



**OPERATION
KINDNESS**

The Original No Kill Animal Shelter

FOSTER
HANDBOOK
PUPPIES



Dear Foster Parent,

Thank you for joining the Operation Kindness foster family opening your heart and home to dogs and cats in need. By providing foster for just one dog or cat you are saving two lives, the one that comes home with you, and the animal which takes its place.

As a foster with Operation Kindness we will provide needed supplies. Every animal going into foster care will receive on-going medical care at Operation Kindness through our on-site hospital. Supplies which are provided to foster include, but are not limited to: crates, play pens, bedding, weight scale, formula, puppy and kitten food, litter boxes and litter.

We provide this handbook to act as a manual for fostering. Included are the shelter's policies and procedures for animal care, medical care and adoption. These policies and procedures will include daily care and the recording of health and behavior, plan of action in case of an emergency, and the steps to take if someone is interested in adopting your foster pet. Please be sure to read through the entirety of the handbook.

Thank you again for joining our foster family and for caring so much about the animals. Please feel free to contact the shelter at any time with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephani Coe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S' and 'C'.

Stephani Coe & The Operation Kindness Foster Team



TABLE OF CONTENTS

○ OPERATION KINDNESS Hours of Operation.....	3
○ OPERATION KINDNESS 101 AND MISSION STATEMENT.....	4
○ FOSTER EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST	5
○ OPERATION KINDNESS FOSTER GUIDELINES.....	6
○ ADOPTION INFORMATION.....	8
○ RAISING PUPPIES: BEFORE YOU GET STARTED	9
○ CARE OF PREGNANT MOMS	11
○ LABOR AND BIRTHING	11
○ BOTTLE BABIES.....	11
○ SIGNS OF ILLNESS AND WHAT TO DO.....	13
○ SOCIALIZING Puppies.....	15
○ WHAT TO EXPECT: AGE 2-4WEEKS	17
○ WHAT TO EXPECT: AGE 5WEEKS – 7 WEEKS	18
○ WHAT TO EXPECT: AGE 8+WEEKS	20
○ SCHEDULING SURGERY AND RETURN FOR ADOPTION	20
○ SEPARATION ANXIETY.....	21
○ WHAT TO DO IF YOUR FOSTER GETS OUT.....	23
○ VACCINE SCHEDULE	25
○ WEIGHT TRACKING HANDOUT	26



Operation Kindness
3201 Earhart Dr. Carrollton TX 75006
972-418-7297

Adoption Hours

Monday 12pm-7pm **Tuesday** –Closed **Wednesday** 12pm-7pm **Thursday** 12pm-7pm
Friday – Sunday 11am-5pm

Available Hours

Monday 7am-7pm **Tuesday** 7am-6pm **Wednesday** 7am-7pm **Thursday** 7am-7pm
Friday - Sunday 7am-6pm

Medical Emergencies Seeking Permission for Vet Care

During the Day: Vet Tech Line 972-428-3802
After Hours: Stephani Coe 214-240-5739



Operation Kindness 101

- Operation Kindness is the oldest and largest no-kill shelter in North Texas.
- On average, we have between 300-350 dogs and cats at the shelter, with another 100-150 in foster.
- 2016 was a record adoption year with over 4566 adoptions.
- Operation Kindness is registered as a nonprofit corporation in the State of Texas, and has 501(c) (3) nonprofit statuses. We are 100% funded by donation.
- All donations to Operation Kindness are tax-deductible.
- We have a fully functional animal hospital on site with surgery and isolation. All spay and neuter surgery is performed in-house.
- We have a volunteer force of over 2500+.

Operation Kindness Mission Statement

The mission of Operation Kindness is to care for homeless cats and dogs in a no-kill environment until adopted into responsible homes and to advocate humane values and behavior.

We:

- Never euthanize one animal to make space for another.
- Provide high quality veterinary care to the animals in our shelter and foster homes.
- Educate the public about responsible pet ownership and the importance of spaying and neutering



Foster Contact List

Stephani Coe Foster Manager

Scoe@operationkindness.org

Cell- 214-240-5739 (Call or Text)

Work- 972-428-3804

On-site Mon- Friday 8am-5pm

Operation Kindness Medical Team

Christy Gray – Vet Technician Manager

cgray@operationkindness.org

Work – 972-428-3823

Onsite Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat

Vet Technicians

vettech@operationkindness.org

Work – 972-428-3802

Business Hours: Mon, Wed and

Thurs 7am – 7 Friday – Sunday 7-6pm

Vettechs@operationkindness.org

Client Services

972-418-7297

ClientServices@operationkindness.org

Available Monday – Sunday 11am – 5pm

Who Do I Call When...?

- General foster questions, re-fill on supplies, behavior questions?
 - Stephani Coe

- Change in eating, diarrhea, any medical issue
 - During the day – vet tech line 972-428-3802
 - After Hours – Stephani Coe 214-240-5739

- Schedule a time bring foster in to see the vet, or to come in for vaccinations/ boosters
 - Stephani Coe, Vet Techs

- Medical Emergency/ Seeking permission for vet care– 6pm.
 - During the Day- Vet Tech 972- 428-3802
 - After Hours –Stephani Coe 214-240-5739

Approved Emergency Clinics

****Fosters must get approval before seeking outside medical treatment**

North Texas Emergency Pet Clinic **1712 W. Frankford Rd #108**



Foster Animal Guidelines

Animals are accepted into foster care at Operation Kindness for several reasons. Among the animals who need fostering are dogs rescued from other shelters, pregnant or orphaned animals, underage puppies and kittens, animals recovering from certain illnesses or treatments, those in need of socialization. Provided below are general foster guidelines for all animals in the Operation Kindness foster program. Additionally, we will include instructions for caring for nursing mothers, orphaned puppies and for dogs who are recovering from medical treatment or injury.

Housing

All foster animals must be housed inside in a clean environment. Animals should not be kept outside, or in a garage. Operation Kindness will provide a crate for animals to sleep and stay in during the day if needed. Operation Kindness highly recommends cleaning the area or room where the foster resides on a continual basis. This can be done with warm water and non-toxic cleaner. We do recommend disinfecting the area where your foster was housed once they return to the shelter or are adopted.

Food and Water

Before leaving the shelter, an Operation Kindness staff person will go over the proper amounts and times to feed your foster animal. When possible Operation Kindness will provide food for your animal. Food is very important for both dogs and cats. A shelter employee should be contacted immediately if your foster loses their appetite, or begins to consume less food, as this can be a symptom of illness.

Water should be available to your foster at all times. Similar to food, your foster's water intake should be monitored daily, and the medical department informed if your foster begins drinking more than normal, or if they stop drinking water.

Exercise

Exercise is needed for each dog going into foster, this can be daily walks or playing fetch in the back yard. This is also a great opportunity to bond with your foster. Foster dogs should not be left alone in a back yard, the shelter does not know if the animal is an escape artist and with enough determination almost any dog can jump a fence.

Interaction with Children

While Operation Kindness does try to screen each animal before going into foster it is hard to know which ones will do well with children. Children should always be supervised when interacting with a shelter

animal no matter how comfortable the animal may seem. Parents, be sure to reinforce polite interactions with dogs and cats (soft petting, no rough play, etc).

Interaction with Persons outside the Household

Socialization is very important with shelter animals: the more types of people the animal is comfortable around, the better its chances for adoption. We encourage fosters to introduce their animals to new people in a slow calm manner. Again, all interactions should be supervised to make sure the foster pet does not become stressed or overwhelmed.

Interaction with Family Pets

Dog to dog introductions are best completed outside, beginning on leash and then dropping the leashes when both dogs show signs of being calm (relaxed facial structure, no tension in the body, low to mid tail wag, soft eyes, ears up.) Introducing young puppies or kittens to family pets is not recommended unless you know the foster animal is free of illness. Our recommendation is to keep owned and shelter pets separated for the first two weeks of foster. Operation Kindness is not liable if your pet contracts illness from a foster pet.

Separation Anxiety and Shelter Dogs

Separation Anxiety can be very common in shelter dogs. Signs of separation anxiety in dogs are: howling barking, or lack of emotional control when you leave the dog alone (in extreme cases this can lead to destructive behavior) attempts at escaping when outside, or becoming a "Velcro Dog" and not wanting to leave your side. If you notice any of these symptoms with your foster contact the shelter to speak with the on-staff trainer.



Adoption Information

It's not uncommon for fosters to have friends and family express interest in adopting their foster animals. While we encourage fosters to help find homes, it is important to keep in mind Operation Kindness' adoption policies and screening process. If you do have someone who is serious candidate for adoption, and they meet the criteria below, the following steps can be taken.

1. Contact the foster manager and let them know you have someone interested in adoption. They will place a memo on the animal's file stating there is a possible adopter.
2. When the animal(s) return for spay/neuter, have the potential adopter fill out an application either on-line (operationkindness.org) or in person during open hours
3. If the adopter is approved they will be able to adopt the animal once it becomes available. This generally will be the day after their surgery, or on Wednesday if surgery is performed on Monday (OPK is closed Tuesday)
4. Adoption paperwork can be completed during Operation Kindness open hours
 - ☒ All adopters, even fosters must pay the animals adoption fee of \$135 for cats and \$185 for dogs.

Adoption Policies

- ***18 years of age or older***
- ***Have current photo ID***



Operation Kindness Foster Care Raising Puppies

Before Bring Fosters into Your Home

- A foster animal could potentially carry illness into your home that could affect your resident animals' (or humans') health. To protect other dogs, foster animals should be separated from household pets for at least two weeks. This means that you should also prohibit the sharing of food and water bowls and toys.
- To protect people, young children should not handle the foster puppies unsupervised and everyone should wash their hands after handling animals and their fecal waste.
- Puppies should be de-fleaed before they enter your home and as often as necessary to keep fleas off of them. Note that fleas can spread disease among your animals, and to people as well.
- You should **wash your hands** with soap and water before handling your own animals or children and you may also want to change clothes.
- You should routinely disinfect the foster puppy's quarters and disinfect the entire premises before new puppies are introduced.

The best way to disinfect the area is to remove all organic material and fecal debris and then soak with a mild bleach solution (1-part bleach to 32 parts water) for at least 30 minutes in a well-ventilated room. All surfaces, bowls, toys etc. need to be disinfected (so you probably want to keep puppies in a room without carpeting. We recommend hardwood floors, tile, etc).

- It is possible even with these precautions that resident dogs could be exposed to mild infections such as URI. Ask the foster coordinator for more information if this is a concern.

Supplies You Will Need

- **Swimming pool** (whelping pool), play pen or half of a large airline crate. This will be where the puppies will stay while they are with their mother. It is important to have a structure big enough for the dogs to move around and with walls that will keep the puppies in. Some fosters have utilized their bathtub for smaller litters.
- **Newspaper:** Keep several layers in the bottom of the box, and they will come in handy when the puppies start to roam around the room. Newspaper will need to be changed daily if not several times a day. Some fosters prefer to use sheets or fleece blankets which can be quickly laundered and re-used.
- **Water bowls** should be heavy and impossible to tip. Water bowls should also be stainless steel or porcelain/ceramic, NOT plastic, as plastic is difficult to disinfect because it is porous. Water bowls should be kept outside of the whelping pool or box puppies will get all nutrients from their mother until around 4-6 weeks of age.

- **Food bowls:** Operation Kindness will provide puppy feeders when the pups begin to be weaned from their mom. You can also use TV dinner trays, paper plates or whatever you have; any relatively flat plate or saucer will do. The larger the litter, the larger the plate should be so that no one gets crowded out.
- **Food:** Canned and dry food will be provided by Operation Kindness for puppies and kittens.

Heating pad, hot water bottle, or infrared lamp: Unless the nursery is at least 85° and your puppies are 2 weeks or older, you need to supply extra heat. **BE SURE THAT THE PUPPIES HAVE ROOM TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE HEAT** (leave room for mom if she is with them). For instance, if you are using a heating pad, place it under a towel so that it covers only half of the floor area of their box. The heating pad should be on "low." If you use a hot water bottle, keep it where the dogs can't destroy it. Operation Kindness can provide cord free heating pads which can be re-heated in the microwave.

- **Clean towels and blankets**
- **Scale:** Puppies will go home with a scale and should be weighed daily with their weight recorded on their daily health chart. It does not matter what time of day the puppies are weighed, though it should be the same time each day.



Caring for a Pregnant Mother

Feeding recommendations for the pregnant and nursing dog:

- **Last 3-4 weeks of gestation** – the nutritional needs increase towards the end of pregnancy, and will continue to increase when the puppies are nursing. Feed 10-20% more than regular maintenance diet if using regular adult dog food, or switch gradually to dry puppy food and feed the same amount as usual, until the puppies are born.
- During the **nursing period** the nutritional needs are markedly increased. Nursing moms may need 2-4 times the normal maintenance diet to maintain milk production and avoid weight loss. The easiest way to ensure these needs are met is by free feeding dry puppy food, until the puppies are weaned.

Delivery

Most dogs give birth without assistance or outside help, it is quite possible that you will miss the birth entirely. It is still important that you know what to expect, and when you should call for assistance.

Just before delivery, the mother will often show signs such as restlessness and nesting. If you are suspecting that the birth of the puppies is impending, gently guide the mother to the designated nursing area. If she refuses to stay there, or if she has had her puppies outside of the pre-assigned area, wait till she is completely done with the delivery, and then move them all into the designated area.

Some dogs will look to you for company and comfort during birth, and will try to follow you if you leave. If this is the case, stay with her and talk to her in a calm, soothing manner. The need for your presence will often subside with the birth of the first couple of puppies, as she will be very busy and not so dependent on your presence. It is however still a good idea to stay nearby so that you can monitor the progression of the delivery, and make sure all the puppies are alive and healthy.

On the other hand; some dogs will crave privacy, and may try to get away from you and hide. If this is the case: give her the space and time she needs, but keep checking in on her regularly.

Stages of labor

During the first stage, uterine contractions begin. The mother will appear very restless. Dogs may pace, dig, shiver, pant, whine or even vomit. This is all normal so just keep an eye on her, make sure she is undisturbed, and that she has water available should she want it. The first stage may last 12 - 24 hours, and is often longer in case of first time pregnancies.

The second stage is the hard labor stage in which the puppy is expelled.

In this stage, the water breaks and straw-colored fluid is passed, a puppy will be delivered a few minutes later. Puppies are born covered in membranes that must be cleaned away to open their airways, or the pup will suffocate, the mother will usually bite and lick these membranes away. Allow her a minute or two after birth to do this; the mother should lick her offspring clean and bite through the umbilical cord.



This is an important process for the bonding between mother and offspring, and allows the mother to learn to recognize the puppies as her own. Do not disturb her. The treatment she gives her offspring may seem rough, but in reality, this serves to stimulate breathing and blood circulation.

If the mother shows no interest in her offspring, even after resting for a few minutes you must clean the puppy for her and make sure it is breathing and alive. Simply remove the slippery covering and rub the puppy with a clean towel, then place it back with the mother. Puppies should begin nursing between subsequent births.

Puppies are born anywhere from minutes to hours apart, so you can expect most deliveries to take a significant amount of time depending on the size of the litter. Expect a new puppy every 30 to 60 minutes; the mother will usually strain for 10 to 30 minutes before each newborn. It is normal that the mother takes a rest partway through delivery, and for some dogs you may have up to 4 hours without any signs of straining between pups. If a puppy is not born within 2-4 hours, if the mother appears to be continually straining for more than 1 hour, or if she shows signs of distress, you should consult the Stephani immediately. This may be an indication that she needs a Caesarean section or drugs to stimulate contractions. If the mother is content and happy, she is probably finished, or taking a rest. It is always better to call the Stephani if in doubt.

The third and final stage refers to the expulsion of the placenta and afterbirth. Usually the placenta follows a few minutes after delivery of each puppy, but not always; the mother may pass two pups and then two placentas. This is normal. The mother will probably eat some or all of the placentas - this is also normal.

General Neonatal Care

In the first 2 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 the nursery area. Tracking food intake and weight gain is also important, fosters will be provided with daily health and behavior charts to easily track puppy's growth and to see if there is weight loss, or decline in appetite. If a puppy stops eating, or the mother begins to separate it from the other contact the Intake or Medical department immediately. Young puppies should be kept in a large box or kennel lined with a towel for easy cleaning. It is very important to keep the puppies warm, especially during the first 2-3 weeks of life. A heating pad or a warm water bottle can be ideal sources of heating. If you use a heating pad make sure it only covers half or parts of the nursing area so that the neonates can move away from the heat if they need to, and also make sure it is set on "low" and that the electrical cord is out of reach of sharp little puppy teeth. The more puppies in your litter, the better able they will be to keep warm by sleeping together in a heap. Small litters and singletons need more help keeping warm, singletons will also often find comfort in a stuffed fluffy toy to snuggle up to. **Keep neonates away from space heaters or cold drafts!**



During the first 2-3 weeks of life puppies do not urinate and defecate on their own. In nature, this is stimulated when the mother is cleaning them, but in the absence of a mom you will need to do the job. Fortunately, it's a fairly easy task as it should be done every few hours. Gently rub a warm moist paper towel or a baby tissue on the puppy's anus and genital area; this will stimulate them to urinate and defecate on the paper towel. Doing it just after feeding is an easy way to ensure it gets done regularly.

Keep the Puppies Clean

A mother dog works hard to keep her puppies clean. She will constantly be grooming them thoroughly to remove any sticky messes they may get into, such as food or feces. Grooming them also stimulates circulation and the digestive system. A daily grooming session gives you the chance to closely monitor each puppy and gets them familiarized with being handled. If the neonate is not very dirty you can use a flea comb to get rid of dust and dried feces in the fur. You can also use a warm, damp wash cloth to clean them a bit more thoroughly. Use short strokes to mimic a mother's tongue. Be sure to dry the puppy well when done so that they don't get chilled.

As the puppies get older, from 4-5 weeks of age, they can be allowed to roam a larger area of your house, but they should still be closely supervised and kept in a secured area when not confined to their nursing area. Remember these puppies are still very vulnerable to infections, such as canine parvovirus infection, and should be separated from other pets if possible, and only be allowed to interact with fully vaccinated, healthy dogs.

Signs of illness

It is very important to keep Operation Kindness informed with any health changes with the puppies or the mother. Keep in mind that any illness you notice with the mother will be transferred to the puppies either in gestation or through nursing. It is for this reason that we supply fosters with daily health and behavior sheets to monitor how everyone is doing. These sheets are extremely important, they will also make it much easier to spot signs of illness such as weight loss, decline of appetite or change in behavior much more quickly. If any of the following signs of illness are seen they should be reported to the medical department immediately.

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| *Lethargy | *Coughing | *Blood in stool |
| *Lose Stool | *Lack of appetite | |
| *Eye Discharge | *Discharge from the nose | |
| *Sneezing | *Vomiting | |

Please bring your health and behavior sheets when visiting medical, the information on the sheets will assist the Vet Techs and Vet to make the best decision for treatment.

Medical Emergencies

Medical emergencies must be reported to an Operation Kindness staff person immediately. A medical emergency could be any of the following

- A temperature over 103F or less than 98F*
- Trouble Breathing*
- Seizures Severe lethargy/non-responsive*
- Evidence of severe pain: restlessness, vocalizing, panting*
- Major wounds requiring suture*
- Vomiting excessively (3-4 times) or excessive diarrhea*
- Not urinating x 24 hours or more*

Once you notice any of these you must contact the shelter. If it during working hours contact the medical department at **972-428-38002**. After hours call Stephani Coe at **214-240-5739**. Stephani or the medical team will be able to either give instructions for care, or make the call to send the dog to an emergency clinic.



When and How Should I Start Socialization?

Relinquishment of pets to shelters due to behavioral problems is a significant problem, especially for dogs. Puppies isolated from other puppies until 16 - 18 weeks of age, after receiving all their puppy shots, are more likely to display fearful behavior and be aggressed upon by other pups, and thus have a higher chance of ending up in a shelter later in their life. Part of your job as a foster home is to convince the puppies that humans are kind and loving, and that other pets do not pose any threat.

The primary socialization period of puppies is between 3 and 13 weeks. This means that you need to get the puppies used to people and other animals before finishing their vaccination program. This period in the puppy's life is critical for development of primary social relationships with humans and other animals. Puppies that are confined during this period are significantly more likely to develop behavioral problems such as fear and aggression, than puppies that are provided the opportunity to get socialized with other animals and people.

Even outgoing, friendly puppies should be allowed 24 hours to accustom themselves to their new home a quiet room, but if they seem content and happy after the initial "chill-out period" they can be cuddled and played with freely.

Shy pets will need more encouragement. Try sitting on the floor allowing the puppies to approach you or avoid you as they please, and play freely around you. You can also tempt them with small treats and food to convince them that you are not as scary as you appear. Always praise positive interaction.

Any introductions of puppies to other cats or dogs should be made with great care and under constant supervision.

There is no such thing as a "bad" puppy and it is useless to punish a "naughty" puppy. Their little minds do not grasp deductive reasoning. Puppies are easily distracted with a toy or a treat when being mischievous rather than punishment and scolding. By providing toys, chews, scratching poles etc. you can get a puppy on its right track to being somebody's well-behaved pet.

Bottle Babies: What to feed?

The shelter will provide puppy formula which should be given at the puppy's body temperature (about 100 degrees). Once the can is opened or the powder reconstituted, unused formula should be kept refrigerated.

It is best to feed the puppies one-by-one, and on a raised surface - this allows them to feed with all four feet on the surface, and their heads level, much as they would if they were nursing from their mom. Some puppies prefer to nurse standing on their hind legs while holding the bottle. They will require a little support from you in this position. Avoid feeding a puppy while he is cradled on his back - if the fluid goes down the wrong way, it may end up in his lungs.



Gently open a puppy's mouth with one finger and place the tip of the nipple on his tongue. If he won't eat, try stroking him. Pull lightly on the bottle to encourage vigorous sucking. Be sure to tilt the bottle up slightly to prevent the puppy from inhaling too much air. Do not force the puppy to nurse, or allow him to nurse too fast.

After each feeding, the puppy should be burped. Hold him against your shoulder and gently massage his back or pat it lightly.

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

0-1 Weeks

- **Bottle Feeding:** Bottle feed 1/2 tablespoon formula every 2 - 3 hours
- **Mom with Pups:** They should nurse vigorously and compete for nipples. Newborns can nurse up to 45 minutes at a time. Be sure to watch puppies nursing at least once a day, if the mom will permit it. Check that everyone is nursing and that there isn't too much jockeying for position. A great deal of activity and crying could indicate a problem with milk flow, quality or availability. When the mom reenters the box, there should be some fussing for only a few minutes before everyone has settled down to serious nursing.
- **Environment:** The temperature of the nest box should be nice and warm: 85-90 degrees. Chilling is the number one danger to newborn puppies.
- **Behavior and training:** At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep 90% of the time and eat the other 10%.

1-2 weeks

- **Bottle Feeding:** Bottle feed formula every 2 - 3 hours, until the puppies' bellies are full but not bloated.
- **Environment:** Floor temperature of the nest box should be 80 to 85 degrees.
- **Behavior and training:** Ear canals open between 5 and 8 days. Eyes will open between 8 and 14 days. They open gradually, usually starting to open from the nose outward. All puppies are born with blue eyes, and initially no pupils can be distinguished from the irises - the eyes will appear solid dark blue.
- Healthy puppies will be round and warm, with pink skin. If you pinch them gently, their skin should spring back. When you pick a puppy up, it should wiggle energetically and when you put it down near the mom it should crawl back to her. Healthy puppies seldom cry.



2-3 weeks

- **Feeding:** Bottle feed formula every 3-4 hours, until the puppies' bellies are full but not bloated.
- **Environment:** The floor temperature of the nest box should be 75 to 80 degrees.
- **Behavior and training** Mom will begin to spend larger periods of time out of the nest, though she will not go far from it.
- **Locomotion:** Puppies begin to crawl around day 18 and can stand by day 21. They will begin to play with each other, biting ears, tails and paws even before their teeth have come in. Their milk teeth are cut during this period. They learn to sit and touch objects with their paws.
- **Socialization:** Puppies begin their socialization phase - they will be strongly influenced by the behavior of their mother for the next six weeks. To further socialize puppies, increase the amount of handling, and get them accustomed to human contact. It is important not to expose them to anything frightening; children may seem intimidating and should be supervised closely while visiting to ensure gentle handling.

3-4 weeks

- **Feeding:** Bottle feed formula every 4 hours, until puppies are full but not bloated. Puppies may start lapping gruel (a mixture of formula and wet food) from a bowl.
- **Environment:** The floor temperature of the nest box should be 70 to 75 degrees from this point onward.
- **Behavior and training:** Adult eye color will begin to appear, but may not reach final shade for another 9 to 12 weeks. Puppies begin to see well and their eyes begin to look and function like adult dogs' eyes. Puppies will start cleaning themselves, though their mother will continue to do most of the serious cleaning.

4-5 weeks

- **Feeding:** Bottle feed as needed to keep pups from crying with hunger. Puppies usually can drink and eat from a saucer by 4 weeks. Weaning should be done gradually. Introduce them to solid food by offering warmed canned food, mixed with a little water into gruel, in a shallow saucer. You can begin by placing one puppy by the plate of canned food gruel, and hoping for the best - if she starts eating, great! Her littermates will probably copy her and do the same. But without mom around to show them, many puppies do not have a clue about feeding from a saucer. The puppies will walk in it, slide in it, and track it all. Some puppies may prefer to lick the gruel from your fingers, if this is the case; slowly lower your finger to the plate and hold it to the food. This way the puppies will learn to eat with their heads



bent down. Be patient, sometimes it takes two or three meals before they catch on. If they do not seem interested enough to even sniff your finger, try gently opening the puppies' mouth and rub a little bit of the food on their teeth. Hopefully this will result in the puppy starting to lick your finger. If they're still not getting the idea, you can take a syringe (without a needle) and squirt a small amount of gruel directly into their mouths.

If there is a mom present, she will usually begin weaning by discouraging her puppies from nursing; however, some dogs (particularly those with small litters) will allow nursing until the puppies are old enough for permanent homes. Some nursing activity is the canine equivalent of thumb-sucking, that is, for comfort only. Even if puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be getting all the nutrition they need from mom. Make sure they are eating food and gaining weight.

Be sure that the puppies always have access to fresh water in a low, stable bowl.

- **Behavior and training:** Begin housebreaking at four weeks of age. This can be done by using a pile of newspapers or training pads in a corner. After each feeding, place the puppy on the papers. Be patient! He may not remember to do this every time, or may forget where to find the papers, but he will learn quickly. Be sure to give the puppies lots of praise when they first start using their papers or cry to go out. It is a good idea to confine the puppies to a relatively small space, because the larger the area the puppies have to play in, the more likely they will forget where the papers are. Keep the papers clean and away from their food.

5-6 weeks

- **Feeding:** 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 some puppy milk replacer into the gruel or tempt the puppy with some meat-flavored human baby food mixed with a bit of water. The familiar formula taste and smell or the meat flavor of baby food is often more appealing to the picky eaters than dog food. Once the puppy accepts the formula based gruel or baby food gradually mix in dry puppy food until the puppy has been weaned like the other puppies.
- **Behavior and training:** At about five 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. The others will quickly follow.
- **Vaccination:** Contact Intake or the Medical Department to set up a time to bring in your puppies for their first set of shots and deworming. The puppies will receive their first DAPP, at this age they are still too young for Bordetella or Rabies. The puppies can travel to the shelter without mom. If needed Operation Kindness can provide a crate for safe travel.



6-7 weeks

- **Mom comes back to the shelter:** By six weeks' mom has done her job, and is likely already weaning the puppies away from her as they have developed teeth and nursing is painful. The Intake or Medical Department will call to schedule a time for her to come in for spay surgery. Surgery days are Mon – Wed and Friday. Mom should have no food past 9pm the night before surgery and no breakfast the day of. Pending no complications, she will be up for adoption the day after surgery.
- **Feeding:** By this age the puppies should be eating dry food well. Feed the puppies at least three meals daily. If one puppy appears food-possessive, use a second dish and leave plenty of food out so that everyone can eat at the same time. Although the puppies may not eat much at a single sitting, they usually like to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day.
- **Behavior and training:** By this time, you have "mini-dogs." They will wash themselves, play games with each other, their toys, and you, and many will come when you call them. Be sure to take them to their papers or outside after meals, during play sessions, and after naps. These are the usual times that puppies need to eliminate.

7-8 weeks

- **Feeding:** Offer dry food 3 - 4 times a day. Leave down a bowl of water for them to eat and drink at will.
- **Vaccination:** An appointment to return for their second booster should have been scheduled when the puppies came in for their first shots. This trip the puppies will be receiving a booster to their first DAPP, and their first round of Bordetella. The vet tech may also decide to microchip the pups at this time as well. If you have names picked out for your pups, they will need to know them to match the puppy with the microchip number. The puppies will go back to foster for another week before returning for spay and neuter.
- **Begin preparing for the puppies to return to Operation Kindness:** You know the puppies better than anyone prepare for their return by writing a short memo about them (4-6 sentences) adopters will want to know about their personality, if they're more lazy or rambunctious. Note how their potty training is going and tricks they have learned. Some fosters have even brought baby books to be given to adopters with pictures of the pups as they grew.



8+ weeks

- **Feeding:** Offer dry food 3 times a day, you can mix in a tablespoon or more of food. Leave down a bowl of water for them to eat and drink at will.
- **Behavior and training:** By the end of this week, prepare yourself to return them to Operation Kindness. The night before surgery the pups should not have any food past 9pm and no breakfast the next day.
- **Empty nest syndrome:** The last week or so of fostering pups can be hard. The pups are older and capable of destruction, their play is loud and their teeth are sharp! Though don't be surprised if you shed a few tears when bringing the pups back to Operation Kindness.

Much of the information in this handout was constructed using the following article.

UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program (Canine: Guide to Raising Orphan Puppies)
<http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/33>



Separation Anxiety

Separation Anxiety can be common in shelter dogs. It is important to address the behavior before it escalates. Below, are standard suggestions to help set on dogs a path to help ease separation anxiety. You may have already tried some of these techniques; if so, let us know and we will further advise.

Getting Started

The first step to addressing separation anxiety is to increase physical exercise and mental stimulation. A tired dog is a good. For Physical exercise, think more often rather than longer sessions due to the animal's impressive recuperation rate. Mental exercise can be met with training sessions, interactive toys such as a Kong filled with peanut butter, and even meal dispensing balls.

Avoid high contrasts of home time, where the dog gets a large amount of attention versus periods of away time when they are alone and potentially bored. When beginning work with the dog keep interactions with them calm, keeping your voice and body language at a mellow tone. Only reward calm behavior during goodbyes and greetings. When you leave and return try not to over acknowledge your pup. If she is excited, speak in a low and soft voice, remembering to keep body movement slow. This practice will help prevent rewarding the heightened state of arousal inadvertently.

Practice

Begin to create a positive association for the dog being alone. Provide brief periods of the dog being away from people for extremely short durations (less than 1 minute) pairing them with a positive experience, such as eating a treat or playing with a toy. Gradually progress to longer periods of time over a few days. Try to make these sessions positive by giving your dog something to do while you are away. This practice can also be done during meal time, set the bowl down and as your dog begins to eat, turn and walk out of the room. Re-enter the room before she has a chance to get upset that you are gone.

Crate Training and Separation Anxiety

These same techniques can be applied to going into the crate and spending time there. Try to make the crate a positive place to be by feeding all meals inside or providing a special treat that she only receives when in the crate. Try throwing treats into the crate and allow the dog to go retrieve the treat building trust that each time she walks in does not mean a long period of alone time. Increase this time the same way as above, one second at a time, ensuring you do not go over the dog's comfort level and cause stress.

If the dog does become stressed in the crate, wait for a moment of calm or quiet before approaching. Returning during a stress reaction can reward or reinforce the reaction. Only return and open the crate when your pup is calm. Keep a log of the amount of time the pup stays in the crate and when



signs of stress emerged. Increase the time alone by small increments. If you happen to progress too far too fast, wait for a second or two of calm before returning to the dog.

Maintenance

The first 15-20 minutes of your absence accounts for 80% of the damage and anxiety. We want to provide our dogs with something to help transition them to being alone. An interactive feeding ball or toy typically works well here. A simple bone can also offer some stimulation to distract from your departure. If the dog is not eating when you are not around, try increasing the value of the treat or toy. This can be wet food, liver or other pet safe food. Try leaving the T.V. or radio on providing the similar noises your dog hears when you are at home.

Separation Anxiety has a wide range of severity and each dog responds differently. Simply rewarding the dog for being in a different room can help resolve the issue, though other times more intervention is required than listed in this handout.

For additional help with separation anxiety contact Operation Kindness at 972-428-7297

References

We also recommend McConnell, Patricia B. *I'll Be Home Soon!: How to Prevent and Treat Separation Anxiety*.



What to do If Your Foster Gets Out

Prevention

Housing

Puppies: Puppies should be housed in a safe place when supervised and when left alone. If supervision is not available the puppies should be secured in a puppy play pin, or appropriate sized crate. Operation Kindness is able to provide these items at no cost. When puppies are out and being played with make sure all outside doors are secure and locked. It may be necessary to place baby gates or a play pin in front of door ways to prevent a puppy's escape.

Adults: When first arriving at a new foster home some adult dogs may pose a flight risk. Make sure all outside doors are secured and locked. When not supervised, it will be safest to keep the dog in a crate to prevent destruction or injury. It may be necessary to place baby gates or a play pin in front of door ways to prevent a puppy's escape.

Walking

To prevent escape Operation Kindness suggests walking dogs and puppies on a slip lead to prevent the dog from slipping out of a collar. Slip leads can be provided by Operation Kindness. Some dogs will benefit by being walked on a harness or head halter. Make sure all walking equipment is fitted properly; consult the Foster Manager or on staff Trainer for proper fit, or equipment suggestions.

When Escape Happens

DON'T CHASE

Do not chase or run after a dog or puppy if they get away from you. Best case scenario the dog will think you're playing a game (of chase) worst case; this will frighten the dog and increase their motivation to get away along with increasing fear.

STOP - Throw a Party!

If a dog gets away from you do not chase it. Instead, call the dog in a friendly manner or high pitched tone. Make yourself as appealing as possible to the dog. Yelling or screaming can be frightening and cause the dog to continue to flee.

Get down low to the ground while calling the dog. This shows the pup you are friendly and nonthreatening.

Not working?

Start walking or jogging backwards while still calling the dog in a friendly happy tone. This will entice the dog to stop running away from you and come over to see what all the fuss is about.

Who to Contact

Immediately call and text the Foster Manager. If no answer continues to call numbers on the contact list. Call local Animal Control or Animal Services: Let them know the dog is a foster and with Operation Kindness. This step should be done immediately especially with the loss of a nursing mom, fearful dog, or medical foster.

All adult animals are fully vaccinated and microchipped before leaving Operation Kindness.

Foster Vaccination Schedule

DAPP: Healthy puppies will receive their first vaccine at 6weeks of age. Boosters will be given two weeks apart. Surgery will be scheduled a week after the second booster.

Bordatella: Puppies will receive their first Bordatella vaccine at 8weeks of age.

FVRCP: Healthy kittens will receive their first vaccine when they are 6weeks of age and weigh at least **1.5lbs**. Boosters will be given two weeks apart. Surgery will be scheduled a week after the second booster.

Strongid: Given to all animals over three weeks of age. Follow up doses can be given after two weeks.

Surgery:

Puppies: Healthy puppies will be scheduled in for surgery after two DAPP, and one Bordatella vaccine.

Kittens: Healthy kittens will be scheduled in for surgery after two FVRCP and once they weigh more than **2lbs**.

	1st	2nd	3rd
DHPP			

	1st	2nd	3rd
Bordatella			

	1st	2nd	3rd
FVRCP			

	1st	2nd	3rd
Strongid			

Animal's Name: _____

Name	Weight	Health and Behavior Notes
