant Ear Black Locust **Emerald Feather Bleeding Heart** Euonymus Bloodroot Fiddle-leaf Fig Flax Boxwood Buckeye Florida Beauty **Burning Bush** Four O' Clock Buttercup Foxglove Cactus Geranium Caladium Golden Glow Calla Lily Henbane

Hemlock

Hibiscus

Hyacinth

Iris

Ivy

Hydrangea

Indian Laurel

Honevsuckle

Horse Chestnut

Hurricane Plant

Holly

Jack-in-the-Pulpit Japanese Plum Java Beans Jerusalem Cherry Jimson Weed Jonquil Kalanchoe Lantana Lily of the Valley Lily (most forms) Locoweed Madagascar Dragon Marble Queen Marigold Marijuana Mistletoe Monkshood Morning Glory Mountain Laurel Mushrooms Narcissus **Nephtytis** Nightshade Nutmeg Oleander Onion Peach Pear Peonv Periwinkle Philodendron Pimpernel Pikeberry Plumosa Fern

Poinsettia

Poison Ivy Poison Oak Pokeweed **Poppy** Potato **Pothos** Precatory Bean Primrose Privet Red Emerald **Red Princess** Rhododendron Rhubarb Ribbon Plant Rubber Plant Sago Palm Schefflera Scotch Broom Skunk Cabbage Star of Bethlehem String of Pearls Sumac Sweetpea Swiss Cheese Plane Taro Vine Thorn Apple Tobacco Tomato Tulip Virginia Creeper Walnut Weeping Fig Wild Barley



FIRST AID DIRECTORY

The following information is intended **only** as a guide on how to deal with some common first aid situations. It is NOT a substitute for veterinary treatment. **Always call the Prairie Paws Adoption Center to arrange for veterinary treatment** following first aid attempts.

Bite Wounds

Approach the animal slowly- muzzle her to prevent getting bitten yourself. Clean the wound with large amounts of water. If it is a large and open area, bandage it to keep it clean. If a wound is bleeding profusely, apply direct pressure and call the shelter for further advice.

Bleeding

Apply firm and direct pressure over the bleeding area. Do not affix bandages tightly enough to affect circulation. Call the shelter for further advice.

No Breathing

Make sure the animal does not have a foreign object lodged in the throat (see choking). If the object is removed from the throat and the animal still is not breathing, place the animal with its right side down. Close the animal's mouth and exhale directly into the nose until the chest expands. Exhale 12-15 times per minute. Check for a heartbeat by placing a hand over the animal's chest between the third and sixth ribs for 30 seconds. If you do not feel a heartbeat, continue artificial respiration while beginning chest compressions. Place your hand over the heart and compress the chest 1-2 inch for large animals and ½-1 inch for small animals. Apply heart massage 70-90 times per minute. Call the shelter for further advice.

Burns

Chemical, electrical and heat burn areas must be promptly flushed with large amounts of cold water. Cover with a wet cloth. Call the shelter for further advice.

Choking

If an animal is having difficulty breathing, excessively pawing at the mouth, and/or turning blue around the lips and tongue, it may be choking. Look in the animal's throat (you may use a gauze pad or paper towel to gently pull the tongue outwards). If you see an object, try to remove it with your finger. Be careful not to push the object farther down the throat. Call the shelter for further advice.

Eve Irritations

If an animal has runny eyes, inflamed eyes, or eye discharge, or is squinting or pawing at an eye, then there could be a foreign object in the eye. Try to open the eye gently and check for an object. If you see an object, try to flush it out with normal saline solution or warm water. Call the shelter for further advice.

Fractures

An animal who is in pain and unable to use a leg and/or has swelling in a leg may have a fracture. Muzzle the animal and control any bleeding. Watch for signs of shock. **Do not attempt to reset a**

fracture. You may apply cold compresses (plastic bags filled with ice cubes) until you can get the pet to the shelter.

Heat Stroke

A dog who is breathing rapidly and with difficulty, vomiting, has a high body temperature, and/or has collapsed may be suffering from heat stroke. Put the animal in a tub of cold water, or gently soak with a garden hose, or wrap in a cold, wet towel. Call the shelter for further advice.

Insect Bites

Insect bites manifest themselves through an onset of swelling, itching and/or pain within one hour of the bite. If there is a stinger present, remove it by scraping it out and apply cold packs. Call the shelter for further advice.

Poisoning

If your animal is vomiting, salivating, having convulsions, diarrhea, weakness, pain, or depression, she may have ingested poison. Write down any information you have, such as what was ingested, when it was ingested, and how much was ingested. In case of poison on the skin or fur (from oil, paint, etc.), wash the animal with mild soap and rinse well. Call the shelter for further advice.

Seizures

If your animal is salivating, has loss of bladder and bowel control, violent muscle twitching, and loss of consciousness, she may be having a seizure. Move the animal away from objects that could be harmful. You may use a blanket for padding. Do not attempt to restrain the animal during the seizure. Time the duration of the seizure (typically seizures last 2-3 minutes). Afterwards, keep the animal calm and call the shelter for further advice.

Shock

Signs of shock are irregular breathing, dilated pupils, and weakness. Shock may accompany severe injury/trauma. Keep the pet warm and quiet. You may wrap her in a blanket. Move the animal quietly and carefully. The head should be kept slightly lower than the body. Call the shelter for further advice.

Snakebite

Signs of snakebite include acute pain, swelling, heavy panting, fang marks with a trickle of blood, and weakness. Keep the pet calm and quiet. You may wrap the animal in a towel or blanket. Apply a cold pack to the bite area. Call the shelter for further advice.

Credits

Prairie Paws Adoption Center would like to give thanks and credit to all the different humane and shelter organizations who allowed us to reproduce sections of their foster manuals and applications.

Pets for Life

Humane Society of the United State's Animal Centering Magazine Maddie's Center Medicine Program *Guide to Raising Orphaned Puppies* Center for Companion Animal Health, UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Heartland Humane Society, Corvallis, Oregon, 541-757-9000 Petaluma Animal Services, California, 707-778-4397 Humane Society of Greater Miami, Miami, Florida, 305-696-0800 Lee County Humane Society, Auburn, Alabama, 334-821-3222



PRAIRIE PAWS ADOPTION CENTER FOSTER CARE APPLICATION

Thank you for taking an interest in Prairie Paws Adoption Center's foster care program. The goal of this program is to provide "special needs" animals another chance at life. "Special needs" animals include bottle babies, nursing momma dogs and cats with litters, injured animals or animals with minor behavioral issues that need some work. Please fill out and submit the application and our foster care coordinator will contact you as soon as possible! You must be at least 18 years old to be a foster parent.

Name:	Date:	
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Date of Birth:	Drivers License #: _	
Home Phone:	Work Pho	ne:
Cell Phone:	Pager:	
Email Address:		
PLEASE CHECK WHICH OF THE FO	OLLOWING YOU WOU	JLD LIKE TO FOSTER:
Orphan Puppies (Bottle Babies)		Orphan Kittens (Bottle Babies)
Puppies w/ Mother		Kittens w/ Mother
Injured Dog		Injured Cat
Special Needs Animal (In need of	of socialization, etc.)	
Short Term / Relief Fostering		
Other (Please Specify)		
NOTE: No healthy and adoptable anim welcome to adopt.	nals may be fostered on a	trial basis. However, foster parents are
Please complete the second page of the animals will be housed.	application so we are m	ore familiar with the location where the foster
Who is your veterinarian?		

Veterinarian phone number:
Do you have any children? yes no
If yes, how many and what ages?
How many hours per day will your foster animal(s) be alone?
Where will the foster animal(s) be kept when not at home?
Do you: own your own home?Rent?
Do you have pets at home? yesno
If yes, what kind, how old, and what genders?
Are your pets spayed / neutered? yes, allno, none some of them
Are your pets current on rabies vaccinations? yes no
Have you ever been a foster parent before? yesno
If yes, describe:
Please list any special skills or knowledge you have pertaining to the care of animals:
Additional Comments:
Signature: Date:



PRAIRIE PAWS ADOPTION CENTER FOSTER PROGRAM CONTRACT

ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN
ANIMAL ID#	DOG	CAT	PUPPY	KITTEN

By fostering the pet(s) listed above, I agree to all of the following terms and conditions:

No fostered animal shall be used for breeding purposes.

I/We hereby agree to care for this pet humanely including providing adequate food, water, shelter, love, and attention. Said pet shall be maintained in an adequately enclosed area or on a leash at all times. Pets shall not be allowed to roam at will. Cats/kittens will live indoors only and dogs/puppies will never be left outdoors when not directly supervised at all times.

If I/we must be away from this pet(s) for more than a 24-hour period of time, I/we will ensure that a qualified individual assumes responsibility for care during the time that I/we are away.

I/We will provide appropriate flea prevention.

If said pet(s) becomes lost or stolen, I/we agree to notify Prairie Paws Adoption Center immediately.

I/We agree not to sell, trade, or dispose of this pet(s). If at any time we are unable or unwilling to care for this pet(s), I/we agree to contact and return said pet(s) to *Prairie Paws Adoption Center*.

I/We agree that said pet(s) will not be used for any illegal purposes and will NEVER be used for fighting. If this clause is broken, I/we understand that the pet(s) will be immediately confiscated by *Prairie Paws Adoption Center* and all applicable law enforcement agencies will be notified.

It is also understood that *Prairie Paws Adoption Center* may examine and make inquiries about said pet(s) at any time. If not satisfied with the condition of the pet(s) or the conditions in which kept, said pet(s) can or may be removed immediately and placed in a different home.

I/We understand that *Prairie Paws Adoption Center* makes no guarantees or warranties regarding the health or temperament of the pet(s).

I/We promise and agree to be solely responsible for this pet(s) and to indemnify and hold harmless *Prairie Paws*Adoption Center and the City of Grand Prairie from any and all claims of liability for the conduct of this pet(s). This Release of Liability and Indemnification shall apply to all known, unknown, and unanticipated damages resulting from my/our fostering or control of such pet(s).

I/WE HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I/WE HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND WILL KEEP THE PET(S) DESCRIBED HEREIN AS A FAMILY MEMBER. I/WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS A BINDING CONTRACT ENFORCEABLE BY CIVIL LAW.

Signature	Printed Name
Signature	Printed Name
Date	

THANK YOU!

The staff at the Prairie Paws Adoption Center welcomes any additional questions or concerns you may have about the health and well-being of your foster pet.

Please contact us at:



City of Grand Prairie **Prairie Paws Adoption Center**

2222 W. Warrior Trail Grand Prairie, TX 75052 972-237-8575 Fax 972-237-8579

HOURS OF OPERATION

Tuesday 9am-7pm
Wednesday 9am-6pm
Thursday 9am-6pm
Friday 9am-6pm
Saturday 9am-4pm
Sunday & Monday CLOSED