


# Puppy Foster Care HandBook



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 [www.blazintrailsbottlebabies.org](http://www.blazintrailsbottlebabies.org)

 Raleigh, NC



Dear Foster Parent,

Welcome to Blazin' Trails Bottle Babies, Inc.!

We are a dedicated team passionate about providing care and support for orphaned neonatal puppies. At Blazin' Trails, we understand the unique challenges and joys that come with nurturing these tiny lives. Our mission is to offer comprehensive guidance and resources to ensure the health, comfort, and well-being of these vulnerable puppies.

Our expertise covers everything from feeding schedules and nutritional advice to health care tips and general nurturing techniques. We are committed to using vet-approved practices and prioritize the safety and health of the puppies in all our recommendations.

While we focus on providing you with the best possible advice for basic care, we always encourage consulting a veterinarian for any serious health concerns. Our approach is not just about practical care, but also about understanding the emotional bond and responsibility that comes with caring for these precious lives.

At Blazin' Trails Bottle Babies, Inc., we are here to guide you every step of the way in this rewarding journey. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of these orphaned neonatal puppies.

With Gratitude,  
Shana Sommer

President  
Blazin' Trails Bottle Babies, Inc.



# ABOUT US

Blazin' Trails Bottle Babies, Inc. is a compassionate and dedicated organization focused on the care and rehabilitation of orphaned neonatal puppies. Founded with a deep love for animals and a commitment to their welfare, our organization stands as a beacon of hope for the youngest and most vulnerable canines. Our primary mission is to provide specialized care for neonatal puppies who, due to various circumstances, find themselves without a mother. These puppies require round-the-clock attention, and our experienced team is trained to meet these intensive needs. From creating a warm and safe environment to managing feeding schedules and ensuring proper nutrition, we are equipped to handle every aspect of their care.



We focus on both the physical and emotional well-being of these puppies, simulating a nurturing environment. Additionally, we emphasize community education and involvement, offering resources and guidance for fostering or adopting. Our practices are aligned with the latest veterinary standards, ensuring safe and effective care. Blazin' Trails is not just an organization, but a community dedicated to giving orphaned puppies a healthy and loving start in life.



# What is Foster Care?

Puppy foster care involves temporarily providing a home and care for puppies until they are ready for adoption. This is especially important for puppies who are too young, unwell, or not yet socialized enough to be permanently adopted.

# Do you have the time?

- Are you able to commit to bottle feeding every 2 hours around the clock for the first 2 weeks?
- Are you able to bring your foster animal to the vet for vaccines and appointments?
- Are you able to contact BTBB and transport your foster puppy to the emergency vet quickly in the event of an emergency?
- Are you able to commit to foster until the puppy is adopted?

# Do you have the space?

- Is everyone at home on board with fostering/Does your home allow fostering?
- Are you able to separate your foster animals from your resident pets?
- Are you able to handle cleaning procedures such as washing hands after every encounter and disinfecting your foster area routinely?
- Are you able to handle any potential damage to your home associated with animals?

## Welcome! Before you get started, some basics...

Puppies under 8 weeks of age represent one of the most vulnerable and in need groups at BTB. Young puppies may require round-the-clock care and their incomplete immune system makes them highly susceptible to the common illnesses found in a shelter environment. Foster homes represent a safe haven for these vulnerable animals and by following proper guidelines, you can keep yours that way.

## General Guidelines and Expectations of Puppy Care

### Health and Sanitation

- Foster puppies can carry illnesses into your home that could affect your health, the health of your resident animals, and future foster animals. You accept this risk when you agree to foster. BTBB does not have the funds to pay for illness to personal animals and cannot be held responsible.
- All new foster puppies **MUST** be properly quarantined in a fully sanitizable space (absolutely NO carpet). Your foster puppy's quarantine may need to be extended if they are actively sick. When in doubt, check in with the foster team before letting your foster puppies out of their quarantine space.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before and after handling animals, their supplies, or their bodily secretions (vomit, feces, soiled puppy pads, etc.).
- Incubators and enclosures for puppies must be cleaned and disinfected daily. When cleaning, place the puppies in a separate, warm space until their incubator is clean and completely dry.
- Foster parents must be able to bring their puppies in for routine vaccinations every 2 weeks to prevent a gap in their immunity and for medical care as necessary.
- It is **required** to keep a daily journal on your puppy's general health and appearance, including weight, appetite, bathroom habits, etc. The Foster Department has monitoring sheets that you may use as an example.

## Housing and Handling

- All foster puppies MUST be kept at home to prevent exposure to potentially deadly diseases. It is unsafe for puppies to walk on any surface where another dog may have urinated or defecated (such as sidewalks or parks) until they are fully vaccinated (around 4-6 months of age).
- Foster puppies must be in a carrier if off the foster parent's property to reduce potential disease exposure, and for safety while being transported in a vehicle.
- Young children should not handle newborn foster puppies as they are extremely fragile. Once the puppies can walk and play on their own, children must be supervised closely and taught proper handling techniques.
- Foster parents can only have one litter of puppies at a time because of the difficulty of keeping litters separated and quarantined.



# THE 4 TENENTS OF PUPPY CARE

## ***KEEP THEM WARM***

Keep Them Warm Puppies cannot regulate their body temperature until around 4 weeks of age. You must always provide appropriate heat to young puppies. Supplemental heat sources include rice bags (short-term only), warming discs, heating pads (be sure to cover exposed cords), and infrared lamps (securely out of reach). Puppies should always have the ability to remove themselves from the heat if they wish.

## ***KEEP THEM FED***

Puppies naturally eat small, frequent meals. Bottle babies may require round-the-clock feedings every 2-3 hours, even overnight. Weaned puppies should have access to dry food at all times and be offered wet food multiple times a day. BTBB will provide the proper food for your puppy

## ***KEEP THEM CLEAN***

Dried on food, feces, or urine can result in fur loss, skin irritation, and even infection. Any debris on your puppy should be removed promptly with a warm, damp washcloth. Flea combs can be a useful tool for gently removing caked-on debris. Full baths should be reserved for extremely dirty or flea-ridden puppies. Use only a gentle dish soap like Dawn. NEVER administer flea treatment or flea shampoo to a foster puppy. Always dry your puppy completely after washing. Contact us before bathing a puppy under 4 weeks

## ***KEEP THEM HEALTHY***

Puppies are born with virtually no immunity so care must be taken to not introduce pathogens into their space. Make it a habit to monitor their weight, appetites, urine/feces output, and overall body condition daily. Alert your foster team of any concerning changes. Healthy puppies should be bright, alert, active, and gaining weight steadily.

Your foster puppies depend on YOU for all their needs. Your foster team at BTBB is here to support you in meeting those needs and with any questions or concerns that arise. We are always happy to answer questions, share tips and tricks, and teach you new skills as your foster career progresses. Fostering is a continuous learning experience!

# Supply CHECKLIST

Before you bring home your first foster puppy, make sure you have all the necessary supplies at the ready. The last thing you want is to bring home a puppy (or several) and find you're missing critical supplies! BTBB is happy to help you with supplies. We will supply essential items such as the incubator, scale, thermometer, food, bedding, bottle feeding supplies (formula, bottles, nipples, etc.). If foster parents wish to purchase their own supplies or supplement with ours, this is always welcomed!

|                 |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| <b>HOUSING</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Incubator           | <input type="checkbox"/> Heartbeat puppy       |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Playpen             | <input type="checkbox"/> Crib Toys             |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Humidifier          | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat Source           |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets            | <input type="checkbox"/> Pee Pads              |
| <b>FEEDING</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Formula             | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottle Cleaning Brush |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Miracle Nipple      | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding Chart         |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottles             | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Syringes            | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| <b>HEALTH</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Scale               | <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrical              |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer         | <input type="checkbox"/> Karo Syrup            |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit       | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby Wipes            |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail Clippers       | <input type="checkbox"/> Dewormer              |
| <b>CLEANING</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Rescue Disinfectant | <input type="checkbox"/> Trash Bags            |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Chlorohexidine      | <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves                |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Towels        | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Sanitizer        |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Puppy Shampoo       | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |



## Puppy's First Stop: Quarantine!

To keep current and future foster animals safe from communicable diseases, as well as protect any resident animals in your home, a 2-week quarantine in a fully sanitizable space for your new foster puppy is MANDATORY. Most illnesses, such as ringworm, parvo, or upper respiratory infection, will begin showing symptoms within 2 weeks.

In the event your puppy DOES present with a communicable disease while in quarantine, this protocol will have kept any pathogens isolated to a single, easily sanitizable space. By fully sanitizable space, we mean absolutely no carpet, poorly sealed/gapped wooden flooring, upholstered furniture, rugs, or other porous surfaces that can't be properly disinfected. Puppies from birth- 3 weeks must be kept in an incubator. Puppies 3-6 weeks will be kept in a playpen/enclosure. All toys and bedding should be either machine washable or made of a non-porous material that can be cleaned with a bleach solution.

*While most puppy illnesses would not be contagious to a healthy, vaccinated adult dog, they do stay in the environment for a long time unless it is properly treated with a bleach solution. This could prevent you from being able to foster puppies again in the future.*

When entering your puppy's quarantine space to feed, clean, or socialize, be conscious of what items enter this space and where they go next. It's a good idea to keep a spare pair of house slippers outside the door, or plan to remove your socks when you exit the quarantine space. An extra sweater and pair of sweatpants specifically worn during socialization will keep your clothes contaminant-free.

## Puppy Feeding, Care, and Development

Puppies experience a tremendous amount of growth and development in a relatively short period and the care requirements of a 1-week-old puppy are dramatically different than that of a 6-week-old puppy. By ensuring proper housing, feeding, and enrichment, you will help your puppy to grow into a healthy, confident young adult!

### Puppy Stages

In their first two weeks of life, puppies are essentially helpless. They are still developing basic reflexes, are still developing their hearing and vision, and are unable to regulate their body temperatures. For all these reasons and more, neonatal puppies should be confined to an incubator and handled minimally for the first 1-2 weeks.

From 3 weeks on, puppies begin to rapidly develop, both in size and behavior. From now until about 3 months of age, they are primed to learn all about the world around them. This is the most crucial and sensitive period in a puppy's life and when you should be working on socialization to ensure confident, well-rounded puppies. See the chart on the next page for a timeline of puppy feeding and development expectations.

### Feeding Puppies 6 weeks +

It is important that your puppy receives, and eats, an appropriate amount of food each day to fuel its rapid growth and development. Puppies should be allowed to eat until they appear full but not bloated. Because dog breeds can vary so greatly in size, there is no single standardized feeding amount. Feed according to the manufacturer's instructions for your particular brand of food. Puppies, regardless of breed, should only be fed puppy-specific food to ensure they are receiving the proper nutrients to fuel their rapidly growing bodies. We will provide guidelines on feeding amounts.

We highly encourage feeding puppies in discrete meals, 3-4 times a day, rather than leaving a large portion of food out at once. This helps both to reduce the likelihood of puppies overeating as well as make potty training go more smoothly, as puppies will generally need to eliminate after eating. Water should always be available to ensure adequate hydration. Puppies' digestive systems are still developing and as a result, are fragile. Do not offer puppies treats; instead, use a brand of puppy food that is different than their main food. This will still entice and motivate them if used for training treats but will not upset their tummies

*In general, a healthy puppy's weight should increase 5-10% each day.*

*If a puppy is not gaining weight appropriately despite receiving adequate nutrition, there may be an underlying medical cause and the foster team should be alerted promptly.*

# Puppy Development

In the first few 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 **MUST NEVER** 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 do not become chilled.

| Age | Feeding  | Development  |
|-----|--|--|
| 0-1 | Bottle Feed 1 cc per 1 ounce of body weight every 2 hours around the clock. Stimulate after feeding. | Minimal handling<br>Will sleep 90% of the time<br>Eyes and ears closed                       |
| 1-2 | Bottle Feed every 2 hours. until belly is full but not distended. Stimulate after feeding.           | Healthy Puppies should be round and warm. They should seldom cry. Eyes and Ears should open. |
| 2-3 | Bottle Feed every 3 hours until belly is full but not distended. Stimulate after feeding.            | May begin crawling<br>eyes and ears are open. Begin teething                                 |
| 3-4 | Bottle Feed every 3-4 hours. May begin lapping from a bowl   | Puppies will begin to clean themselves.  |
| 4-5 | Begin introducing canned food or softened kibble. Continue to bottle feed every 4 hours as needed.   | Socialization begins   |
| 6-8 | Feed gruel 4 times a day. Ensure fresh water at all times  | Continue training and socialization  |

## Neonatal Care: Bottle Baby Puppies

### Overview

Orphaned puppies need a significant level of care until they are ready to be weaned and are eating on their own. It is the responsibility of a foster parent to ensure their puppies are receiving proper nutrition, hydration, adequate housing, and that they are consistently gaining weight during this crucial time.

### Getting Started

You will use either a Miracle Nipple and Syringe or a regular baby bottle like Dr. Browns or Phillips Avent, depending on the size and age of the puppy. Miracle Nipples come pre-cut and fit both syringes and most bottles. Feeding supplies should be sterilized often and it is generally best to use a fresh bottle at each feeding to reduce the chance of introducing bacteria or other pathogens. To sterilize your bottle-feeding supplies, rinse bottles and nipples thoroughly then place them into a boiling water bath for approximately 5-10 minutes.

Only a formula specifically made for puppies (puppy milk replacer/PMR) should be fed, such as Pet Ag PMR or Breeder's Edge PMR. NEVER give a puppy cow's milk (or anything else besides the specified formula) as this can lead to gastric issues and nutrient deficiencies. BTBB mixes formula according to the manufacturer's instructions. Shaker bottles are handy tools for easily mixing and storing puppy formula. The unused formula should be labeled with the date/time and refrigerated. Discard leftover formula after 24hrs

*Please note that before you start feeding your puppy, you should assess their body temperature. NEVER feed a cold puppy. Place them on a heat source to regulate their body heat and then proceed with feeding.*

## Bottle Feeding Supplies



### Mastering Bottle Feeding Time

Fosters and puppies may have different preferred feeding styles. Some fosters feed on a table or countertop while others feed on their laps. *Puppies should be fed in a position that mimics how they would naturally be nursing from mom; all four feet pointed towards the ground and their heads level.* However, some puppies may prefer to nurse standing on their hind legs while holding the bottle, or while wrapped in a hand towel like a burrito. Regardless, puppies should be kept in a mostly horizontal position with feet towards the ground.

**NEVER** feed a puppy on its back like a human baby— this is extremely unsafe.

### Examples of Proper Feeding Position



#### **Bottle Feeding Tip #1**

*Many foster parents find using a bottle and nipple meant for human babies work well when bottle feeding puppies*

The formula should be fed at a temperature similar to the puppy's body temperature. The best way to warm the formula is by placing the bottle in a hot water bath. Test the formula temperature by squirting a few drops onto the inside of your wrist; it should feel warm but not hot. To feed, gently open a puppy's mouth with one finger and place the tip of the nipple on their tongue.

If they don't begin suckling, try petting them down the back; this replicates a mother dog grooming and can be an effective stimulant. Pull lightly on the bottle to encourage vigorous sucking or try moving the nipple back and forth on the puppy's tongue. Be sure to keep the bottle at a 45-degree angle to prevent the puppy from inhaling air. Do not force the puppy to nurse or allow them to nurse too fast. It can take puppies some time to get used to nursing from a bottle. Be patient and go drop by drop if needed, allowing them to swallow in between – they'll get the hang out of it.

***Bottle feeding Tip #2***

*Hold their head steady with your non dominant hand while you use your dominate hand to control the bottle or syringe, If the puppy isn't latching, try different nipple sizes and warming up the nipple in warm water prior to feeding*



*You should never squeeze the bottle of formula when feeding puppies as this can cause aspiration. Aspiration occurs when the puppy inhales formula into their lungs while feeding. Aspiration can lead to serious complications.*

After each feeding, the puppy should be burped by gently patting their back or sides a few times – it’s uncommon to hear a puppy physically burp so a few gentle pats should be sufficient when burping a puppy. If not done before feeding, they should be stimulated to urinate/defecate. This is done by gently rubbing a damp cloth or cotton ball on your puppy’s genitals and rectum until they eliminate. If you use a damp cloth, be sure to use a dry cloth afterward to ensure the puppy’s genitals and rectum are dry. Puppies should urinate at every feeding and defecate about once a day

**How Much to Feed**

Overfeeding bottle babies is as dangerous as underfeeding! Neonates are still developing, and their digestive systems can only process so much at a time. Puppies should be fed an amount and at a frequency appropriate for their age. Refer to the Puppy Bottle Feeding and Stomach Capacity Chart from Maddie’s Fund. Keep an eye on your puppies at feeding time and monitor how much each is eating. Keep a written record of mealtimes and the amount consumed. Try feeding smaller amounts but more frequently if your puppy is struggling to consume their suggested amount in one sitting, and gradually decrease the number of feedings as they start consuming more at once. The amount of formula being fed should continue to slowly increase as your puppy ages.

| PUPPY/KITTEN WEIGHT | TOTAL DAILY AMOUNT | PER FEEDING AMOUNT FOR NEWBORN (every 3 to 4 hours) | PER FEEDING AMOUNT FOR OLDER PUPPY/KITTEN (every 6 to 8 hours) |
|---------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| 4 oz.               | 2 Tbsp.            | 5 mL  | 10 mL  |
| 6 oz.               | 3 Tbsp.            | 7.5 mL  | 15 mL  |
| 8 oz.               | 4 Tbsp.            | 10 mL   | 20 mL  |
| 10 oz.              | 5 Tbsp.            | 12.5 mL   | 25 mL  |
| 12 oz.              | 6 Tbsp.            | 15 mL   | 30 mL  |
| 14 oz.              | 7 Tbsp.            | 17.5 mL   | 35 mL  |
| 16 oz.              | 8 Tbsp.            | 20 mL   | 40 mL  |
| 18 oz.              | 9 Tbsp.            | 22.5 mL   | 45 mL  |
| 20 oz.              | 10 Tbsp.           | 25 mL   | 50 mL  |
| 22 oz.              | 11 Tbsp.           | 27.5 mL   | 55 mL  |
| 24 oz.              | 12 Tbsp.           | 30 mL   | 60 mL  |
| 26 oz.              | 13 Tbsp.           | 32.5 mL   | 65 mL  |
| 28 oz.              | 14 Tbsp.           | 35 mL   | 70 mL  |
| 30 oz.              | 15 Tbsp.           | 37.5 mL   | 75 mL  |
| 32 oz.              | 16 Tbsp.           | 40 mL   | 80 mL  |

***Call us immediately if your baby is eating poorly or losing weight.***

## NEONATAL CARE: TUBE FEEDING

Tube feeding is a more specialized feeding technique that's primarily used for orphaned puppies who can't or shouldn't suckle from a bottle. While this method is highly effective in ensuring that a puppy receives adequate nutrition, it must be done with extreme care to avoid complications like aspiration pneumonia. Below we'll cover the 'how,' 'when,' 'why,' and provide a step-by-step guide for tube feeding.



### When to Use Tube Feeding

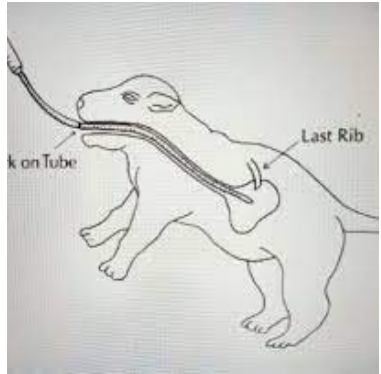
Tube feeding should only be used under specific circumstances and ideally under veterinary guidance. It's most suitable for neonate puppies up to the age of 3 weeks. Beyond this age, tube feeding is generally not recommended, as puppies should be learning to eat solid food.

1. Weak or Ill Puppy: If a puppy is too weak to suckle, tube feeding is an alternative way to provide the necessary nutrients without exhausting the little one.
2. Physical Deformities: For puppies born with cleft palates or other physical deformities that affect their ability to suckle, tube feeding may be the best way to ensure they get the nutrients they need.



## Preparing for Tube Feeding

1. Consult BTBB: Before you begin tube feeding, consult us. DO NOT tube feed if you have not been properly trained!
2. Get the Right Supplies: You will need a sterile feeding tube, a syringe to attach to the tube, and a high-quality puppy milk replacer.
3. Measure the Tube: Prior to inserting it, measure the feeding tube from the tip of the puppy's nose to the last rib. This will give you an indication of how far the box should be inserted.



4. Prepare the Formula: Prepare and warm the puppy milk replacer according to the same guidelines as for bottle feeding.

## Step-by-Step Tube Feeding Process

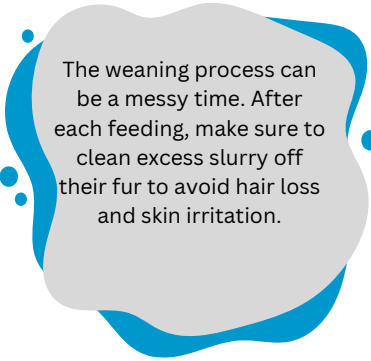
1. Sterilize Equipment: Sterilize the tube and syringe by boiling for 5-10 minutes.
2. Lubricate the Tube: Use a water-soluble lubricant to lubricate the tip of the tube to ease insertion.
3. Secure the Puppy: Position the puppy securely, ensuring it is calm and restrained but not stressed.
4. Insert the Tube: Gently insert the lubricated tube into the puppy's mouth and down into the esophagus. Go down to the point you previously marked by measuring.
5. Check the Proper Placement: Before administering the formula, pinch the puppy's back foot. If he is able to vocalize, the tube is in the stomach. If he CANNOT vocalize, remove the tube and try again.
6. Administer the Formula: Once you are confident the tube is correctly placed, slowly push the plunger on the syringe to administer the milk replacer.
7. Remove the Tube: Flex the tube back on itself then carefully withdraw the tube, ensuring not to pull it out too quickly.

### **Remember the 6 P's:**

1. *Premeasure the tube*
2. *Prewarm the puppy and formula*
3. *Pass the tube to the left*
4. *Pass with the chin down*
5. *Pinch the tail of the puppy prior to feeding to assess placement*
6. *Place the end of the tube in water to check for no bubbles.*

## Weaning

Weaning is the process of teaching puppies to eat on their own and typically begins at 4 weeks old. It is an equally exciting and messy time of a puppy's journey. To bridge the gap between nursing and solid foods, we begin by offering a shallow dish of slurry (wet food mixed with warm water or formula) to an applesauce-like consistency. You can similarly introduce dry food by soaking it in water first.



The weaning process can be a messy time. After each feeding, make sure to clean excess slurry off their fur to avoid hair loss and skin irritation.

Begin by placing one puppy near the plate of the slurry mixture; if they start eating, their littermates will probably catch on. Sometimes one will begin lapping right away and bite the edge of the plate while they figure it out. Some will lick the slurry off your finger and then you can slowly lower your finger to the plate and hold it to the food. It can take a few feedings to master. If they do not seem interested enough to even sniff your finger, try gently opening the puppy's mouth and rubbing a little of the food on their teeth and they'll hopefully start licking your finger.

During the weaning process, you should continue to offer a bottle after each slurry meal to ensure your puppy is getting enough calories. As they master munching, you can gradually cut back on this supplemental bottle feeding and the amount of liquid in their food mixture until they are eating dry kibble. Be sure that the puppies always have access to fresh water in a low, stable bowl.

## Guide to Puppy Socialization and Appropriate Behavior

Puppies are naturally playful, mouthy, and jumpy. It's important to encourage their liveliness and affection, but also teach them how to play appropriately. By starting early and instilling good practices in foster, you can set your puppies up for success in their forever homes.

### Responding to Common Puppy Behaviors

Puppies are cute and lovable, but they can exhibit some behaviors that are not ideal. Here are some tips for managing some common behaviors.

#### Chewing and Nipping

When puppies play, they use their mouths. This behavior is not typically aggressive and is not meant to be harmful. However, it is important to teach your puppy that biting human skin is not acceptable. Redirect your puppy to a chew toy and teach them that nipping at you will stop all interaction. Consistency is key, and it may take time for your puppy to understand what is expected.

#### Jumping Up

Puppies often jump up to get attention. Pushing them away or nudging them reinforces this behavior. Instead, hold out your arms, say "off," and turn away until your puppy has all four feet on the ground. Praise and reward them when they stop jumping and sit.

### The Power of Positivity!

#### Using Positive Reinforcement Training

Positive reinforcement training is the most humane and efficient way to shape your puppy's behavior. When your puppy exhibits unwanted behavior, redirect them with a toy or kissy noise. Praise and reward them for stopping the undesirable behavior and giving you attention instead. Reinforcing desired behaviors with praise when the puppy displays them on their own (i.e. puppy runs to greet you = "good come;" puppy gets tired and sits down = "good sit!") Consistency is key, and everyone in the household should use the same commands and reward desired behavior, never undesired behavior. Food treats, praise, petting, or a favorite toy or game can all be positive reinforcement. Remember to give verbal praise along with the reward.

## Special Care for Singleton Puppies

### Understanding Singleton Puppies

Singleton puppies, or puppies raised without siblings, may miss out on important social and behavioral lessons typically learned through interactions with littermates. These lessons include bite inhibition, social cues, and appropriate play behavior.

### Addressing Potential Challenges

**Socialization:** Singleton puppies need extra socialization to compensate for the lack of interaction with littermates. This can include structured playdates with other puppies or gentle interactions with well-behaved adult dogs, ensuring the experiences are positive and not overwhelming.

**Bite Inhibition:** Without littermates to teach bite limits, singleton puppies may not learn to moderate the strength of their bites. Foster parents should focus on teaching gentle play and discouraging biting, using methods like yelping when bitten or stopping play immediately to indicate that biting is unacceptable.

**Confidence Building:** These puppies may also need help building confidence, as they haven't had the benefit of learning and exploring with siblings. Engage them in a variety of experiences, such as exploring new environments and meeting new people, to build confidence.


**Independence Training:** Singleton puppies can become overly reliant on human companionship, leading to potential separation anxiety. Gradually teaching them to be comfortable alone, using crate training and short periods of separation, can help foster independence.

### Additional Tips

**Play and Exploration:** Engage in supervised play sessions that mimic littermate interactions, focusing on gentle play and exploration.

**Handling and Touch:** Regular, gentle handling of the puppy can help them become comfortable with human touch and various types of physical contact.

**Training Consistency:** Consistent training and reinforcement are crucial for singleton puppies to learn appropriate behavior and boundaries.



*Singleton puppies benefit greatly from extra socialization and gentle play to learn behaviors usually taught by littermates*

## Punishment is a Thing of the Past

Attempting to punish or scold a puppy for an unwanted behavior does not teach them what to do instead or stop that behavior. In reality, it may be teaching a puppy to fear retaliation, to hide a behavior, or even to respond aggressively when they feel overwhelmed. Using aversive training methods (such as prong collars or spray bottles) and punishment harms the relationship between animals and humans, whereas positive reinforcement methods strengthen that relationship and bond.

## Housetraining


Since most foster puppies return to the shelter for adoption when they are 8 weeks old, you will only be able to work on basic housetraining habits. If you have a mother dog, she will clean up after her babies until they are 4-5 weeks old, which is when you can start housetraining.

Housetraining a puppy requires time, vigilance, patience, and commitment. It is possible to minimize the number of house soiling incidents, but every puppy will have an accident in the house at some point. It is important to remain consistent, be patient, and set your puppies up for success!

## Eliminating Outside

Once the puppies are coordinated enough (usually around 5-6 weeks old), you may take them outside to eliminate but they must stay on your personal property. You MUST know the history of your yard and be certain that no dog with parvo virus has been in your yard in the last 5 years. If you are unsure, it is safest to keep the puppies indoors and utilize the puppy pads.

If your yard has a clean history, you should still minimize the amount of time spent outside. Limit time outside to short potty breaks; choose a location not too far from the door to be the bathroom spot. Always take your puppy on a leash directly to the bathroom spot, praise them profusely once they've eliminated, and bring them immediately indoors.



*Generally, puppies can hold their bladders for about one hour for each month of age, so most foster age puppies will require bathroom breaks at least every hour*

### **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 punishment
5. Clean up accidents with an enzymatic cleaner

When you catch your puppy eliminating in the house, do something to interrupt them, like making a startling noise (but not loud enough to scare them), and immediately take them to their bathroom spot, praise them, and give them a treat if they finish there. Never punish them for eliminating in the house!

Be proactive by taking puppies out frequently and watching closely for signs that they might have to go, including sniffing, circling, and squatting. Cleaning any accidents in the house with an enzyme cleaner is very important because puppies are highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like urine or feces. Normal household cleaners often only mask these odors to us but leave them perceptible to animals. If you find an accident after they've finished, show it to them, give a firm (but calm) "no" to the accident itself, pick/soak up accident with a paper towel, set it on the potty place, and praise the accident for being in correct place. If unsure of which puppy did it, can be done as a "group lesson" as we aren't punishing them, but rather showing them that waste in one spot makes us upset, while waste in another spot makes us happy.

### **Additional Reasons for House Soiling**

- **Medical Problems:** House soiling can often be caused by physical problems, such as a urinary tract infection or a parasite infection. Contact the foster team if you suspect any medical concerns.
- **Submissive/Excitement Urination:** Some dogs, especially young ones, temporarily lose control of their bladders when they become excited or feel threatened. This usually occurs during greetings, intense play, or in anticipation of punishment.
- **Territorial Urine-Marking:** Dogs sometimes deposit urine or feces, usually in small amounts, to scent-mark their territory. Both male and female dogs do this, and it most often occurs when they believe their territory has been invaded.
- **Separation Anxiety:** Dogs that become anxious when left alone may house soil as a result. There are usually other symptoms, such as destructive behavior or vocalization.
- **Fears or Phobias:** When animals become frightened, they may lose control of their bladder and or bowels. If your puppy is afraid of loud noises, such as thunderstorms or fireworks, they may house soil when they are exposed to these sounds.

## Crate Training

House training and crate training for puppies go hand in hand. A crate is a great tool when used appropriately. Crates are not meant as a means of punishment and should be established as a safe, enjoyable place to be. Crates offer a safe space for puppies to be when not actively attended, keeping them out of trouble. They can also serve as a den or safe retreat for puppies, a space where they can withdraw when they need a break. Crates are meant to be used only for short-term confinement. Long-term confinement areas should be created with an x-pen or by using baby gates.

Crates should be just large enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and stretch out. Puppies instinctively want to keep their den areas clean and will avoid eliminating in this space. However, if the crate is too large, a puppy may find there is space for a potty area. As your puppy grows, their crate will need to grow as well.

Begin crate training by feeding your puppy in their crate, providing chew toys only in the crate, and or playing crate games to build a positive association with the crate. Keep crate training sessions short and fun and practice having your puppy in the crate for short periods while you are home.





## **Puppy Socialization**

A puppy's experiences during the first few weeks and months of life are critical in developing future sociability. From the time a puppy is 3 weeks old until approximately 12 to 16 weeks of age (this range varies depending on the specific dog) puppies are in a critical socialization period. During this time, curiosity and sociability outweigh fear. After the critical socialization period, fear of new things becomes more prominent. Because of this, the critical socialization period is the perfect time to introduce puppies to new things and expose them to the world they will be living in. Puppies who have improper socialization, incomplete socialization, or were simply under-socialized are at an increased risk for future behavioral problems that are rooted in fear and anxiety.

Puppies need to have lots of fun, safe, and new experiences with different people, places, items, sounds, smells, motions, and animals. When socializing puppies, it is important to make sure that there is a lot of variety in their experiences. Puppies should also be handled all over while in their critical socialization period to help acclimate them to future vet visits and grooming needs.

### **How to Properly Socialize Your Puppy**

Not all socialization is good socialization. It's important that the puppies are having a fun, safe time. New things should be associated with "really good stuff" – new humans should have lots of delicious treats, and puppies should be given the chance to explore the world on their own comfort (i.e., don't place them on the stairs and force them down or drag them across new flooring).

Scary things can be magical treat-producing devices! Chicken might suddenly appear on the scary tile flooring right in front of the puppy. Yummy snacks might be found near a stationary vacuum (which doesn't move until the puppy is far enough away to not be scared by it) and as soon as it turns on, puppies get even more yummy snacks. If your puppy is nervous or scared by something, it's okay to back up a few steps and work at a point where they are comfortable. Time and treats go a long way with many puppies. Forcing them into scary situations and expecting them to just get over it can have the opposite effect and create lifelong fears. On the following page is a socialization checklist. Please note you do not want to expose your puppy to all of these items in a short period of time.

# SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><u>Unfamiliar People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> wearing backpacks</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> people dancing</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> different ethnicities</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> people riding a bike</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> men with beards</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> men with deep voices</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> wearing hats</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> wearing sunglasses</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> toddlers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> infants</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> elderly</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> children playing</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> people running</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> tall men</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> women</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> clowns</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> teenagers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> walking with canes or walkers</li></ul> | <p><u>Meeting Animals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> puppies</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> male adult dogs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> female adult dogs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> kittens</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> cats</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> horses</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> pocket pets</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> different breeds</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> old dogs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> farm animals</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> squirrels</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> rabbits</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> birds</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> cows</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> flat-faced dogs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> forest animals</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> ducks</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> different temperaments</li></ul> | <p><u>Visual and Noises</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> sirens</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> fireworks</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> car horns</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> motorbikes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> thunderstorms</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> wheelchairs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> cars</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> door bells</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> skateboards</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> airplanes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> vacuum cleaner</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> hair dryer</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> blender</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> gunshot</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> alarm</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> trucks</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> washing machine</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> crowds of people</li></ul> |
| <p><u>Body Handling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> check the ears</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> bending towards puppy</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> opening the eyelids</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> grabbing the collar</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> handling and trimming toenails</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> hugging your puppy</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> holding him in your arms</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> squeezing the feet</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> grooming brush</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> examine mouth</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> touching tail</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> touching belly</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> cradling the puppy in your arms</li></ul>   | <p><u>Places</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> parks</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> boarding kennel</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> daycare</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> pet store</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> veterinarian</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> groomer</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> lake</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> forest</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> shopping areas</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> bridges</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> night time</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> dog friendly:</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> class locations</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> events</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> restaurants</li></ul>   | <p><u>Objects and Flooring</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> pots and pans</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> brooms</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> bags blowing in the wind</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> umbrellas</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> sidewalk signs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> garbage cans</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> escalators</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> bench</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> ballons</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> elevators</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> tile floors</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> wet grass</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> stairs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> wood floors</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> carpet</li></ul>  |

## Incubators

Incubators and enclosures are essential for the care of neonatal puppies, particularly for those under 3 weeks old, exhibiting signs of illness or distress, or born as singletons. These specialized environments provide a stable and regulated atmosphere, which is crucial for the survival and development of vulnerable puppies. The use of incubators is not merely a convenience but often a life-saving necessity. Before any puppy is placed in an incubator, it is critical to conduct a thorough health assessment. This includes checking the pup's body temperature to ensure it falls within the normal range of 94.7-97.3°F. Special attention is given to signs of hypothermia, indicated by temperatures below 94°F, which necessitate immediate incubator placement.

The preparation of the incubator is a meticulous process. It involves cleaning and sanitizing with a safe and effective disinfectant, such as Rescue Brand, ensuring that no chemical residues are left behind that could harm the puppies. The temperature and humidity settings within the incubator are carefully controlled. In the first week, the air temperature is set between 85° to 90°F with a humidity level of 55-65%. This is gradually reduced to 85°F in the second week and tapered down to about 74°F by the time the puppy is 3-4 weeks old. Continuous monitoring every two hours is essential to maintain these conditions and to adjust as necessary based on the puppies' responses.

Additional features of the incubator include a humidifier, a Nebulizer ports are also available for administering respiratory treatments, which are particularly useful in combating conditions like pneumonia, asthma, or kennel cough. In cases of severe hypoxia, an oxygen concentrator can be attached. Observing the puppies' behavior is key; for instance, puppies piling on each other indicates they are cold, while spreading out and panting suggests they are too hot. For singleton puppies or those with health issues, extended care in the incubator until 5 weeks of age is advisable.



## Puppy Health

A Healthy puppy has bright eyes, a sleek coat, and a plump belly. Younger puppies are content to sleep between feedings and as they approach 8 weeks, they begin to spend more time playing. The normal body temperature for a puppy is 94.5-97.3 the first week, slowly rising to 100.1 after the first week of life. Unfortunately, puppies do become ill and sometimes die while in foster, so it is important to prevent disease and treat it as soon as it appears.

### Performing a Nose to Tail Assessment

Whenever you bring home a new foster animal you should perform a nose to tail assessment on them. Familiarize yourself with their general physical appearance and take note of any irregularities. We highly encourage you to take photos or videos of anything odd or concerning with your puppy and contact us for guidance.

|                    | Normal   | Abnormal  |
|--------------------|--|---|
| General Appearance | ALERT, ACTIVE, AND RESPONSIVE WITH A HEALTHY BODY CONDITION.                     | LETHARGIC, UNRESPONSIVE, UNDERWEIGHT OR OVERWEIGHT, OR SHOWING SIGNS OF DISCOMFORT. |
| Eyes               | CLEAR, BRIGHT EYES WITH NO DISCHARGE OR REDNESS.                                 | CLOUDINESS, EXCESSIVE TEARING, REDNESS, OR DISCHARGE.                               |
| Ears               | CLEAN, ODOR-FREE EARS  | FOUL ODOR, EXCESSIVE WAX, REDNESS, SWELLING, OR DISCHARGE.                          |
| Nose               | MOIST (NOT NECESSARILY WET) AND CLEAN WITH NO DISCHARGE.                         | PERSISTENT DRYNESS, CRACKING, DISCHARGE, OR EXCESSIVE SNEEZING.                     |
| Mouth              | PINK GUMS, CLEAN TEETH, AND NO EXCESSIVE DROOLING OR BAD BREATH.                 | PALE OR OVERLY RED GUMS, PLAQUE BUILDUP, PERSISTENT BAD BREATH, OR SWOLLEN GUMS.    |
| Skin/Hair          | SMOOTH SKIN WITH A SHINY, CLEAN COAT AND NO BALD SPOTS.                          | FLAKY, RED, OR IRRITATED SKIN, DULL COAT, EXCESSIVE SHEDDING, OR BALD PATCHES.      |
| Legs/Feet          | STEADY GAIT WITH NO LIMPING; PAWS AND PADS SHOULD BE FREE OF WOUNDS OR SWELLING. | LIMPING, RELUCTANCE TO WALK, SWOLLEN PAWS, OR VISIBLE WOUNDS ON LEGS OR FEET.       |
| Anal/Genital       | CLEAN AND FREE OF SWELLING OR DISCHARGE.   | SWELLING, REDNESS, DISCHARGE, OR SIGNS OF DISCOMFORT WHEN TOUCHED IN THE AREA.      |

### Warning Signs: Identifying a Sick Puppy

- Temperature: A cold puppy is a sign of trouble. Their weakened immune systems make them more susceptible to infections.
- Activity and Sounds: Sick puppies may cry weakly and seem to frail to nurse. They often lie apart from their siblings.
- Physical State: They may appear thin and limp which are indicators of malnutrition and dehydration.

## Common Illnesses in Puppies

Most of the puppies that we take in have unknown health histories, meaning, we have no way of knowing what illnesses they may have been exposed to or parasites they may have picked up. This is why our mandatory 2-week quarantine period is so important.

During your foster career, there are a few common ailments you are likely to run into with your puppies. Learning to promptly identify signs of illness and alerting the foster team is crucial to speeding up your puppy's recovery. If you notice any of these illnesses, please contact the foster team. Do not self-treat at home.

### Illnesses

#### **Diarrhea**

Diarrhea is common in puppies and may be caused by parasites, viruses, bacteria, food changes, weaning off formula, stress, overfeeding, or other causes. Be sure to notify your foster team that your puppy is having loose stools.

#### **Vomiting**

If your puppy is vomiting, it is possible that they are eating their meals too quickly. You should watch them when they eat and not allow them to eat too much too quickly – feeding out of a slow feeder or scattering the kibble on the floor can help slow down fast eaters. One episode of vomiting is generally not concerning, but if vomiting persists, notify the foster team as severe dehydration can occur and medical intervention might be required.

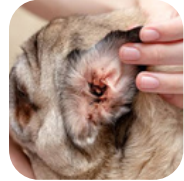
#### **Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)**

Nasal discharge accompanied by sneezing, ocular discharge, and/or coughing. Your puppy is likely to feel “dumpy” and may not be eating its normal amount. Full-blown URI is diagnosed when the puppy has colored nasal discharge. Clear or cloudy nasal discharge, or the absence of nasal discharge but the existence of ocular discharge and/or sneezing, might be diagnosed differently.

## Parasites

### Ear Mites

Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal. They cause intense itching, noted by scratching behind the ears and violent head shaking. Inside the ears, you may see a crumbly, dark brown discharge resembling coffee grounds, and the ears may have a bad smell.



### Roundworms

Roundworms are not, in fact, round, though under a microscope their eggs are. Roundworms are often found excreted in stool and described as “spaghetti-like” - yum! They are the most common culprit of the bloated potbelly that many young animals enter the shelter with.



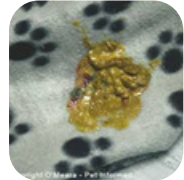
### Tapeworms

Tapeworms have long, segmented bodies that frequently break off into small sections. Most often, you will find tiny, individual segments that look like white rice in an animal's feces. You may also find tapeworm segments or eggs that resemble sesame seeds located around the anus.



### Coccidia

Coccidia is single-celled parasites that love to take up residence in the intestinal wall and cause all kinds of mischief. While you won't spot wild coccidia with the naked eye, coccidia does generally lead to a very distinct, yellowish, loose, and foul-smelling stool.



### Fleas

We've all seen these little pests – small black bugs that run and jump quickly. Most commonly found around the neck, ears, under the armpits, and around the genitals. Usually accompanied by large amounts of black flea dirt, digested blood that has been excreted. Fleas are transmitters of both roundworm and tapeworm, so if your foster animal has fleas, keep an eye on their poop as well.



### Treating Fleas in Young Puppies

For puppies under 8 weeks old, topical flea treatment cannot be applied. Fosters should use a flea comb to remove live fleas. Dip the comb in warm soapy water first to trap the fleas, and after to rinse them off and kill them.

Only a mild dish soap like Dawn should be used. In severe cases, puppies can be submerged up to the neck in warm soapy water – be sure to make a dish-soap collar around their neck first to stop fleas running onto their head. Very young, sick, or weak puppies should not be fully bathed unless absolutely necessary, as it may send their weakened bodies into a state of shock. Chilling is one of the number one dangers to young puppies who may still be unable to regulate their body temperatures.

*NEVER put a puppy away wet.  
Thoroughly towel dry your puppy after any bathing and place them with a supplemental heat source to prevent chilling.*



## Parvovirus

Canine parvovirus, “parvo”, is a virus that attacks the canine intestinal tract and sometimes the heart. It is one of the most resistant viruses and can live in the environment for up to two years withstanding heat, cold, and most common disinfectants.

Parvo is transmitted through the feces and vomit of infected dogs and puppies. Because it is so difficult to kill, the virus is easily transmitted by “fomites” - hands, clothing, or the shoes of anyone who encounters it.

Parvovirus in puppies presents with several acute and severe symptoms. Initially, puppies may exhibit lethargy and an apparent loss of interest in play or normal activities. This is often followed by a loss of appetite and refusal to eat. One of the more alarming symptoms is persistent vomiting, which can quickly lead to dehydration. Another hallmark of parvo is severe, often bloody, diarrhea, contributing further to dehydration and rapid deterioration in the puppy's condition. Puppies may also have a fever or, conversely, a lower-than-normal body temperature. As the illness progresses, these symptoms can lead to rapid weight loss, increased weakness, and noticeable depression. Early detection and immediate veterinary intervention are crucial, as parvo can be life-threatening, especially in young, unvaccinated puppies.

Preventing parvovirus in neonatal puppies primarily involves vaccination and minimizing their exposure to the virus. Puppies should receive the parvovirus vaccine as part of their routine vaccinations, usually starting around 6 to 8 weeks of age, with boosters following at three to four-week intervals until they are around 16 weeks old. Until fully vaccinated, it's important to limit their exposure to unvaccinated dogs and environments where the virus may be present, such as dog parks, pet stores, and public areas. Good hygiene practices, such as regular cleaning and disinfecting of living areas and utensils, are also vital. For breeders or caregivers of neonatal puppies, ensuring that the mother is fully vaccinated before pregnancy can provide some immunity to the puppies for the first few weeks of life. Remember, even with these precautions, it's crucial to be vigilant for any signs of illness in puppies and seek immediate veterinary care if parvo is suspected.



## Veterinarian Care

As a foster caregiver, your primary responsibility is to ensure the health of your foster puppies, and regular veterinary care is a vital component of this. Puppies require consistent medical attention, including core vaccinations and general check-ups. As a foster parent, you should be prepared to take your puppies to BTBB approximately every two weeks, or more often if needed. Taking care of puppies is demanding but incredibly rewarding, as you are playing a crucial role in saving their lives!

It's important to keep track of vaccination schedules. Puppies are born with limited immunity, gaining initial antibodies from their mother's milk. These maternal antibodies start to diminish as the puppy grows, but the exact timing varies for each puppy. To bridge any potential immunity gaps that could leave the puppies vulnerable to serious illnesses like parvovirus, we provide deworming and core vaccinations every two weeks from when the puppies are 2 weeks old until they reach 16 weeks. Routine anti-parasitic treatments are also part of their care regimen.

You'll need to bring your puppies to BTBB for their deworming and booster shots every two weeks. These appointments are typically quick and can be conveniently scheduled online to fit your routine.

## **Puppy Vaccination and Parasite Control Protocol**

### **Deworming, Giardia, and Coccidiosis Management**

Effective parasite control is crucial, especially for puppies that are outdoors or have mothers that are frequently outside. Puppies can contract parasites from their mothers or from external sources like giardia, often found in wet areas. Parasite infestation can lead to symptoms like poor weight gain, rough coats, diarrhea, and dehydration. Dangerous parasites, such as giardia and coccidiosis, can have severe symptoms similar to parvoviruses.

To combat this, we implement a strict parasite control program starting from 2 weeks of age, focusing on proactive and consistent treatment. Below, we outline our protocol, including recommended products. This is not medical advice, but a sharing of our practices.

### **Weighing Your Puppy:**

Dosages are weight-dependent. It's important to weigh your puppy accurately. We recommend specific scales for different puppy ages, ensuring precise dosage calculation.

### **Intestinal Worms Control:**

Puppies are dewormed starting at 2 weeks old and continue every 2 weeks until 2 months old, then monthly until 6 months old. The specific medication varies depending on the age and type of parasite.

### **For Roundworms & Hookworms:**

At 2, 4, and 6 weeks, we use Pyrantol Pamoate 50 mg/ml suspension.

### **For Puppies Aged Six Weeks and Up:**

We use Safeguard 10% Fenbendazole Dewormer, effective against a broader spectrum of intestinal worms and giardia.

## Vaccine Information & Protocol:

### Puppy Vaccinations:

#### 1. DHPP - Modified Live vaccine

- Give first vaccine at 6 weeks of age. If the puppy arrives older than 6 weeks of age, give the vaccine right away unless it has had a verified vaccine within the last 2 weeks.
- Give the second and following vaccines every 2 weeks (minimum 2 weeks, no more than 3 weeks).
- Give the last booster vaccination at 18 to 20 weeks of age.

#### 2. Rabies

- Give once the puppy is 12 weeks of age.
- Booster one year after the initial vaccine, then every three years.

#### 3. Bordetella and Parainfluenza

- Give the first vaccine at 6 weeks of age or immediately upon intake if older than 6 weeks at intake.
- Booster in one year

### Vet Checks

It is a fact of fostering that sometimes animals will either come to you sick or become sick while in foster. In the event your foster puppy becomes injured or ill, you should reach out to the foster team as soon as possible for guidance in setting up an exam with one of our vets.



## Fading Puppy Emergency Guide

Fading Puppy Syndrome or sudden failure to thrive is a life-threatening emergency in which a puppy, suddenly “crashes” and begins to fade. This sometimes happens in previously healthy puppies with little to no warning. Fading puppy syndrome is most commonly a result of hypothermia (low body temperature) and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). Although, other underlying issues such as congenital defects, diseases, and untreatable illnesses can cause a puppy to fade rapidly. Even with early detection and intense intervention, puppies may not survive but this fading puppy protocol could help save their life!

### Recognizing Fading Puppy Syndrome

**Hypothermia:** Newborn puppies lack the ability to regulate their own body temperature, making them susceptible to quick temperature drops.

**Hypoglycemia:** Puppies can experience rapid blood sugar fluctuations, often due to inconsistent feeding or malabsorption issues.

**Dehydration:** A result of inadequate fluid intake, or possibly due to an underlying illness causing excessive fluid loss such as diarrhea or vomiting.

Symptoms to Look For

**Cold Extremities:** A touch test is imperative. Check the puppy’s paws, nose, belly, and gums. They should feel warm to the touch.

**Lethargy:** Weakness and sluggishness are red flags. Puppies experiencing FPS often lack the energy to move or respond to stimuli.

**Breathing Difficulties:** Labored or shallow breathing patterns are cause for immediate concern.

**Vocalization:** Constant crying or whimpering can be indicative of discomfort or distress.



**TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE IN FPS. IMMEDIATE ACTION IS CRUCIAL.**

### Preparing for Emergency Treatment

Gather the following items:

**Digital Thermometer:** Essential for accurate temperature readings.

**Heating Pad and Warm Towels:** Critical for temperature management.

**High-Calorie Supplement:** Brands like Nutrical can provide instant, nutrient-dense calories.

**Syringes:** Both small (1ml) and larger sizes for fluid administration.

**Electrolyte Solution:** Pedialyte or an equivalent vet-approved option.

**Sugar Source:** Karo syrup, honey, or maple syrup for rapid sugar infusion.

**Timer:** To ensure treatments and checks are performed at the correct intervals.

## Emergency Treatment Steps

### Step 1: Warming the Puppy

To understand the severity of the situation, immediately take the puppy's rectal temperature using a digital thermometer. A puppy's normal body temperature should range between 94.7-97.3F the first week and slowly rise to 97.3-100.3 the 2nd and 3rd weeks. Having a baseline temperature will help you adjust your warming techniques as needed.

### Warm the Puppy:

- **Wrap and Warm (Method 1 - Towel and Heating Pad):** Securely wrap the puppy in a clean, warm towel, ensuring the nose and mouth are exposed for unobstructed breathing. Place a cloth-covered heating pad under the towel-wrapped puppy to gently raise its body temperature.
- **Alternative Warming (Method 2 - Heating Discs):** As another option, caregivers often use microwavable heating discs, enveloped in a cloth, as a reliable heat source. Place the wrapped disc beneath the puppy, sandwiched between layers of the towel, to distribute the heat evenly.
- **Additional Warming Option (Method 3 - Skin-to-Skin):** If heating pads or discs aren't available, holding the puppy against your own skin, perhaps inside your shirt, can offer critical warmth. Although less consistent, this method is still effective in emergencies.
- **Optimal Warming (Method 4 - Incubator):** If you have access to a specialized puppy incubator, this is the ideal warming method. Incubators maintain a consistent temperature and humidity level, providing the most stable environment for the puppy. Transfer the puppy to the incubator as soon as possible, and continue to monitor its condition closely.

*It's crucial to recheck the puppy's temperature every 5 minutes to aim for a gradual increase to the normal range.*

*A too-hot heating pad can cause burns or overheat the puppy. Monitor both the pad's and the puppy's temperature closely.*

## **Step 2: Raising Blood Sugar Levels**

In the event of hypoglycemia, first raise their blood sugar levels. Karo syrup is the preferred sugar source; if unavailable, use honey or maple syrup. Apply a small amount directly to the puppy's gums or tongue using a syringe or your fingertip. It's crucial to administer this sugar solution every three minutes for 15-20 minutes or until the puppy shows signs of improvement. Next, address dehydration. Check the puppy's hydration by gently pinching their skin; a slow return to normal suggests dehydration. Administer Pedialyte orally with a 1ml syringe, giving 1-2 ml every five minutes for 30 minutes, taking care to avoid choking or aspiration. After stabilizing the puppy, wait an additional 30-45 minutes before starting feeding. This step-by-step approach is essential for effectively managing a puppy's hypoglycemia and dehydration.

## **POST-EMERGENCY CARE AND MONITORING**

After addressing an emergency situation with a puppy, ongoing care is essential. Continue monitoring the puppy's temperature every 30 minutes for the next four hours to ensure stability. Nutritional support during this period is crucial; offer smaller, more frequent feedings of Nutrical and Pedialyte every hour for the first 4-6 hours. It's important to keep a close eye on the puppy, maintaining continuous and careful observation for the next 24-48 hours. This vigilant monitoring is key to promptly identifying any signs of deterioration and ensuring the puppy's steady recovery.

## **Emotional Support**

Losing a puppy, despite your most diligent efforts, is a devastating experience that leaves an emotional toll. However, it's crucial to understand that your love, care, and rapid action afforded that young life a chance it may not have otherwise had. You became a beacon of hope in that puppy's world, even if the outcome was not what you or anyone would have wanted.

When you put your heart and soul into caring for a vulnerable life, it's natural to go through a grieving process when things don't turn out as hoped. The stages of grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—are all normal emotional responses. You may find yourself questioning what you could have done differently. It's natural to feel this way, but it's also crucial to remember that Fading Puppy Syndrome often occurs despite the best medical and supportive care.

## Sterilization and Sanitation

Keeping our equipment and feeding supplies clean is crucial for the health of our babies. Sterilization is a non-negotiable part of our routine. We use Rescue brand cleaner for most of our sanitization needs, as it's effective and safe for animals.

### Equipment Sterilization

#### Daily Routine

- **Mixing Cleaner:** Prepare the Rescue brand cleaner as per the manufacturer's guidelines,
- **Application:** Generously spray the solution on incubators, whelping boxes, and nesting boxes.
- **Wiping:** Use a sterile cloth to clean every corner.
- **Air Drying:** Let everything air dry naturally.

#### Weekly Deep Cleaning

- **Disassemble Components:** Take apart removable parts for thorough cleaning.
- **Intensive Cleaning:** Soak the disassembled parts in a stronger concentration of Rescue cleaner.
- **Scrubbing:** A designated brush will help you get to those hard-to-reach spots.
- **Rinsing and Drying:** Always rinse well and air dry before reassembling.

### Post Feeding Routine

- **Initial Rinse:** Rinse bottles and nipples immediately after use to remove leftover formula.
- **Soapy Water:** A quick soak in warm, soapy water helps a lot.

### Thorough Cleaning

- **Scrubbing:** A gentle scrub removes any stubborn residues.
- **Final Rinse:** Always rinse under clean, running water.
- **Boiling:** Boil the supplies for at least 5 minutes to ensure they are sterilized.
- **Air Drying:** Air dry on a clean towel.

## The Path Forward

Congratulations on reaching the final section of our foster care guide! If you've made it this far, you're undoubtedly committed to providing the best possible care for orphaned, bottle-fed puppies and whelping mothers. Your dedication is what makes our mission possible, and we couldn't be more grateful.

### A Journey of Love and Compassion

Fostering a puppy is a journey filled with its own unique challenges and joys. As you've learned throughout this guide, your role is invaluable—from understanding developmental milestones to meeting nutritional needs, and from recognizing health issues to offering essential love and socialization. Inspired by the spirit of Blaze, our organization strives to ensure every puppy receives the highest quality of life. Your involvement makes this dream a reality.

### The Impact You Make

Remember, every little bit helps. Even if you can only foster a puppy for a short period, your compassion and care make an indelible mark on their lives. Every cuddle, every bottle-feed, and every playful interaction sets the foundation for a healthier, happier adult dog.

As we conclude this handbook, we want to emphasize that fostering is more than just a commitment—it's a calling. You are the crucial link between a vulnerable puppy's past and its potential future, and for that, you deserve all the gratitude in the world.

### How You Can Help If You Can't Foster a Bottle Baby

We understand that fostering isn't for everyone, but there are many other ways you can contribute to our mission.

**Become a Volunteer:** Help us behind the scenes with administration or be hands-on in puppy care.

**Be a Social Media Warrior:** Boost our reach by sharing our posts and engaging with our content online.

**Monetary Donations:** One-time or recurring contributions help us provide top-notch care.

**Donate Supplies:** Our puppies are always in need of essentials like formula and toys.

**Fundraising:** Get creative and host your own fundraiser to support our cause.

**Skill-Based Contributions:** Use your talents to benefit our mission in unique ways.

By diversifying how you can contribute, we encourage everyone to be a part of this labor of love, regardless of their capacity to foster.



