Contact Information

General Contact Information
Mailing Address, Social Media, and Email:

THE CAWS
MAILING ADDRESS:
#20, 314-222 BASELINE ROAD
SHERWOOD PARK, AB T8H 1S8

PHONE: 1-888-460-4045

WEBSITE:        www.cawsab.org
TWITTER:         @cawsab
INSTAGRAM:       @cawsab

MAIN EMAIL:      cawsab@gmail.com
FOSTER EMAIL:    fosters.cawsab@gmail.com
ADOPTIONS EMAIL: adoptions.cawsab@gmail.com
VOLUNTEER EMAIL: volunteers.cawsab@gmail.com
MEMBERSHIP EMAIL: memberships.cawsab@gmail.com
DONATIONS EMAIL: donations.cawsab@gmail.com
GUARDIAN ANGELS: gap.cawsab@gmail.com
PRESIDENT:       president.cawsab@gmail.com
VICE PRESIDENT:  vicepres.cawsab@gmail.com
24-Hour Emergency Clinics

NORTH EDMONTON EMERGENCY VETERINARY HOSPITAL
9719 137 AVE
EDMONTON, AB
(780) 423-9111  www.vetemerg.com

EDMONTON VETERINARIAN’S EMERGENCY CLINIC (780) 433-9505
11104 102 AVE
EDMONTON AB
(780) 433-9505  www.ecmontonvetemergency.com

GUARDIAN VETERINARY CENTRE
5620 99 ST
EDMONTON AB
(780) 436-5880  www.gaurdianvetcentre.com

All medical emergencies must be reported to you FHS. If you are unable to contact your FHS please contact the President or Vice President.

The CAWS Partner Veterinary Clinics

West Edmonton Spay Neuter Clinic
6023 199 Street
Edmonton, AB T6M 2T6
Phone: (780) 489-3203

South Side Animal Hospital
6003 104 Street
Edmonton, AB T6H 2K6
Phone: (780) 434-6462

Who to Contact and When:

If you are having a medical or behavioral issue with your foster animal, please contact your designated Foster Home Supervisor (FHS).
Please only contact the President and Vice-President in case of MEDICAL EMERGENCIES.
Forward all general questions, updates and photos to the corresponding FHS using the emails listed above.
A phone list with active President, Vice President and Supervisors will be provided separately from this manual.

ATTENTION:
- All regularly scheduled vet appointments (vaccines, alters, routine exams) will be made by the Foster Home. Please communicate to your FHS the times for you will be taking your foster to these appointments.
- All adoption and foster home applications will be reviewed and screened by appointed, trained volunteers. No animal shall be adopted out or moved to another foster home without the approval of your FHS or an appointed, trained volunteer.
Chapter 1
Foster Parent Program

Objectives and Responsibilities

Main Objective

To provide a nurturing environment for all animals of The CAWS that are in your home, where these animals receive the care they need to grow, heal and socialize in order to improve their chances of finding a new, loving home.

Foster Family Responsibilities

- Feed, socialize, and groom foster animals in your home.
- Ensure the safety of the foster animal that is in your care.
- Cats and kittens need to be kept indoors at all times.
- To transport your foster animal to any vet appointments or other appointments it may require. If you are unable to transport your animal yourself to these appointments please make your animal available for another volunteer to pick up. It is the Foster Home’s responsibility to find alternate transportation. If you are unable to receive the required help please then contact your FHS.
- To transport your foster animal to at least ONE adoption event per month. If you are unable to transport your animal yourself the event please make your animal is available for another volunteer to pick up. It is the Foster Home’s responsibility to find alternate transportation. If you are unable to receive the required help please then contact your FHS.
- Isolate foster animals from owned companion animals and children, unless discussed previously.
- Ensure that your own companion animals are current on vaccinations and they are spayed or neutered.
- Observe and report any problems/concerns to your designated FHS.
- Provide photos, write ups and updates on foster animals on a regular basis. Please send write ups and photos to your FHS.
- Consult with FHS before seeking any and all medical attention (homeopathic or natural remedies) for your foster animal. The exception is in the case of an extreme emergency at which time Executives of The CAWS will review and reimburse all expenses if deemed an appropriate emergency medical visit.
- Return all foster animals and all supplies or donations that belong to The CAWS (including, but not limited to) kennels, food, leashes, collars, medications, cages, litter, litter boxes, toys, etc associated to or belonging to The CAWS upon ending your volunteer duties.
- Support The CAWS in all of their philosophies and policies and comply with The CAWS adoption processes.
- Support The CAWS and its associates, supporters, store locations, adoption locations and their locations policies and procedures.
- Represent The CAWS in a responsible and professional manner.
The CAWS’s Responsibilities

- Supply food, litter, kennels, and any other miscellaneous animal supplies if needed.
- Train foster families in all areas of fostering.
- Pay for and provide medical treatment including but not limited to, spaying/neutering, vaccinations (including rabies), microchips and any other treatments the foster animal(s) may need.
- Take the foster animal back at any time, for any reason. The CAWS does ask that Foster Homes realize that not all animals can be moved immediately. An alternative location will need to be found and this could take up to 48 hours.

Introduction to Foster Homes

What do foster homes do?

Foster homes allow The CAWS to rescue homeless, abused, unwanted and neglected animals from a variety of situations by providing these animals with temporary care and shelter until they are adopted. Foster homes are asked to provide foster animals with plenty of love, adequate food and water, shelter from the elements and exercise. Some foster homes of The CAWS provide temporary care for animals that come into its Guardian Angel Program, with the intention of the animal being returned to its owner.

Administering medications may also be necessary in certain circumstances.

In addition to providing the basics, foster homes may also be asked to transport foster animals to vet appointments or adoption events.

Foster homes play a crucial role in rehabilitating rescued animals. They are in a unique position to help abused or neglected animals learn how to love and trust again. Foster homes can help these animals become “adoptable” by providing socialization and basic training. By teaching or re-teaching an animal how to live in a home setting, foster homes help increase the odds for a smooth and successful transition into a permanent adoptive home.

In the case of orphaned baby animals, foster homes provide surrogate parenting and round the clock care for tiny animals that are too young to survive on their own. By providing orphaned animals with plenty of nutrition, love and stimulation during their first weeks of life, foster homes help ensure their health and survival as adults.

**FOSTER HOMES SAVE LIVES.**

What are the requirements for becoming a foster home?

First, you must fill out a foster home application, located on our website [www.cawsab.org](http://www.cawsab.org). Your application is then reviewed by a team member of The CAWS. A home check may be required and reference checks could be completed. The main requirement is that you love the animals that you are going to foster and have the time and resources to provide a foster animal with adequate care. Other requirements will vary depending upon the specific needs of a given foster animal. Some animals, for example, will need fenced yards, extra time commitments (as in the case of newborns or orphaned animals), isolation from personal pets, etc.
What kinds of animals need foster care?

Animals needing foster care in our Adoption Program are dogs, puppies, cats and kittens. Dogs, puppies, cats kittens, rabbits, hamsters, gerbils, reptiles, birds and any other animal type of animal may be fostered while in our Guardian Angel Program, barred on The CAWS having the foster home space, funds and facilities. Foster homes are needed for animals of all ages: adults, babies, moms with newborns, and orphaned newborns. Foster homes are also needed for animals that are ill and/or need medical care. Many foster homes choose to specialize in fostering a specific kind of animal, while others choose to foster whatever animal is in need.

The majority of our rescues are brought into our Adoption Program are Owner Surrenders. These animals usually need help with basic training and sometimes need a refresher course in house training.

How long do animals spend in foster care?

The time an animal needs to spend in foster care ranges from one night to several months. Any time commitment a foster home can make is desperately needed and appreciated.

How do foster animals in the Adoption Program find permanent adoptive homes?

The CAWS takes full responsibility for finding permanent adoptive homes for foster animals that are in its Adoption Program. Foster homes are encouraged to let people know that their foster animals are available for adoption, but any person interested in adopting an animal needs to complete an adoption application first prior to taking the animal.

Foster homes with animals that are enrolled in The CAWS Adoption Program are required to attend at least ONE adoption event per month. If the foster home is unable to attend the event, it is the foster home’s responsibility to find alternate transportation. If they are unable to find the required help their FHS is there to support them in finding another volunteer to help.

Adoptions are handled on a case by case basis and every effort is made to match animals with homes that meet their specific needs. Foster homes can help immensely in this process by providing information regarding an animal’s personality, training, time requirements and other needs. This information, write ups and photos of the animals are required by the foster homes on a regular basis. Any input given by a foster home is appreciated and is taken into consideration during the adoption process.

What constitutes an emergency?

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

Illness

If your foster animal becomes severely ill, please contact the President as soon as possible or the Vice-President. Indications of severe illness include lethargy, severe vomiting and/or diarrhea, or signs that an animal is in pain.
Trauma

If your foster animal sustains any kind of traumatic injury, please contact the President as soon as possible or the Vice-President. If the injuries are severe, please take the foster animal immediately to the nearest veterinarian.

Loss

If your foster animal becomes lost, please contact the President as soon as possible or the Vice-President. They will help you contact local animal control facilities.
Chapter 2
The CAWS Adoption Process

Introduction

It is our responsibility to find the best possible homes for the animals in our Adoption Program. We consider important details in finding the right fit, such as a person's home, interests and lifestyle. We then work with the potential adopter to determine if the animal of interest matches those with an animal's social, exercise and training needs. Some of our animals have special needs or requirements like being an only pet or medical issues or they may not be good with kids etc. Therefore we reserve the right to deny an adoption if we feel it is not a good fit or in the animal’s best interest.

Step 1: The Application

Our adoption process starts with the completion of an extensive Adoption Application. In the application, that we ask every adopter to fill out, will ask questions like: where the animal will sleep, if you have any other animals, if your yard is fenced (if you’re adopting a dog) and do you own or rent your home? At this time, we will also ask for any supporting documentation that may be required.

Step 2: Screening

Once the application has been completed and submitted, it is reviewed by an approved The CAWS Adoption Screener. The applicant is contacted by our Screener by phone within 48 hours of the application to be received. In this 48 hours the Screener has time to get organized. They may need to contact the foster home to get more information about the animal or they might want to talk to a Supervisor about the application before contacting the family to start the over the phone interview.

In the phone interview the screener will obtain more in-depth information on some questions and also answer any questions that the family might have about the animal, The CAWS in general or about our adoption process.

If the screener feels that the family might be a good fit for the animal, they will let the family know that the Foster Home will be in contact with them within 48 hours to set up a Meet and Greet.

If the screener feels that the family is not the right fit for the particular animal they are inquiring on, they might suggest another animal in our care that might be better suited. If we do not have an animal in our care that is suited to them, they may encourage them to visit other rescue sites to find an animal better suited for them.

Step 3: The Meet and Greet

Once the application is approved, an appointment is to be made to for the family to meet the animal. They can meet the dog privately in the foster home, at their own home at a dog park (keeping dogs on leash while there) or any other safe location. Adopters may choose to meet at one of even one of adoption events, which are usually held on Saturdays. Please confirm location, date and time of adoption events before setting the Meet and Greet there.
We require that everyone in the immediate family, including the family’s current dog (if they have one and are wanting to adopt another dog) come to the appointment to meet their potential new dog. Adopting a dog is a big family decision and requires a commitment from everyone. If they currently own a dog, it must be up to date on shots, spayed/neutered, however this should be confirmed in the screening process.

At the appointment, the foster home will help to assess whether the dog is a good match for the family’s lifestyle and the family. The foster home can also answer any questions the family may have about the adoption process.

Sometimes The CAWS will also proceed with a home check. Some rescue animals can be amazing escape artists. By visiting the family’s home, you may help to identify potential escape routes, and keep the animal safe and secure in its new home.

**Step 4: The Adoption**

Before the family can take their new pet home, the must sign a contractual agreement called an Adoption Contract with The CAWS. In addition, an adoption donation is requested. Please confirm with your FHS the adoption donation cost if you are unfamiliar with the amount.

Adoption donations can be made via cash, cheque, PayPal (link on our website) or by internet e-transfer. The email used for e-transfers is cawsab@gmail.com. Please ensure that the family contacts The CAWS to inform us of what the answer is to the security question.

The adoption donation is non-refundable after 10 days of the adoption contract being signed.
Chapter 3
Cats and Kittens
(Over 8 weeks)

Introduction

For many people, cats and kittens are the easiest kinds of animals to foster. They do not require a lot of time and yet they give plenty of love in return. Many foster homes find that they are even comfortable fostering more than one cat at a time. Whether you are interested in fostering one cat or many cats over time, the information in Chapter 3 will help you to familiarize yourself with some of the common needs, behavior issues and health concerns that are associated with fostering cats and kittens.

Supplies Needed

The following is a check list of items that you will need to foster a cat or a kitten or both!

- Litter box
- Food and water bowls
- Collar
- The CAWS Animal ID Tag
- Scratching post and/or toys to help keep your foster kitty busy
- Litter
- Cat and/or kitten food
- Cat bed/blanket/towels for sleeping

Behavioral Issues

It is very common for a cat to experience some behavioral problems and need a period of adjustment when placed into a new environment. The following is a list of common behavior problems as well as suggestions for behavior modifications.

Problem 1: Aggression towards other cats

Prevent aggression before it occurs by introducing cats gradually. For instance, try placing the two cats on opposite sides of a door. Let them get used to each other’s smells and sounds before opening the door. You many even want to try pushing small treats under the door from one cat to the other. The cats will think that the treats are coming from the cat on the other side of the door. When you do introduce the cats, try to make sure that they are away from any area in your home where one cat may feel territorial (favorite sleeping or eating place, favorite toys). Taking these extra steps in the beginning will aid in a smooth transition into your home.
Problem 2: Scratching furniture or carpet

Provide something appropriate for the cat to scratch. All cats scratch. The scratching motion allows the outer, frayed layers of the cat’s nails to be removed. While it is very difficult to try and teach a cat not to scratch at all, it is quite easy to redirect the cat’s scratching to a designated scratching post. Cats like to do most of their scratching activity right when they wake up. Keep this in mind and make sure that the scratching post you provide is near where the cat naps. If the cat insists on scratching in an inappropriate place, try using a squirt bottle to deter the cat from that location. For behavior modification to be successful, do not scold the cat; just provide a quick squirt with the squirt bottle. You want the cat to associate the squirt with scratching in the inappropriate place, not with you. You can also try placing double sided tape on the area where the cat likes to scratch. Cats don’t like sticky surfaces and will usually leave the area alone.

Problem 3: Not using the litter box

There are several common reasons why cats don’t use their litter boxes. When introduced to a new environment, a cat may simply not know or remember where the litter box is located. Make sure to confine a new foster cat to a small area (like a laundry room or bathroom) for several days before allowing the cat to have more space. This will help ensure that the cat knows where to find the litter box when he needs it. It is also very important to keep the litter box as clean as possible. In general, cats are extremely clean animals and most cats will do their business elsewhere if their litter box becomes too soiled or if the litter box is too close to their food or water. If more than one cat is using the same litter box, it may be necessary to provide extra litter boxes so each cat can have their own. I none of these suggestions help, the source of the problem may be a medical condition. Urinary tract infections are fairly common in cats and almost always result in litter box problems. If you suspect a urinary tract infection (UTI), contact your FHS to set up a vet appointment.

Note – Cats do NOT respond well to punishment. When dealing with behavior problems, focus on behavior modification, not punishment. Physically punishing a cat won’t do anything but damage the bond between human and cat.

Health Issues

Because most of our animals are rescued from shelters or are homeless, it is difficult to ensure that they are always healthy. A cat that appears healthy at the time of rescue could easily begin to show signs of illness several days later. For this reason it is extremely important that the resident animals at the foster home keep up to date on their animal’s vaccinations. Most illnesses should be apparent within two weeks. We also suggest that foster homes provide foster cats with separate food bowls, water bowls, and litter boxes for the duration of their stay.

Common illnesses in cats

The following information is intended to help you better understand and recognize some of the more common illnesses of cats.
Panleukopenia (Feline Distemper)
Panleukopenia (sometimes called feline distemper) is a viral infection that most commonly affects kittens and young cats. Left untreated, Panleukopenia is almost always fatal. Even with intensive treatment, the majority of cats showing signs of Panleukopenia will die. Unfortunately, this illness can be frustrating to deal with because the virus can survive in the environment for up to a year. This means that other unvaccinated cats can become infected simply by coming into contact with places the infected cat has been. A bleach solution is the best way to disinfect area that may have been contaminated. The vaccine for Panleukopenia is very effective.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Fever, diarrhea, lethargy, vomiting, loss of appetite

**Treatment:** Veterinary care ASAP, including fluid therapy and antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats, especially through contact with infected feces or vomit

Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)
The term URI refers to any illness that affects a cat’s upper respiratory system. URI’s are very common in rescue cats. Some of the more serious URI’s (for which there are vaccines) are listed separately in this Chapter. The following is information that applies to all upper respiratory infections.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Sneezing, runny nose and eyes, fever.

**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Loss of appetite, sneezing, runny nose and eyes, oral ulcers.

**Treatment:** Vet care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats

Rhinotracheitis
A type of URI that often infects cats that also have calicivirus. The vaccine is very effective.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Sneezing, coughing, fever, runny nose and eyes.

**Treatment:** Vet care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats

Chlamydia
Also called Pneumonitis, Chlamydia attacks the respiratory tract and produces conjunctivitis. Chlamydia is a bacterium. Vaccines are considered very effective.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Loss of appetite, fever, nasal discharge, red eyes

**Treatment:** Vet care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats
Earmites
Tiny parasites that live in the ear canal.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Itching, scratching, head shaking, dark brown discharge in the ears

**Treatment:** Vet care including an injection or ear medications

**Transmission:** Contagious to other cats and dogs, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animals.

Ringworm
Fungus related to athlete’s foot, not actually a worm.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Irregularly shaped areas of fur loss; the skin in these areas will usually appear rough and scaly.

**Treatment:** Vet care, including an injection and/or topical treatment

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats, dogs and people but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal.

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Intense itching and scratching

**Treatment:** Vet care, including an injection and/or topical treatment

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats, dogs and people

Round, Tape and Hook Worms
Worms affect a cat's digestive system. They are most commonly seen in kittens and young cats.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Large belly, diarrhea, an inability to gain weight.

**Treatment:** Vet care including deworming medication

**Transmission:** Contagious to other cats and dogs, but only through contact with (and subsequent ingestion of) feces.

Cleaning Procedures

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

THE CAWS strives to provide foster cats with routine veterinary care prior to placement in permanent adoptive homes. However, some veterinary care such as booster and rabies shots may be given after the foster animal is in its foster home.

The following schedule outlines the various types of routine care provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Distemper combo&quot; vaccine</td>
<td>Initial dose given shortly after rescue to cats 8 weeks of age and older.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Panleukopenia, Rhinotracheitis</td>
<td>Booster given 3-4 weeks later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Calicivirus)</td>
<td>Additional booster given in another 3-4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies Vaccine</td>
<td>One dose given shortly after rescue to dogs that are at least 16 weeks of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deworming</td>
<td>Initial dose given shortly after rescue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spay/Neuter</td>
<td>Done shortly after rescue at the age of 12 weeks and older</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Information**

Always keep a “The CAWS ID tag” attached to a properly fitted collar that will remain on your foster cat at all times.

Do not let your foster cats outside for any circumstance unless in a carrying kennel.

Let your FHS know if you no longer want to foster a cat that you have in your care. Do not give your foster cat to another person or agency without first receiving permission from The CAWS first.
Chapter 4
Dogs and Puppies (Over 8 Weeks)

Introduction

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

Supplies Needed

The following is a check list of the items you will need to foster a dog or puppy.

- Food and water bowls
- Collar and leash
- The CAWS Animal ID Tag
- Food
- Chew toys
- Crate or kennel
- Dog bed, blankets, or towels

Behavior Issues

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

Lack of House Training

Chances are your foster dog will at least need a refresher course in house training. Many rescued dogs have spent most of their lives outside and never learned the rules of living indoors. Other dogs may have once been house trained, but may still have an accident or two when transitioning into a new home.

The most important element of effective house-training is extensive supervision. Correcting a dog for eliminating in the house is only effective if the dog is caught in the act. For this reason, it is essential that the dog be under your supervision at all times. There will, of course, be times when you are unable to watch the dog constantly. During these times, the dog should be in his or her kennel or crate. The crate should be just large enough for the
dog to be able comfortably stand up, turn around, and lie down. Because a dog will try not to soil the area where he or she has to sleep, he will usually not urinate or defecate in a crate.

See later in the Chapter for crate training.

When the dog is allowed out of the crate, he should be taken outside immediately. If the dog eliminates outside, give him lots of praise. If the dog does not eliminate, it is important that you supervise the dog closely once you re-enter your home. If you catch the dog having an accident in the house, tell the dog “NO” in a firm but not angry voice. Take the dog straight outside and give him a chance to finish eliminating outside. If the dog does eliminate outside, give him lots of praise.

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

House-Training Don’t’s

- Do not rub the dog’s nose in it! This method of training has been proven ineffective by trainers and behaviorists. The only message a dog gets from this type of “training” is that you are angry. The dog will likely not learn to eliminate outside and may instead learn to fear you.
- Do not correct the dog after the fact. Again, this method of training has been proven ineffective. Punishing a dog for something she did much earlier will not yield the results you are looking for. Yes, the dog will behave submissively and perhaps look guilty, but this is because the dog knows you are angry, not because she knows that either, she did something wrong.

House training is not a process that happens overnight. Be patient. Any progress you can make with your foster dog on house training will make our life easier and help them improve the dog’s chances for successful placement and adoption.

Chewing

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

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

If the destructive chewing occurs when you are away, consider kenneling the dog in a crate. A crate will help keep both the dog and your home safe. It is also important to make sure that your foster dog is getting plenty of exercise. A tired dog will sleep, not chew!
Separation Anxiety

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

The most common sign that a dog may be suffering from separation anxiety is destructive behavior when left alone. A dog may scratch frantically at the door or make other attempts to get out of the house, or the dog may chew on things or engage in another destructive behaviors. If you have reason to suspect that your foster dog is suffering from separation anxiety when you are away, consider kenneling the dog. If used appropriately, the dog will feel safe and secure and hopefully relieve some of the anxiety. If you do have the time to work with your foster dog if you do have the time to work with your foster dog, there are several things you can try to help alleviate separation anxiety. Start out by leaving the dog in your home for very short intervals. Tell the dog to wait and then walk outside for a few minutes before returning. When you return to the house, praise the dog for waiting. Begin to gradually leave the dog for longer and longer periods of time. It is important that, when you leave, you remain calm and not make a big deal out of leaving. It is also important that you not be too excited when you return. You want to praise the dog, but calmly. You don’t want your return to be such an exciting event that the dog anxiously anticipates the moment of your return. Perhaps the most effective treatment for separation anxiety is time. Be patient. As your foster dog spends more time with you, he will begin to feel more secure in knowing that when you leave, you always come back.

Some destructive behavior that appears to be related to separation anxiety may, in fact, be the product of boredom. Try providing chew toys or other play items that will entertain your foster dog while you are away. There are several products on the market that work quite well. One of the more popular toys keeps dogs engaged by making them work for food or treats. Once the toy is filled with some kind of small food item, the dog must work by rolling and tipping the toy until a treat falls out. Most of these products allow you to adjust the level of difficulty, and can keep a dog entertained for significant periods of time.

Don’t forget to make sure that your foster dog gets plenty of exercise. A tired dog is much less likely to engage in behaviors associated with anxiety or boredom.

Notes on Crate Training

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

**Never confine a puppy to a crate for longer than four hours at a time, or an adult dog for longer than eight hours at a time.** Remember, the dog will not want to soil his crate, so forcing the dog to stay in the crate longer than he can comfortably “hold it” is inappropriate.
Health Issues

Because most foster dogs are rescued from shelter environments, it’s difficult for The CAWS to ensure that they will always be healthy. A dog who appears healthy at the time of rescue could easily begin to show signs of illness several days later. For this reason, it is very important that foster homes keep their own dogs up to date on vaccinations.

Common illnesses in Dogs

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

Canine Distemper

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

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

Parvo

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea (usually bloody)  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including fluid therapy and antibiotics  
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs, especially through contact with infected feces or vomit

Kennel Cough

Kennel Cough is a respiratory tract infection that has been linked to several different viral and bacterial causes. Coughing is usually stimulated by physical exertion or by touching the throat area. Kennel cough is self-limiting, usually lasting 1-3 weeks. Antibiotics are often given to prevent secondary infections. Kennel cough is very common in shelters and other boarding facilities. There is a vaccine for bordetella, one of the main agents responsible for causing kennel cough.

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

Ear Mites

Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Itching, scratching, head shaking, dark brown discharge in the ears  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including an injection or ear drops  
**Transmission:** Contagious to other dogs and cats, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal
**Ringworm**

Ringworm is a fungus related to athlete’s foot; it’s not actually a worm.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Irregularly shaped areas of fur loss; the skin of the areas will usually appear rough and scaly  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including an injection and/or topical treatment  
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs, cats and people, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal

**Fleas**

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

**Signs & Symptoms:** Intense itching and scratching  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including an injection and/or topical treatment  
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs, cats and people

**Round, Tape and Hook Worms**

Worms affect a dog’s digestive system. They are most commonly seen in puppies and young dogs.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Large belly, diarrhea, and an inability to gain weight  
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including de-worming medication  
**Transmission:** Contagious to other dogs and cats, but only through contact with (and subsequent ingestion of) feces

**Cleaning Procedures**

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

The CAWS strives to provide foster dogs with routine veterinary care prior to placement in permanent adoptive homes. However, some veterinary care such as booster and rabies shots may be given after the foster animal is in its foster home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Distemper combo” vaccine</td>
<td>Initial dose given shortly after rescue to dogs that are at least 6 weeks of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(distemper,hepatitis,parainfluenza, parovirus, and caronavirus)</td>
<td>Booster given 3-4 weeks later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Additional boosters given again after 3-4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies vaccine</td>
<td>One dose given shortly after rescue to dogs that are at least 16 weeks of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Vet Care</td>
<td>As required on a case by case basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De-worm</td>
<td>Initial dose given shortly after rescue (only routinely given to puppies under 6 months of age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second dose given only if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spay/neuter</td>
<td>Done shortly after rescue (puppies must be at least 12 weeks old and weigh at least 2 pounds)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

1. Always keep a The CAWS ID tag attached to a properly fitted collar that will remain on your foster dog at all times.
2. Keep your foster dog under your control at all times, going outside only on a leash or into a securely fenced area.
3. Let your FHS know if you no longer want to foster a dog that you have in your care. Do not give your foster dog to another person or agency without first receiving permission from The CAWS first.
Chapter 5
Newborn Kittens
(Under 8 weeks)

Introduction

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

Supplies Needed

The following is a checklist of items that you will need to foster newborn kittens.

- Nest box (you could use a cat carrier or a large cardboard box)
- Blankets and/or towel
- 2 litter boxes (a large litter box for mom and a small litter box for the kittens when they're old enough (a cake pan or box lid will work fine)
- Litter
- Food and water bowls
- Kitten food
- Heating pad, hot water bottle, or infrared lamp
- Toys
Pregnancy, Labor, and Birth

Pregnancy

During her last week of pregnancy, a mother cat may not have a big appetite because the kittens are crowding her organs. Feed her several small meals daily rather than one or two larger meals. Leave dry cat food and water out at all times. If the mother cat will not eat the food provided, try mixing it with a small amount of tuna or other fish-flavored cat food.

Prepare a nesting box; place it in a dry, warm, relatively dark, draft-free place that is out of the way of household activity. Place the mother cat in the box. If she does not want to stay, do not insist, but encourage her by petting her and giving her little food treats.

If your nursery room is not warm enough, wrap a heating pad in a towel, set it on the lowest setting, and place it under half the box so the mother has room to move away from the heat source if she chooses. You might consider wrapping duct tape around the cord; otherwise, the kittens will be apt to chew on it.

Until the mother cat delivers, fill her litter box with shredded newspaper instead of cat litter. Many cats will deliver their kittens in the litter box and newspaper provides a much cleaner environment for the cat and kittens. After the kittens are born, you may switch to the normal clay litter.

Labor

Before the delivery, the mother cat may become very irritable and restless. She will search for a place to have her kittens. Try to place her in the designated nesting box. She may choose another location to give birth, so it may be helpful to place the box in a room without any hiding places. Let her have the kittens outside of her nest box if she chooses. When delivery is complete, you may then move the mother and the kittens into the box.

Some cats may want you to stay with them and will follow you if you leave. You will probably have to spend some time soothing this kind of cat. After the birth of the first couple of kittens, she will be very busy and not as dependent on your presence. Other cats will try to get away and hide when in labor. Give this kind of cat the space she needs to feel comfortable, but check up on her regularly.
The three stages of feline labor:

Stage 1

During the first stage, which may take up to 12 hours, the mother may purr or breathe rhythmically. She may become very active, dig at the floor, cry loudly and appear to be straining to use her litter box.

Stage 2

In the second stage, the water bag breaks and straw-like fluid is passed. Delivery will begin a few minutes later. The mother cat will lick the newborn kittens clean and bite through the umbilical cord. She is bonding with her kittens through this process and learning to recognize them as her own. It is very important that you do not disturb her. It may appear as though she is too rough, but she is actually stimulating breathing and increasing blood circulation.

Stage 3

In the final stage, the placenta follows a few minutes after delivery of a kitten. The mother will probably eat some or all of the placenta.

Birth

Kittens are born anywhere from 15-30 minutes apart, so most deliveries take 2-6 hours. The average litter is 4 to 5 kittens. The mother cat is probably finished giving birth if she seems calm and happy, although there have been some cases in which a cat resumed delivery later. If a kitten is not born within 2 hours and the mother is continually straining or seems to be in distress, you should seek emergency veterinary care as soon as possible.

The First 8 Weeks of Life

Week 1

A nursing mother cat cannot be overfed. Food requirements can increase up to three times the normal amount. Leave food out for the mother cat at ALL time.

The floor temperature of the nest box should be between 85 and 90 degrees. The kittens’ ear canals open when they are between 5 and 8 days old. The kittens should weigh about 4 ounces and be handled minimally. Kittens will sleep 90% of the time and nurse from their mother the other 10%. They should nurse vigorously and littermates should compete for nipples. Kittens can nurse for up to 45 minutes at a time.

Chilling is the number one danger to newborn kittens, so keep them warm. Try to watch kittens nurse at least once a day. Make sure every kitten is nursing and there is not too much maneuvering for position. A great deal of activity and crying could indicate a problem with milk flow or quality. When the mother cat re-enters the nest box, there should be fussing for only a few minutes before the kittens settle down.
Week 2
The floor temperature of the nest box should now be 80-85 degrees.
The kittens should now weigh about 7 ounces.
The kittens’ eyes will open between 8 and 14 days. They open gradually, usually starting from the nose outward.
Short-haired cats’ eyes usually open earlier than those with longer hair.
All newborn kittens have blue eyes and initially no pupils can be distinguished.
The eye color is a solid, dark blue.

Week 3
The mother cat will begin to spend more time out of the nest.
The floor temperature of the nest box should now be 73-80 degrees.
The kittens should now weigh about 10 ounces.
The kittens’ ears will begin to stand erect.
The kittens should now be spending only 60-70 percent of their time sleeping.
Kittens generally begin to crawl around day 18 and can usually stand by day 21.
The kitten’s milk teeth will begin to cut.
Kittens will begin to play with each other, learn to sit, and will start trying to touch objects with their paws.
During week 3, kittens should begin their socialization phase. Start to increase the amount of handling the kittens receive and try to accustom them to human contact. Avoid exposing them to anything frightening.

Week 4
The floor temperature of the nest box should be 70-75 degrees from this point forward.
The kittens should now weigh about 13 ounces.
Adult eye color will begin to appear, although it may not be final for another 9 to 12 weeks. The kittens will begin to develop complete sound and sight orientation.
Kittens will begin to clean themselves, although their mother will continue to do most of the serious cleaning.
Kittens can begin to eat from a shallow saucer and should be weaned gradually from their mother’s milk. The mother cat will usually begin to discourage her kittens from nursing; however, some cats (particularly those with smaller litters) will allow nursing until the kittens are around two months old.
Sometimes, nursing activity is done just for comfort. Even if the kittens appear to be nursing, they may not be receiving all the nutrition they need. Make sure they are eating and gaining weight.
At this time, kittens will begin eliminating on their own. Supply a small, low litter box and fill it with clay litter.

Week 5
The kittens should now weigh about 1 pound.
The male kittens’ testicles will become visible.
The kittens should be very active and be able to get out of the nest.
Weaning and litter box training should continue.

Week 6
The kittens should now weigh about 1.25 pounds.
The kittens should have complete visual abilities. They will imitate their mother, use scratching posts, and explore the world around them.
Continue the weaning process by thickening the gruel. Begin to introduce solid food.
Week 7
The kittens should now weigh about 1.5 pounds.
Nursing sessions should be brief and infrequent, if they take place at all.
The kittens should now eat undiluted kitten food. Continue to encourage the kittens to eat dry food. Dry food is good for their teeth and will likely be what they are fed in their adoptive homes.
At this time you should contact your FHS to be booking the appointment to have them spayed or neutered in the next couple of weeks.

Week 8
By the end of week 8, the kittens should weigh 2 pounds and be ready to be spayed or neutered.

**Kitten Weight Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At birth</td>
<td>3.0 to 3.7 oz. (90-110 grams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks old</td>
<td>7.0 to 11.0 oz. (200-300 grams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 weeks old</td>
<td>11.7 to 15.0 oz. (350-450 grams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 weeks old</td>
<td>1 to 1.5 lbs. (450-700 grams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 weeks old</td>
<td>1.7 to 2 lbs. (800-900 grams)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Orphaned Kittens**

Newborn kittens are sometimes orphaned. Success with raising these newborns is based on following basic procedures and keeping important elements in mind. Successful rearing of orphaned kittens requires providing them with a suitable environment, the correct quantities of nutrients for different stages of growth, and a regular schedule of feeding, sleeping, grooming and exercise. You must also provide the stimulus for urination and defecation during the first 18-21 days of life. Do this by massaging the abdomen and peri-anal area after each feeding with a cotton ball or very soft washcloth dampened with warm water (you don’t want to irritate the area). You can also use mineral oil on a cotton ball to stimulate the bowels. Kittens, after 4 weeks of age, can usually eliminate without assistance.

You must also maintain their body warmth, since kittens do not have the ability to regulate and control their body temperature. Keep them out of drafts; if necessary, use a 250-watt infrared heat bulb suspended above the crate. If you need to use a heating pad, place it in front of their sleeping area, at the opening of the crate and cover it with several layers of towels.

Kitten bedding must be changed daily, and sometimes more often. Wash dirty bedding with a little bleach to disinfect it.

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

Cow’s milk is not nutritious enough for kittens; they will slowly starve to death on it. Purchase kitten milk replacer (KMR) from a veterinary clinic or pet supply store for feedings. Test the temperature of the KMR before feeding. It should be warm, but not hot: around 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Don’t boil the KMR, since boiling will destroy the nutritional value. You can warm the bottle by placing it in hot water for a few minutes or putting it in the microwave for no more than 10 seconds.

If constipation occurs, add 1 drop of vegetable oil to each kitten’s feeding no more than once daily until the problem eases. Don’t overfeed, since it can cause diarrhea and a host of other problems.

Hand-feeding can be challenging and yet very rewarding. Everyone who has done this has developed a method that works best for them; you will, too. Whether you use a baby animal bottle or a syringe, it’s best to keep the kitten in a position similar to what he would experience if mama were there. In other words, don’t turn the baby on his back. Keep the bottle at a 45-degree angle to reduce the amount of air getting into the kitten’s stomach.

**Kitten Feeding**

Feeding equipment needs to be sterilized before and between feedings. Do this by dipping the equipment in boiling water. You should also sterilize your hands before and after feedings. Feedings should occur every 2 hours until the third week; after that, do feedings every 4 hours at night (for your sanity). Below are general guidelines for how much to feed and when to feed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of life</th>
<th>Amount to feed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st week</td>
<td>3.7 cc’s per ounce of body weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd week</td>
<td>4.9 cc’s per ounce of body weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd week</td>
<td>5.7 cc’s per ounce of body weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th week</td>
<td>6.3 cc’s per ounce of body weight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As long as the kitten does not cry excessively, gains weight, and feels firm to the touch, the diet is meeting his/her nutritional needs.

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

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

It is your job to help convince the kittens that humans are kind and loving. Some kittens will adjust to you and their new environment quickly, while others may seem frightened and intimidated. To help the kittens get used to you, try sitting down in the middle of their room while making phone calls. They will hear the sound of your voice, but not be threatened by it. Familiarize them with the sound of the television and radio.

When the kittens are nearly 4 weeks old, they are ready to socialize with you and each other. Try to play with your kittens daily. The outgoing and friendly kittens will be easy to play with; however, some will need a little encouragement. If your kittens are afraid and run away when you approach, try sitting or lying on the floor near them and let them come to you. When you pick a kitten up, stroke the kitten gently and speak to her in a soft tone. You want this to be a pleasant experience, so put the kitten down if she begins squirming a lot. With patience and love, most young kittens will come to tolerate and even enjoy the company of humans.

Weaning

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

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

Do not give the kittens cow’s milk or other human foods. Cats and kittens have different nutritional needs than humans and can become ill when given some human foods.

Litter Box Training

When the kittens reach about 4 weeks of age, they will begin to eliminate on their own. You can create a small litter box out of a cake pan or box lid. Be sure to use clay litter only and avoid exposing the kittens to the clumping variety. (It is not unusual for kittens to eat litter, and the clumping variety can be dangerous if ingested.) Most kittens learn from watching mom and will use the litter box from the start.
You can encourage the kittens by showing them the litter box several times a day, especially after meals and naps. Gently take a paw and scratch at the litter. Be sure to praise the kittens when they start using the box. It is, of course, common for young kittens to make mistakes. If you find that a kitten has defecated outside the litter box, pick up the stool with a tissue and place the stool into the litter box. This should help remind the kittens where they are supposed to eliminate. It is a good idea to confine the kittens to a relatively small area because they may forget where the litter box is located if they have too much room. Be sure to always keep the litter box clean and away from their food.

Health Issues

Because most foster kittens are rescued from shelter environments, it is very difficult for The CAWS volunteers to ensure that they will always be healthy. A kitten that appears healthy at the time of rescue could easily begin to show signs of illness several days later. For this reason, it is very important that foster homes keep their own cats up to date on vaccinations.

It is also important that foster homes keep their newborn kittens physically separated from their personal cats for the duration of the kittens’ stay. Newborn kittens are extremely vulnerable to illness. While your personal cats may be vaccinated and thereby protected from various illnesses, your cats can still carry and transmit illnesses they have been exposed to.

Common Illnesses in Newborn Kittens

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

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Fever, diarrhea, lethargy, vomiting, loss of appetite

**Treatment:** Veterinary care ASAP, including fluid therapy and antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats, especially through contact with infected feces or vomit

Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)
The term URI refers to any illness that affects a cat’s upper respiratory system. URI’s are very common in shelter cats. Some of the more serious URI’s (for which there are vaccines) are listed separately in this Chapter. The following is information that applies to all upper respiratory infections.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Sneezing, runny nose and eyes, fever.

**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats
Calicivirus
A virus that attacks the lungs and lower respiratory tract, usually causing pneumonia. Ulcers are often seen on the tongue and lips. The vaccine is very effective.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Loss of appetite, sneezing, runny nose and eyes, oral ulcers.

**Treatment:** Vet care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats

Rhinotracheitis
A type of URI that often infects cats that also have calicivirus. The vaccine is very effective.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Sneezing, coughing, fever, runny nose and eyes.

**Treatment:** Vet care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats

Chlamydia
Also called pneumonitis, chlamydia attacks the respiratory tract and produces conjunctivitis. Chlamydia is a bacterium. Vaccines are considered very effective.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Loss of appetite, fever, nasal discharge, red eyes

**Treatment:** Vet care, including antibiotics

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats

Earmites
Tiny parasites that live in the ear canal.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Itching, scratching, head shaking, dark brown discharge in the ears

**Treatment:** Vet care including an injection or ear medications

**Transmission:** Contagious to other cats and dogs, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animals.

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Irregularly shaped areas of fur loss; the skin in these areas will usually appear rough and scaly.

**Treatment:** Vet care, including an injection and/or topical treatment

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats, dogs and people but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal.

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Intense itching and scratching

**Treatment:** Vet care, including an injection and/or topical treatment

**Transmission:** Very contagious to other cats, dogs and people
Round, Tape and Hook Worms
Worms affect a cat's digestive system. They are most commonly seen in kittens and young cats.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Large belly, diarrhea, an inability to gain weight.

**Treatment:** Vet care including deworming medication

**Transmission:** Contagious to other cats and dogs, but only through contact with (and subsequent ingestion of) feces.

Fading Kitten Syndrome
Once in a while, one or more kittens who were healthy and vigorous at birth will begin to “fade” after several weeks of life. They will stop growing, begin to lose weight, stop nursing, and stop crawling. They may cry continuously and lose the ability to stay upright. The mother cat may push them out of the nest, where they often chill and/or starve to death. Kittens fade very quickly and will not survive 48 hours without veterinary care. Most kittens will not recover without intensive care. There is no clear cause or reason for this condition. It has been linked to birth defects, environmental stress, and infectious disease. Early detection and treatment is imperative, but even with tube feeding, re-hydration, and monitoring, many of these kittens will still die.

Routine Veterinary Care

THE CAWS strives to provide foster kittens with routine veterinary care prior to placement in permanent adoptive homes. However, some veterinary care such as booster and rabies shots may be given after the foster animal is in its foster home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Distemper combo” vaccine</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(panleukopenia, rhinotracheitis,</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calicivirus, and chlamydia)</td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies Vaccine</td>
<td>One dose given at 16 weeks of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leukemia vaccine</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De-worm</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spay/neuter</td>
<td>12 weeks (must weigh at least 2 pounds)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Kittens can be adopted at approximately 12 weeks or after they have been spayed/neutered and received their first set of vaccinations.
Cleaning Procedures

It is important that all items and areas used by a sick foster animal be cleaned thoroughly. You can use a 10% bleach solution to reliably kill most viruses and bacteria. Items to be cleaned should be thoroughly wetted with the bleach solution and allowed to stand for several minutes before rinsing. Foster homes that have recently fostered a cat or kitten with feline distemper or another extremely contagious disease may be asked to wait until fostering another unvaccinated cat or kitten.
Chapter 6
Newborn Puppies (Under 8 weeks)

Introduction

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

Supplies Needed

The following is a checklist of items that you will need to foster newborn puppies.

- Nesting box
- Food and water dishes
- Blankets/towels/beds
- Puppy food (it's a good idea to have both dry and canned food on hand in case you have a picky eater)
- Esbilac (puppy milk replacer)
- Heating pad
- Hot water bottle, or infrared lamp
Pregnancy, Labor, and Birth

Pregnancy

During her last week of pregnancy, a mother dog may not have a big appetite because the puppies are crowding her organs. Feed her several small meals daily rather than one or two larger meals. Leave dry dog food and water out at all times. If the mother dog will not eat the food provided, try mixing it with a small amount of meat or other gravy-flavored or moist dog food.

Prepare a nesting box; place it in a dry, warm, relatively dark, draft-free place out of the way. Lead the mother dog to the box. If she does not want to stay in it, do not insist, but encourage her by petting her and giving her little food treats.

If your nursery room is not warm enough, wrap a heating pad in a towel, set it on the lowest setting, and place it under half the box so the mother has room to move away from the heat source if she chooses. You may consider wrapping duct tape around the cord; otherwise, the puppies will be apt to chew on it.

Labor

Before the delivery, the mother dog may become very irritable and restless. She will search for a place to have her puppies. Try to place her in the designated nesting box. She may choose another location to give birth, so it may be helpful to place the box in a room without any hiding places. Let her have the puppies outside of her nest box if she chooses. When delivery is complete, you may then move the mother and the puppies into the box. Some mother dogs may become protective of their new litters. Talk to her in a gentle, calm voice during this time. If she still acts aggressive, make sure the environment is safe and warm for the puppies, and leave her alone until she is less anxious. Some dogs may want you to stay with them and will follow you if you leave. You will probably have to spend some time soothing this kind of dog. After the birth of the first couple of puppies, she will be very busy and not as dependent on your presence. Other dogs will try to get away and hide when in labor. Give this kind of dog the space she needs to feel comfortable, but check up on her regularly.

The three stages of canine labor:

Stage 1

During the first stage, which may take up to 12 hours, the mother may breathe rhythmically. She may become very active, dig at the floor, cry loudly and appear to be straining while defecating.
Stage 2

In the second stage, the water bag breaks and straw-like fluid is passed. Delivery will begin a few minutes later. The mother dog will lick the newborn puppies clean and bite through the umbilical cord. She is bonding with her puppies through this process and learning to recognize them as her own. It is very important that you do not disturb her. It may appear as though she is too rough, but she is actually stimulating breathing and increasing blood circulation in the puppies.

Stage 3

In the final stage, the placenta follows a few minutes after delivery. The mother will probably eat some or all of the placenta.

Birth

Puppies are born anywhere from 15-30 minutes apart, so most deliveries take 2-6 hours. The average litter is 4 to 5 puppies. The mother dog is probably finished giving birth if she seems calm and happy, although there have been some cases in which a dog resumed delivery sometime later. If a puppy is not born within 2 hours and the mother is continually straining or appears to be in distress, you should seek emergency veterinary care as soon as possible.

The First 8 Weeks of Life

Week 1

A nursing mother dog cannot be overfed. Food requirements can increase up to three times the normal amount. Leave food out for the mother dog at ALL times.
The floor temperature of the nest box should be between 96 and 100 degrees.
The puppies’ ear canals open when they are between 13 and 17 days old.
The puppies’ weight will vary according to their breed but they should be gaining about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. They should be handled as little as possible.
Puppies will sleep 90% of the time and nurse from their mother the other 10%.
They should nurse vigorously and littermates should compete for nipples.
Puppies can nurse for up to 45 minutes at a time.
Chilling is the number one danger to newborn puppies, so keep them warm.
Try to watch the puppies nurse at least once a day. Make sure every puppy is nursing and there is not too much maneuvering for position. A great deal of activity and crying could indicate a problem with milk flow or quality. When the mother dog re-enters the nest box, there should be fussing for only a few minutes before the puppies settle down.

Week 2

The floor temperature of the nest box should now be 90-95 degrees.
The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight.
The puppies’ eyes will open when they are between 10 and 14 days old. They open gradually, usually starting from the nose outward.
All newborn puppies have blue eyes and initially no pupils can be distinguished.
The eye color is a solid, dark blue.
Week 3
The mother dog will begin to spend more time out of the nest. The floor temperature of the nest box should now be 85-90 degrees. The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. The puppies should now be spending only 60-70 percent of their time sleeping. Puppies generally are able to stand around day 15 and can usually crawl by day 21. The puppies’ milk teeth will begin to cut.

Puppies will begin to play with each other, learn to sit, and will start trying to touch objects with their paws. During week 3, puppies should begin their socialization phase. Start to increase the amount of handling the puppies receive and try to accustom them to human contact. Avoid exposing them to anything frightening.

Week 4
The floor temperature of the nest box should be 75-80 degrees from this point forward. The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. Adult eye color will begin to appear, although it may not be final for another 9 to 12 weeks. The puppies will begin to develop complete sound and sight orientation. Puppies will begin to clean themselves, although their mother will continue to do most of the serious cleaning. Puppies can begin to eat from a shallow saucer and should be weaned gradually from their mother’s milk. The mother dog will usually begin to discourage her puppies from nursing; however, some dogs (particularly those with smaller litters) will allow nursing until the puppies are around two months old.

Sometimes, nursing activity is done just for comfort. Even if the puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be receiving all the nutrition they need. Make sure they are eating and gaining weight. Puppies will begin eliminating on their own. Supply newspaper or puppy training pads and encourage them to use this area.

Week 5
The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. The male puppies’ testicles will become visible. The puppies should be very active and be able to get out of the nest. Weaning and house-training should continue.

Week 6
The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. The puppies should have complete visual abilities. They will imitate their mother, play with toys, and explore the world around them. Continue the weaning process by thickening the gruel. Begin to introduce solid food.

Week 7
The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight. Nursing sessions should be brief and infrequent, if they take place at all. The puppies should now eat undiluted puppy food. Continue to encourage the puppies to eat dry food. Dry food is good for their teeth and will likely be what they are fed in their adoptive homes.
Week 8

The puppies should continue to gain about 1 to 1 1/2 grams per day for each pound of anticipated adult weight, and be ready to be spayed or neutered.

Orphaned Puppies

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

You must also provide the stimulus for urination and defecation during the first 18-21 days of life. Do this by massaging the abdomen and peri-anal area after each feeding with a cotton ball or very soft washcloth dampened with warm water (you don’t want to irritate the area). You can also use mineral oil on a cotton ball to stimulate the bowels. Puppies, after 4 weeks of age, can usually eliminate without assistance.

You must also maintain their body warmth for them, as puppies do not have the ability to regulate and control their body temperature. Keep them out of drafts. If necessary, use a 250-watt infrared heat bulb suspended above the crate. If you need to use a heating pad, place it in front of their sleeping area, at the opening of the crate, and cover it with several layers of towels.

Puppy bedding must be changed daily, and sometimes more often. Wash dirty bedding with a little bleach to disinfect it.

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

Cow’s milk is not nutritious enough for puppies; they will slowly starve to death on it. Purchase Esbilac from a veterinary clinic or pet supply store for feedings.

Test the temperature of the Esbilac before feeding. It should be warm, but not hot: around 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Don’t boil the Esbilac, since it will destroy the nutritional value. To warm the Esbilac, place the bottle in hot water for a few minutes or put it in the microwave for no more than 10 seconds.

If constipation occurs, add 1 drop of vegetable oil to each puppy’s food no more than once daily until the problem eases. Overfeeding can cause diarrhea and a host of other problems.

Hand-feeding can be challenging and yet very rewarding. Everyone who has done this has developed a method that works best for them; you will, too. Whether you use a baby animal bottle or a syringe, it’s best to keep the puppy in a position similar to what she would experience if mama were there. In other words, don’t turn the baby on her back. Keep the bottle at a 45-degree angle to reduce the amount of air getting into the puppy’s stomach.
Puppy Feeding

Feeding equipment needs to be sterilized before and between feedings. Do this by dipping the equipment in boiling water. Sterilize your hands before and after feedings. Below are general guidelines for how much to feed and when:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of life</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st week</td>
<td>60 ml per pound</td>
<td>4 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd week</td>
<td>70 ml per pound</td>
<td>3 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd week</td>
<td>80 ml per pound</td>
<td>3 times a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th week</td>
<td>90 ml per pound</td>
<td>3 times a day</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As long as the puppy does not cry excessively, gains weight, and feels firm to the touch, the diet is meeting his nutritional needs.

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

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

Socialization

It is your job to help convince the puppies that humans are kind and loving. Some puppies will adjust to you and their new environment quickly, while others may seem frightened and intimidated. To help the puppies get used to you, try sitting down in the middle of their room while making phone calls. They will hear the sound of your voice, but not be threatened by it. Familiarize them with the sound of the television and radio.

When the puppies are nearly four weeks old, they are ready to socialize with you and each other. Try to play with your puppies daily. The outgoing and friendly puppies will be easy to play with; however, some will need a little encouragement. If your puppies are afraid and run away when you approach, try sitting or lying on the floor near them and letting them come to you. When you pick a puppy up, stroke the puppy gently and speak to him in a soft tone. You want this to be a pleasant experience, so put the puppy down if he begins squirming a lot. With patience and love, most puppies will come to tolerate and even enjoy the company of humans.

Weaning

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

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

Do not give the puppies cow's milk or other human foods. Dogs and puppies have different nutritional needs than humans and can become ill when given some human foods.

**House-training**

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

**Health Issues**

Because most foster puppies are rescued from shelter environments, it is very difficult for our volunteers at The CAWS to ensure that they will always be healthy. A puppy that appears healthy at the time of rescue could easily begin to show signs of illness several days later. For this reason, it is very important that foster homes keep their own dogs up to date on vaccinations.

It is also important that foster homes keep their newborn puppies physically separated from their personal dogs for the duration of the puppies’ stay. Newborn puppies are extremely vulnerable to illness. While your personal dogs may be vaccinated and thereby protected from various illnesses, your dogs can still carry and transmit illnesses they have been exposed to.
Common illnesses in Dogs

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

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

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

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

**Signs and Symptoms:** Lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea (usually bloody)
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including fluid therapy and antibiotics
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs, especially through contact with infected feces or vomit

Kennel Cough
Kennel Cough is a respiratory tract infection that has been linked to several different viral and bacterial causes. Coughing is usually stimulated by physical exertion or by touching the throat area. Kennel cough is self-limiting, usually lasting 1-3 weeks. Antibiotics are often given to prevent secondary infections. Kennel cough is very common in shelters and other boarding facilities. There is a vaccine for bordetella, one of the main agents responsible for causing kennel cough.

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

Ear Mites
Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Itching, scratching, head shaking, dark brown discharge in the ears
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including an injection or ear drops
**Transmission:** Contagious to other dogs and cats, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal

Ringworm
Ringworm is a fungus related to athlete’s foot; it’s not actually a worm.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Irregularly shaped areas of fur loss; the skin of the areas will usually appear rough and scaly
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including an injection and/or topical treatment
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs, cats and people, but usually requires direct contact with the infected animal
Fleas
Fleas are tiny insects that feed on the blood of dogs, cats, humans and other animals. Although each flea only consumes a small drop of blood, fleas usually attack in large numbers.
**Signs & Symptoms:** Intense itching and scratching
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including an injection and/or topical treatment
**Transmission:** Very contagious to other dogs, cats and people

Round, Tape and Hook Worms
Worms affect a dog's digestive system. They are most commonly seen in puppies and young dogs.
**Signs and Symptoms:** Large belly, diarrhea, and an inability to gain weight
**Treatment:** Veterinary care, including de-worming medication
**Transmission:** Contagious to other dogs and cats, but only through contact with (and subsequent ingestion of) feces

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

The CAWS strives to provide foster puppies with routine veterinary care prior to placement in permanent adoptive homes. However, some veterinary care such as booster and rabies shots may be given after the foster animal is in its foster home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distemper combo vaccine</td>
<td>Initial dose given to puppies that are at least 6 weeks of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(distemper, hepatitis, para-influenza, parovirus, and coronavirus)</td>
<td>Booster given 3-4 weeks later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Additional booster given 3-4 weeks later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies vaccine</td>
<td>One dose given at 16 weeks of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Veterinary Care</td>
<td>On a case by case basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De-worm</td>
<td>Routinely given to puppies under 6 months of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second dose given only if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spay/neuter</td>
<td>Puppies must be at least 12 weeks old and weigh at least 2 pounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Note: Puppies can be adopted at 12 weeks, after they have been spayed/neutered and received their first set of vaccinations.
Chapter 7
Small Animals
Including Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, Hamsters, Gerbils, and Birds

Introduction

Fostering small animals is extremely rewarding. Rabbits as well as other small animals are intelligent, social animals who require mental stimulation, toys, exercise, environmental activity, and social interaction (from, as appropriate, people, other rabbits, or other animals). They will respond to cuddling and utilize small toys to entertain both themselves and you.

Supplies Needed

The following supplies will be provided for you from your FHS:

- Cage or pen (non-wire floor)
- Food and water dishes
- Food, Timothy Hay
- Toys
- Blankets, towels, non-toxic bedding (not pine or cedar)
- Litter box if a rabbit is your foster, litter recommended is Yesterday's news or Aspen chips.

Behavior Issues

Rabbits and other small furry animals are not born mean, well over 99% of behavior issues can be changed with patience and understanding. Never hit the rabbit or small animal! Your hands must be seen as only a source of affection, bring hay/food, petting and cuddling. Rabbits have very long memories and if “tap” them on the nose they will never forget and this makes things much worse. Reassurance that his environment is safe, train yourself not to flinch when he/she attacks, using a high pitched “eeek” works to indicate this behavior hurts (it is how they communicate to each other when play gets rough).

If there are other behavioral issues you are encountering please contact your FHS.

House Training

Start with a box in the cage, and one or more boxes in the rabbit’s running space. If she urinates in a corner of the cage not containing the box, move the box to that corner until she gets it right. Don't be concerned if your bunny curls up in his litter box–this is natural. Once she’s using the box in the cage, open her door and allow her into her
running space. Watch her go in and out on her own. If she heads to a corner where there’s no box, or lifts up her tail in the characteristic fashion, cry “no” in a single, sharp burst of sound. Gently herd her back to her cage and her litter box, or into one of the boxes in her room. Be careful, however. You don’t want to make the cage or the litter box seem like punishment. A handful of hay in the box makes it a more welcoming place. After she first uses the box, praise her and give her favorite treat. Once she uses the box in her room a couple of times, you’re well on your way, as her habits will be on their way to forming. As she gets better trained in her first room, you can increase her space. Don’t hurry this process. And if the area becomes very big, or includes a second floor, be sure to include more litter boxes, so as not to confuse her. Remember, as she becomes more confident and uses fewer boxes, you can start to remove some of her early, “training” boxes. Get your rabbit into a daily routine and try not to vary it. Rabbits are very habitual and once a routine is established, they usually prefer to stick with it.

Chewing

All small animals need to chew for the maintenance of their teeth, approved chew toys such as wooden non-toxic chew toys, hay, and elk antler.

Health Issues/Food

Guinea pigs have a special requirement that rabbits and other rodents do not. Guinea pigs, along with humans and primates, require an outside source of vitamin C. Other animals produce their own vitamin C within their bodies. Commercial foods made specifically for guinea pigs should have vitamin C already added. The problem is that vitamin C is water soluble and not stable when exposed to sunlight or high temperatures or when stored for a long time. Sometimes the pellets you buy may not have been stored properly or are too old and you may think your pet is getting enough C when that’s not the case! The good news is that there are other ways to give vitamin C. One is through good quality grass hay, as mentioned. The other is by feeding dark, leafy greens that are richer in vitamin C then an orange! For instance a cup of fresh kale contains approximately 250 mg of vitamin C compared to a cup of oranges (without the peel), which contains only 50 mg of C. The minimum daily vitamin C requirement in the guinea pig is 10-30 mg per day. Guinea pigs can easily get this amount and more with the feeding of 1/2 to 1 cup of fresh leafy greens daily. (Use the same greens as listed for rabbits above.) Some particularly high vitamin C foods are kale, dandelion greens, parsley, collard greens, green peppers and mustard greens.

Mice, Hamsters, and Gerbils

Other foods can be fed in addition to the commercial pellets but should not constitute more than 20% of the total diet. Fruit and vegetables as described for the rabbits, guinea pigs and chinchillas can be offered at a rate of about 1 teaspoon/day. Remove any uneaten fresh foods within 3 to 4 hours to prevent spoilage. All of these species love grains, nuts and seeds, but these foods should be offered in small quantities because of their high fat content. A reasonable amount of nuts and or seeds would be a total of 1 teaspoon/day for rats and about ½ teaspoon for the other species.

Rabbits

The biggest mistake people make when feeding rabbits is overfeeding high calorie and high starch foods such as commercial pellets and grains and underfeeding high fiber foods such as hay and greens. This pattern of feeding
can lead to obesity and gastrointestinal disease. The most important part of the house rabbit diet is an unlimited supply of grass hay, which provides essential fiber as well as proteins, vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates. Because of the high fiber content of the hay, it is the best preventative for stomach and intestinal problems such as chronic soft stools. Hay (and greens) also provide some of the essential work needed to keep the teeth worn down due to all the chewing the rabbit needs to do to break it down.

Another important part of the house rabbit diet is fresh, leafy greens. These foods provide not only fiber, but a variety of vitamins, such as A and C, minerals, proteins, and carbohydrates.

The rabbit then produces bacteria-rich droppings called cecotropes, which are softer, stickier, and greener and have a stronger odor than the regular waste droppings. These cecotropes are eaten directly from the anus as soon as they are produced. The cecotropes are then passed through the digestive tract of the rabbit and nutrients such as vitamins, amino acids and fatty acids are released from the bacteria and absorbed into the rabbit’s body. In this way, rabbits are efficient at producing their own vitamin, protein and fat supply from food that for some animals, such as ourselves, would be totally useless.

Cleaning Procedures

Clean litter boxes often, to encourage your rabbit to use them. Use white vinegar to rinse boxes out—for tough stains, let pans soak. Accidents outside of the cage can be cleaned up with white vinegar or club soda. If the urine has already dried, you can try products like “Nature’s Miracle” to remove the stain and odor. To dispose of organic litters, they can be used as mulch, or can be composted. Rabbit pills can be directly applied to plants as fertilizer

Routine Veterinary Care

Spaying/Neutering

Your foster rabbit will be spayed or neutered once they have reached over two pounds or approximately 4 months. Your GP or other small animal will not be spayed or neutered so please do not let the males and females mix, we are a responsible rescue that does not endorse breeding. If you are picking up your foster after being altered there will be the responsibility of giving them medication after, if you are not comfortable with this please contact your FHS immediately.

To help ensure the health and safety of your small animal foster, The CAWS asks that you adhere to the guidelines set forth, including the following:

- Keep your small animal foster within sight range when free roaming, as small animals tend to chew cords can be life threatening .If outside please use an xpen to contain the animal. The xpen or similar cage does not replace supervision.
- When you are running low on supplies please let your FHS know 5 to 7 days prior to when you will need them. Arrangements have been made for supplies to stored in various locations of the city and surrounding areas.
- Let your FHS know if you no longer wish to foster. Do not give your small animal foster to another person or agency, your FHS will arrange everything. Please be patient as this may take up to 48 hours.