

FOSTER CARE

A Guideline for Success



Kern County Animal Services

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Precautionary URI Advisement

Severe respiratory illnesses are being reported recently in concerning numbers nationwide. The signs and symptoms of this respiratory illness include:

- Persistent Cough
- Eye or nasal discharge
- Fever
- Lethargy and loss of appetite

In some cases, these symptoms have progressed into pneumonia and death. This illness is highly contagious to other animals, can be spread through direct contact or indirect contact through things like food bowls, toys, or blankets, and can be fatal. The Kern County Animal Shelter has had several dogs in its care recently that we believe were infected with this severe canine respiratory disease. As we navigate this situation, reducing the amount of animals in the shelter becomes vital. Fostering will be relied upon heavily to save lives and to afford our staff kennel space to properly disinfect animal habitats to provide a safe environment for future homeless and lost pets, but also to allow our medical professionals to treat those animals that do remain. But it is important to state that there is risk involved in fostering animals. That risk is primarily to other animals in your home. You must be able to commit to isolating your foster pet from other animals for a period of at least 10 days. If you have other pets in the home, it is important to take precautionary steps to keep all toys, food and water bowls, and blankets or beds separate from the other pets in the home.

Your foster pet will be receiving medications for you to take home, and it is important for you to ensure that these medications are given consistently. If your foster pet has mild symptoms, and those symptoms begin to become more severe (bloody mucous discharge or bloody stool for example), you will need to contact Animal Services right away for direction.

Director of Animal Services,

Nick Cullen

Canine Distemper Disclosure

Kern County Animal Services is cautioning all dog and puppy fosters to the potential risk of Distemper Virus after several dogs have come into the shelter with symptoms of the disease. Diagnostic testing has confirmed several cases of the serious and potentially fatal viral illness. Cats, kittens, and livestock are not affected by this virus and there is no risk associated with those animal populations. This virus is limited to dogs and other members of the Canidae family. It is not transmissible to humans.

Kern County Animal Services continues to perform diagnostic testing to determine if any symptomatic shelter dogs have contracted the virus.

What is canine distemper?

Canine Distemper is a very serious and often fatal viral illness that affects dogs. The illness can strike a dog at any age. However, young unvaccinated dogs and puppies are most susceptible to Canine Distemper. The virus is found in bodily secretions and spread via inhalation. Once inhaled, the virus can move to the lymph nodes and then to the blood, spreading to the respiratory, gastrointestinal, urogenital, and central nervous systems.

Canine Distemper cannot be cured, but it can be easily prevented. Puppies usually receive their first vaccination against the distemper virus at the age of about 6 weeks. The second vaccination is typically given a month later, or as recommended by a veterinarian. The Canine Distemper vaccine is recognized as one of the most effective vaccines and can offer protection within hours. Kern County Animal Services vaccinates every shelter dog in its care and urges animal guardians to make sure their animals are up to date on vaccinations.

While symptoms vary from dog to dog, runny nose, watery eyes, fever and lethargy, neurological symptoms like twitching, callusing of nose/foot pads, vomiting, diarrhea, and seizures can often be signs of distemper. The eye discharge, which can be mistaken for a simple cold, is often the first sign of a potential problem.

How is it transmitted?

The Distemper Virus is transmitted by coming in contact directly with an infected dog, or indirectly with its saliva or urine. The distemper virus can also spread through the air. Even the most stringent sanitation protocols cannot eliminate the risk at any shelter. Canine Distemper virus has an incubation period in which symptoms are not always recognizable upon intake.

Dear Foster Family:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your giving spirit toward the animals in our shelter by becoming a foster family. Our special foster families provide a safe and healthy environment for young animals to be able to grow; and injured, sick, or under-socialized animals a place to heal.

Since the inception of our Foster Care program, special participants, just like you, have saved thousands of dogs and cats, which would have otherwise been euthanized.

We have developed this manual to assist you with guidance and helpful tips to ensure the success for the duration of your foster animal's stay in your home.

Of course, you are always welcome to contact our staff at (661) 868-7130 or by emailing dogfoster@kerncounty.com (allow 24 hours for a response), if you need any assistance.

Types of Animals That Need Foster Homes

- Puppies or kittens too young to be adopted
- Dogs or cats that need socialization and love
- Injured dogs or cats recovering from surgery
- Sick dogs or cats
- An abandoned mother with a litter of kittens or puppies
- Any animal when the shelter becomes overcrowded.

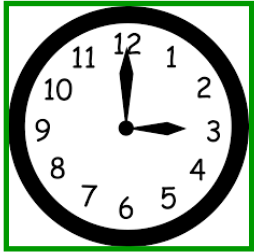
If the requirements included in the following section do not work well with your current schedule, please let us know. We can help you find a foster situation that will work better for your lifestyle.

Sincerely,

Kern County Animal Services

Foster Team

BASIC FOSTERING NEEDS



TIME

Are you able to devote the required time daily and weekly to your foster animal?

YES NO

Are you able to bring foster animals to the shelter for vaccinations and wellness exams every 1-2 weeks?

YES NO

Are you able to contact KCAS or bring foster animals to the emergency care facility quickly in an emergency?

YES NO



SPACE

Are you able to separate your foster animals from your household pets for at least two weeks to protect them from illnesses and allow for proper adjustment period?

YES NO

Are you able to handle cleaning procedures such as washing hands after every encounter and cleaning/disinfecting the animals' quarters routinely?

YES NO

Are you able to handle any potential home damage (carpet, clothing, and/or furniture) associated with animals?

YES NO



CARE

Are you prepared to handle sickness or possible death of your foster animal?

YES NO

Are you able to emotionally handle letting go of the foster animal after becoming attached once their foster period is over?

YES NO

Are you able to handle the potential of foster animals carrying illness that could affect your household animals/family?

YES NO

Getting yourself ready.....

What does KCAS provide to its Fosters?

- Resources: medical, and general assistance with caring for your foster dog.
- Certain supplies like crates, food, leashes/collars.
- All medical care for the dog as deemed appropriate by our medical staff.

How long do I keep a foster dog?

We ask that you keep your foster dog until adoption, or a rescue is found. We are unable to predict how long it will take for your foster dog to be adopted or sent to rescue as it is case specific. Young puppies are adopted very quickly, while adult dogs can take 1-2 months and sometimes longer.

What are my responsibilities as a foster?

- Provide a safe, clean, caring environment.
- Provide food, water, toys/enrichment, and shelter.
- Provide exercise and socialization as appropriate.
- Monitor any medical and/or behavioral problems.
- Transport to/from any necessary appointments at our shelter or outsource Veterinary hospital.
- Actively participate in marketing your foster dog.
- Carefully read all documents & carefully follow all instructions that KCAS provides

Preparing A Room for Fostering

When considering fostering animals, decide which room in your house works best. Due to the general area, a bathroom often works well in securing the animals is a safe room. When preparing any room in your house for foster animals the following guidelines will help you:

- A space where the temperature can be controlled.
- The space has been disinfected by using a mild bleach solution of 1 part bleach and 32 parts water.
- A space separate from other household pets.
- A space that can withstand messes such as spilt water or food, vomit, urine, feces, etc.
- A space where any electrical outlets or wires are blocked.
- A space where no breakable items are within reach of the foster animal.
- A space with no small items that can be easily swallowed.
- A space with windows secured by either being closed or with a secure screen.

Getting yourself set.....

Everything you need to care for your foster animal, including vet care, is provided free of charge.

Here are a few other tips for setting up properly for your foster's environment.

Dogs:

- Dogs should be kept indoors in a crate or in a separate room/office when unattended.
- Dogs must be on a leash at all times when outdoors unless there is a private secure fenced area. The recommended fence height is six (6) feet to prevent jumping of the fence.
- Foster dog/puppies are not permitted to go to dog parks, because:
 - Dog parks can be extremely dangerous environments, when there are no professionals at the dog park when conflicts arise.
 - Not every dog is nice or safe.
 - While dogs are social animals, they are individuals that do not like every dog they meet.
 - Dogs have a variety of play styles, and these play styles can be conflicting and instigate fights.

Puppies:

- Indoors a kitchen or bathroom is the best choice of environment.
- Puppies should be around humans for socialization purposes and should not be isolated.
- Puppies should be always kept in a crate when not under supervision. Crates are provided if available.
- Outdoors—only if supervised by an adult. Puppies younger than five (5) months should NEVER go to an off-leash area as they are not fully vaccinated.
- Puppies should not be exposed to other dogs or places frequented by other dogs due to the risk of diseases such as parvovirus.

Puppy Development:

In the first two weeks of life, puppies are helpless and vulnerable. They are still developing basic reflexes, their hearing and vision is still not fully developed, and they are unable to properly control their body temperatures. They should therefore be confined to a nursery area. Puppies should not be allowed to mingle with your own pets.

During the first 1-3 weeks of life puppies do not urinate or defecate on their own and require stimulation for elimination. Gently rub a warm cloth or cotton pad on the puppy's genital area and anus. This should be done before or after feeding.

Keeping the puppies clean from food and feces is vital for his or her health. If you notice your puppy has food, urine, or feces on him or her gently wipe the puppy down with a warm damp cloth or baby wipe. Be sure to dry the puppy well afterwards so they don't become chilled.

Socializing and handling the puppies is important, but please remember these animals are small and need to be gently handled. Closely supervise when children are assisting with the care of or are playing with the puppies.



Puppy Feeding



Types of Food: Never give a neonate puppy anything other than their specified formula which will be provided. No cow's milk which can cause serious illness in the puppy and may be fatal.

Powder Formula: Powder formula must be mixed for feedings. It is important to closely follow mixing directions: one part powder into two parts warm water. Diarrhea or constipation can be the result if the power food is not mixed properly in proper proportions. Formula is only good for 24 hours after mixed. After the formula has been heated up, it cannot be placed in the fridge or saved for the next feeding. It must be thrown out.

Feeding Etiquette:

- Only use clean nipples and bottles!
- Feed puppies one at a time. Place them on a countertop and allow them to feed with four paws on the counter and with a level head. This simulates how they would nurse from a mom.
- *Do not* feed a puppy while she is on her back. This can cause formula to go down the wrong way and end up in the lungs.
- Gently open the puppy's mouth with your finger and place the nipple on the tongue.
- Stroking the puppy can help them to eat.
- Pull lightly on the bottle. This promotes strong sucking.
- Tilt the bottle up slightly. This prevents the puppy from inhaling too much air.
- Do not squeeze the bottle to force formula into the puppy's mouth. This can cause formula to move into the lungs.
- After feeding, burp your puppy by gently massaging her back
- Be sure to stimulate the puppy after or before feeding. Stimulate them with a warm cloth if necessary.

Weaning: Weaning can occur at 4 to 5 weeks and should be conducted gradually. Create a gruel by mixing moistened dry food with water or canned food. Introduce them to solid food by offering warmed can food, mixed with a small amount of water into gruel, in a shallow dish. Begin by placing puppy to the side of the plate, he or she should start to eat, it may take a few tries for puppies to understand. If they are not interested, wait for few hours, and then try again. After they have accepted the gruel, gradually thicken it by adding less water. Begin to also offer dry food on a free feeding basis.

If the mother is present, she will usually begin weaning the puppies by discouraging them from nursing; however, some dogs will allow the nursing until the puppies are old enough for spay/neuter surgery. Some nursing activity is the canine equivalent of thumb-sucking, that is, for comfort only. Even if the puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be getting all the nutrition they need from mom. Make sure the puppies are eating food and gaining weight.

Cleaning Equipment: Keeping the puppies' nursing bottles and supplies clean is vital as this will prevent diarrhea, vomiting, or infection. Cleaning the bottles and nursing nipples is quite easy. Using hot, soapy water clean the bottle with a bottle brush. If you do not have a bottle brush, you may wash the bottle and nursing nipple in the dishwasher. You may place them in the silverware rack or in a dishwasher basket.



Additional Feeding Considerations: The digestive systems of puppies are fragile. Do not offer puppies treats. Only feed them the food which is provided by the Foster Team with Kern County Animal Services.

If the puppies are fighting over food, start to feed them separately. Contact the Foster Team for assistance.

Never take food away from a puppy that is growling. Simply remove the other puppies and wait for the food bowl to be unattended.

Puppy Feeding/Development Guide

| <u>WEEKS</u> | <u>FEEDING</u> | <u>DEVELOPMENT</u> |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0-1 | Bottle feed 1/2 tablespoon of formula every 2-3 hours, overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. If there is a mom dog, make sure that all puppies are nursing. Puppies can nurse from Mom for up to 45 minutes at a time. A lot of crying or activity should indicate a problem with Mom's milk supply. | At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep about 90% of the time and eat the other 10%. Puppies should be kept in a warm environment as chilling is the number one danger to newborn puppies |
| 1-2 | Bottle feed every 2-3 hours until puppies' bellies are full but not bloated. Overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. | Healthy puppies should be round and warm. When you pick up a puppy they should wiggle energetically, and healthy puppies seldom cry. The eyes will open between 8 and 14 days |
| 2-3 | Bottle feed every 2-3 hours until puppies' bellies are full but not bloated. Overnight feeding can be every 3-4 hours. | Puppies begin to crawl around and should be almost standing. They will begin to play with each other, biting ears, tails and paws before their teeth come in. They should be teething at this point. |
| 3-4 | Bottle feed formula every 4 hours until the puppies are full but not bloated. Puppies may start to lap from a bowl. Bottle feed as needed to keep puppies from crying with hunger | Puppies will start cleaning themselves. If they have a mother, she will continue to do most of the serious cleaning. |
| 4-5 | Puppies usually can drink and eat from a saucer by 4 weeks. Weaning should be done gradually (see Weaning Description in Puppy Care section). | Begin housebreaking at four weeks of age. This can be done by using training pad or taking the puppy to an outside secure fenced in area of your home. |
| 5-6 | Feed gruel 4 times a day. Thicken the gruel gradually by reducing the amount of water mixed with it. Introduce dry food and water. If you are fostering a litter with their mother, continue weaning. For reluctant eaters, try mixing puppy formula into the gruel. | At about 5 weeks, puppies can start to roam around the room, under supervision. The strongest, most curious puppy will figure out how to get out of the nest and the others will quickly follow. |
| 6-7 | By this age, puppies should be eating dry food well. Feed the puppies at least three meals a day. Puppies may not eat as much at a single sitting; they usually like to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day. | By this time, you will have "mini-dogs". They are able to wash themselves and play games with each other and you. |
| 7-8 | Offer dry food 3-4 time a day. Leave a bowl of water down for them to drink at will. <i>Do not feed the puppies table scraps.</i> | Continue playing and socializing with the puppies. You can even begin training such as sit, down, roll over and come when called. |

Example of Neonate Puppy Daily Weight and Feeding Record

| <u>NAME/ID</u> | <u>PUPPY 1</u> | <u>PUPPY 2</u> | <u>PUPPY 3</u> | <u>PUPPY 4</u> | <u>PUPPY 5</u> | <u>PUPPY 6</u> |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|

Date

Weight

Attitude

Milk volume

Stool/urine

Milk volume

Stool/urine

Milk volume

Stool/urine

Milk volume

Stool/urine

Milk volume

Stool/urine

Milk volume

Stool/urine

Fostering Moms

In some cases, moms are fostered together with her litter. There are a few things to keep in mind for this type of foster situation. Moms require a calm setting that has privacy and minimal activity. Stress can cause moms to stop taking care of their puppies.

Bringing Mom Home: You will need a separate space for a mom with her litter. When you first bring them home, leave them alone in their new space. The separate area may be referred to as a whelping box or nesting area. Mom will need some time, up to a few days, to adjust to her new space. Be sure to offer mom fresh food, water, and a clean nesting area.

Socialization: Even adult dogs need socialization; however, proceed slowly with any adult dog that you do not know. Create situations for socialization but let her come to you. Stop the session if you notice any negative signs, such as swishing tail, ears laid back, head jerk towards you, tensing up, move away, or growling. It is always best to move slowly and use caution when reaching into the nesting area.

Mom and Her Puppies: For the first few weeks, mom will do everything necessary to take care of her puppies. Puppies start nursing very soon after birth. Mom will also groom her puppies. It's best to leave the mom alone for the first two weeks except to feed and go outside for potty breaks.

Possible Issues with Mom

Maternal neglect: In some cases, about 8% of the time, puppies die from poor maternal care. There are a few causes of this. Some dogs lack maternal instincts, and in other cases, it is nature's way of handling sick or weak puppies. Environmental stress is an important factor, which is why it is important to create a calm environment for mom and the litter. Foster parents should watch for signs of maternal neglect. Call the Foster Team if you notice the mom avoids feeding and grooming her puppies and ignores their cries.

Maternal aggression: As mom protects her puppies, it is common for her to be aggressive towards humans or other animals. Do not try to introduce your household pets to your foster mom as this adds too much stress to the environment. If aggression becomes severe, call the Foster Team.



Fading Puppy Syndrome

Fading Puppy Syndrome is a life-threatening emergency in which a puppy, sometimes one that was previously healthy, “crashes” and begins to fade away. The signs can be very subtle and if not dealt with immediately, even mild symptoms can progress and cause death quickly.

If a puppy is fading during business hours and you need assistance, please come to the shelter. If you need assistance outside of our business hours, please call the emergency foster phone at 661-246-8267. For a fading puppy, there is nothing we can do beyond this protocol until they perk back up.

Causes:

- Hypothermia (too cold)
- Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)

Symptoms:

- Low Body Temperature – the puppy’s paws, gums, nose, or belly feels cool/cold to the touch
- Extreme Lethargy- not getting up, unable to stand, not responding when pet
- Gasping for breath
- Restless Crying

When any of these symptoms occur, it is vital that you take these immediate steps!

Step 1- Get them warm: Create the “burrito” towel. Immediately wrap the puppy up in a towel like a burrito leaving their face exposed only. Their whole body, tail, ears, and paws should be in the towel, only nose and mouth exposed. Do not take the puppy out of the towel to adjust them, check on them, etc.- this is very important! Every time you take them out you will make them cold again, even if it is only for a second. Wrap a heating pad turned on LOW around the burrito towel as an EXTRA source of heat.

Step 2- Get their blood sugar up: Once you get the heat on them, give them Karo Syrup! Use a syringe, your finger, a Q tip or whatever you have available to give the puppy 3 drops every 3 minutes into the mouth (on the tongue or on the gums). You should see some improvement in about 20 minutes, if low blood sugar is the cause of the symptoms.

Step 3- Once the puppy has perked up, wait at least 30 minutes before attempting to feed the puppy a fresh, warm meal. If you feed them too soon, their organs may not be prepared, which could shock their system and they can start fading again.

REMEMBER, even with all the love and attention and perfect treatment of this condition, some fading puppies still won’t make it. Try not to blame yourself during this difficult time. This puppy was

BASIC TRAINING TIPS



Mouthing:

- Puppies are born with instincts to bite. One of the most important things they learn, as a puppy, is how to control the strength of their bite.
- Puppies naturally train each other how to bite. When one puppy bites another too hard, the other puppy yelps loudly and stops playing.
- As a foster parent, you can play this role. Any time a puppy mouths with too much force, yelp loudly. If the puppy stops biting, then praise her/him lavishly. If the puppy continues biting, turn your back on the puppy and walk away. After ten seconds or so, resume playing happily.
- Remember, Mouthing is important! A puppy who is never allowed to mouth will grow up to have a hard bite.
- Never scold, tap on the nose, or yell no at a puppy who is biting. Bite inhibition is a crucial development for puppies. A puppy who is punished for biting can turn into an adult with unsafe jaws (because they do not know their jaw strength). Simply yell “ouch” when a puppy bites too hard.

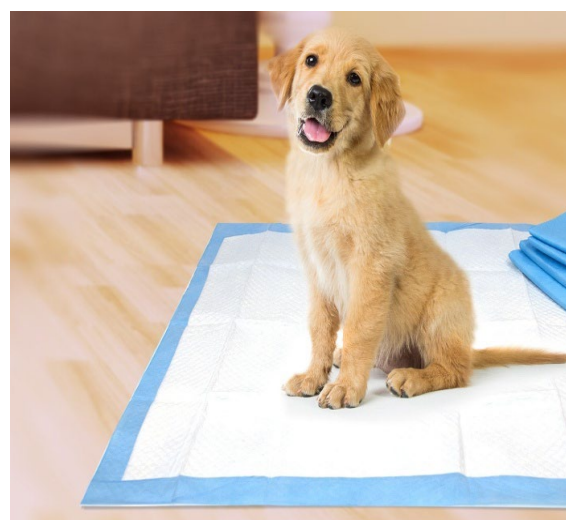


House training: We always want to set our puppies up for success and doing so in the house-training process is essential! Puppies should have frequent breaks and be taken outside to the same spot to relieve themselves every 30—60 minutes when active (when waking up from a nap, after drinking or eating, and after a play session). A puppy can hold his/her bladder one hour for each month of age (i.e.: 2 months = 2 hours; 3 months = 3 hours).

Remember these five steps to successful house training:

1. Prevent accidents
2. Reward going to the bathroom
3. Anticipate bathroom needs
4. Interrupt accidents and avoid punishing
5. Clean up accidents with enzyme cleaner

Pee Pads: For Puppies five weeks and under: Place puppies on pee pads immediately after waking up, after eating, and about once an hour. Praise the puppy enthusiastically every time he/she urinates or defecates on the pad. Change the pads frequently, as puppies tend to chew on pee pads.



Crate Training: House training and crate training go hand in hand. A crate can be a great tool to use for your puppy, but it can also be misused. The crate should be big enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and stretch out; we will make sure you go home with the correct size, but your puppy may grow. Please let us know if you need a larger crate.

Your foster puppy/dog should have a short-term confinement area, such as the crate, and long-term confinement area, such as an x-pen or baby gated section of the house or room.

If you are beginning to crate train, feed you puppy in the crate, provide stuffed chew toys only in the crate, and/or play crate games to build a positive association with the crate. Keep sessions short and fun and have your puppy in the crate for short periods of time when you are home.

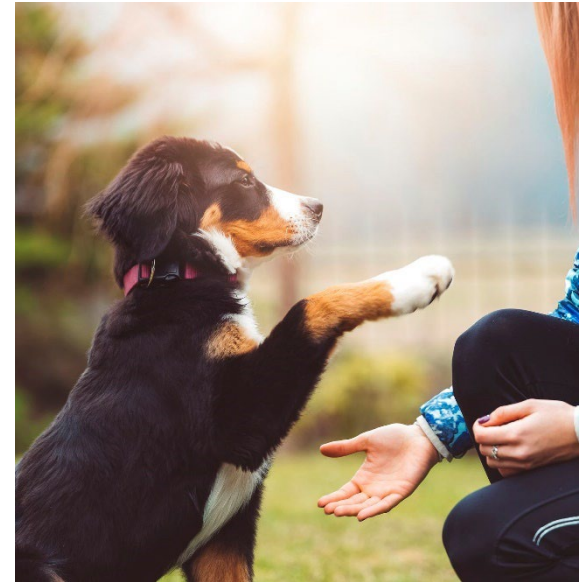
Never use a crate as a form of punishment for your foster puppy or kitten.



Toys: Having toys available for your puppy is vital for their mental health and development. A selection of toys is best such as plush squeak toys, rope toys, stuffed Kongs, and teething toys.

Socialization: From 3 weeks to 3 months, puppies are biologically primed to learn that new sights, sounds, smells, objects, environments, and people are fun and safe. This is the most crucial and sensitive period in a puppy's life.

Socialization is not simply exposing a puppy to a variety of people, places, and things, but using positive proactive socialization training. Each new person the puppy meets should be a wonderful experience with treats and toys. Take things slow if your puppy seems fearful of the new person, place, or thing.



Training: Positive Reinforcement: As a foster parent, there will be many situations for you to train your animal. Kern County Animal Services Department only promotes training using positive reinforcement. Decades of research and scientific study concludes that Positive Reinforcement training is the most humane and effective method of training.

Do not scold or punish bad behavior.

- When an unwanted behavior is offered/performed re-direct the puppy with a kissy noise or toy. Praise and reward the puppy for stopping the undesired behavior and giving you attention.
- Punishment can instill fear, which can lead to aggressive behavior.
- Praise and reward good behavior.
- When a behavior is immediately followed by a positive outcome. that behavior is strengthened.

Reference books for additional training tips:

Perfect Puppy in 7 Days: How to Start Your Puppy Off Right by Dr. Sophia Yin

Puppy Start Right: Foundation Training for Companion Dog by Dr. Kenneth Martin & Debbie Martin

SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST

Socializing your puppy to these items/actions is as easy as touching your puppy's paw and giving a treat, having a man with a hat give a treat as he walks by or saying hello and giving affection.

PEOPLE

- MEN — tall, bearded, variety of ethnicities, younger, older, men with canes/walkers/crutches, men with hats, etc.
- WOMEN — tall younger, variety of ethnicities, older, with purse, with walker/canes/crutches, etc.

BEHAVIORS

- Laughing
- Talking loudly
- Walking
- Jogging
- Running

ITEMS

- Vacuums
- Mops
- Brooms
- Bicycles
- Skateboards
- Lawnmower








SURFACES

- Grass
- Concrete
- Stairs
- Carpet
- Tile
- Hardwood

HEALTH & GROOMING

- Nail clippers
- Feet being touched
- Ears being touched
- Tails being touched

MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH

| Uh, oh. Constipation | | Normal | | Eek, diarrhea | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type 1 | Type 2 | Type 3 | Type 4 | Type 5 | Type 6 | Type 7 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Small, hard dry bits akin to rabbit poop | Lumpy and sausage-shaped and it's dry to boot | Cracked surface with sausage-shape but it's slightly moist | Long, smooth and soft snake-like shape, wet in appearance | Soft, distinct blobs | Fluffy with ragged edges | Watery, no solid pieces to be found |
| Hard to pass | Hard to pass | Thumbs up | You're still ok! | Easy to pass | Mushy pea-esque | Entirely liquid |
| Add Water & Fiber | | Keep up the good work! | | Add Fiber | | |


Diarrhea:

There are three types of stools: normal, soft and diarrhea, Normal stool is firm and has a definite shape. Soft stool is not firm but still has some shape. Diarrhea is liquid, with or without color to it. Diarrhea is common and can be caused by parasites, viruses, bacteria, food change, stress, overfeeding and other issues.

Diarrhea must be monitored as it can lead to dehydration. If the foster is active, mild diarrhea that occurs for 24 hours is not a concern. Feed the foster less at a time, but more often, If the diarrhea is severe, lasts more than 24-36 hours or contains blood/parasites, call the Foster Team to schedule a recheck.

Vomiting:

Vomiting is not serious unless it happens continuously or is accompanied with diarrhea. It can lead to dehydration. If vomiting lasts longer than 24 hours, call the Foster Team right away.

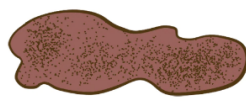


Vomiting
vs.
Regurgitation

- Forceful ejection of stomach and upper intestinal contents
- Can contain yellow bile or partially digested dog food
- Usually smells sour and involves heaving


- Mild ejection of undigested food from the esophagus
- Does not involve abdominal heaving
- Tends to happen just after eating

TYPES OF VOMIT




GRANULAR

- Often food-related
- Somewhat liquid
- Granules look like coffee grounds
- May see blood
- Partially digested food



CHUNKY

- Often food-related
- Can see food pieces
- Food hasn't been digested
- Happens soon after eating
- Dog ate quickly or ran after eating



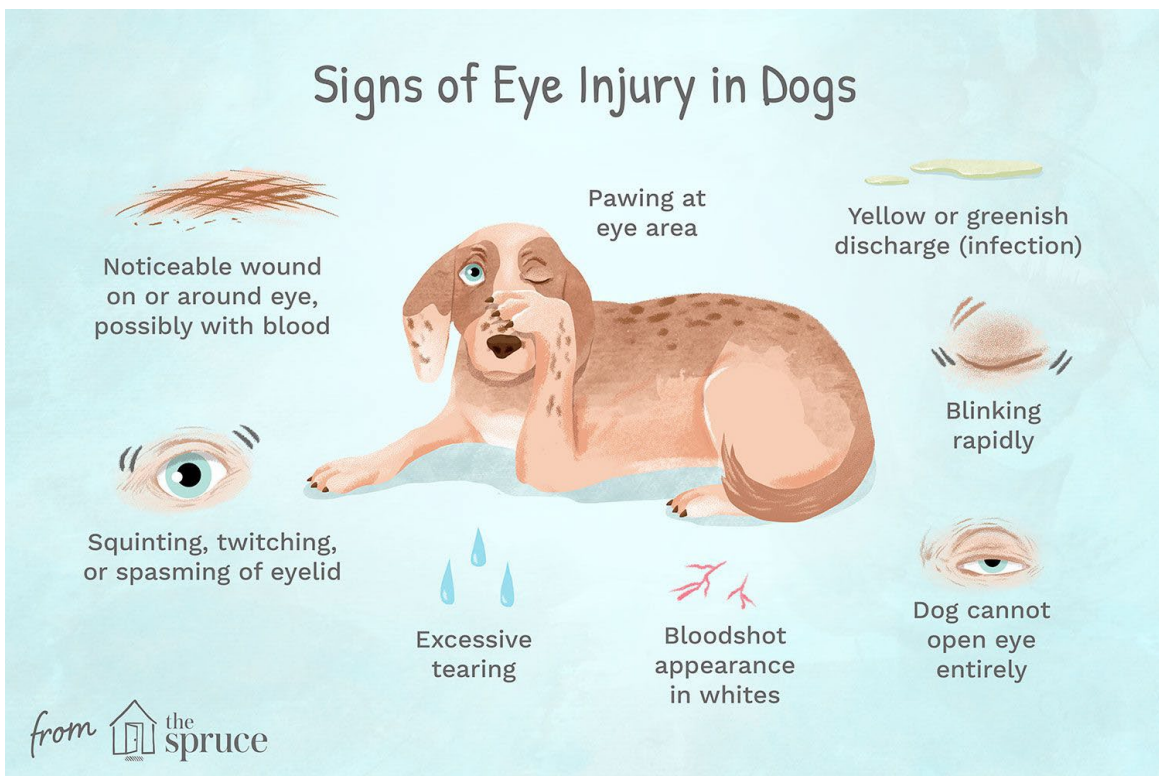
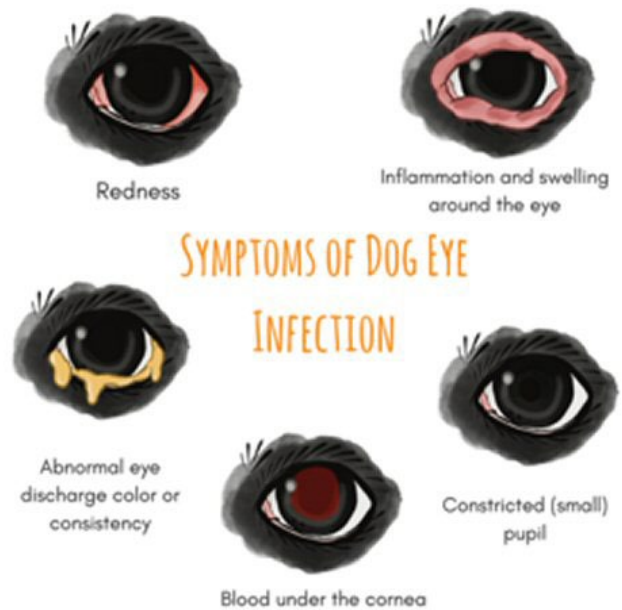
LIQUID

- Not food-related
- Can be foamy or slimy
- May be yellow or clear
- Can be confused with kennel cough symptoms

MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH

Eye Discharge:

It is normal for animals to have little pieces of crust in their eyes after waking up. If you see continuous yellow or green discharge, swollen or closed eyes call the Foster Team to schedule a recheck. You can use a warm, damp towel to wipe the affected eye(s).



MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH

Parasites:

Fosters are dewormed upon intake and at every recheck. Parasites are commonly found in the stool of puppies and kittens. Tapeworms may look like grains of rice and can be seen in stool or around the anus. Roundworms look like spaghetti and can be seen in the stool or in vomit. If you notice worms, schedule a recheck on waitwhile.

COMMON WORMS THAT DOGS & CATS GET



ROUNDWORMS

You can see roundworms in your dog's poop. They'll look a lot like spaghetti. Your dog may look pot-bellied and he may feel lethargic.



HOOKWORMS

Hookworms are 1/8 to 3/4 inch long and have a hook that attaches to the intestinal lining. Diarrhea and vomiting are the usual symptoms.



WHIPWORMS

Whipworms are about 2 inches long and tapered at one end, like a whip. Symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, and weightloss.



TAPEWORMS

Whole tapeworms are flat and about 6 inches long. Usually you'll see the broken-off segments looking like grains of rice in your dog's poop.

MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH



Ear Mites:

Ear mites are parasites that live in the ear canal. You may notice a bald spot behind their ears due to continuous scratching. They may also violently shake their head. The ears may smell bad, and you may see brown discharge that resembles coffee grounds. Ear mites are contagious to other animals and need to be treated. Call the Foster Team if you notice any of these symptoms.

Fleas:

Animals that have fleas will scratch themselves often. Topical flea prevention is given to fosters four weeks of age. Flea prevention for puppies under 4 weeks of age includes daily brushings with a flea comb and daily bedding change. If you still notice a sign of fleas, you can wash the puppy in a small amount of Dawn® dish soap followed by using a flea comb to remove any remaining fleas. Be sure to thoroughly dry him/her following a bath. Baths should not be given more than once every 1-2 weeks. If you still notice signs of fleas, call Foster Team to schedule a recheck.



MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH



Ringworm:

Ringworm is a contagious fungus that can be spread to other animals and humans. A sign of ringworm is thinning hair or patches of hair loss. Ringworm is difficult to remove from your house. To help with prevention and spreading maintain cleaning protocols and a good hand washing routine. Email the foster team or schedule an appointment on waitwhile.

Mange:

Mange is caused by parasites that infect the skin of animals. Some forms of mange are contagious to other animals and humans. The symptoms include itching, hair loss and sores. If you notice these symptoms, email the foster team or schedule an appointment on waitwhile.

MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH

Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URI):

URIs are common and are caused by contagious viruses and bacteria. Signs to look for:

- Sneezing and discharge from eyes/nose
- Contested breathing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Dehydration
- Coughing
- If you notice any of these signs, please contact the Foster Team to schedule a recheck, or bring into the shelter during normal business hours. Dog must stay in the car when you come for your appointment.

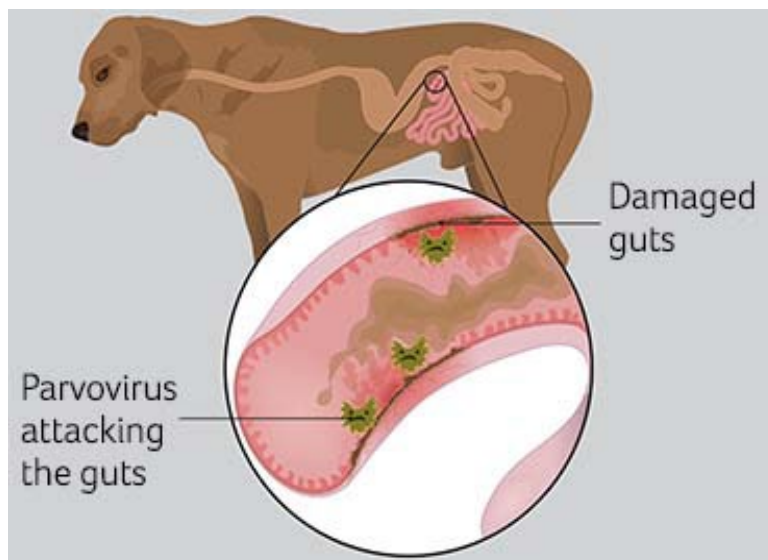


Parvovirus:

Parvovirus is a deadly and contagious virus that attacks a dog's gastrointestinal tract. Once parvovirus is present in an environment it is difficult to remove. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated feces.

Signs to look for:

- Lethargy
- Dehydration
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain and bloating
- Fever
- Low body temperature
- Vomiting
- Severe diarrhea with or without blood



If you notice any of these signs, immediately contact the Foster Team to schedule a recheck, or bring to the shelter during normal business hours.

MAINTAINING FOSTER HEALTH

Distemper:

Distemper is a highly contagious and fatal disease that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous systems. It is transmitted through direct contact with contaminated saliva, blood, or urine. If you notice any of these signs immediately contact the Foster Team, schedule a recheck appointment on waitwhile, or bring to the shelter during normal business hours. Dog must stay in the car when you come for your appointment.



Fading Puppies:

Occasionally, a puppy that appeared healthy will suddenly stop thriving. They will stop growing, socializing, and crawling. They will begin to lose weight and may cry continuously. When this happens, they fade quickly and, even with medical intervention, may not survive 48 hours.

There is no understood cause for this condition. Occasionally, puppies die in foster care. If this should occur contact the Foster Team for information concerning the disposition of remains.

LEVELS OF EMERGENCY FOR FOSTERS

Please review the information below to determine what type of emergency and what to do.

Green: send an email to DOGFOSTER@KERNCOUNTY.COM

- One episode of vomiting or diarrhea
- Reverse sneezing or regular sneezing
- Itchy eyes
- Water eyes
- Broken nail
- Hot spot/skin irritation
- Visible worm in stool
- Fleas & Ticks

Yellow: Send an email & schedule a Foster Recheck on WAITWHILE

- Vomiting for more than 24 hours or more than once/twice daily
- Cut or puncture wound
- Lethargy and low appetite/not eating
- Green nasal discharge
- Limping
- Diarrhea for more than 24 hours
- Straining to urinate/blood in urine
- Chewed or removed sutures or staples
- Coughing

Red: Immediate Phone Call to Emergency Line (661) 246-8267

- Dog Bite/broke skin
- Bleeding profusely
- Hit by car or otherwise seriously injured
- Having trouble breathing
- Unresponsive
- Ingested a dangerous item
- Unable to stand or walk
- Seizure/disoriented/ataxia
- Dog ran away

If you have non-emergency questions about the health of your foster animal, please email dogfoster@kerncounty.com and give our foster team 24 hours to respond. If an emergency should arise **during regular hours of operation**, and you cannot get a hold our Foster Team, please come directly to the shelter. If your foster animal has an emergency that occurs outside the normal hours of operation, please call the emergency # 661-246-8267.

Kern County Animal Services Department must approve any/all treatment for foster pets.

NO MATTER WHAT LEVEL OF EMERGENCY, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU BE AS DETAILED AS POSSIBLE IN YOUR DESCRIPTION SO THAT OUR STAFF CAN BEST ASSIST YOU.

VETERINARY CARE

Routine Veterinary Care:

Routine veterinary care is provided by the Medical Team at Kern County Animal Services Department during normal business hours. The Foster Team will work directly with the shelter's Medical Team to manage the health and well-being of each foster pet or litter. After hours, one of the shelter's Supervisors will take calls when emergencies arise. In the event of an emergency after hours, the Supervisor will instruct the foster parent or family of the appropriate steps to take.

Kern County Animal Services Department has a policy that we will not reimburse individuals for vet bills for foster animals when taken for veterinary care outside of that which is pre-authorized by the Kern County Animal Services Department.

Scheduling Rechecks:

Foster animal(s) are required to return to the shelter every two weeks for vaccinations, deworming and general exams unless otherwise discussed. All rechecks require an appointment, which can be scheduled on Waitwhile.

Recheck times are as follows:

- Monday 10 AM to 4 PM
- Tuesday 10 AM to 4 PM
- Wednesday 2 PM to 7 PM
- Thursday 10 AM to 4 PM
- Friday 10 AM to 4 PM

How to schedule appointment on Waitwhile

Go to, app.waitwhile.com/welcome/kcasdogfoster

1. Schedule an Appointment
2. Foster Dog Recheck
3. Select Date & Time (it will pull up the next available app)
4. Enter all required information.



If for any reason you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment, please email the Foster Team or reschedule on waitwhile.

Vaccines:

Puppies receive vaccinations every two weeks from the time they are newborn until they are 16 weeks or unless otherwise directed by our veterinarians. Animals 12 weeks and older receive a Rabies vaccine.

Dogs and puppies receive the Canine DHPP (Canine Distemper, Adenovirus Type2, Parainfluenza-Parvovirus), and Bordetella.

BITE PROTOCOL

Please follow this protocol if your foster dog bites you, a member of your household, or anyone else. Note: Dog to dog bites and any injuries caused to another animal should be reported to the Dog Foster Coordinator.

If a bite occurs:

1. Immediately remove the foster dog to a safe environment, i.e., a crate or other option that both prevents further injury to the person and provides a calm environment for the dog.
2. Report the incident immediately to the Dog Foster Team via email. If it is an emergency or you need immediate assistance, call emergency number. If you do not receive a timely response, contact the KCAS at 661-868-7100 option #2.
3. Your email should include a detailed description of the incident and photos of any injuries (this can be done in a follow up email).
4. The Dog Foster Team will determine the dog's future placement.

If the bite resulted in an injury, follow these additional steps:

1. With the person injured, assess the need for medical care. (See next page.)
2. The Dog Foster Team will verify the status of the dog's rabies vaccination and provide you with proof thereof, as needed. Note: By California law, puppies under the age of 3 months will not have been vaccinated for rabies.
3. If the bite broke the skin (deep scratch, puncture wound, bleeding), it may be necessary to quarantine the foster dog for 10 days. This can usually be done in the foster home or, in some cases, may require a dog to serve the quarantine at the Kern County Animal Services. If the dog that bit is given a clean bill of health after 10 days, it could not have passed on the rabies virus at the time of the bite.

| DOG BITE PREVENTION | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Statistics About Dog Bites:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most dog bites are directed towards children.• Most dog bites are from the family pet rather than the strange dog on the street. | <p>Reasons a Dog Might Bite:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scared• Startled• Needs Space• Guarding a Resource• In Pain• And others. . . |
| <p>Important to Remember:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ANY breed of dog can bite.• Even "friendly" dogs can bite.• Biting is part of every dog's communication toolbox. | <p>Preventing a Dog Bite:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review dog body language.• Teach kids how to recognize body language warning signs.• Don't punish the dog for giving warning signs (moving away, growling, air snapping). |

BITE PROTOCOL

Bite Assessment/Wound Care:

Immediately rinse the bite wound(s) with Betadine solution. If that is not available, rinse the wound in running water for 5 minutes and do not use soap. We recommend that people seek medical care after any bite. However, if the person is undecided if medical attention is needed, here are some guidelines:

- Did the bite break the skin?
 - If no, no further action is required.
 - If yes, see below depending on the type of wound:
- Scratches: Watch for signs of possible infection - swelling, redness, abnormal discharge. If any of those symptoms occurs, seek medical attention.
- Punctures: The person bitten may need oral antibiotics. Please seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY to prevent sepsis, loss of function, or even death.
- Bleeding: Apply pressure directly to the wound to try to stop the bleeding. If the bleeding is severe call 911.

Bites are a very dangerous issue and must be reported immediately per the instructions above. Reporting is especially important for a bite involving an unvaccinated dog. In addition, reporting a bite and the circumstances surrounding a bite enables our team to develop a more customized plan for your foster dog.

Appropriate medical treatment is also crucial. An infected bite can cost thousands of dollars if not treated immediately and as stated above, can cause sepsis, loss of function, or even death.

KCAS IS NOT liable for any damages relating to a bite or responsible for any medical bill or other cost associated with a bite (including any injury to another animal). However, we can often provide suggestions on what to do after a bite occurs. If you choose not to seek medical help, KCAS IS NOT liable for any resulting consequences.

NEARING THE FINISH LINE....

Spay/Neuter Surgery:

During a scheduled visit, the Foster Team may decide to accept the pet or litter back for adoption. If this is the case, surgery may be scheduled. If scheduled for a later day, you will continue foster care and bring the pet in on the morning of the scheduled surgery. We use the following guidelines to determine when the foster animal is ready to be returned for surgery.

- Are the puppies old enough or did they gain enough weight for surgery?
- Are the successfully weaned from their mother?
- Have they been successfully socialized?
- Is your foster healthy and recovered fully from the illness or injury?

THE DAY OF SURGERY

- No food or water after midnight the night before. If for any reason the animal happened to eat or drink, please notify staff when dropping the animal off.
- Drop off time for surgery is 8am, for shelter surgery.
- Drop off time for the outsource vet is 7:30am.
- Pick up time for shelter surgery is between 3-4pm.
- Pick up time for outsource vets is 3pm-4pm.



READY FOR ADOPTION!

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE SAVED A LIFE!

How do pets in foster care get adopted?

We encourage all foster parents to actively promote their foster pets by sharing them with friends, family, and potential adopters. Providing updated photos, videos, and a short bio about your foster pet helps us showcase their unique personality and increases their chances of adoption. Once the pet is altered, we also encourage foster parents to attend our offsite adoption events. These opportunities help introduce your foster pet to a wider audience and connect them with potential adopters. If the animal is ready for adoption, we can put the animal on our adoption floor to be seen by the public and potential adopter. Kern County Animal Services Department Foster Program is for adoptable animals and/or animals waiting for rescue. This foster program has been quite successful due to the community's help!

Can foster parents adopt their foster animal?

You bet! Foster parents have first choice to adopt their foster pet. Adoption fees will apply.

