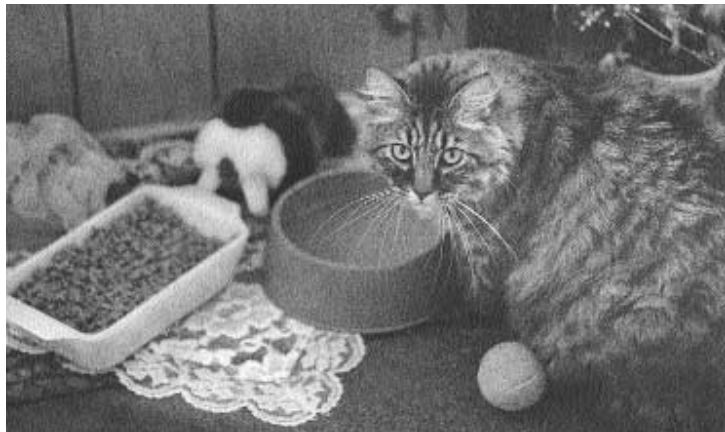


10 Ways to Become a Successful FOSTER PARENT



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1 Give your foster animal lots of attention and affection.

The animal you are fostering likely has special needs that require time and energy. The animal may have lived a difficult life before coming to your home; your love and attention will help to heal the animal's physical and psychological wounds.

2 Learn as much as you can about pet care.

Before you bring your foster animal home, learn as much as you can about caring for that animal. Read about feeding, grooming, and training. Study the warning signs that may indicate the animal needs veterinary attention.

3 Be prepared to make a financial commitment.

Before volunteering to foster an animal, find out from the shelter what costs you will incur. Depending on your shelter's policies and resources, you may be asked to pay for food, supplies, and/or veterinary care.

4 Make your home pet-friendly.

Before you bring your foster animal home, make sure you "pet proof" your home. For example, remove

poisonous plants and protect furnishings. Keep the animal's room warm and comfortable. Also, take steps to prevent the animal from escaping.

5 Keep your pets up-to-date on their vaccinations.

All animals should be current on the vaccinations that protect them from diseases. Before you bring home a foster animal, consult with your veterinarian to make sure your own animals have received the preventive treatment they need.

6 Keep foster animals away from your own pets.

A foster pet may come into your home harboring contagious diseases. Even though your pets are vaccinated against many diseases, it's a good idea to keep the foster animal away from your pets as an added precaution.

7 Recognize your limits.

Fostering requires a great deal of time and energy—both emotional and physical. Don't overextend yourself by fostering animals too frequently; you may burn yourself out.

8 Return the animal to the shelter on time.

The shelter depends on you to make its program work. Be sure to return the animal to the shelter at the scheduled time. If you decide to adopt an animal you foster, go through the shelter's normal adoption process. If a friend or relative wants to adopt the animal you are fostering, that person must go through the shelter's adoption process—not yours.

9 Understand that some foster animals will not survive.

Many animals who arrive at the shelter come from unknown backgrounds. Despite your best efforts, the animal you foster may develop a severe illness that cannot be treated. Do the best you can to help the animal, but accept the fact that you cannot save them all.

10 Enjoy being a foster parent.

Although fostering takes a great deal of time and commitment, it can be an incredibly rewarding experience. You are temporarily providing a needy animal with a loving home environment and helping that animal become more suitable for adoption into a responsible, lifelong home.

This space for your organization's name,
address, and phone number.

Provided by The Humane Society of the United States

This Reproducible is designed as a handout for people interested in becoming foster caregivers for needy animals. Your organization can photocopy this information sheet for general distribution or insertion in foster-care packets.