# Foster Training Class

**Items to have ready before the class begins:**

* Foster Family Information Sheet – one for everyone attending
* Foster Agreement – one for you to read
* Foster Manual – one for everyone attending (best to do one per household)
* Medical records sheet – a new one and one that has been correctly filled out
* Kennel Card
* Kitten List
* Name Tags
* Paper for taking notes on and pens
* Laptop and projector

**Starting the class:**

* Welcome families and introduce yourself. Explain how long have you been with (your organization’s name). How you got started. Are you a volunteer or staff person?
* Go around the room and have each person tell you their name, and why they are here. *Keep this short*.

**Foster Training:**

* Review quickly the highs and lows of fostering. This was emailed to everyone ahead of time so there should not be many questions. Is fostering right for you and your family?
  + Are you aware that there is a great deal of clean-up time and that there is always a possibility of damage to your home?
  + Are you able to separate the foster animals from your own animals?
  + Are you and your family emotionally prepared for the death of an animal? As badly as we would wish otherwise, death can occur.
  + Will you and your family be able to give up your foster kitty at the end of the foster period? Foster families become very attached to their foster kitties, and sometimes find it difficult to give them to their permanent families, or to the shelter.
  + Will you and your family be able to spend quality time with your foster cats/kittens? Socialization is as important as feeding and keeping them clean.
  + Are you prepared to work with our veterinarian system? Will you be able to bring your kittens to the shelter when they need to be seen?
  + Do you feel comfortable telling people that these are not your animals and can only be adopted through (your organization’s name) adoption procedures?
  + Are you aware that there may be some financial obligations? Will you be able to pay for food, litter, toys, etc? If not, we will discuss this in a later section.
* Foster animals are your responsibility.
  + All animals should be closely monitored regarding temperament and health. Close observation helps in appropriate placement in their permanent homes as well as avoidance of more serious health issues later on.
  + All cats and kittens must be kept strictly indoors. If your own cats go outdoors, the foster cats must be strictly isolated from your cats to avoid the transmission of disease. When the cats leave to return to the shelter or go to outreach they need to be in a carrier.
  + All foster cats are to be strictly supervised by an adult when around children under 10 or household pets.
  + Your own animals must be altered and up to date on vaccinations and veterinary care.

**Briefly explain the mom and kitten foster program including types needing fostering and length of time.**

* We will foster VERY pregnant cats to kittens that only need vaccines on board for 5 days. Fostering can last from 5 days to 3 months depending on which group you sign up to take. We will foster moms with kittens, and orphan kittens.

**Go over the foster agreement word for word.**

* This is now found at the back of the Foster Manual so the foster parent will always have a copy.

**The foster process:**

* You will now go through the foster packet page by page and just brush on the importance of each. Specifically point out mentors, kitty proofing your home, expenses, how to pick up your fosters, maternity home guidelines, supplies in your baby bag, medical records and problems, emergency veterinary care, Petfinder, surgery, etc.
* At this time you will also go over the medical records sheets, the kennel card so they know when services are due, and the kitten list so they see what the public sees.
* Discuss that they cannot allow their house cats and the foster cats/kittens to use the same food bowls, water bowls, litter boxes, etc. They can meet each other but only for short periods of time.
* Discuss that the foster parent cannot go and “find” their own litters to foster from people out on the street. They must take groups that have already come in to your shelter. Also talk about the fact that they cannot foster a litter that they found and a litter from your shelter at the same time – disease control. Plus, they cannot foster for you and another shelter at the same time.

**Rewards of foster care – saving lives! Explain to them the great parts of fostering.**

1. Saving lives.
2. Turning off the TV and spending time with your family.
3. Life lessons that kids will learn and their friends.
4. How great it feels to know that the kittens will get everything they need to start their lives happy and healthy.
5. Anything else that you know from personal experience.

**Q & A**

**Check out kittens as a group -** This is a mock experience so when they come in for the first time they know where to go, who to talk to, and how to get their kittens out the door and home the correct way. Walk them through your shelter.