TABLE OF CONTENTS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS, Contact Information ... 3

Additional Literature and Information ... 4

Foster Info and Requirements ... 5

Volunteer Description ... 6

Fostering Process ... 7

Isolation ... 8

Animal Proofing Your House ... 9-10

Supplies ... 11

Daily Duties ... 12

Cleaning Procedures ... 13

Kitten and Puppy Development ... 14-15

Juvenile Kittens and Puppies ... 16-17

Mothers and Babies ... 18-19

Feral/ Under-socialized Kittens ... 20

Canine Behavioral Fosters ... 21-22

Ill, Injured and/or Surgery Recovery ... 23

Troubleshooting ... 24-25

Spay/Neutering ... 26

Health Issues ... 27-28

General Care ... 29

Return and Adoption ... 30-31
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Longmont Humane Society
9595 Nelson Road, Longmont, CO 80501
303-772-1232 x 234
(If no one answers in the Foster Department you can dial “0” and have a department staff paged)
Erinn is usually in the office Tuesday–Saturday from 9:00 am until about 4:00 pm

After Hours for Foster Animal Emergencies:
Erinn Pagratis, Foster Home Liaison – 720-515-FOSTER (720-515-3678)

After Hours IF you cannot reach Erinn and ONLY in an emergency:
Poison Emergency - 1-800-332-3073 or 303-629-1123
Aspen Meadow Veterinary Specialists, 104 S Main St Longmont CO, 80501, 303-678-8844
Aspen Meadow will assist with emergency euthanasia only after hours at no charge if you cannot reach Erinn or get to the shelter in time. Please make sure to take the copy of your foster agreement with you as this will help with the paperwork and identify you as an LHS foster parent. Emergency Center personnel should also try to contact us before proceeding with any treatment of the foster animal.

Emergency Situations
An emergency situation requires immediate action. An example of an emergency situation would be if a kitten fell off a dresser and broke its leg, or you believe the animal is near death. Best contact is via email at foster@longmonthumane.org. Contact a foster department staff member with any health concerns – do not wait until it becomes an emergency! Please also be advised that you are discouraged from seeking any medical care for your foster animals outside of the LHS Veterinary Clinic unless otherwise arranged by the Foster Department. If you choose to do so, any costs incurred will be your responsibility and cannot be reimbursed by LHS.

NON-EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Longmont Humane Society
For general questions during normal shelter hours (Monday – Sunday 11:00 am to 6:00 pm)
303-772-1232 x0
Let the answering staff know what your call is regarding and they will direct you to the right person.

Erinn Pagratis  Annie Wyatt  Rhea Moriarity
Foster Home Liaison  Lead Training Specialist  Training and Behavior Manager
303-772-1232 x 234  303-772-1232 x265  303-772-1232 x277
foster@longmonthumane.org  annie@longmonthumane.org  rhea@longmonthumane.org

*This page should be copied and kept where it will be handy.*
Additional Literature and Information

The following information sheets and articles are available upon request or on the Foster section of the Longmont Humane Society Website

1. Common Foster Problems and Solutions
   a. Contains many simple solutions for diarrhea, conjunctivitis, and other health and behavioral concerns

2. Foster Care Feeding Protocols – Cat/Kitten or Dog/Puppy
   a. The feeding protocols we use for animals in the shelter

3. Shelter Disease FAQ sheets
   a. Information on common shelter animal diseases and their symptoms

4. How to Determine a Cat or Dog’s Age and Sex
   a. Contains diagrams of both genders and what to look for in the teeth to determine an approximate age of an animal

5. Raising Neo-Natal Kittens and Raising Neo-Natal Puppies
   a. An informative article on the developmental stages of kittens or puppies and how to raise and care for them as prepared by the University of California at Davis Shelter Medicine program

6. Transitioning Bottle Babies to Slurry
   a. Tips and tricks for transitioning stubborn babies off of the bottle and onto real food! Also includes the same information on litterbox training as listed later in the manual

7. Bottle Baby Trouble Shooting Guide
   a. Identifying issues with bottle babies and what may be done to help

8. The Puppy’s Rule of 12
   a. A helpful guide for what puppies should have been exposed to and how to help nurture/discourage certain behaviors before they come back to the shelter for adoption
Foster Program Information

The Longmont Humane Society (LHS) Foster Care Program provides temporary homes for animals that are sick, injured, too young, or have behavioral issues that prevent them from being adoptable in their given state. The program has saved hundreds of lives of vulnerable companion animals over the years. It provides a chance at survival for animals that might not otherwise thrive in different circumstances.

Fostering is a huge commitment that requires a large amount of both time and energy. People who choose to foster are preparing the fostered animals for a successful future. By becoming a foster parent you are giving the gift of hope to animals in need. The staff and the animals at LHS can never thank you enough for your commitment to these special animals.

**Foster Requirements:**

In order to become a Foster Volunteer, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have the consent of all adults living in your household.
- Have the consent of your landlord if renting.
- Have current vaccinations for all household pets and negative FeLV/FIV tests for all cats in your home.
- Have a securely fenced yard to foster dogs, or be willing to walk your foster dog(s).
- Agree to keep foster felines indoors at all times.
- Understand that any veterinary care sought outside of LHS for your foster animal(s) that has not been pre-approved by LHS staff will not be reimbursed.
- Understand that LHS is not responsible for any damage, injury, or illness to animals or humans caused by a foster animal in your care.
- Understand that LHS remains the legal custodian of the animals; that all fostered animals must be returned to the Shelter at the end of the foster period; and that LHS cannot guarantee placement of all animals.
- Have the facilities (use of spare rooms, etc.) and willingness to isolate foster animals from your own animals.
- We recommend that you attend a LHS volunteer orientation prior to fostering, but it is not required.
Foster Volunteer Job Description

Objective: To provide a temporary home environment for animals that are not ready to be adopted and to provide care to enable the foster animal(s) to recover, heal, develop, and become adoptable.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide food, shelter, necessary medications, grooming, socialization and care for young, ill, or injured animal(s) in your home.
2. Ensure the safety of the foster animal at all times and isolate the foster animals from your pets as required.
3. Report any health issues to a member of the foster care department and bring animal(s) to shelter for necessary vaccinations or health care follow-up.
4. Return animal(s) to the LHS for adoption after foster care is completed.

Required Training:

1. We recommend that you complete a volunteer application and a volunteer orientation.
2. An initial inspection of the area in your home you will be using for fosters before you take home a foster animal. Additional annual inspections are required.

Supervision:

Direct supervision by the Foster Home Liaison and additional mentorship by experienced Foster Volunteers.

Benefits:

- Opportunity to play a life-saving role in animal welfare and give the gift of hope to needy companion animals.
- Increased knowledge of animal behavior and care.
- Personal satisfaction and unconditional love from the foster animals.
1. **Placement:** Once an animal has been evaluated for foster care, the animal will be matched with a foster volunteer. Foster Staff will send out a call via email with descriptions of the animal(s) in need of foster care. If you are unable to foster an animal on the list, no action is required. If you are interested in fostering, or have any questions about one of the animals or groups of animals, please respond as soon as possible. If the animal(s) you wish to foster have already found a home, Foster Staff will let you know. A record will be kept of your intention and availability so you will be contacted first when more animals become available.

2. **Preparation:** Once you agree to foster an animal or litter, the animal and its paperwork will be prepared for pickup. A date and approximate time is determined for picking up the animal(s) and all necessary supplies. All cats must leave the shelter in a carrier, or on a leash for dogs.

3. **Foster Agreement:** When you arrive at LHS, go to the intake desk and let them know you are there to pick up a foster animal. Please do not wander into the foster department as the foster staff is often in other areas of the building. You will receive the foster care instructions and the animal(s) as well as a copy of the foster contract and any other literature related to your animal(s). If you are unable to foster the animal(s) for the entire time needed, contact the Foster Department as soon as possible so appropriate arrangements can be made. Foster animals must stay in the immediate care of the foster volunteer. Leaving your foster animal in anyone else’s care is prohibited, unless it has been approved by the Foster Department.

4. **Check-ups:** All check-up dates (for vaccines, de-worming, etc.) or spay/neuter dates are on the foster care instruction sheet. You are responsible for contacting the Foster Department to set up vaccination, de-worming, or spay/neuter appointments. Unless otherwise instructed, please go to the intake desk and let them know you are here for vaccines, weight check, or other health check to get the process started.

5. **Return:** The expected return date on the Foster Contract is only an estimate, and does not need to be strictly adhered to. Foster volunteers are responsible for contacting the foster department to arrange a time for returning the animal for adoption, transfer to another foster family, or other reasons. LHS reserves the right to reclaim an animal from foster volunteers at any time during the fostering period. Foster volunteers will be informed of the reason(s) why the animal needs to be returned and asked to bring the animal back as soon as possible.
Isolating Foster Animals

1. For Your Pets: Fosters may be incubating something that can be transmitted to your own animals. This can be anything from upper respiratory infection (URI) to ringworm, mange, fleas, etc. Although we vaccinate all animals for common disease conditions, they may be incubating a disease or be a chronic shedder. Additionally, there are other diseases not covered by the vaccinations that could be transmitted to your pets.

2. For the Fosters: Your own animals may have something that, while not appearing to cause a problem for them, could cause disease in a young, ill, or stressed foster animal. Foster cats can catch as well as transmit intestinal parasites by “borrowing” the family litterbox.

3. Stress: It can be stressful to animals currently in the household to be continually meeting “new pets”. In the best case scenario, just when everyone is getting along well, the foster animals are returned to the shelter for adoption and your pets have lost their new buddies. When this occurs 7 to 8 times in a calendar year, it can be extremely confusing to your own animals. In the worst case scenario, when there is negative interaction and avoidance behavior between your pets and the foster animals, you can end up with ongoing behavioral problems with both parties.

4. Attachment: If you have NOT isolated, and the foster animals have integrated successfully into your household, it is much more difficult to return them to the shelter for adoption (there is always that feeling that maybe THIS ONE is the one to keep!).

We do not allow animals from different litters to comingle in the shelter for 14 days after their arrival. We will also enforce this policy in the foster home. This is due to the incubation period of common diseases.

We do occasionally recommend that you socialize your foster animal(s) with your own (with dogs it is usually unavoidable). However, it is very important to isolate kittens and cats (especially at first) for the reasons specified above. Once they are settled and healthy and you have determined it is safe for everyone, they may socialize with supervision, but should still be isolated when you are not around.
Animals are curious creatures, many of whom are capable of jumping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest of spaces. To protect your foster animal in his or her new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, you must animal proof your house!

**Kitchens/Bathrooms:**
- Use child proof latches to keep little paws from prying open cabinets.
- Keep medications, cleaners, chemicals, and laundry supplies on high shelves.
- Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet.
- Check for and block any small spaces, nooks, or holes inside cabinetry or behind washer/dryer units.
- Make sure no foster animals have jumped into the dryer before you turn it on or into the refrigerator as you’re shutting the door.
- Keep toilet lids closed.
- Keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn’t harmful, the wrapper could be).

**Living/Family Room:**
- Place dangling wires from lamps, DVD players, TVs, stereos, computers and phones out of reach.
- Keep children’s toys put away.
- Put away knick-knacks until your foster animal has the coordination and/or understanding not to knock them over.
- Block spaces where your vacuum cleaner doesn’t fit but a foster kitten could.
- Move house plants – which can be poisonous – out of reach, including hanging plants that can be jumped onto from other nearby surfaces.
- Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover.
- Put away all sewing and craft supplies, especially thread.
- Secure aquariums or cages that house small animals like hamsters or fish to keep them safe.
- Minimize the wear and tear on your carpets by topping them with sheets, blankets, or towels - taking care not to leave gaps where curious kittens might work their way beneath and injure themselves. These coverings should be removed between groups of fosterlings and thoroughly cleaned in a more aggressive manner and with less cost than carpeting.
Bedrooms:
- Keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors (drawstrings, shoelaces, and buttons can cause major problems).
- Keep any medications, lotions or cosmetics off accessible surfaces.
- Move electrical and phone wires out of reach of chewing.

Garage:
*Most garages contain too many dangerous chemicals and unsafe items to be an acceptable foster care site. Foster animals should never be housed in a garage unless discussed with the Foster Department.*
- Move all chemicals to high shelves or behind secure doors.
- Clean up all antifreeze from the floor and driveway, as one taste can be lethal.
- Bang on your car hood to ensure that your animal (usually an “escaped” cat or kitten) or a neighbor’s cat has not sought the warmth of the engine for a nap.
Supplies

Provided Supplies:

- Dry Food
- Wet Food (as available)
- Clumping and/or Non-Clumping Litter
- Puppy pads
- Kitten/puppy milk replacement (if necessary)
- Medications and other veterinary care
- Carrier (for kittens or puppies) and Leashes/collars (for dogs)
- Crates, bowls, litter boxes, bedding, etc as needed

Additional Recommended Supplies:

- Baby gate (for puppies)
- Waterproof tarp
- Thermometer
- Litter pan
- Litter scoop
- Cotton balls
- Scale(s)
- Old blankets/towels
- Squirt bottle
- Newspaper
- Scratching post
- Flannel backed vinyl tablecloth(s)
- Ceramic/weighted bowls
- Stain/odor remover
- Brushes/combs/nail clippers
- Notebook
- Toys –
  **Good Toys:**
  - Kittens – plastic shower curtain rings, ping pong balls, paper bags, paper towel rolls
  - Puppies – kongs, tennis balls

*Fostering should not be a huge financial burden. If you are unable to provide any of the supplies necessary, we will do our best to accommodate your needs.*

Purchased Supplies

If you are able to provide any of the basic supplies necessary for your foster animals, we greatly appreciate it. Make sure to save all receipts as it is considered a tax-deductible donation to the Longmont Humane Society.
Daily Duties:

- Feed (may be doing 2-3 times per day or more).
- Replace soiled bedding, and spot clean the foster areas.
- Clean bowls.
- Supply fresh water.
- Clean area where animal urinates and defecates; check for any problems (blood in urine, loose stools, and vomit in or near litterbox …).
- Groom coat.
- Examine paws.
- Check for health issues and fill out the check list. Contact the foster care department if anything is abnormal.
- Look inside mouth at gums and teeth.
- Socialize and play with animal.
- Keep written record of the foster’s weight, food intake, and medications given.

As needed duties:

- Weigh animals every other day for very young, once a week for older animals.
- Clean bedding.
- Trim nails.
- Write down all dates that vaccines and de-wormer are due on your calendar, check regularly, and make appointments with a member of the foster care department as needed.
- Check your food and litter supplies and call the foster care department if you need more.
As you set up your foster area, keep in mind the fact that animals are messy, especially kittens and puppies. You will spend a significant part of the foster period just mopping up messes. Obviously, cleanup is quicker, easier and more effective in an area with washable walls and a tile or vinyl floor than in one with flocked wallpaper, thick carpeting, heavy drapes, and upholstered furniture, so choose your foster area carefully. This will protect your companion animals and any future foster animals.

Keeping your foster area clean serves several purposes:
- It minimizes damage to your home
- It keeps foster animals cleaner and more comfortable
- It decreases objectionable odors
- It reduces the spread of disease

**Routine Cleaning While Foster Animals are in Residence**
Take the foster animals out of the room while cleaning and **only use a gentle soap**. Do not use any cleaners – the animals can ingest them off of surfaces or while they are grooming themselves. While you have the foster animals, a good thorough soap and water cleaning of your foster area and the items in it will go a long way towards keeping your foster animals healthy and free of disease. For felines, remove solid waste from litter boxes daily. Change litter and wash the litter box with soap and water weekly. If you are dealing with an outbreak of diarrhea consider using disposable cardboard boxes (available at the shelter). Clean food and water dishes daily – if animals are ill, use the dishwasher “sani-cycle” or soak dishes in a weak bleach solution after washing and rinse thoroughly. Check bedding in the sleeping area and wash with bleach, but no fabric softener, as needed.

**Cleaning and Disinfecting Between Groups of Animals**
Between groups of foster animals, you can use harsher chemicals including bleach as a disinfectant. Be sure to remove all organic matter (hair, excrement, dirt, etc) with warm water before using the bleach disinfectant. Use a solution of **1 part bleach to 30 parts water** (1/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water). Saturate all surfaces and leave for 10 minutes. Then rinse all of the surfaces with water to remove the chemicals. Wash all bedding and toys in hot water, using bleach in the wash cycle. Anything that cannot be washed or disinfected should not be used for future foster animals.
A great amount of time and effort is required to properly socialize kittens and puppies between the ages of 4 to 12 weeks. Daily socialization sessions are important in shaping the animal’s future personality and emotional growth. Combine simple play with handling exercises. This familiarizes a kitten/puppy to having its paws touched (front and back), mouth opened, and ears touched. Combining this with regular grooming sessions and body massages helps prevent skin sensitivity or aversion to touch. Acquaint kittens/puppies to different sights, sounds, and textures.

**Neonates**

Neonatal kittens/puppies should be pink, firm, and plump. The ears and eyes are closed. Healthy kittens/puppies will curl their bodies inward. Temperature: 96-97°F

**1 to 2 weeks**

The eyes and ears open at approximately 11-15 days. The kittens/puppies can use their front legs to stand and walk shakily. At this stage handling sessions should be very short (1-2 minutes) and great care must be taken. Gently rub the animal’s coat, toes, ears, and muzzle. Temperature: 100°F

**2 to 3 weeks**

Vision is poor but continues to develop until three to four weeks of age. The ears should be open. If the eyes are still closed but look sticky, gently wipe them with a damp cotton ball to ease their opening. NEVER pull the eyelids apart. If the eyelids have not opened call the foster care department. Kittens/puppies should be crawling and their legs can now support their body weight. They are able to maintain their own body temperature. The deciduous incisors erupt followed by the canines. Increase the amount of handling time to 5 minutes and include clipping the nails when necessary. Temperature: 100.5 to 102.5°F (normal temperature to remain for the rest of kitten-hood or puppy-hood)

**3 to 4 weeks**

By three weeks kittens/puppies can walk fairly steady, can sit, and control their toes. Their vision and hearing are normal. They will start to investigate their environment and toys can be added at this time. Kittens/puppies are experiencing a large amount of sensory stimulation so it is important not to frighten the animals. A frightening experience at this age could make a life-long impression.

**4 to 5 weeks**

Kittens/puppies are walking normally and starting to climb. They become more playful and social. The deciduous premolars erupt. Continue to handle and socialize more and more. At this stage, they may also start showing an interest in food. If they do not have a Queen, now is the time to start their transition off of the bottle.

**5 to 8 weeks**

By 5 weeks kittens/puppies should have all of their deciduous teeth. They are playing with toys and continue to become more and more playful. It is important to introduce the animals to as many different people as possible and have them handle the kittens/puppies gently.
Supervised visits with other animals are also appropriate as long as they are healthy and you believe it is safe for them as well as your animals. These visits should be calm and pleasant; otherwise it could traumatize the kitten/puppy. Expose the animals to mild household sounds and different surfaces. Introduce them to a carrier and treat the kitten/puppy when it is in the carrier.

8 weeks plus
Kittens’/puppies’ teeth change from milk teeth to adult teeth at about 3½ months.

**Kittens:** The kitten is almost fully developed at this stage, needing only experience. Female kittens become sexually mature between four to 12 months of age. Male kittens become sexually mature around seven to 10 months. Begin to introduce the kitten to louder noises such as a vacuum cleaner, dishwasher, and/or washing machine. Only praise a kitten for positive reactions. Do not force it to approach a scary situation.

**Puppies:** The puppy is almost fully developed at this stage, needing only experience and training. Female and male puppies become sexually mature between five to 12 months of age. It is important to separate littermates at 10 weeks of age to promote bonding with people. Introduce the puppy to a crate and begin crate training. Introduce the puppy to the car either in a crate or on the floor. Begin to introduce the puppy to louder noises such as a vacuum cleaner, dishwasher, and/or washing machine. Play retrieving games, and hide and seek. Practice training techniques and leash walks with the puppy.
Juvenile Kittens and Puppies

One of the most common needs for foster care is for animals that come into the shelter too young to be placed directly into the adoption area. Kittens/puppies must be at least eight weeks of age and kittens must weigh two pounds to be eligible for placement. Being able to go into a foster home enables these animals to mature, to become socialized, and to begin their vaccination series. In most cases, young kittens/puppies are spayed or neutered while in foster care and, therefore, fully recover from the procedure before being placed for adoption. Young animals are usually placed into foster care with their littermates, but occasionally we will separate large litters or have a single orphan animal that needs care.

Facilities Needed
An easy to clean area separated from your own companion animals, yet not totally isolated from normal activities is ideal. Examples would be a bathroom, spare bedroom, heated laundry room, or basement area with finished walls. For kittens/puppies under four weeks of age, an enclosed shower stall or a bathtub lined with towels is safe and easily disinfected. If young kittens/puppies are having trouble climbing into a regular litter pan, try starting out with a shoebox lid, a shallow cardboard box, or metal 9” x 13” baking pan. We also have shallow cardboard litter boxes if need be. Kittens need to be kept indoors throughout their foster period and in carriers when traveling to and from the shelter, however, exposure to sunlight is still important. Puppies must be supervised whenever they are outside and travel in carriers or on leash. Puppies cannot visit public areas (such as dog parks) or come into contact with other dogs.

Food
For kittens three to five weeks old, provide a “slurry” of 1 part canned food to 2 parts warm water or kitten milk replacement formula. The same for puppies only with a puppy milk replacement formula. Serve the food at body temperature (98 to 100°F). Offer this mixture three to four times a day. Remove the slurry after about 15 minutes and discard. If a kitten/puppy is not eating call the foster care department immediately for alternatives and solutions. NEVER give cow’s milk.

Health
Healthy kittens/puppies have moist gums, elastic skin, and clear, colorless urine. Dry gums, loss of skin elasticity, or yellow colored urine indicated dehydration. With any foster less than three months of age, it is important to pay attention to their weight. Kittens should gain 1 to 1 ½ ounces every other day. Kitchen or postage scales work well for monitoring the weight of these little ones. Puppies should gain ¼ to one full pound weekly depending on the breed. It is highly recommended to record weight, feeding schedule, amount of food eaten (at each feeding), urine, feces and any other important information. If the kittens/puppies are not gaining weight and/or not eating well – please notify the Foster Department immediately.
**Fading Kitten Syndrome**

A “fading” kitten is one that appears healthy at birth but fails to survive beyond 12 weeks of age. Death usually occurs because of one of the following reasons: congenital defects, low birth weight, nutritional diseases from inadequate diet fed to the mother, infectious diseases, lack of antibodies from the mother, severe parasites, etc. Unfortunately, kitten death due to “fading” is not uncommon. Usually the circumstances are unavoidable.

****Remember it is not your fault!****

By being a foster parent you are giving an animal every opportunity to survive.

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**In the unfortunate event that one of your foster animals passes away.........**

If an animal does pass away in your care, it needs to be brought back to the shelter as soon as possible to be examined. You are welcome to bring back the animal during regular shelter hours 7 days a week. Come to the intake desk on the east side of the front of the building and be sure to tell them the name and number of the animal. It is also a good idea to bring in the rest of your animals to be checked out by the healthcare team just to be sure they are all still healthy. Please call ahead so the staff will know to expect you.

In every case, ALWAYS call Erinn on the emergency line!
Mothers and Babies

We receive many nursing mothers with babies. Foster homes are needed to provide a safe, warm environment where the mother can raise her young. Although the mother is caring for the babies, foster volunteers must closely monitor the progress of the litter and the health of the mother. They also provide socialization for the kittens/puppies and attention for the mother.

**Isolation**
Nursing mothers will often be VERY protective over their kittens, especially from other animals. It is *extremely* important to isolate the entire family from all of the other animals in your home until the kittens are weaned and the mother cat has been returned to the shelter. Even though your animals may be very friendly with the kittens and even the mom, she will see them as a very serious threat and may try to harm them. Additionally, the stress can cause her to withdraw and may also harm her milk supply which will then negatively impact the health of her kittens. Once the mother cat has been returned to the shelter and the kittens are healthy and post the initial 14 day isolation period, they are welcome to begin interacting with the pets in your home.

**Feeding**
Because milk production requires energy, nursing mothers require three to four feedings of wet food a day in order to make enough milk for their babies. Provide clean water at all times.

**Facilities**
A clean, warm, dry, quiet, out of the way area should be provided for the mother to raise her young. A nesting box is essential for her and her babies. The box should be big enough for the mother to comfortably lie away from the litter if she chooses, but small enough so the kittens can reach her. The sides of the box need to be high enough to prevent the babies from wandering, but low enough for the mother to be able to come and go with ease. Line the box with towels and/or blankets. Wash the materials frequently and examine them for any holes or frayed edges (throw away if there are any). Do not place any loose bedding (such as hay or shavings) in the box as they could be inhaled and obstruct breathing. The temperature in the room should be between 85-95 degrees F. If using a heating pad or electric blanket, place it underneath the nesting box and be sure it does not become too hot. Remember that the young cannot maintain their own body heat until they are three weeks old.

**Weaning**
Weaning should be a gradual process. The mother should take care of the weaning process herself, but you will want to be sure you are supplying enough food for the nursing mother and weaning babies. Begin introducing the “slurry” mixture (1 part canned food to 2 parts warm water or milk replacement) when the kittens are three weeks of age. At five weeks the kittens/puppies should be reducing their intake of mother’s milk. Once they are consistently eating the gruel, gradually decrease the amount of liquid until it is just canned food. **NEVER** give cow’s milk.
**Drying Up**
The mother’s milk supply needs to be “dried up” otherwise the cat’s mammary glands can become swollen and infected. To dry up the mother, separate her from her kittens and withhold food and water for 24 hours and then add it back slowly each day.

It is imperative to consult with the Foster Home Liaison before applying the “drying up” schedule. Most often, we will have you bring the mother cat back to shelter without her kittens and we will apply the “drying up” schedule in shelter.

Follow the following “drying up” schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Food Ration:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Food/Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 ration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 ration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3 ration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 ration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3 ration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full ration + WET OK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Always supply fresh, clean water after the first day
Fostering Under-Socialized Kittens

Under-socialized, neglected, and frightened feral kittens may be the most challenging shelter animals to foster. They need specialized care and handling in order to qualify for the adoption program. These kittens may not have been inside a house or car, been litter trained, or have experienced kindness from a human. Under-socialized animals must be closely monitored to reduce the chance of escape or destructive behavior. They frequently require fostering for at least a month while they acquire the social skills that will make them treasured, lifelong companions for a lucky family.

A quiet, confined environment is best for these kittens. A small space such as a dog crate or small bathroom works best. If they are confined to a room, make sure to block off hiding spaces so you can access the kittens without having to chase them and cause additional stress. Give the kittens a safe place such as a tipped over box with a towel inside. Fearful kittens need a lot of handling – at least three times a day.

These kittens are very frightened and may hiss and “spit” at people. The more ferocious the kitten acts, the more scared it is. Remember that in the eyes of these kittens you are a predator. The kitten may think it is fighting for its life and bite or scratch in defense.

Do not attempt handling when the kitten first arrives. The kitten needs to learn that their foster home is a safe environment. Visit with them frequently, move slowly around them, and talk gently to them. Playing talk radio or reading aloud around them may also be a useful tool to help them associate people as a good, trustworthy entity. Allow the kitten to approach you and after a couple of days, begin to try to handle them.

Place a small towel over the kitten, and pick it up in the towel. Gently pet the kitten, but be careful not to give the kitten the opportunity to bite. Let go of the kitten if it becomes aggressive, but try to be the one who ends the handling session. Give a treat after handling or feed it a meal afterwards. Playing with the kitten is a great way to break the ice. Do not stare directly at the kitten as this is a threatening behavior. Have different members of the family or friends play with the kitten (under these same guidelines) to prevent the kitten from bonding to just one person and still distrusting people in general.

Some will never respond to human attention no matter what is done and are not adoptable. These animals are either put into our barn cat program or humanely euthanized. The foster department staff is always available to discuss any policies with you.

Thought to be one of the most challenging to foster, feral kittens may also become the most rewarding animal you may encounter.
Canine Behavioral Fosters

Goals of Behavioral Foster
- To increase adoptions
- To reduce euthanasia
- To determine if concerning behaviors are triggered by the kennel environment or if they will be seen in the home as well
- To help animals that are not coping well in the shelter environment find loving homes

Common Behavioral Issues
- Barrier reactivity towards other dogs
- On-Leash reactivity
- Wariness of strangers
- Separation Anxiety
- Specific stress reactions to the shelter environment (such as spinning, drooling, etc)
- Generally under-socialized behavior

Any dog that is sent into foster will need work with their behavior. Dogs specified as “canine behavioral fosters” need additional behavioral support. Specific goals for your foster dog will be explained to you at the time of pick up. Monitor the dog’s behavior in all situations and record any information related to the dog’s progress. Follow the guidelines given to you and if you are not sure how to resolve a behavior issue please contact the behavior department rather than trying your own methods. Socialize your foster dog within the guidelines given to you by LHS. The following guidelines apply to all dogs in foster. Some dogs will have additional specific protocols to be followed that will be given to you at the time of pick up.

Guidelines:
- All dogs must be supervised at any and all times when they are outside.
- Foster dogs CANNOT go to public dog parks, or be off-leash in public, unconfined or unfamiliar areas.
- Please do not deviate from the protocols specified by LHS staff.
- Do not reinforce behaviors that are unwanted by potential adopters.
- Please communicate openly with Training and Behavior staff and fully disclose all concerning behaviors observed in the home environment.

Commands:
- ‘SIT’ to ask politely for a treat or attention
- ‘PLACE’ to go to a designated spot and stay
- ‘OFF’ to keep four paws on the floor
- ‘IN’ to enter an area or a crate on command
- ‘OUT’ to leave an area on command
- ‘FREE’ to communicate the release from a command
Behaviors to reinforce:
  - ‘Loose Leash Walking’ for proper leash manners
  - Crate train your foster dog (up to 4 hours) to minimize destruction when left alone.
  - Exercise your foster dog daily to burn excessive energy.
  - Expose your foster dog to new people, places and things (as directed by the Training & Behavior Coordinator) to promote sociability and desensitize fears.
  - Utilize basic obedience and other trained behaviors to create new habits and good manners.

To discourage unwanted behaviors, acceptable aversives include a squirt bottle, shake can, leash/drag line, and bean bag. Any necessary training equipment will be provided by the behavior department. It is best to contact LHS at the start of an issue before it becomes a real problem.
LHS also occasionally receives animals in need of extensive medical treatment. Our shelter veterinarian treats animals suffering from injuries as a result of being hit by a car, attacked by another animal, abuse, neglect, accidents, etc. The foster care period for an animal recovering from surgery may vary from a few days to weeks, depending on the severity of the injuries and treatment involved. These animals may require daily medications or special diets as well as regular vet check-ups at the shelter. Many animals need complete “bed rest” in order to fully heal, and others will require some sort of rehabilitation exercise or physical therapy to regain strength or range of motion.

Facilities Needed
An easily accessed, easy to clean area, separated from your own companion animals. Some injured animals may recover more quickly in a quiet, secluded area of your home. Others might thrive being closer to the hustle and bustle of daily activity. Cats need to be kept indoors during the foster stay and in carriers while traveling.

Shelter animals are frequently exposed to diseases that are contagious to other animals. These illnesses can affect animals of all ages and can include upper respiratory infection, mites (skin and ear), intestinal parasites, ringworm, etc. The immune system of the infected animal may be compromised due to these illnesses and it is important to place that animal in a secure, safe environment in order to recover fully. While fostering ill animals, it is likely that a foster parent will administer daily medication, provide a special diet, and ensure that the animal receives regular check-ups at the shelter. Make sure the foster animal is kept in an easy-to-clean area that is completely isolated from your companion animals until they are determined to be completely healthy again.
Troubleshooting

Litter Training

Around 3-4 weeks of age, you should be able to start training your kittens to use the litter box. While this behavior is mostly instinctive and you generally should not need to litter train kittens, occasionally they need a little encouragement.

After feeding, you should place each kitten into a shallow litter box (plastic surgical trays or a glass pie pan work well) with a small amount of non-clumping clay or pine litter. Once they are in the box, scratch the litter with your finger* and then tickle their bottoms with your finger or a moist cotton ball (as you have been doing to stimulate them) until you get a stream of urine into the litter. You can clean the kitten(s) off, but leave the wet litter in the box so their smell will help connect them to ‘doing their business’ in the proper place. It should only take a few times for them to start getting the idea. Some are early learners, but others can take some time to get the idea. Just keep trying until they get it!

*Do NOT scratch the litter with the kitten’s paws as it may be unpleasant to them. The dig/bury instinct will come in time.

Location
Most people want to put the litter box in an out of the way place to minimize odor and loose particles. This may be undesirable to the cat. Do not put the litter box by something noisy like a furnace or washing machine. If you place the litter box in a closet, be sure the door is wedged open so the cat can get in and out. Some cats like to scratch the surface around the litter box and may find a cold cement floor unappealing, so an old towel or blanket underneath it can help.

Litter
Never use clumping litter for kittens younger than 6 weeks. It is important to scoop out feces daily, no matter how much litter you put in the box. Cats do not like litter that is more than two inches deep. Change the litter once a week. Do not clean the box with strong smelling cleaners as this could cause the cat to avoid using the litter box. Washing it with soap and water should be sufficient. We also have cardboard litter boxes of various heights if you would prefer.
Biting and Fighting

Biting
Kittens/puppies are naturally playful and need to release this energy. Having littermates helps with this, but they still need regular interactive time with toys. Kittens/puppies may nip and bite during play or while being petted. To prevent biting, make sure the animal is getting enough play time; three times a day is ideal. Never encourage a kitten/puppy to play with fingers or toes. If the animal is about to “play” with your finger or toe, divert its attention with a toy so it is distracted from attacking you. Be gentle when petting the kitten/puppy and gradually increase its tolerance for handling by routinely touching the paws, tail, and belly. Stop petting the animal if she/he shows any signs of irritation such as nipping, tail swishing, growling/meowing, etc. If the kitten/puppy does bite, do not punish it with a nose tap, hit, swat, etc. Instead correct the animal by withdrawing, saying NO, clapping your hands, and blowing on its face. Calmly leave the room if the kitten/puppy does not stop biting.

Bite Incident
If a bite breaks the skin, clean and flush the wound immediately. All bites that break the skin MUST be reported to a member of the foster care department. Colorado law requires any dog or cat bites that break the skin to be reported to the Department of Health and the animal must be put on a 10 day quarantine period for rabies. If you are no longer comfortable fostering the animal it may be returned to the shelter. Do not withhold information about a bite in fear that the animal will be euthanized - just because an animal bites does not disqualify it from being adoptable.

Fighting
Kittens/puppies play quite roughly with each other – including wrestling, kicking, and biting. This behavior is normal and, unless they are hurting each other, the play is harmless. To decrease the amount of fighting, increase the amount of human playtime with the animals. Interrupt fighting by clapping your hands or saying NO. Fighting becomes a problem when a kitten/puppy becomes wounded, it affects the appetite of one or more of the animals, and when an animal becomes stressed or fearful. Separating the kittens/puppies for brief periods of time may help. For any questions call the Foster Care Department.
All animals that are adoptable must be spayed or neutered.

**Eligibility:**
- healthy (no URI and at least one week post completion of antibiotics)
- received its first round of vaccines at least 1 week prior to surgery
- at least eight weeks old
- kittens must weigh over two pounds

**Scheduling:**
Surgery occurs at the shelter weekly in the mornings. Contact the foster department when you believe your animals are ready for their surgery and they will be assigned a date for surgery. Please do NOT show up at the clinic without a scheduled appointment.

Most animals will not need to return to the foster home to recover from their spay/neuter surgery and may remain at the shelter to be made available for adoption the next day. Occasionally, due to health, age, or adoption space, we may recommend that an animal return to the foster home for a couple of days of observation before returning to the shelter. If an animal returns home with you post-surgically, please contact the Foster Care Department to schedule a time for the animal to return to be put up for adoption.

The night before surgery, kittens and puppies three months of age and under should have access to their normal food and water. They are welcome to have access to dry food and water overnight, but no wet food should be offered the morning of surgery. Adult animals should not have food after 10:00 pm the night before surgery. The animals will need to be brought to our clinic (located at the northeast corner of the building in the back) between 8:00 and 8:30 am or dropped off at the shelter the night before. Cats/kittens need to be in a carrier, and dogs/puppies in a kennel or on a leash. They are usually ready to be picked up after 4:00 pm that afternoon.
All animals at the shelter are evaluated for age, health, and temperament before being placed in a foster home. There are no guarantees that the animal will not get sick later on so the initial isolation from your companion animals is crucial. We are happy to provide all necessary veterinary care for your foster animals, but cannot treat your resident animals if they become infected as well. **All foster animals MUST see an LHS veterinarian.** You cannot take the foster animals to your personal veterinarian.

Many of the diseases that we deal with in a shelter environment have an incubation period. Your foster animal may have been infected with a disease before it came to the shelter and/or before going to foster, but will not show symptoms until after you have brought it home. Below are some symptoms to look for.

**Symptoms**

**Call IMMEDIATELY for the following symptoms (if it is after hours, call the emergency line (720-515-3678) and we will guide you):**

- Vomiting blood
- Severe diarrhea, especially in combination with vomiting
- Excessive blood in diarrhea (especially in puppies)
- Labored breathing
- Unconsciousness, seizures, uneven pupil dilation, or fainting
- Severe lethargy or dehydration

**Other Symptoms** – call during regular operating hours:

- **Vomiting** - more than three times

- **Dehydration** – To check for dehydration lift the skin between the animal’s shoulders and drop back into place. If the skin drops back slowly or bunches up the animal may be dehydrated. Dry, sticky gums are another sign of dehydration.

- **Diarrhea** – Although common with young animals, if left unchecked it can lead to death. See below for the sample collection/analysis procedure of a fecal sample.

- **Fever**

- **Lethargy** or other behavior changes for more than one day

- **Weight loss** in an animal eating normally and failure to gain in a young animal

- **Loss of appetite** for more than two days in adult animals or for more than two feedings in very young animals
Trouble eating or mouth pain

Excessive drinking for more than three days in adult animals or for more than three feedings in very young animals

Increased urination, difficult urination, or inability to urinate – Watch for sudden accidents in house, straining, bloody or discolored urine.

Sneezing with or without nasal discharge for more than one day

Eye problems - squinting, redness, swelling, or discharge

Ear problems - ear rubbing, head shaking, scratching at ears, or ear discharge

Coughing for more than one day

Limping

Hair loss with or without scabs, scales, crusts, scratching

Call or email the foster department to discuss any symptoms that your foster animal has during the normal operating hours. Do NOT wait until it becomes a crisis. When you call with health-related questions, we will need to know the animal’s temperature, if it is vomiting, has diarrhea, is active or listless, and whether or not it is eating and drinking. Depending on the symptoms your foster is experiencing, we will set up an appointment with the shelter veterinarian or advise you as to what other course of action is appropriate. Occasionally, we will have you drop your foster off at the shelter in the morning so that our vet may observe/treat it throughout the course of the day. Any vet appointments with outside clinics MUST be made by shelter staff. Do not call about symptoms after hours unless it is an emergency (such as a broken bone).

**Bringing in a Fecal Sample**

If one of your foster animals develops diarrhea that lasts more than 2 days and is not improving with bland diet or probiotics, you should bring in a fecal sample to be analyzed to check for bacteria, parasites, or other issues. Fecal samples need to be as fresh as possible. They can last for up to 24 hours if refrigerated, but it is always best to bring them in as quickly as possible. The foster care department is happy to provide you with a fecalyzer for easy sample collection, or you may bring it in a plastic bag or disposable tupperware container. It is okay if there is litter or other debris in the sample. Please come to the intake desk during regular shelter hours with the fecal sample, the animal’s name and number (provided on the Foster Animal Info sheet and Contract). Ask to have healthcare paged to take the sample and ask any other questions they may have.
General Care

Bringing your Fosters in for Vaccines/Deworming

Your foster animal’s next vaccination date will be listed on your Foster Animal Information sheet given to you at the time of pick up. If your foster animal requires a vaccination booster while in your care, you will need to bring them to the shelter. Contact the foster care department to arrange an approximate date/time for vaccinations. Come to the intake desk during regular shelter operating hours. Let them know you are bringing a foster in for a vaccination and let them know the name(s) of the animal(s) you are bringing in so they can get their paperwork ready. They will page an Animal Care Team member who will administer the vaccine.

Checking the Temperature

The normal temperature for cats is from 100 to 102.5°F. The normal temperature for very young kittens will be a couple of degrees lower.
The normal temperature for dogs is from 101 to 102.5°F.

You will need a rectal thermometer to take the temperature. Digital thermometers are best, as there is little chance of breakage occurring while the thermometer is in use. Use petroleum or KY jelly to lubricate the end of the thermometer. Place the tip of the thermometer into the rectum of the animal and leave until the digital model beeps. If the animal is being uncooperative, consider enlisting the help of another person to distract and/or restrain it while the thermometer is in place.

*Contact LHS staff immediately if the temperature is over 103°F.*

Nail Trimming

Get the animal accustomed to having its paws handled. Gently pet the legs and paws while giving it a treat and make the experience as pleasant as possible.

Felines: Apply pressure to the cat’s paw with your thumb on top of the paw and your index finger under the paw until the claws extend. Look for the quick or pink portion of the nail. Do NOT cut the quick as it will bleed and be painful for the cat. Cut off the curved tips of the nails weekly.

Canines: Gently squeeze the toe between your thumb and finger to extend the nail. Observe where the quick is located. The quick is the blood supply of the nail. If you cannot see the quick, cut the nail just in front of where it starts to curve downward. If you accidentally cut the quick, the dog will bleed and feel pain. Apply pressure to the nail with a cotton ball until the bleeding stops.

*If you are uncomfortable trimming nails, please contact a member of the Foster Care Department.*
Return and Adoption

When the fostered animal is brought back to LHS, the animal is given a health and behavioral evaluation before it is available for adoption. Foster parents are encouraged to provide a write-up about the animal for display on the animal’s kennel. The write-up can be clever (but always honest and positive) and should contain information about the animal’s personality and behavior. You are welcome to create a kennel card for your fosters, but please also email the text to the foster care department so it can easily be added to the animal’s profile.

Returning Foster Animals
When your foster animals are ready to return to the shelter for adoption, contact the foster care department to schedule a good time to bring them back. Come to the intake desk and let the staff know that you are returning the animal(s) from foster. They will then have the Animal Care Team get the animal set up in a kennel. Please make sure to bring any extra supplies and/or write ups with you. Animals returning from foster do require an exam and behavioral evaluation before they can be made available, so please don’t panic if your animal isn’t immediately on the adoption floor or website!

Foster volunteers need to understand that returning their foster animal to LHS can be a very emotional time, even under the best of circumstances. When polled, foster volunteers overwhelmingly said their least favorite part of the foster program was returning the animal and not knowing if the animal was adopted, and to whom.

Everyone at LHS understands the mixed feelings foster parents have when returning their animal(s) to the shelter. Many staff members are also foster parents and have experienced these same emotions. Do not hesitate to speak of your feelings. You are never alone.

Every effort will be made to place your foster animal in the ideal home. You are always welcome to call LHS to find out the status of the animal. Privacy laws prohibit the shelter from disclosing the names of foster animals’ adopters. However, the foster department staff will gladly give you any general information that the adopters have provided on their adoption profile.

Foster volunteers give the animals they care for the best gift anyone could give – the beginning to a happy life in a loving home!
Adoption Process
Each adoption from LHS entails a questionnaire and evaluation process to ensure that the animal’s needs will be met by the potential adoptive family. A member of the Client Care Team at the adoption desk will assist the family through the adoption process. Most family members should meet the animal prior to adoption. Potential adopters are also told about the importance of diet, exercise, obedience classes, and how to best introduce the new animal to other animals already in the home. We stress that it is best to keep cats indoors and not to have cats declawed. If foster parents feel the animal needs a certain type of environment (such as a six-foot fence for dogs) we encourage them to provide this information to the Foster Care Department so it can be added to their profile and communicated to potential adopters. The Client Care Team does everything within their abilities to find the animal a loving, responsible, lifelong home.

When the animal is adopted, an adoption contract is signed and the adoption fee is paid. Handouts are available online or by request relating to common problems, supplies the animal may need (or enjoy) obedience classes, etc. If problems do occur, new adopters are encouraged to call us so we may help them work on the problem area. All dogs adopted through LHS come with free behavioral support for the life of the animal. Animals that have not been sterilized while in foster are spayed or neutered before going to their new home.

If a fostered animal needs to come out of adoptions for awhile (i.e., develops upper respiratory disease, kennel cough, or simply needs a break from the shelter life), the original foster parents may be contacted first to see if they would be willing to foster the animal again.

Know someone interested in one of your animals?
Sometimes foster parents know of people who might want to adopt their foster animal. Foster parents need to let these interested people know that they must go through the adoption process at LHS.

Foster parents should inform the interested party to contact the intake desk to set up an adoption hold on the animal(s)*. There is a fee associated with this hold. If the animal is able to be adopted, they will be called by our Client Care Team when the animal is made available. They will have 24 hours from the time the animal is made available to adopt. If they are still interested in the animal, they simply need to come into the shelter and go through the process described above. IPs should be informed that LHS cannot guarantee that every animal will qualify for adoption.

If you, the foster volunteer, want to adopt your foster animal, you will need to inform the foster care department so that we can place an IP hold on the animal. There is no fee for Foster Parent IP holds. You will also receive a 20% discount on the adoption fee and no dog/family meets are required for animals that have been in your home already. You will need to fill out the adoption application and have it approved by a Client Care staff member.

*Occasionally, there will be an existing IP on an animal. These are usually the finder (if the animal was stray) or occasionally a staff member. IPs are first come first served.
Thank you, Foster Volunteers!!!