**PAWS FOR LOVE DOG FOSTERING**

**HELPFUL TIPS FOR OUR HELPFUL FRIENDS**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO MAKE THIS THE BEST EXPERIENCE**

**FOR BOTH YOU AND YOUR DOG!**

**PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY!**

**Supplies provided**

To help with your fostering experience, Paws for Love will provide you with dog food, frozen raw meat, bowls, toys, a collar and leashes, an outdoor tie-out, dog bed, deworming pills, and a crate if needed.

**Keeping track**

Feel free to download the DOG ADOPTION FORM on the Fosters Page on the website to help you keep track of important appointments and information.

**Pick up**

When you pick up your dog at the airport, please don’t open the crate until you are safely inside your house. Many of these dogs do not come with a collar or a leash and in their fear and confusion they can bolt. When transporting, place the crate inside your vehicle – do not put in the back of your truck where the dog is exposed. It will be a very terrifying experience for him/her since he/she has never been in a city before.

**How to welcome to your home**

Dogs thrive on attention so giving your dog lots of love and spending time with him is very important. If your dog is shy and hesitant, go slower and set smaller goals when trying to get him/her used to people and your home. If your dog shows any sign of viciousness and you don’t think you have the experience or are concerned for yourself or your family and other pets, Paws for Love will give him/her to a more experienced person. If you become afraid of your foster dog, it is important that he/she go to another home. Fear feeds aggression and there are professional trainers who can figure out what is triggering the aggression and are very willing to help. All dogs at Paws for Love are given opportunities. We never give up on anyone. We never put a dog down.

**Introducing your foster to your own dogs and cats**

The following excerpt, taken from the Humane Society’s website, is meant as a guide. Most fosters who introduce a new dog to their pack, whether it’s a one or ten dog pack, report very few difficulties. Pregnant females are often treated with great respect from any dog, whether it is male or female.

**Introduce on neutral territory**

It’s best to let dogs become familiar with each other on neutral territory: outdoors. Each dog should be walked separately on a leash, and each walker should have a bag of high-value treats or food broken into small pieces. At first, walk the dogs at a distance where they can see each other but are not too provoked by each other’s presence. If the dogs are not showing any negative behaviors, reward them with treats just for seeing each other. For example, when the dog you’re walking looks at the other dog, you can say “Good boy!” or “Good girl!” in a happy, friendly voice and give him/her a treat. Repeat often.

**Pay attention to each dog’s body language**.

Watch carefully for body postures that indicate a defensive or wary response, including hair standing up on the dog's back, teeth baring, growling, a stiff-legged gait or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, either when the dogs are at a distance or near each other, immediately and calmly interrupt the interaction by interesting the dog in something else. If the dogs seem relaxed and comfortable, you can shorten the distance between them. Again, offer treats to the dogs any time they look at each other in a relaxed manner.

**Let the dogs determine the pace of the introduction.**

It’s possible that the dogs will just want to play with each other by the middle of the walk. It’s also possible that it will take more time before the dogs are comfortable enough to walk side by side. The most important thing is to take this introduction slowly. The more patient you are, the better your chance of success. Do not force the dogs to interact.

Once the dogs are able to view each other at a close proximity, allow one dog to walk behind the other, and then switch. If the dogs remain comfortable, allow them to walk side by side. Finally, let the dogs interact under close supervision. If one or both dogs show any signs of stress or agitation, proceed more slowly with the introduction.

**Monitor closely in the home**.

When first introducing the dogs in the home, use a sturdy, tall baby gate to separate them. Observe how they interact through the gate. Reinforce positive behavior by providing high-value treats to the dogs for positive interactions.

Make sure that there are no toys, food or treats left around the home that the dogs could potentially fight over. Also, be aware of situations that could lead to conflict—for example, when the dogs get overly excited. Closely monitor the dogs when they are together, rewarding them with treats, until you are 100% confident they are comfortable and safe with each other.

If introductions don’t seem to be going well, feel free to ask for advice from the Paws for Love Dog Rescue Foster Families group on Facebook or contact Kim.

**Feeding/Water**

Keep the food bowl on the floor, full of dog food all the time until bedtime. This reduces food aggression while your dog learns that food is always available. Taking the food away at bedtime will decrease the chances of him/her having to go to the bathroom at night. Clean water should be provided all the time, day and night.

**Bathing**

However horrible smelling your dog may be, please wait a couple days before bathing him/her. He/she most likely has never had a bath in his/her life and you don’t want to overstress him/her. You may use your own dog shampoo or if we have any on hand, we’re happy to provide you with some.

**House training**

House training a rescue dog isn’t as difficult as it may seem. It usually takes about 48 hours because your rescue has never been in a house before. Simply watch your dog for signs of wanting to go to the washroom, take him/her outside, and praise him/her when he/she does go: “Oh, my goodness! You are a wonderful poochy! You pooped outside! I love you! I love you! I love you!” works very well.

Once your dog is vaccinated you can train him/her on a leash outside of your property. Please keep your dog on a leash at all times when going outside for fear of bolting.

The following training advice on using a leash on your dog is taken from the American Kennel Club’s website:

**Leash training**

**If your dog pulls:** If your dog starts pulling in the other direction, turn yourself into “a tree.” Stand very still and refuse to move until your dog comes back to you. Do not yank or jerk the leash, and do not drag your dog along with you. Front-hook harnesses and head halters are alternative training tools designed for dogs that tend to pull.

**If your dog lunges:** If your dog is [going after something while on a walk](https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/basic-training/tips-for-walking-your-distracted-dog/) — another dog, a car, a skateboarder, for example, be proactive. Try to redirect his/her attention with a treat before he/she has a chance to lunge, and increase the space between your dog and the target. Stay alert and be prepared before the target of his/her frustration gets too close. This type of behavior may be more common in [herding breeds](https://www.akc.org/dog-breeds/groups/herding/), but any dog can be startled by something he or she is not used to or finds exciting.

Feel free to train your dog to follow other commands such as sit and stay.

**Exercise**

Rescue dogs are used to being outside and running around so you may find your dog wants to be outside more often than in. Use this outside time to bond with your dog and enjoy going for walks and exploring your yard together. Once he/she is vaccinated you may expand your walking territory and go for miles and miles into the great unknown!

**Crate Training**

While some people may not agree with crate training, it has many benefits, especially if you have a dog who is anxious and destructive when left alone. Dogs are pack animals and dogs coming from the reserves are very accustomed to being around dogs and people. When left alone, a dog may become anxious and rip apart cushions, furniture, and even electronics. It is beneficial for a dog to know how to self-soothe and be able to stay in a crate for long periods of time, therefore saving your furniture. It’s also beneficial to crate train a dog as he or she may have to stay in a crate while at the vets or on a plane, or any other circumstance when dogs are not allowed to wander. A crate is much like a dog’s den, and offers the dog a place to feel safe and content.

One video that provides some great tips and step by step instructions on crate training is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsJfhuLMvwU>

If the dog you are fostering shows signs of separation anxiety the following excerpt may be helpful. It’s taken from <https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/five-tips-for-crating-a-dog-with-separation-anxiety>

**5 Tips for Crating a Dog with Separation Anxiety**

By: [Emma Castleberry](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/author/emma-castleberry)

[Crate training your dog](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/how-to-crate-train-a-puppy) has a myriad of benefits, but it takes time and effort. Especially if you have an adult dog who is experiencing separation anxiety, introducing the crate and ensuring it is an effective tool for your pet can be a significant undertaking.

Crating a dog with separation anxiety has the potential to help your animal feel safer and more relaxed, but it can also have the opposite effect. Use these tips to ensure your pet has a positive experience with their crate and you can feel better about leaving them alone.

Can Crating Help a Dog with Separation Anxiety?

Many pet owners wonder if crate training might help their dog feel more comfortable while they’re away and manage their [stress symptoms](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/signs-of-stress-in-dogs-how-to-recognize-them) more effectively. Crating a dog with separation anxiety won’t cure their issue, but it can be used in conjunction with other strategies to help your dog. Plus, it has general benefits, including:

* Limiting your dog’s ability to take part in some stress behaviors like pacing
* Reducing the risk of your dog panicking, escaping the house, and getting lost
* Less household destruction and bathroom accidents from separation anxiety

 **SOME STRESS BEHAVIORS ACTUALLY COMPOUND YOUR DOG’S STRESS**

Some of the ways a dog might communicate his separation anxiety can sometimes make their stress worse. Actions like pacing and whining are compulsive, and they can get your dog more worked up as he participates in them. While the crate won’t help with stress vocalizing, it can limit your dog’s range of motion and prevent them from pacing or constantly readjusting. Sometimes, being in a smaller, confined space not only makes your dog feel safer and more protected, but also forces them to be more still, which can ultimately [calm](https://www.pawcbd.com/dogs/calming-tinctures/dog-calming-tincture-blueberry-500mg.html) them down.

**A DOG WITH SEPARATION ANXIETY MAY TRY TO ESCAPE**

Dogs experiencing separation anxiety are often in a panicked state when you are away and not thinking clearly about their actions. This can sometimes result in them breaking free – either escaping out an accidentally opened door or chewing and digging through the backyard fence – and running away in an effort to find you. Crating a dog with separation anxiety can reduce the chances that they will escape and become lost.

**CRATING CAN PREVENT HOUSEHOLD DAMAGE**

Many of the symptoms of separation anxiety are somewhat destructive. Dogs who are afraid of being alone may chew on furniture, upholstery, and clothing. They also often have bathroom accidents indoors (even if they are fully housebroken). If they’re in a crate, there is less for them to damage.

Dogs are also very unlikely to go to the bathroom in a small enclosed space where they sleep (this is what makes crate training such an effective method for potty-training puppies). A dog who tends to be destructive in an effort to communicate their separation anxiety may be inclined to chew on or destroy the inside of their crate. This can also be a sign your dog is bored, or being left inside their crate for too long. If you notice this behavior, you might need to slow down crate training, consider a new type of crate, or even throw in the towel with crating your dog with separation anxiety.

**5 Tips for Crating a Dog with Separation Anxiety**

How successful and effective the crate will be for a dog with separation anxiety depends on how carefully and intentionally you approach the use of this tool. If you’re trying to make the crate a safe space for your stressed-out dog, be sure to:

1. Ensure your dog’s routine is complete

2. Use the right crate

3. Create positive associations with the crate (including your presence)

4. Use commands and stay [calm](https://www.pawcbd.com/dogs/calming-tinctures.html)

5. Leave them with something to do

1. **A COMPLETE ROUTINE MIGHT REDUCE SEPARATION ANXIETY**

Are you sure that crating your [dog with separation anxiety](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/top-7-high-anxiety-dog-breeds-that-hate-to-see-you-leave) is the best approach to their issues? Sometimes dogs with separation anxiety actually just need a change in their daily schedule. Dogs need consistent and focused time with their owners each day for play and affection. They are inherently social creatures and being alone doesn’t come naturally to them. They also have significant exercise needs. Before crating your dog with separation anxiety, you might try to increase the length of their daily walk or incorporate some additional one-on-one playtime and see if their separation anxiety subsides.

Even if you choose to go forward with crating, it’s advisable to give your dog several minutes of vigorous exercise before putting them in the crate. Even the most stressed-out dog has limitations, so be sure they are tapped out of energy before you put them in the crate.

1. **CHOOSING THE RIGHT CRATE FOR YOUR DOG**

The crate itself has to be an inviting, cozy place for your pooch where they feel [safe and comfortable](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/the-five-essentials-for-your-dog-safe-space-and-why-they-need-one) to be effective in comforting them. This means they need to have enough space to move around: your dog should be able to stand and turn a full circle without impediment in their crate.

When crating a dog with separation anxiety, it’s often helpful to soften the interior of the crate by using some of your worn, unwashed clothing. Your scent can be comforting and reassuring to your pet and also makes it a more comfortable place to lie down and rest.

The material will also be specific if you’re crating a dog with separation anxiety. Wire or mesh crates are popular because they are lightweight and functional for many dogs, but a dog with separation anxiety will likely chew through such a crate. Furthermore, they can see and hear everything going on around them, which can create additional stress triggers. The crate you purchase does need proper ventilation, but that can be achieved with a steel crate and a window that will make your dog feel more secure. Crate covers also provide added darkness and security for some dogs.

1. **INTRODUCE THE CRATE AND DRAW PAW-SITIVE ASSOCIATIONS**

 When you first introduce the crate to your dog, you need to ensure that the object itself brings joy to your dog. Encourage them to enter and sniff around by using plenty of [treats](https://www.pawcbd.com/cbd-for-pets). Now is not the time to count calories (though you should [be aware of how many treats you give your dog on a daily basis](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/healthy-dog-treat-habits)). Don’t shut your dog into the crate when you first introduce it. Let them become comfortable with the space before you close them into it.

After they seem comfortable with the crate itself, you can shut the door and move about the house within view of your dog. The important factor when crating a dog with separation anxiety is to prove to your dog that being crated doesn’t mean you are leaving.

You should linger on this crate training step when you are working with a dog who suffers from separation anxiety. If they associate the crate with your departure, it will only worsen their concern and give the crate a negative association.

1. **COMMANDS CAN BE HELPFUL – BUT DON’T BE DRAMATIC**

Having commands and verbal notifications for your dog can be helpful in general, and that applies also to crate training a dog with separation anxiety. Having a word or phrase that indicates when you are leaving the house and returning can be helpful to keep your dog aware about what’s happening. If your dog comes to understand that hearing the words “I’m leaving” will ultimately result in the words “I’m home,” it might assuage some of their separation anxiety – which often stems from their fear that you won’t ever return.

The commands should always be spoken after your dog is already in the crate. The key with commands such as these is that you don’t create too much drama around when you use them. If you make a big deal out of leaving – giving your dog tons of affection and speaking in a high, tense voice – they will pick up on your intensity and it will likely increase their anxiety about your departure. You leaving the house should be treated as an everyday occurrence, so don’t make a big deal out of it.

1. **GIVE THEM SOME STIMULATION IN THE CRATE**

Another way to make the crate a more functional and sustainable place for your dog with separation anxiety is by giving them something to do inside of the crate. Keep a special toy reserved for crate time. It should be something high-value that they don’t get to play with outside of the crate. Kongs make great mentally stimulating toys when filled with [peanut butter](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/peanut-butter-for-dogs-keep-your-pooch-safe) or another treat. There are also a variety of other puzzle toys or [fun, interactive dog toys](https://www.pawcbd.com/blog/post/seven-of-the-best-interactive-dog-toys) you can leave in the crate with your pooch to keep them occupied and help them forget their stress.

Crate Training a Dog with Separation Anxiety Might Not Work

Remember: even if you follow all of our tips, the crate might cause more harm than good and upset your dog rather than soothe them. If you’re going to try crating a dog with separation anxiety, it needs to be an intentional, slow, and careful process. This strategy should help soothe your dog – not simply contain them. Follow our tips and take your time so that your dog comes to love their crate and find it relaxing!

After you feel your dog is comfortable around the crate, then you can work on having him get used to staying in it for a period of time. The following video may be helpful:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVM3S5s1f64>

**De-worming**

Most, if not all rescue dogs, have worms. Tapeworms are usually transmitted when a dog digests a flea during grooming. Dogs can also get tapeworms by ingesting the eggs shed by other animals or by hunting flea-infested rodents. A tapeworm’s body is made up of tiny segments and each of these segments has its own digestive and reproductive system. These segments eventually break off and are passed through a dog’s digestive system, exiting via the anus.

These nasty segments, which look like pieces of rice, can be spread and when a segment is ingested by your dog, the cycle can start all over again, inside the unknowing victim’s digestive tract.

The most common symptom of tapeworms is the appearance of the tapeworm segments on your dog’s fur - near the anus or in the stool. Because tapeworms feed on the nutrients passed in the small intestine, your dog may seem more hungry than usual as he/she is unwittingly sharing his/her meals with a nasty intestinal parasite. If the infestation lasts long enough, your dog might even lose weight.

If a dog has tapeworms, their stool is liquid-like and you may see a tapeworm hanging out of his/her anus. Disgusting as this may seem, all you need to do is use a tissue and pull it out gently until it snaps. Often you will see the worms in his/her poop. You will never look at fettuccini the same again.

Fosters of adult dogs will receive Drontal pills to give to your dog immediately, unless advised otherwise. Deworming must be done again 2 weeks later, and if necessary and under advisement by a vet, again in another 2 weeks.

**Vaccinations**

An appointment with a vet will be arranged for you to bring your rescue in to be vaccinated. Keep the vaccination papers the vet provides you with so they can be given to the new owner.

**Spay/Neuter**

If your dog is six months or older, an appointment will be set up to have him or her neutered or spayed. During the procedure the dog will also be microchipped. You will be responsible for bringing the dog to and from the clinic.

On the night before the spay or neuter, give your dog his/her food around 8 pm and then DO NOT give ANY food after 9pm. This includes treats. Water may be left down overnight, but should be removed first thing in the morning.

You will bring your dog to the clinic early in the morning around 8:00, leave your dog and then pick him/her up at approximately 3:00.

After your dog’s spay, the clinic will provide you with pain medication to administer. Please keep your dog’s exercise to a minimum for the first 10 days and follow all instructions provided from the clinic for your dog’s post-op care.

**Important Info**

Please remember to care for your dog as if you are taking care of someone else’s – because you are! Although it may be common for some people to let their dog ride in the back of a truck, we ask that you don’t do this. It may be an accident waiting to happen for inexperienced dogs. Although your own dogs may be comfortable and well trained and not require a leash when going for a walk, we ask that you keep your dog on a leash for fear of bolting. There’s been a few cases when Paws for Love dogs have run off from their loving foster homes and we’ve had to spend days looking for them.

**Adoption Procedures**

When your rescue dog is ready for adoption, you will be asked to send his/her photo and some information i.e. age, breeds, temperament, successes in training, etc., so he/she can be put up on the Paws for Love Facebook page and/or website and/or kijiji (Thunder Bay, Timmins, North Bay etc). When taking your dog’s photo try to have as little in the background as possible and all of the dog, from ears to paws, in the photo. You can also print the dog’s name (in pink for girls, in blue for boys) on the photo itself. The website designer appreciates this immensely.

Once an application is received, it will be sent to you by Kim. Your job is to review the application and determine if it’s a suitable fit for the dog. Take into consideration if the applicant lives in an apartment (then probably not suitable for a large dog) or lives near railway tracks (probably not a good fit for a dog that may take off), the amount of time the dog will have to spend alone, etc. When in doubt, ask Kim. Once you have a suitable applicant then call the applicant and invite him/her to meet your foster. Please follow the current Covid protocols for visits if applicable.

When the applicant decides they want to adopt your dog, a home visit must be done to ensure the dog’s safety and well being. When the home visit is completed, they can take the dog home for a 2-week trial period. Once they decide to adopt, a fee of $275 must be paid via etransfer to pawsforlovethunderbay@gmail.com , cash, or cheque payable to Paws for Love. This covers costs for spay/neuter, vaccinations, and microchipping. People who already have a dog through Paws for Love can take a dog without another home visit.

The adoption must take place within a reasonable time frame. It is not fair to the dog if he or she stays at your place for too long and becomes attached to you, only to leave you later for his or her new home. If a new owner requests that you keep the dog for a longer period of time due to travel, other commitments, etc., then talk to Kim. The dog’s well being is Paws greatest concern.

Paperwork will be provided for the new owners to fill in. **PLEASE READ THROUGH THE FORM WITH THE NEW OWNER TO ENSURE THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE SIGNING, ESPECIALLY IN REGARDS TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING AGREEMENT AND REHOMING.** Once the forms are completed, give them the appropriate papers (owners receive yellow copy of adoption form, yellow copy of PETIDCO form, and PETIDCO pamphlet), dog tags, and the dog collar he/she is currently wearing, and send your dog on his/her way to his/her forever home.

Remember to invite the new owners to check out the Paws for Love fundraising page on Facebook. The ongoing auction provides Paws for Love with much needed funding to cover costs of food, medicine, medical expenses etc. for our furbuddies.

This can be a very difficult time for you as you and your rescue have become good friends. Feel free to reach out to others on the Foster Facebook page who have gone through the same experience. And please take comfort in knowing that you have made someone very happy and your dog is well prepared to accept a home and the love from another person. Without you, this would not be possible.

