



Bottle Babies 101

TRI-COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

BOTTLE BABIES 101



WHY ARE YOU HERE?

- General Public/Interested in Topic?
- Interested in Foster Care for TCHS?
 - Contact our Foster Care Coordinator:
Kallie Braun, 320-252-0896 extension 16,
fostercare@tricountyhumanesociety.org
- Already a Foster or Volunteer?
- Other?

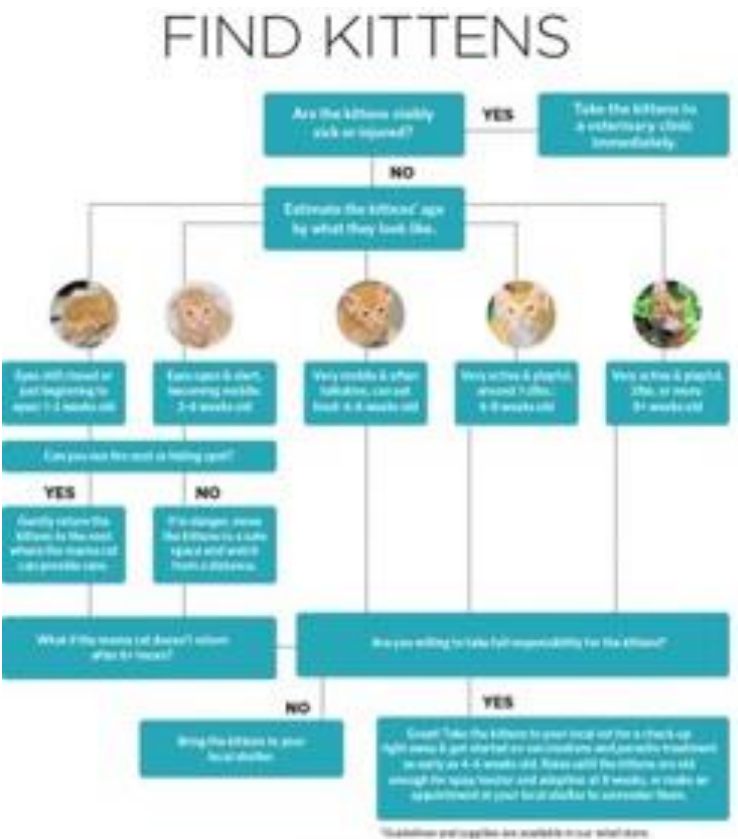


WHO ARE WE?

- **TCHS Mission:** We believe in the human-animal bond and exist to support Central MN by practicing and promoting quality adoption services and education programs.
- We take in anywhere from 3000-5000 animals per year as an open-admission shelter!
- In 2018, we had a 95.6% placement rate



TO INTERVENE OR TO NOT INTERVENE?



ROOM SET UP

- Clean, Warm, Dry, Space
- Small, No Hiding Places
- Bathrooms work great!



- Remove small, ingestible objects from the environment
- Keep toilet bowls closed
- Secure window screens in any open windows
- Remove plants and flowers from the vicinity of your foster animal's space (many are toxic!)
- Secure/remove household toxins (i.e. cleaning products, etc.)
- Enclosed resting area



TCHS NEONATE CARE PACKAGE

- KMR
- Syringes
- Bottles & Nipples
- Heating Source (e.g. *Snuggle Safe* Disk)
- Gram Scale
- Enrichment Tools
(Toys, Stuffed Animal, etc.)



ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES

- Canned Pate Wet Food
- Shaker Bottle or Whisk
- Cotton Balls, Potty Pads, Rags, etc.
- Tooth Brush
- Cleaning Supplies for Bottles
- Plate, Saucer, or Low Profile Dishes



DISINFECTING AND STORAGE

- All bottles, nipples, and other feeding supplies must be thoroughly washed and disinfected between each use/feeding
- Warm soapy water
 - Be sure to scrub inside and outside the bottles and nipples
 - Rinse well
 - Disinfect
- Dilute bleach solution, chlorhexidine, steam
- Air dry
- Store in a clean, safe place



5 REQUIREMENTS FOR KITTEN CARE

1. Keep Kittens Warm
2. Provide Kittens With Adequate Nutrition
3. Keep Kittens Clean
4. Provide Socialization With People and With Cagemates.
5. Do Your Best to Protect Them From Infectious Disease.



1. KEEP KITTENS WARM

- Kittens < 4 weeks CANNOT thermoregulate
- Place a warmed Snuggle Safe disk at the opening of the cage or crate (See heating instructions on disk)
 - Make sure it does not feel too hot before placing it in the cage or crate and cover the heating disk with a soft folded towel or blanket



1. BODY WARMTH

- Make sure some area of the cage does not contain a disk or heating pad so kittens can move away from the heat source if too hot
- Mom would have provided a nice 100 - 103°F environment for them
- Provide heat source until 4-6 weeks of age



2. NUTRITION: KITTEN FEEDING

GUIDELINES FOR BOTTLE FEEDING KITTENS:

- Kittens must be warm, they cannot digest properly if their body temperature is low
- Combine 1 part powdered KMR formula to 2 parts water. (NEVER give them cow's milk and keep them on the same formula.)
- Kittens should eat 2 tablespoons or 30 ccs of formula per 4 ounces of body weight within a 24 hour period (25% of their weight)
- Feed kittens less than 2 weeks of age at least every 2 hours



2. NUTRITION: KITTEN FEEDING

GUIDELINES FOR BOTTLE FEEDING KITTENS:

- Kittens 2 to 4 weeks of age should eat every 3-4 hours. If they are sleeping for longer periods during the night, do not wake them to feed
- Feed weak kittens or ones not eating enough more frequently.
- Some individual variations in frequency and amounts for each kitten may occur



2. NUTRITION: KITTEN FEEDING

GUIDELINES FOR BOTTLE FEEDING KITTENS:

Feeding Stage:	Age Range:	Weight Range:	Feeding Frequency:
Bottle Babies	0 to ~4 weeks	90-400 grams	Every 2-3 hours, 4-5 hours overnight
Syringe Gruel	3 to ~6 weeks	300-700 grams	Every 4-6 hours, 6-8 hours overnight
Gruel/Kibble	5 weeks and up	700 grams and up	Every 4-6 hours, 8-10 hours overnight



2. NUTRITION: KITTEN FEEDING

GUIDELINES FOR BOTTLE FEEDING KITTENS:

- Test the temperature of the formula before feeding (around 100°F)
 - Mix formula well before testing
- NEVER recline a kitten on its back while feeding
 - This can cause aspiration
- Kittens must be leaning forward or flat on their belly while feeding (as if they are nursing on mom)



2. NUTRITION: KITTEN FEEDING

GUIDELINES FOR BOTTLE FEEDING KITTENS:

- A kitten refusing to nurse beyond the first few "getting the hang of it" times may indicate illness and it needs to be examined by a veterinarian
- After each feeding session, give each kitten a full-body once over with a barely damp, warm washcloth. Use short strokes like its mom would use
 - This keeps the fur clean, teaches them how to groom, and gives it needed socialization
 - Make sure the kitten is completely dry before placing it back in its cage



2. NUTRITION: KITTEN FEEDING GUIDELINES FOR BOTTLE FEEDING KITTENS:

- Kittens naturally suckle on each other and on fingers, even after eating
 - Excessive suckling may be a sign that the frequency of feedings need to be increased
 - If littermate suckling becomes problematic, especially around the genital area, separate the kittens



2. Nutrition: Kitten Feeding

Guidelines for bottle feeding kittens:



STIMULATION

General Guidelines:

1. Kittens need to be stimulated until about 3 weeks of age.
2. Kittens need to be stimulated after each feeding (and possibly before).
3. Kitten should urinate every time and defecate at least once daily



STIMULATION

- Around 3 – 4 weeks old, they no longer need help eliminating body wastes.
 - Place a litter box in the crate or cage and fill with non-clumping litter or shredded newspaper.
 - Clumping litter can create litter clumps in their stomachs and respiratory passages and should not be used with young kittens.
- At the same time as introducing a litterbox, you may need to start providing some dry kitten food so the kittens can chew on the food and not the litter



DEMO & TIPS?

- If a kitten is having difficulty latching, gently rubbing on the sides of the face may help
- Different kittens may have different nipple preferences, or need syringe-feedings
- Do NOT squeeze the bottle when feeding
- Kittens may need to be gently burped after feeding, especially in the beginning
- A large Rubbermaid tub can be a good place for kittens to rest



DEMO & TIPS?

- Keeping kitten upright may help with stimulation
- Placing potty pads or paper towels under kittens during stimulation can help visualize the amount and quality of urine produced
- When transitioning to a litter box, a soiled cotton ball +/- stool placed in the box can help
- Place litter box in area they are eliminating
- Tub can be converted to have a clean/warm space and a potty pad with shredded paper to start to potty training



Stimulation



WEANING

- A kitten is ready for the weaning process when it bites the nipple often and forcefully, and is able to lick formula from fingers
 - Continue bottle feeding through the weaning process to ensure kittens get adequate nutrition
- Start off by putting formula in a flat dish
- Introduce to solid food by mixing WARM canned kitten food and prepared formula into a slurry



WEANING

- Gradually reduce the amount of formula mixed with canned food until the kitten is eating just the food
- Kittens often walk through their food. Make sure the kittens are clean and DRY before putting them in their cages
- Most importantly be patient! The weaning process takes time.



3. BATHING

- Warm water
- Can use Dawn or baby shampoo
- DO NOT stick face in water, use a warm damp towel to wipe face off
- Have towels ready to immediately dry it off
- Can use a blow dryer on low heat and at a safe distance
 - Too close can scald the skin
- Do not put the kitten back unless completely dry



3. BATHING



Age	Weight	Milestones
Birth	90-100 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eyes & ears closed• Sleep 90% of the time• Minimal handling
2-3 days	90-100 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Umbilical cord falls off
4 days	90-100 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begins to purr
10-14 days	~227 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eyes and ears should be open• Round and warm with pink skin and will rarely cry
2-3 weeks	~340 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teeth start coming in• Begin to eliminate w/o help• Will start crawling, standing, and playing

Age	Weight	Milestones
4 weeks	~454 grams (1 lb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beginning to walk, start to groom themselves• Able to thermoregulate• Ready for 1st vaccines• Ready for gruel
6 weeks	~680 grams (1.5 lbs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Premolars come in• Using the litterbox• Should be eating dry kitten food, supplemented with canned
8 weeks	~907 grams (2 lbs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ready for surgery and adoption

4. SOCIALIZATION

- Very important!
- Naturally socialize with mom and littermates
 - Why we try not to send singlets to Foster Care
- Key socialization period = 4 to 12 weeks
- Make sure they have plenty of toys and stimulation
 - Pipe cleaners and cardboard toilet paper or paper towel rolls are good in addition to traditional toys



4. SOCIALIZATION

- Foster parents should spend some time each day playing with the kittens
- Kittens should be acquainted to their foster homes before introducing to resident pets



PREGNANT MOMS

- May not have a big appetite during her final week
- Leave dry kitten food and water out at all times
- Feed her several small meals daily
- Give her a birthing box
 - Place in dry, warm, relatively dark and out-of-the way place
 - In a room with little to no nooks or hiding places for her to move the babies to



BIRTHING KITTENS

- Majority of cats give birth with no help
- If she has birth out of the birthing box, gently move everyone to the box once she is completely done delivering
 - She normally cleans up the “mess” leaving little evidence of the birth
- Check in on her regularly but give her the space she needs



STAGES OF FELINE LABOR

Stage 1

- May take up to 12 hours
- May purr and breathe rhythmically
- May become very active; try to dig at the floor, appear to be straining to use the litterbox, or cry loudly

Stage 2

- Water breaks, straw colored fluid is passed
- A kitten will be delivered a few minutes later
- The mom should lick the kitten clean and bite through umbilical cord
- Bonds with her kittens through this process, **DO NOT** disturb her



STAGES OF FELINE LABOR

Stage 3

- The placenta follows a few minutes after each kitten delivery
 - Mom generally eats some or all of the placenta
- Are typically born 15 to 30 minutes apart

****If a kitten is not born within 2 hours and the mother appears to be continually straining or in distress, call a veterinarian immediately****



NURSING MOMS

- Make sure mom is getting plenty of food, nursing requires a lot of calories
- Should be eating dry kitten food supplemented with canned food
- Monitor mammary glands
 - They should not be overly swollen, hard, look red or inflamed, or be painful to the touch
- Kittens should be weighed daily to ensure they are getting milk



NURSING MOMS

- DO NOT bottle feed unless absolutely necessary, it can cause nipple confusion.
- Mom should keep kittens clean on her own



NEONATAL FADING SYNDROME

Fading Kitten Syndrome is a life-threatening emergency in which a kitten “crashes” and begins to fade away

- Most susceptible: Kittens under 3 weeks old or were recently sick
- Occurs most commonly in kittens who have been eating poorly, and losing or not gaining weight. Weighing is important!



NEONATAL FADING SYNDROME

Symptoms of FKS (Fading Kitten Syndrome):

- Extreme lethargy, unable to stand or hold head up, not responding when touched
- Whole body feels cool to the touch
- Panting or gasping for breath
- Meowing/crying out in distress



NEONATAL FADING SYNDROME

Take Immediate Action!

Step 1: Get Kitten Warm

- Place towel over heating pad (on low setting) and roll kitten into a “kitten burrito”
- Leave kittens face exposed
- DO NOT remove kitten from burrito even if he/she struggles and cries out



NEONATAL FADING SYNDROME

Take Immediate Action!

Step 2: Get Blood Sugar Up

- Can use either corn syrup (Karo, etc), or sugar water
- Place in microwave for a couple seconds
- Use a syringe to administer one drop every 3 minutes



NEONATAL FADING SYNDROME

Take Immediate Action!

Step 3: Call A Veterinarian

- We DO NOT recommend you rush your foster kitten to the vet or your local shelter
- Unfortunately, even if you've employed all of the steps outlined above to a tee, some kittens just won't make it



WHY FOSTER?

“We foster because we can't adopt every cute kitten that we come in contact with, also because then we get some young/baby time”

“I love kittens and need to hold as many as I can so I don't take all of them home forever. The best way to do that is foster them. I also like caring for the ones that need socialization. Those poor cats just need to get out of the shelter to be calm and when they come out of their shell it is the best.”



WHY FOSTER?

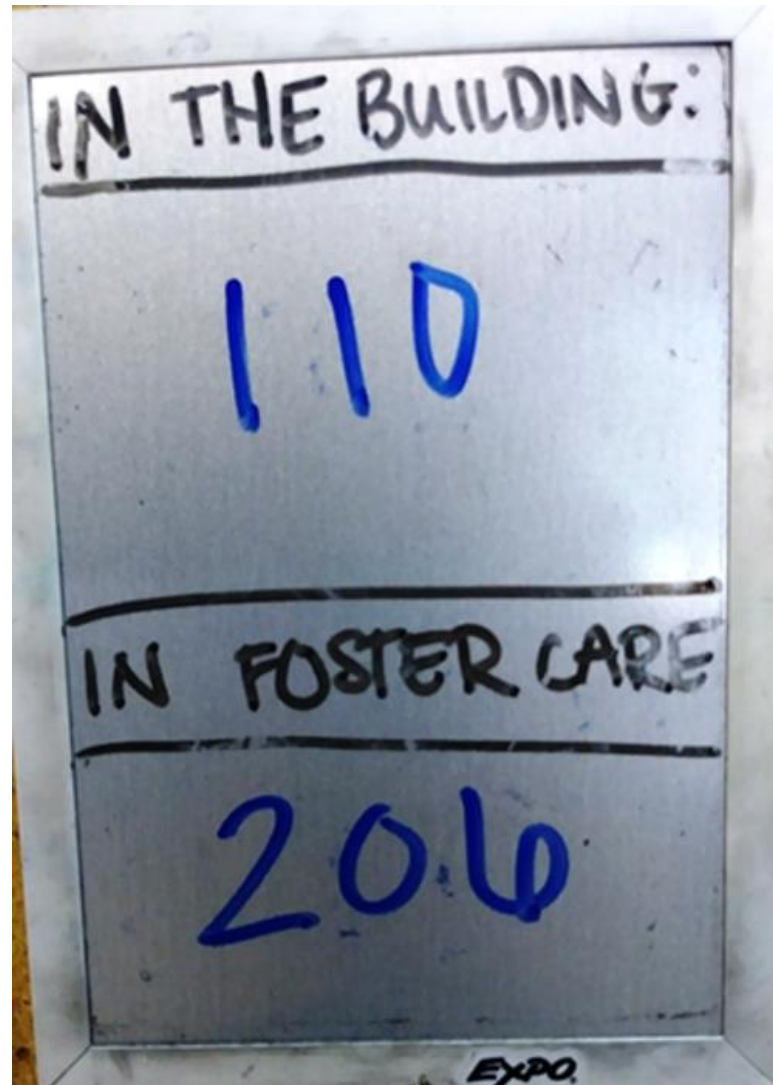
“1 - Because I love animals and 2 - Since I can't adopt every animal that needs a home, I can at least help by giving them a temporary home until they're ready to find their new family!”

“I foster for lots of reasons. It's a way for me to make a difference in my community. It's a great stress reliever and has helped me make gains in recovering from a chronic illness. Finally, fostering provides the animals with a loving home while they await their purrfect forever homes!”



WHY FOSTER?

- Help your community
- Help animals in need
- Experience
- Make a Friend



FOSTER CARE INFO AND TIMELINE

Reasons:

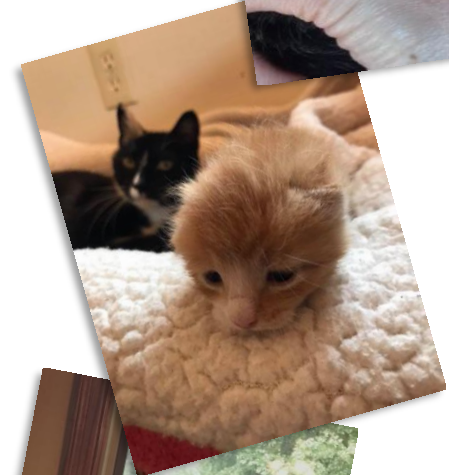
- Too young/too small
- Pregnant/nursing
- URI
- Socialization
- Behavior
- Rehab
- Medical

Age	Due for:
2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1st dewormer
4 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2nd dewormer• 1st Fel-O-Guard 4 vaccine
6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3rd dewormer• 2nd Fel-O-Guard 4 vaccine
8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4th dewormer• 3rd Fel-O-Guard 4 vaccine• Ready for surgery and adoption



DONATIONS

- Kitten Milk Replacer
- Dry Kitten Food
- Canned Wet Kitten Food (pate)
- PetAg Bottles & Nipples
- Non-clumping litter
- Monetary



REFERENCES:

Austin Pets Alive! Fading Kitten Syndrome. 2017,
<http://maddieslifesavingacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2017NeonatalFosterGuide-3.pdf>

Feeding:

<https://youtu.be/QXlaoLfEXjY>

Stimulating:

<https://youtu.be/KExOXnZHt50>

Bathing:

<https://youtu.be/qqxzUan3AP8>

