
Open Paw® Shelter Manual

Open Paw, Inc.

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Chapter 1

Introducing Open Paw

Imagine

Imagine the following scenario: A prospective adopter walks into an animal shelter that is quiet and smells clean. The dogs are peacefully lounging on beds, happily chewing away on food-stuffed chew toys, or sitting calmly at the front of their kennels wagging hello at every passer-by. The cats are either curled up in beds on elevated platforms or batting at dangling catnip toys. Volunteers are busily training dogs throughout the facility and cat cuddlers are patiently teaching young, playful cats to retract their claws before getting over-excited. This is the type of shelter that people travel for miles to visit, clamoring to adopt the friendly, well-trained residents. These are cats and dogs that will easily settle into their new, permanent homes. This is a shelter that focuses on public education, and everyone who walks in walks out smarter and more aware of the needs of companion animals. This is an Open Paw Shelter.

Open Paw is a non-profit organization that was founded in January of 2000 by Dr. Ian Dunbar and Kelly Gorman. It is designed to help stop the surrender and euthanasia of unwanted dogs and cats through the education of people and animals. The primary goal of Open Paw is to educate pet owners and, especially, prospective owners about animal behavior and care. Our second goal is to turn every animal shelter into a pleasant, friendly, quiet place where members of the community can go to learn about animals, and about basic training and behavior. Thirdly, we want to change the way shelters are structured, so that animals learn or retain social skills, house training, and basic manners while they are in the shelter instead of losing those skills. Thus, pets leave the shelter much better able to live successfully in a new home. We want every animal shelter to become a Dog and Cat University, where not only animals, but also people, can learn.

For more information go to: www.openpaw.org.

What is Open Paw?

Open Paw's mission is to give people and their pets the tools they need to develop a successful relationship with one another and with our communities. Our goal is to prevent the surrender, abandonment, and euthanasia of unwanted animals by making sure that they do not become unwanted. Open Paw's approach is threefold:

1. Educate prospective pet owners before they get their pets,
2. Provide practical hands-on experience and training for shelter staff and volunteers, and for prospective and existing pet owners, and
3. Promote the adoption of Minimum Mental Health Requirements for shelter animals.

Owner Education

All shelter animals were once perfectly normal, loveable and loved puppies and kittens. Yet many are surrendered to shelters or abandoned when they are 6 months to 2 years old. Why have these animals become unwanted? In most cases, because of behavior, temperament, or training problems, all of which could easily have been prevented. Many of these problems are apparent before puppies and kittens are 8 weeks old, and are already well established before 3 months of age, that is, before owners normally come into contact with pet professionals who could help them.

The solution is to educate prospective pet owners before they get their pets. By alerting people to predictable developmental pet problems and teaching them a variety of user-and-animal-friendly training techniques and preventive measures, we can help people to raise their new puppies and kittens into well mannered dogs and cats. Thus, animals are kept in their original homes with happy and appreciative owners.

To accomplish this, Open Paw advertises and distributes educational materials, much of it free, to prospective and existing pet owners and veterinary students. By championing this preventive approach, we ensure that animals do not become unwanted in the first place.

Community Educational Centers

Open Paw has created protocols to establish shelters as hands-on educational centers within the community, by redirecting the focus of sheltering towards education and prevention.

Conventionally, day-to-day shelter operations comprise the collection, routine care, and re-homing of unwanted cats and dogs. Rather than limiting shelter operations to the routine husbandry of resident animals, Open Paw has devised protocols so that the process of rehabilitating and re-homing the shelter animals can be used as an educational opportunity

for prospective and existing pet owners in the community. Open Paw's shelter program provides practical experience and education to shelter staff and volunteers (prospective pet owners themselves) and, by using the Open Paw program in the animals' daily care, staff and volunteers model easy, animal-friendly training and management techniques to the visiting community. Thus, the very process of providing daily care provides practical education for prospective and existing pet owners.

Minimum Mental Health Requirements

One of the most important parts of the animals' daily care is the set of Minimum Mental Health Requirements.

Many animals have behavioral baggage when they come to the shelter and, sadly, many animals rapidly deteriorate after only a short time in the shelter environment. Shelter animals often become de-housetrained, hyperactive, noisy, anxious, and lonely. If they do not become intimidated when strangers walk up to their kennels, their delight and excitement at seeing people is expressed as uncontrollable exuberance. Unless a vigorous socialization and training program is in effect, the animals, particularly puppies and kittens, become less and less adoptable with each day that they stay.

While there are many rigorous physical health regulations for kenneling animals, there are no standard guidelines for the maintenance and improvement of the animals' psychological health when kenneled.

Open Paw has created a set of Minimum Mental Health Requirements to provide for the essential needs of sheltered animals, specifically regarding their adoptability, comfort, and needs for companionship, entertainment, and education.

Classical Conditioning and Reward Training

As you read through the shelter manual, you'll see many references to two training techniques—Classical Conditioning and Reward Training. Open Paw uses these two methods for much of its training, and you'll be incorporating these techniques into much of your new daily routine.

Classical Conditioning (CC) is learning by association. You all probably remember this from your biology class in high school: say there's something that naturally makes you blink, like having a puff of air blown into your eyes. Now, say that every time someone blows a puff of air into your eyes, they make a sound immediately before blowing the air. After a few repetitions, you'll blink when you hear the sound by itself—you've associated the sound with the puff of air, and react to the sound just like you formerly reacted to the puff of air.

Classical Conditioning can be used to help dogs make positive associations to all kinds of things, such as learning to enjoy being in the kennel and having new people approach (because you'll teach them that new people approaching the kennel means that yummy treats will be handed out!) or to enjoy the presence of things that may have initially frightened them, such as umbrellas or baby strollers.

Generally, when we use classical conditioning we're trying to change an animal's behavior by changing its emotional or reflexive response to a given stimulus. When using CC in the shelter, a "good consequence" might be paired with a stimulus we want the dog to learn to like (e.g., a dog terrified of men is given lots of liver treats by a male staff member). This act of Classical Conditioning is performed repeatedly, regardless of the animal's response, in an attempt to change the underlying emotion (fear) of the stimulus in question (men).

Reward Training (RT) is a low-pressure way to influence an animal's behavior. When we use RT, we present something rewarding when the animal voluntarily does something we would like to see more of in the future. Reward Training relies on the premise that animals will naturally repeat behaviors that are positively reinforced. In Reward Training, the trainer simply waits for the animal to voluntarily offer a behavior, and then rewards the animal. This is much less stressful than prompting the animal to do something, or touching an animal (who may be too stressed or agitated to deal with the physical contact just then). For example, even the most hyperactive dog will have to lie down sometime. In Reward Training, the trainer would observe the dog in her kennel and ignore all of the behaviors she does not want to encourage, such as jumping, pacing, or barking. The moment the hyperactive dog lies down in her kennel, the trainer would immediately reward the dog in some way, whether it be with a food morsel, a game of fetch or tug, or a walk.

Sample Press Release

⟨shelter logo or letterhead here⟩

Contact Name
Agency Name
Phone
email

For Immediate Release

⟨Shelter Name⟩ Launches New Open Paw Program

⟨Shelter City⟩ ⟨Date⟩- ⟨City/County⟩, ⟨Shelter Name⟩ has launched the Open Paw Program! ⟨Your shelter name⟩ will now be able to help our community in two ways: through a tested national training program and by implementing the new Mental Health Guidelines for our shelter pets. Shelters nationwide utilize the Open Paw Program to train staff and volunteers in basic animal behavior and training, as well as to enhance the adoptability of their resident cats and dogs.

Open Paw's training curriculum provides many useful benefits for the public, the shelter staff and, most importantly, the animals themselves. The main functions of the program are to educate the community and to train or retain adoptable traits in the resident animals.

⟨Your shelter name⟩ is excited to employ the Open Paw training method to serve as a model for our community. "Every time someone enters an Open Paw shelter they leave a little bit smarter and kinder than when they arrived. It doesn't matter if they are there to volunteer, to adopt an animal, just visiting, or even to surrender an animal," says Kelly Gorman, President of Open Paw. Gorman continues, "Change begins with education and, with Open Paw, the animals are the real teachers. The main focus of an Open Paw shelter is to provide a humane education resource for every person in the community. Modeling fun and friendly training methods through the daily care of the resident dogs and cats achieves this goal. People see the wonderful results of training right before their eyes and they ask questions of the staff and volunteers, who are happy to share their knowledge." The more people know about how to raise and train their animals, the more likely animals are to stay in their original homes.

Furthermore, the thorough daily handling and training of the cats and dogs provides the staff with valuable insight into each animal's personality, which aides in finding permanent homes, and helps them see potential behavior issues that may then be addressed prior to adoption.

Finally, the program is designed to teach shelter dogs and cats how to behave in order to get adopted, and to stay adopted. Basic household manners and friendly behaviors are

WHAT IS OPEN PAW?

taught in order to assure success in the real world. Open Paw teaches shelter animals how to greet people politely, which items are okay to chew or scratch on, where to eliminate appropriately, and more.

We encourage you to volunteer at <Shelter City>'s Open Paw shelter and become part of the educational revolution. For more information go to: <www.your shelter website here> or www.openpaw.org.

<Insert paragraph describing your shelter here>

Open Paw is a non-profit organization committed to helping people and animals build successful relationships with each other and their community. Our organization is dedicated to decreasing the surrender and abandonment of unwanted animals by making sure that they don't become unwanted. This is accomplished in three ways: (1) by educating prospective pet owners before they get their pets, (2) by providing practical hands-on experience and training for shelter staff and volunteers and for prospective and existing pet owners, and (3) by promoting the adoption of Minimum Mental Health Requirements for shelter animals.

<YOUR SHELTER INFO HERE

Address

City, State, Zip>

For more information on Open Paw - www.openpaw.org

Chapter 2

Day-to-Day Operations

Minimal Mental Health Requirements for Dogs

- At least 3 walks daily to a Canine Relief Center outside their kennel, and a reward for using it.
- A comfortable bed or "den" for each adult dog; puppies can share.
- Interaction with at least 20 people each day (either people visiting the kennel OR on a walk, mobile adoption, field trip, etc.), including 5 unfamiliar people.
- Environmental enrichment: appropriate chew toys available at all times, such as stuffed Kongs, Buster Cubes, Molecule Balls, Big Kahunas.
- Quiet "down time" each day (a scheduled break from the public).
- Daily mental stimulation through training (anything from basic manners to agility).
- Food daily hand-fed or stuffed in a chew toy; i.e., no feeding from bowls.
- Access to water at all times.
- Daily grooming and handling exercises with 3 people, including 1 unfamiliar person.
- At least 20 minutes out of their kennel run each day, used either for training, socialization, playtime, exercise or just "down time" in somebody's office. (Open Paw does recommend same-species interaction for animals that have been in the shelter for more than 1 month, but not necessarily before, because there are other more pressing activities that will help the cats and dogs get adopted.)
- Regular healthcare (or euthanasia) for any illness or physical conditions that may arise.

- If your shelter is fulfilling all of the other Minimal Mental Health Requirements, add the following for those dogs who have been with you for over one month: Canine companionship—either housed with other dogs, or daily 10-20 minutes play/train session. See our handout on dog-dog play in this section for specific recommendations.

Additional Minimal Mental Health Requirements for Puppies

- Daily handling, grooming, and manners training from at least 5 unfamiliar people; mock vet visit, placement on different surfaces, mock visit to groomer, hearing sounds of household items like vacuum cleaners running and dishes clattering; sound of nail clipper while handling feet, etc., all while being hand-fed.
- Access to appropriate toilet area in the kennel run.
- Must be hand- and chew toy-fed—no bowls!
- Housed together whenever possible in a self-training, long-term confinement area.
- Fostered whenever possible.
- Field trips to animal-free or “safe” places outside of the shelter.

Minimal Mental Health Requirements for Cats

- A warm, clean environment with a comfortable hiding place.
- A separate litter box area.
- Litter box should be cleaned regularly (feces removed immediately when noticed).
- A convenient scratching post with suspended toys.
- Interaction with at least 20 people daily, including at least 5 unfamiliar people.
- Daily handling, gentling, and grooming by at least 5 people, including 1 unfamiliar person.
- Feline companionship for social cats (group housing).

Additional Minimal Mental Health Requirements for Kittens

- Daily handling, grooming, gentling with at least 5 unfamiliar people.
- Mock vet visit, placement on different surfaces, hearing sound of household noises like vacuum cleaner running and dishes clattering, sound of nail clippers while handling paws, while being hand-fed.
- Constant access to appropriate toilet area in the cage.
- Must be hand- and chew toy-fed—no bowls!
- Housed together whenever possible in self-training, long-term confinement area, with constant access to scratching surface with suspended toys, and a separate litter box area.

Open Paw's Minimum Mental Health Requirements—Dog-Dog Play

To play or not to play? That is the question.

Open Paw's Minimum Mental Health Requirements for Kennelled Animals suggests that shelter dogs receive regular canine companionship and that friendly, social cats be housed communally when possible. No single MMHR has been misinterpreted more than this one.

The Open Paw MMHRs were written in response to the increasing number of "no-kill" shelters and rescue groups sprouting up across the nation. Until recently, most shelters did not keep animals in shelters indefinitely; instead, animals were often euthanized if not reclaimed or adopted in a relatively short period of time. Nowadays many shelters will keep animals as long as they are considered "adoptable"—safe for the public and physically and mentally healthy. This is a tremendous step towards the socially responsible, humane treatment of animals in our society and should be applauded. However, it has become clear that long-term confinement often causes problems that actually make the animals less adoptable over time. Mainly, it is clear that long-term confinement detrimentally affects an animal's mental well-being. If shelters plan to stay committed to the cats and dogs in their care, and plan to let them remain in residence until adoption—regardless of length of stay—there must also be a plan to keep the animals in top physical and mental shape to facilitate their eventual adoption.

Open Paw's ultimate goal is to keep animals out of shelters in the first place by educating all pet owners about responsible, user-and-animal-friendly training and care.

Until that goal is achieved in its entirety, Open Paw realizes that shelters must do what they can for the animals in their care. The first goal of any animal adoption agency should be to reduce the length of stay of their resident cats and dogs by teaching them basic manners and training them to like all people—in short, giving their animals the skills they need to get quickly adopted and succeed in their new homes. In addition, aggressive public relations and quality marketing campaigns should be in place, as should a responsible selection process that places the most adoptable animals up for adoption. This in and of itself resolves the problem of deterioration due to length of stay. By far the best option for shelter animals is to find a permanent home and get out of the shelter as quickly as possible, even if the shelter has an excellent enrichment program.

Sometimes shelter staff and volunteers lose sight of the big picture and the ultimate goal: adoption. This is often because they truly care about the animals, but become desensitized to the shelter environment and forget how hard it is on an animal's health to be confined in such a way for long periods of time.

To best serve the animals, shelters must prioritize and focus on setting up the shelter environment to help the dogs and cats get adopted quickly, rather than simply altering the shelter environment to ease the stress of a long-term stay. The very best shelter in the world is still not as suitable for a dog or cat as even a mediocre home.

Cats and dogs that languish in the shelter for months or years on end should most definitely be the extreme exception, not the rule. Open Paw does recommend same-species interaction for animals that have been in the shelter for more than 1 month, but not necessarily before, because there are other more pressing activities that will help the cats and dogs get adopted.

Dogs

Dog-dog play can be very beneficial to the resident dogs if it is well thought out, carefully planned, and executed with specific goals in mind. But dog play in the shelter environment can be tricky and, if not executed properly, may do more harm than good.

Dog-dog play is a very low priority on Open Paw's list of daily activities for an adoptable shelter dog. It is much more important for dogs to learn to play with, and enjoy the company of, humans. Interactive games that teach them to seek out human companionship, make eye contact with humans, be well-mannered, and look cute will do infinitely more to achieve the goal of adoption (and retention in the home) than will dog-focused activities. They also need the daily opportunity to enjoy some quiet time, learning how to settle down around people and simulating a day in the average home. An unshakable chew toy addiction is a big plus, too. Basic manners training will give the dogs the mental stimulation and skills to help them get adopted and stay adopted.

Too much free dog-dog play tends to create a dog-focused dog in the best scenarios, and can create a defensive, snarky, or guardy dog in the worst cases. For example, in most private doggy daycare situations, many of the dogs are over-stimulated and pushed beyond their tolerance level (over threshold) much of the time they are there, either because they have been playing like fools all day or because they have been stressed by forced social interaction for too long without a break. Sure, they are tired at the end of the day, but it is more likely exhaustion, not satiation.

Dogs that hang out with dogs all day will become (for better or worse) extremely socially aware of other dogs and will tend to focus on dogs rather than on people in most situations—when out on a walk with a potential adopter, for instance. These dogs need to learn to seek out eye contact with the potential adopter to make an emotional connection. They need to learn to walk politely with a person instead of pulling on leash and constantly looking for other dogs, or perhaps even whining or lunging annoyingly in the presence of other dogs.

In a nutshell: dogs do not adopt other dogs. It is strictly a people decision, and a dog only has about 30 seconds to make a connection with a potential adopter or be passed by. Wouldn't it be lovely if, when hanging out with a potential adopter in a meet-and-greet room, the dog either drops a toy on the person's lap or curls up with a chew toy near the person's feet?

The exception is dogs that live in permanent rescue situations with little or no hope for adoption. If that is the case, appropriate dog play should be a part of their daily activity, if they like to play with other dogs. But in a shelter full of adoptable dogs, where the goal is to get them into good homes as soon as possible, too much dog time is "barking up the wrong tree". We limit dog-dog time to: (1) short introductions to assess each dog's social skills and (2) perhaps a weekly play-and-train session (with no more than 4 dogs and no fewer than 2 people at a time) where training exercises are integrated into the play session. The play and train sessions teach dogs that play and training are not mutually exclusive, and that the better they pay attention to what the person is asking them to do, the more playtime they get. Use the distraction of other dogs as the ultimate reward for following the requests of people. It's a very fun and efficient way of meeting the social, physical, and educational needs of your resident dogs. However, a weekly play-and-train session for adoptable dogs should only be introduced after all of the other MMHRs are being met. If your shelter's dogs are all potty-trained, quietly napping or chewing stuffed toys when they're in their kennels, sitting for walks, quietly approaching and engaging charmingly with shelter visitors, sitting or standing still to greet when they're out of the kennel, walking on a loose lead, and enjoying physical contact from humans even on ears, muzzle, rump, tail, paws and around their collar, then it may be time to add in once-weekly play-and-train sessions. If any of the above is not in place, focus on those goals for adoptable animals before considering dog-dog play sessions.

Cats

Studies have shown that friendly cats thrive in an open environment with lots of litter boxes, nooks, and crannies. They fare better physically and mentally in an open community cat room than in a sterile kennel with nowhere to curl up or hide. This is true in spite of the presence of other cats!

As long as there are plenty of litter boxes (a one-to-one ratio is best) and enough beds for all, the cats will choose whether or not to interact. Please do NOT force the cats to intermingle. Cats do not require a separate, defined playtime but, rather, choose to be spontaneous in their play. Let it happen naturally and in their familiar temporary surroundings.

General Cleaning Considerations for Shelters from the UC Davis Shelter Medicine Program

Cleaning and disinfection are not trivial concerns in shelters. Careful and effective cleaning by well trained employees is literally life saving. Although the main purpose of cleaning animal areas is prevention of infectious disease spread, an additional benefit is increased willingness of the public to adopt from and support a shelter that looks and smells clean. Because of its importance for animal health, cleaning should be approached systematically, and a well thought out plan developed, implemented and periodically revisited to make sure it is still functional. Time and money spent on training and supplies for an effective cleaning program will be amply repaid in decreased costs due to a reduction in disease.

What needs to be cleaned?

When we think of cleaning protocols, often the focus is on cleaning cat cages and dog runs. However, germs are tracked by human and animal traffic throughout any shelter. Additionally, germs are spread by hands, on doorknobs, clothing, carriers, exam tables, instruments, animal transport vehicles, and so on. Different protocols and products may be needed for different areas. Following is a list of some areas and items to consider:

- Office areas (lower priority if shelter animals are not allowed in offices, but employees will still track germs in and out from animal areas)
- Main lobbies and hallways
- Dog runs, including central walkways, walls, doors, gates, etc.
- Cat rooms, including floors, walls, doorknobs, etc. as well as cages (if applicable)
- Quarantine areas
- Isolation areas
- Medical/surgical areas, including instruments and equipment
- Other indoor animal areas, such as grooming, treatment rooms, intake rooms, visiting rooms, training areas, etc.
- Exercise yards or other outside animal areas
- Transport vehicles
- Carriers/transport cages
- Hands

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- Employee clothing (separate clothing should be worn while doing heavy cleaning or handling infectious animals)
- Bedding
- Dishes
- Toys
- Tools, such as poop scoopers and mops
- Ventilation and heating ducts
- Storage areas (especially food storage)
- Entire building, especially door knobs, phones, keyboards, and other frequently handled items.

If no specific guidelines exist, it's likely that cleaning some of the above listed areas will be overlooked in a busy shelter. Therefore, for each of the areas/objects to be cleaned, at least a brief outline should be written detailing:

- How often the area/object is to be cleaned (after each use, daily, weekly, annually?)
- Who is responsible for cleaning (and who will double check and make sure it has been cleaned adequately)
- What cleaning and disinfection products are to be used
- Details on how cleaning is to be performed

In some cases, it may make sense to have one basic daily or more frequent protocol, with a more thorough cleaning protocol used at less frequent intervals (e.g., once a week).

Who gets cleaned first?

To avoid dragging disease from sick to healthy animals, cleaning should proceed from the cleanest areas of the building housing the least vulnerable animals, to the most contaminated areas and the most vulnerable animals. A good general order would be:

1. Adoptable kittens/puppies
2. Adoptable adult animals
3. Stray/Quarantine kittens/puppies

4. Stray/Quarantine adult animals
5. Isolation animals

Other animals that are likely to be healthy but may have compromised immune systems, such as those recovering from spay/neuter surgery or being treated for other non-infectious conditions, should be cleaned relatively early in the cycle.

Separate brushes, mops and other supplies should be provided for each of these areas.

What cleaning products should be used?

A clear understanding of the definition and function of different cleaning products is important to design an effective cleaning protocol. Three types of products are generally used for environmental cleaning:

Soap/detergent: Cleaning agent which works by suspending dirt and grease. Does **not** kill harmful microorganisms.

Disinfectant: Chemical agent which kills harmful microorganisms. Does **not** necessarily remove dirt or grease.

Degreaser: More powerful soap/detergent specially formulated to penetrate layers of dried-on body oils and other greasy debris.

Effective sanitation requires applying a germicidal agent to a basically clean surface. This requires use of both detergent and disinfectant products, in that order. Detergents in themselves do nothing to kill germs. Although some disinfectants can also act as detergents, many (such as bleach) do not. Virtually all disinfectants used in shelters are inactivated by organic material (such as feces, kitty litter, saliva, sneeze marks and plain old dirt) to some extent so, if they are not applied to a clean surface, they simply will not work. Periodically, a stronger degreaser should be used to deal with body oils and other grunge that builds up in kennels over time and can render disinfectants ineffective.

Choosing disinfection products

Disinfection products in general share certain characteristics:

- Disinfectants **MUST** be used at the correct concentration. Going by smell or color or "eyeballing" it leads to extra expense and potential toxicity if too much is used, and ineffectiveness if too little is used. Cleaning protocols need to include clear instructions on how to correctly dilute the disinfectant.

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- Adequate contact time is required. Virtually all disinfectants require a contact time of at least 10 minutes. Spraying on, wiping off and immediately putting an animal in the freshly "cleaned" cage will not prevent disease spread.
- Disinfectants must be applied to a basically clean, non-porous surface, free of organic matter. Porous surfaces such as wood, carpeting, unsealed concrete and turf can't be completely disinfected.
- Disinfectants and detergents can cancel each other's actions, and should not be mixed unless specifically directed by the manufacturer.

There is no single perfect disinfectant for use in all circumstances. It is important to consider the surface to be cleaned and the harmful microorganisms most likely to be present. Most disinfectants are effective against most bacteria, enveloped viruses and fungi. Unenveloped viruses are more resistant, and are only killed by a few disinfectants safe enough for routine use. Unenveloped viruses of importance in shelters include parvo, feline panleukopenia and calicivirus (a significant component of feline URI). Other agents not reliably inactivated by most disinfectants include ringworm, some protozoal and coccidial cysts, parasite eggs such as roundworm and whipworm, and external parasites such as fleas, ticks and mites. Special protocols are required when these agents are an ongoing problem in a shelter. Other considerations in choice of cleaning/disinfection agents include cost, ease of storage and application, and animal and staff tolerance.

Following are some common disinfectants used in shelters.

Quaternary ammonium compounds (marketed as Roccal, Parvo-sol, Triple-Two, Kennel-sol) are:

- effective against most bacteria and some viruses.
- **not reliably effective against parvo, panleukopenia or ringworm**, and only partially or completely ineffective against calicivirus (common cause of feline URI).

- less effective than the label claimed, based on studies from 1980, 1995, and 2002 that tested quaternary ammonium compounds labeled for use against unenveloped viruses such as parvo.¹
- moderately inactivated by organic debris (but less so than bleach).
- reduced in effectiveness by hard water.
- should not be mixed with other soaps and detergents, as they may cancel each other's actions.
- have low tissue toxicity.

References

Scott FW. Virucidal disinfectants and feline viruses. *Am J Vet Res* 1980;41:410-4

Kennedy MA, Mellon VS, Caldwell G, et al. Virucidal efficacy of the newer quaternary ammonium compounds. *Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association* 1995;31:254-8.

Eleraky NZ, Potgieter LN, Kennedy MA. Virucidal efficacy of four new disinfectants. *J Am Anim Hosp Assoc* 2002;38:231-4

¹Some quaternary ammonium compounds have detergent/cleaning action as well as acting as disinfectants, and are suitable as a good general purpose product for both cleaning and disinfection (a stronger degreaser should still be used periodically). Keep in mind that control of unenveloped viruses requires the addition of other products. In general, products used at a higher concentration (i.e. diluted 1:64 versus 1:256) are likely to have more effectiveness as a detergent. Specifics should be discussed with the manufacturer. A reasonable choice would be to use a quaternary ammonium compound with detergent characteristics for general cleaning of all areas, followed by an application of bleach where unenveloped viruses are a concern (ALWAYS in cat areas since feline calicivirus is so common, in dog areas whenever parvo is a concern, for example in isolation and quarantine. Follow cleaning with bleach disinfection at least once a week in all areas, even if parvo is not suspected).

Bleach (Sodium hypochlorite)

- Member of halogen family of disinfectants, which also includes iodine and related products.
- 5% solution diluted at 1:32 (1/2 cup per gallon) completely inactivates parvo, panleukopenia and calicivirus when used correctly.
- Inactivates ringworm at higher concentrations and with repeated application
- Significantly inactivated by organic matter, light and extended storage: should be stored for limited time in light-proof containers.
- Low tissue toxicity, but fumes can be irritating at high concentration and bleach is corrosive to metal.
- Hard water reduces effectiveness.
- **Bleach has no detergent action, and cannot be used as the sole cleaning agent in a shelter. Disinfection with bleach requires prior cleaning of the surface with a detergent.**

Potassium peroxymonosulfate (marketed as Virkon or Trifectant)

- Relatively new product.
- According to 2002 study (Eleraky et al.), effective against panleukopenia and feline calicivirus. Studies also support efficacy against other unenveloped viral agents, including parvo.
- Reportedly less corrosive to metal than bleach, somewhat inactivated by the presence of organic matter, but less so than bleach.
- Comes in powdered form; mixed solution stable up to 7 days.
- **Like quaternary ammonium compounds, potassium peroxymonosulfate reportedly has some detergent effect and can be used as a sole cleaning/disinfection agent for lightly soiled surfaces.**

Alcohol (usually in hand sanitizer)

- effectiveness similar to quaternary ammonium.
- Commonly used in hand sanitizers, not used as an environmental cleaner.

- Less irritating to tissue than quaternary ammonium or bleach.
- Ethanol at 70% concentration is more effective than other alcohols against calicivirus.
- No effect on parvo, panleukopenia, ringworm. Gloves should be worn whenever these diseases are suspected.
- Adequate contact time required (15-30 seconds recommended by manufacturer).
- Hand washing with soap and water is preferable to hand sanitizer, when possible.

Chlorhexidine (Nolvasan)

- Very gentle, with low toxicity, but not very powerful.
- Relatively expensive.
- Ineffective against unenveloped viruses, including calicivirus. Should not be used as a general-purpose cleaning agent.

Phenolic disinfectants, such as Lysol, are toxic to cats and should not be used in a shelter. **Glutaraldehyde** and **formaldehyde** are highly effective but also too toxic for routine environmental cleaning use.

Method of application

Whatever disinfectant/detergent combination is selected, it is important that storage, dilution and application be straightforward and that all needed equipment be provided and be in good working order. An investment in a slightly more expensive cleaning system that is designed especially for shelter use will likely result in better results, improved compliance and reduced cleaning time. Buying components such as disinfectant, applicators and mixing systems separately can also result in a functional system but may require a more active effort to put together.

Mopping versus spraying

Spraying: Spraying disinfectant keeps it from getting contaminated by organic material, as it would be in a mop bucket. Spraying also tends to be faster than mopping, and commercial sprayers can be set to automatically supply the correct dilution. Hose-end or high-pressure sprayers coat the area to be cleaned more effectively than hand-held spray bottles, and should be used whenever practical. A wide array of cleaning systems appropriate for shelters of various sizes are available through animal care and janitorial supply houses,

from built-in centralized systems to high quality sprayers that can be used with existing hoses. Although a high pressure sprayer may reduce the need for scrubbing, no matter what system is used, caked-on organic material still needs to be mechanically scrubbed using a brush or mop.

Mopping: Mopping or wiping on disinfectant using a rag or paper towel is generally less efficient than spraying, but may be the only practical option in some circumstances, such as in rooms without drains or where the animal stays in the cage while it is cleaned. Compared with spraying, mopping does have the advantage of less aerosolization and moisture. In addition to being more time consuming, the disadvantage of mopping (or use of a bucket and rags or brush for cat cages) is the potential for the cleaning solution to get heavily contaminated by organic matter over the course of cleaning a number of cages/runs or a large floor surface, rendering the disinfectant ineffective and spreading disease through the contaminated water. This can be addressed with a two bucket system, whereby you rinse the mop or other applicator in a clear water bucket between each application of disinfectant. Two-sided buckets are available from janitorial supply houses. Another solution, particularly when cleaning cat cages, is to use a separate rag for each cage. Buckets of disinfectant should always be emptied, rinsed and refilled between cleaning each ward or area.

Cat cage cleaning considerations

Few shelters are designed to allow for easy and effective cleaning of cat cages. Shifting cats from cage to cage invites disease spread and makes it difficult to ensure adequate contact time for disinfection. Leaving the cat in the cage while it is being cleaned is logistically difficult and exposes the cat to disinfectant fumes. Placing the cat in a carrier means that the carriers also need to be cleaned. All of these methods require extensive handling of cats which, in itself, can be stressful for the cats and result in worker injury in addition to spreading disease. Ideally, cat housing areas in the future will be designed to allow each cat a two-sided cage, just as is the case in many dog runs, so that the cat can be safe and comfortable on one side while the other side is cleaned. Infectious disease is an even greater problem in cats than dogs in many shelters, and it does not make sense to continue designing cat holding areas that are not easily cleaned. For shelters without this luxury, however, compromise is required. Possible solutions include:

- Each cat is assigned a cardboard carrier, in which s/he is placed during cleaning. Cat goes back into same cage s/he was in previously. The carrier goes home with cat when s/he is adopted.
- Place a small cat box with a door (made of plexiglass or other easily cleaned material) inside the cage. The cat goes into the box while the cage is cleaned. The box is cleaned thoroughly, then used on the next cat. This technique is often used in feral cat

housing areas, but can be effective for tame cats as well, and has the added advantage of giving the cat a cozy place to hide.

- All cats in one zone are placed in a rolling cage bank while individual cages are cleaned. Cats are put back into the same cage they were in previously, and the cage bank is thoroughly sprayed and cleaned before holding next group of cats.
- Metal or other easily cleaned transport cages are used to house cats while cages are being cleaned. These are thoroughly cleaned between cats. This requires as many transport cages as there are cats to be cleaned.

Cage cleaning in a "jigsaw puzzle" fashion, that is, cleaning one cage, moving a cat into it, then cleaning the just vacated cage and moving another cat into it, is very time consuming and likely to spread disease, and is not recommended. Likewise, placing a cat in a holding cage while its cage is cleaned, then replacing the cat in its cage and putting another cat in the same holding cage will lead to the spread of disease. Even if the holding cage is wiped out between cats, it is impractical to allow ten minute disinfectant contact time between each and every cat.

Another important consideration in cat cage cleaning is control of disease spread via handler contact with soiled supplies. In the course of picking up dirty newspapers, emptying litter pans and so on, the cleaning attendant's hands and clothing become heavily contaminated. This person should not then go on to handle clean supplies and cats without a change of gloves and top, at least. This means either having two people clean each cat ward (it should take half as long, so no more total staff hours are required), with one person assigned to handle all dirty material, and the other to handle cats and clean supplies, or having one person put on a protective smock and gloves, go through and remove all dirty materials, clean the cages, then change gloves and remove the smock before handling clean supplies. If cat cages must be cleaned one by one, rather than cleaning a whole bank or ward at a time, the two-person system must be used. After cleaning is completed, all cleaning staff should change clothing and shoes before returning to other duties that involve animal handling.

Sample Cleaning Protocols

Basic cleaning, whether a dog run or a kitty litter pan, consists of the same steps:

1. Mechanically removing organic matter: by scooping poop, dumping litter and food, sweeping and/or rinsing with plain water. This still leaves behind caked-on debris, such as dried-on feces, dirt, and saliva. Removal of this requires...
2. Cleaning using a detergent/soap product, and mechanical scrubbing with a brush, rag, paper towel, etc. This still leaves behind a film of potentially harmful microorganisms, which requires...

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3. Disinfecting using a germicidal product effective against whatever harmful agents are likely to be present. (For areas that are not heavily soiled, in some cases steps two and three can be combined if a product is used that has both disinfectant and detergent qualities.)

Dog runs: (This protocol was designed for general adult dog wards in a shelter with frequent enough parvo to warrant concern, using a quaternary ammonium compound with detergent qualities. In a shelter with infrequent parvo, bleaching dog runs weekly instead of daily may be acceptable.)

Dog cage cleaning should proceed in the following order: adoptable puppies, adoptable adults, stray puppies, stray adults, quarantine animals, isolation animals.

Before you begin: Put on a protective jumpsuit, boots, eye protection and gloves. (Masks should be worn if desired or if indicated for the product being used.)

Daily cleaning

1. Get the supply cart.
2. Move all dogs to one side of the ward and close the connecting kennel doors.
3. Fill and attach the disinfectant sprayer and make sure it is set to the correct dilution.
4. Spray any severely soiled runs with disinfectant solution and allow to soak while proceeding with cleaning.
5. Collect food and water dishes and stack on cart, collect used blankets and toys and place in hamper.
6. Scoop feces from each run using pooper scooper. Discard feces in designated trash can (on supply cart or one for each ward).
7. Spray each run with disinfectant, including walls, door and gate. Surfaces should be completely covered with disinfectant.
8. Using the stiff bristled brush labeled for the ward you are cleaning, scrub off any caked-on debris.
9. Spray main aisle with disinfectant.
10. Scrub aisle.
11. Empty pooper scooper bucket into drain. Spray pooper scooper, bucket, and brush with disinfectant.
12. Disconnect the disinfectant sprayer and rinse all runs and aisle with water.

13. Fill the sprayer with bleach and make sure it is set to the correct dilution.
14. Spray runs, including walls, doors and aisle with bleach solution.
15. Fill the poop scooper bucket with fresh bleach solution.
16. Squeegee each run and aisle dry (if needed).
17. Feed and water all dogs. (Clean dishes and food on cart.)
18. Spray and wipe around doorknob using hand sprayer with disinfectant and paper towel.
19. Transport soiled blankets to laundry, soiled dishes to kitchen.
20. Restock cart.
21. After all cleaning is completed, remove jumpsuit and clean or change boots.

Separate boots or shoe covers and a protective smock should be worn when cleaning isolation wards.

Once a week, prior to disinfection, cages should be cleaned and scrubbed with a degreaser, with careful attention paid to scrubbing cracks around gates, where wall meets floor and any other likely spots where dirt can hide. Doors, areas around light switches, hose handles and any other frequently handled areas should also be cleaned.

Sample cat cage cleaning protocol

Again, this presumes a quaternary ammonium compound with detergent properties has been chosen for general cleaning. Because calicivirus is so common, bleach is also used daily.

In this shelter, each cat is assigned a cardboard carrier at intake which remains with the cat throughout its stay and, when the cat is adopted, goes home with the cat. The cost of the carrier is added to the adoption fee. For lively cats which escape from the cardboard carrier, a plastic carrier is used and thoroughly cleaned after the cat goes home, before being used for another cat. (Thoroughly cleaning plastic carriers requires completely breaking them down and scrubbing; dirt and body oils otherwise readily accumulate.) As discussed above, this is only one of many ways to clean cat cages in less-than-ideal circumstances.

Cat cage cleaning should proceed in the following order: adoptable kittens, adoptable cats, stray kittens, stray cats, quarantined cats, isolation cats.

Before you begin: Put on a protective jumpsuit, boots, eye protection and gloves. (Masks should be worn if desired or if indicated for the product being used.)

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1. Stock the cart with litter pans, food and dishes, paper towels, gloves and other needed supplies.
2. Put on the smock hanging by the door inside the ward.
3. Remove each cat in the ward from its cage and place in its assigned carrier (cage number should be noted on carrier). Place the carriers in the hall outside the ward.
4. Remove and discard soiled paper, dump litter pans into trash, stack used litter pans and food dishes on the cart. Put dirty bedding in the laundry hamper.
5. Sweep debris out of any heavily soiled cages using the hand broom and dust pan designated for that ward. Sweep the floor of the ward. Remove stray pieces of feces using a paper towel. (This step is not needed if there is not much litter on the floor and the drains can easily handle what there is.)
6. Fill and attach the disinfectant sprayer and make sure it is set to the correct dilution.
7. Spray all cages with disinfectant, including all surfaces and doors.
8. Using the stiff bristled brush assigned to that ward, scrub all cages, including doors.
9. Spray floor with disinfectant and scrub with brush.
10. Disconnect the disinfectant sprayer and rinse cages and floor with water.
11. Fill the sprayer with bleach and make sure it is set to the correct dilution.
12. Spray cages, including sides, doors, and floor with bleach solution.
13. Squeegee cages if needed.
14. Remove soiled smock, put on a clean pair of gloves.
15. Place clean paper, bedding, fresh food and water in each cage.
16. Replace cats in the same cage they were in before.
17. Spray and wipe around doorknob using hand sprayer with disinfectant and paper towel.
18. Transport soiled blankets to laundry, soiled dishes to kitchen.
19. Restock cart.
20. After all cleaning is completed, remove jumpsuit and clean or change boots.

In isolation or whenever handling sick cats or cats that have a known exposure to serious infectious disease such as panleukopenia, gloves should be changed or hands thoroughly cleaned with hand sanitizer or soap and water between handling each cat. Gloves are required when handling cats with panleukopenia.

Sample Kennel Cleaning Protocol Based on UC Davis Recommendations

Parvo Outbreak Recommendations

1. Take one day to thoroughly clean all areas of the shelter that have had puppies in them, including all walkways and outdoor toilet areas, all drains and gutters, and the front lobby. This should involve scrubbing with soap/detergent at the correct dilution, including scrubbing all walls, gates, corners and cracks. This should be followed by spraying with bleach diluted at 1:32, covering all the same surfaces. Implements used for cleaning should be rinsed and then dipped in bleach at a dilution of 1:32.
2. All plastic/scratchable items (such as toys, Kongs, dishes) that may have been exposed to a parvo puppy should be discarded. Parvo can persist in cracks in plastic.
3. Keep puppies strictly confined in the steel cage bank only for short term intake evaluation, and send to foster homes within 48 hours.
4. Do not mix puppies unless housed together prior to entering the shelter. An exception may be made for single puppies under 8 weeks old for socialization purposes, if a medical exam reveals no evidence of health problems.
5. Vaccinate puppies starting at 6 weeks (or at intake if over 6 weeks) and every 2 weeks thereafter until 12 weeks of age.
6. The only puppies that should be allowed in other parts of the shelter must have been vaccinated at least 2 weeks prior to entry AND were vaccinated at age 12 weeks or greater (this means only puppies 14 weeks and older will be kept in the shelter).
7. Foster parents need to be aware that puppies may be incubating parvo in the first 1-2 weeks at home, and should be kept off of all unbleachable surfaces (e.g., carpeting) during this time.
8. Foster homes in which parvo has been diagnosed should be prepared to steam clean soiled carpeting and not bring in any new puppies (foster or otherwise) for 3-6 months, with one exception: contaminated homes may be used for known parvo-exposed (i.e., littermates of the parvo-positive pup) or recently parvo-recovered puppies, but full cleaning precautions must still be taken after every possible exposure.
9. Clean the steel cage bank thoroughly after each use, including scrubbing the seams with a scrub brush and general detergent, followed by thorough bleaching with at least 10 minutes contact time.
10. Puppy rooms should have all wooden material removed, floor fully covered with sturdy tile or other readily cleanable flooring, and walls painted with sealed enamel paint.

Common Cleaning Errors

Disinfectant and bleach concentration not being measured. Correct dilution is important. Too strong will irritate human and animal respiratory tracts, and too weak is ineffective.

Walls of dog runs not being effectively sprayed; disinfectant is sometimes sloshed on using a bucket, which will likely not provide consistent and adequate coverage, and is very wasteful of disinfectant. Sprayers may be too small, difficult to use, and have a part that comes off and gets lost easily; some sprayers are hard to refill without splashing bleach on clothing.

Gates of dog runs often not cleaned at all.

Crates not cleaned routinely.

Outside aisleways (high dog traffic areas) not routinely cleaned.

Sometimes confusion about whether outside dog cage is clean and set up or dog has just been moved in or adopted and it is dirty. New dogs may be put in dirty cage.

Brushes from different wards getting mixed up.

Drains and gutters not routinely disinfected. No drain covers in dog runs.

Cat litter pans often washed in same water that dishes are soaking in, same sponges sometimes used for both purposes.

Dishes and litter pans are put straight into bleach water to soak. The organic matter on the dishes and pans will immediately inactivate the bleach, rendering this step ineffective. They need to be washed with soap or detergent prior to bleach dip.

An unknown amount of bleach is used in the soaking solution for dishes. The way to get the right dilution is to measure the approximate number of gallons the sink holds, and add 1/2 cup of bleach per gallon.

Sink is small and dishes and toys are stacked so high they have no contact with bleach water.

Plastic sink is scratched and grimy.

Cat cages not routinely scrubbed between bars on front gates.

Nolvasan diluted to unknown level being used to clean cat cages. Nolvasan is relatively expensive and is not effective against cat viruses.

Walls, molding, doorknobs of cat rooms cleaned infrequently, if at all. Lots of accumulated grime on walls, especially at cat level.

Lots of hair and litter in presumably recently cleaned cat rooms.

Supply list

- 2 sets of 2 high quality sprayers with quick disconnect: one set for detergent application, one set for bleach.
- Measuring cups (at least four) to measure bleach.
- Stiff bristled scrub brushes: several long-handled so each dog area has its own (inside, outside adoptable, outside quarantine, isolation, others?), several short-handled labeled separately for puppy cages, food/toys, litter pans, and one short-handled for each cat area.
- Mop and bucket for indoor dog runs.
- Hand spray bottles—use light-proof ones for bleach; Triple-Two comes with its own spray bottles.
- Hand-held vacuum for cat rooms.
- Brooms, dustpans: intake, adoption cats and cat rooms can share. Use a separate one for isolation.
- Smocks, old surgery gowns, jumpsuits or some sort of other protective clothing to wear while cleaning (separate ones for cleaning cat intake and isolation areas).
- Poop scooper and bucket for each dog area, if not already available.
- Detergent and Disinfectant
- Plenty o' bleach for disinfecting
- Degreasing solution
- A double-sided high capacity stainless steel sink, sometimes available for cheap or free from restaurants going out of business.
- DO NOT USE: Pine-sol or Nolvasan (Nolvasan should be used only in the veterinary hospital side of operations, not for routine cleaning).

Cleaning recommendations

In a shelter population that is relatively stable and healthy, such as in adoptions versus quarantine, it makes sense to have 2 levels of cleaning for most animal areas: daily spot cleaning/tidying up, and more in-depth cleaning weekly, between animals (i.e., every time an animal leaves a cage) or when a run or cage is heavily soiled. There needs to be a system to designate clean versus dirty empty runs and cages. For instance, when an animal is

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adopted out, the run be left open and dirty with contents still inside. After cleaning, the crate is placed upside down to drain (in dog runs) and cat cages are left completely empty. That way you can assume an empty cat cage or a dog run with an upside-down crate is clean and ready to go; you just have to set it up and pop in the animal. (This is safer than the other way round, since someone might forget to take all the junk out of the cage when an animal is adopted, and you might not be able to tell if it is clean and set up, or dirty and set up.)

The most important areas to clean thoroughly every day are the quarantine and isolation areas, and common areas which experience frequent animal traffic: the lobby, aisleways, and outdoor toilet areas. For weekly cleaning tasks, we suggest dividing it up so that it doesn't all happen on the same day—maybe do the weekly cleaning of the indoor dog runs one day, outdoor the next, cat cages the next, etc. Ultimately, protocols must be developed for every area of the shelter! (puppy runs, offices, the front lobby, etc.) Please see general cleaning considerations for shelters for more information on developing a comprehensive cleaning protocol.

Examples:

Occupied dog runs should be cleaned in the following order: Puppies, adoptions going out, quarantine dogs, isolation dogs.

Daily dog cleaning, adoptions

(This example uses Triple-Two, a combination detergent/disinfectant)

1. Fill one mop bucket with Triple-Two (pre-diluted from the dispenser) and another with clear water.
2. Walk through and look at all the dogs. Check for signs of depression, discharge from the nose or eyes, or other abnormalities. Check the cages for vomit, diarrhea or other abnormalities. If you have any medical concerns, notify medical staff, and clean that cage after all others.
3. Remove a dog from its run (to go on a walk or, if no walker is available, to an outside empty, clean run).
4. Scoop poop if needed and discard in garbage (not in drain).
5. Remove soiled bedding and dirty toys or dishes. Dump water into drain. Water dishes may be left in the run if not visibly soiled. Put dirty laundry in laundry room and stack dirty toys and dishes on a cart for transport to the kitchen.
6. For heavily soiled runs or if a dog has just been adopted out of that run:
 - (a) remove the crate to the central walkway and take it apart

- (b) attach a sprayer filled with Triple-Two to the hose end
 - (c) spray the run and crate
 - (d) scrub everything with stiff bristled brush, including walls, door and crate
 - (e) rinse with clear water
 - (f) put the crate back together and replace in run, face down if the run is empty
7. For lightly soiled runs, spot mop any soiled areas. Dip the mop in the detergent/disinfectant bucket, mop, then rinse in the clear water bucket.
 8. Fill the water dish with clean water.
 9. Place clean bedding and toys in the run.
 10. Return the dog.
 11. After all runs are complete, thoroughly mop the central walkway, then rinse with water from the hose.
 12. Dump out the dirty Triple-Two, rinse the bucket, and refill with fresh, properly diluted Triple-Two. Rinse the poop scooper, then place it in the fresh bucket.
 13. Clear any debris from drain covers, then pour Triple-Two into drain gutter. Follow by rinsing all debris from behind the kennels and the drain gutter with the hose.
 14. If any outdoor runs were used for dog housing during cleaning, spray the runs with Triple-Two using the hose end sprayer. Squeegee if necessary.

Weekly dog cleaning, adoptions (this protocol should also be applied after a dog leaves a run, before putting a new dog in that run, and any time a run is heavily soiled). **This protocol would also be appropriate when there are sick dogs in isolation.**

1. Remove all dogs from dog area, either taking them out on walks or to unoccupied runs.
2. Scoop poop if needed and discard in garbage (not in drain).
3. Remove soiled bedding and all toys and dishes (including water dishes). Stack toys and dishes to go to kitchen, put soiled laundry in hamper.
4. Move crates to a spacious area for cleaning. Break down all crates. (At minimum, crates MUST be broken down and completely cleaned between dogs.)
5. Fill the hose-end sprayer with Triple-Two and attach to hose. Make sure the sprayer is set for the correct dilution (1:64).
6. Spray each run, including walls and door.

GENERAL CLEANING CONSIDERATIONS

7. Spray all walkways, including the area behind the runs and the hallway by the kitchen.
8. Spray the inside and outside of the crates.
9. Using a stiff bristled scrub brush labeled for that zone's dog runs, scrub all runs, walkways and crates, paying special attention to scrubbing corners and cracks.
10. Remove the spray applicator and rinse runs, walkways and crates with water.
11. Fill the bleach spray applicator and attach to hose end. Spray all runs and crates with bleach, including walls and door.
12. Squeegee if needed.
13. Put crates back together and replace in runs.
14. When the central walkway is clear, scrub with stiff bristled brush, then spray with bleach. Squeegee if needed.
15. Place clean bedding, toys and water dishes in the runs.
16. Return the dogs.
17. Dump out the dirty Triple-Two, rinse the bucket, and refill with fresh, properly diluted Triple-Two. Rinse the poop scooper then place it in the fresh bucket.
18. Clear any debris from drain covers, then pour Triple-Two into drain gutter. Follow by rinsing all debris from behind the kennels and the drain gutter with the hose.
19. If any outdoor runs were used for dog housing during cleaning, use the hose end sprayer to spray the run with Triple-Two disinfectant solution first, then with bleach solution.

Whenever there is a crate in a dog kennel, it is very important to take it apart and clean it really well after each dog is finished using it.

Once a month, Triple-Two should be replaced with degreasing solution for cleaning and scrubbing all runs and crates. All other steps, including bleach application, should be followed as usual.

Cat cage cleaning: intake/quarantine/isolation

Before you begin: Put on boots, eye protection and gloves. (Masks should be worn if desired or if indicated for the product being used.)

1. Stock the cart with litter pans, food and dishes, paper towels, gloves and other needed supplies. Fill a hand sprayer with properly diluted Triple-Two, and another one with bleach solution (bleach solution should be freshly made up at the start of each day). Fill the mop bucket with Triple-Two.
2. Fill a bleach footbath (diluted at 1:10) for the doorways to cat intake, quarantine and isolation.
3. Put on a clean pair of gloves and smock.
4. Visually examine all cats for signs of illness, and look in litter pans and cages for signs of diarrhea, vomit or other abnormalities. Notify medical staff of any concerns. If you are worried about any cat, handle it last after all the other cats, and change gloves afterwards.
5. Remove each cat in the ward from its cage and place in its assigned carrier. (Put all the cats in carriers at once, then clean all cages, not one cat in carrier, clean one cage, put cat back, etc.)
6. Remove and discard soiled paper, dump litter pans into trash, stack used food dishes and dirty litter pans on the cart. Dump water dishes in the closest sink. Put dirty bedding in the laundry hamper. Litter pans, water dishes and bedding that are not visibly soiled (no feces or food material) may be reused for the same cat (be sure not to switch them around, though—if in doubt, just use fresh supplies!)
7. Sweep debris out of any heavily soiled cages using the hand broom and dust pan designated for that ward. Sweep the floor of the ward.
8. Spray all cages with Triple-Two, including all surfaces and doors.
9. Remove any visible caked-on debris using the stiff bristled brush labeled for the room you are in.
10. Wipe cages with paper towels or rags, using one rag for each cage.
11. Spray cages with bleach, including cage doors.
12. Wipe down doorknob with Triple-Two, then spray lightly with bleach.
13. Change gloves.²
14. Replace bedding and toys in same cage they came from (can stack on carrier to keep track), refill litter or put in clean litter pans, provide fresh food and water.

²Whenever handling sick cats or cats that have a known exposure to serious infectious disease such as Panleukopenia, gloves should be changed or hands thoroughly cleaned with hand sanitizer or soap and water between handling each cat. Gloves are required when handling cats with Panleukopenia.

GENERAL CLEANING CONSIDERATIONS

15. Put cats back in cages and restack carriers.
16. Mop floor with Triple-Two solution.
17. Remove smock and put in dirty laundry. (A separate smock should be used for isolation and intake).

Between intake cats: Cages need an extra-thorough cleaning after cats have been moved out into adoption and before another group of cats comes in. In addition to the steps outlined above:

- Thoroughly scrub cages using Triple-Two and a stiff bristled brush, including corners and between cage bars, then wipe dry.
- All bedding, dishes and toys should be removed and washed (toys may alternatively move with the cat into adoption; bedding should be washed, however)
- After mopping floor with Triple-Two, mop or spray with bleach.

Cat cage cleaning: adoption cats daily cleaning

(This example uses Triple-Two, a combination detergent/disinfectant)

1. Stock the cart with litter pans (set up with sheet of paper in bottom and clean litter), extra litter, food and dishes, paper towels, rags, gloves and other needed supplies. Fill a 2-sided bucket (or 2 buckets) with properly diluted Triple-Two in 1 and rinse water in the other.
2. Put on a clean pair of gloves and smock.
3. Visually examine all cats for signs of illness, and look in litter pans and cages for signs of diarrhea, vomit or other abnormalities. Notify medical staff of any concerns. If you are worried about any cat, handle it last after all the other cats, change gloves afterwards, and clean the cage after all the others.
4. Remove each cat in the ward from its cage and place in its assigned carrier.
5. Remove and discard soiled paper, dump litter pans into trash, stack used food dishes and dirty litter pans on the cart. Dump water dishes. Put dirty bedding in the laundry hamper. Litter pans, water dishes and bedding that are not visibly soiled may be reused (for the same cat only).
6. Remove any visible caked-on debris with scrub brush, then sanitize it.

7. Sweep debris out of any heavily soiled cages using the hand broom and dustpan designated for that ward. Sweep the floor of the ward.
8. For cages with a resident cat, spot-clean as needed using Triple-Two on a rag. Rinse rag in water between uses, and dunk in Triple-Two. The same rag may be reused within a single ward, provided all the cats are healthy.
9. For cages that have just been emptied and are dirty (blankets, toys, litter box etc. still in cage, but no cat):
 - Remove all bedding, toys, litter, dishes, etc.
 - Thoroughly wipe with a generous amount of Triple-Two.
 - Use the stiff bristled brush labeled for cat adoption to scrub walls, door, between bars and in all corners.
 - Spray with bleach solution, including cage door.
 - Leave cage empty to indicate it has been cleaned and is ready to set up for a new cat.
10. Replace bedding and toys in same cage they came from (can stack on carrier to keep track), line litter pan with a sheet of newspaper and refill (or put in fresh litter pan), provide fresh food and water.
11. Wipe down doorknob with Triple-Two, then spray lightly with bleach.
12. Change gloves and put cats back in cages.³
13. After cleaning is completed, all ward floors and central walkway should be mopped with Triple-Two.
14. Remove smock/jumpsuit and clean or change shoes before proceeding with the rest of your responsibilities for the day.

Once a week:

- Remove and wash all water dishes and litter pans.
- Mop floors with Triple-Two, followed by bleach application.
- Clean walls of ward with Triple-Two.

³Whenever handling sick cats or cats that have a known exposure to serious infectious disease such as Panleukopenia, gloves should be changed or hands thoroughly cleaned with hand sanitizer or soap and water between handling each cat. Gloves are required when handling cats with Panleukopenia.

Dish Toy and Litterpan Cleaning

The same principles that apply to disinfection of cages also apply here. Dishes have to be clean before disinfectant is applied; it does no good to simply dunk dirty dishes, Kongs, etc. in bleach water. Need to measure number of gallons of water when sink is full and add 1/2 cup bleach per gallon.

Dishes and toys should always be washed separately from litter pans. For dishes to be washed properly, do not overload the sink: no more dishes can be washed at any one time than can fit in the sink and be completely covered by water. If there is no more room, stack dishes waiting to be washed next to the sink, not in the sink.

1. Fill one side of sink with soapy water (can use regular dish soap).
2. Dump leftover food in trash, rinse if necessary over the empty side of the sink, then put dishes in soapy water to soak.
3. While the dishes are soaking in the soapy water, fill the other side of the sink with water and add the appropriate amount of bleach.
4. Using a stiff bristled brush, scrub each dish to remove any remaining food particles, then place in bleach solution and let soak for at least ten minutes.
5. After soaking, place dishes to dry next to the sink. No need to rinse again.
6. Drain and refill both sides with every load of dishes, or as needed. Rinsing in dirty bleach solution is ineffective.

Same process with litter pans. Litter pans should be washed after the dish washing is completed. After litter pans have been washed, both sides of the sink should be drained, then scrubbed and sprayed with bleach solution.

Protocol For Quarantine

1. What dogs should be quarantined?

- (a) Dogs that are surrendered by an owner and reported by the owner and/or owner's veterinarian to be in free of signs of infectious diseases may be housed in adoption areas without quarantine.
- (b) Owner-surrendered dogs with a long history (greater than 2 months) of ocular or nasal discharge, mild to moderate diarrhea, cough or other signs consistent with some infections should be brought to the attention of the veterinarian. S/he may opt to place the dogs directly into adoption, 1-week observation/quarantine, or full two week quarantine.
- (c) Owner-surrendered dogs with sub-acute or acute onset (less than 2 months) of ocular or nasal discharge, mild to moderate diarrhea, cough or other signs consistent with some infections will be quarantined for two weeks.
- (d) All dogs from animal control facilities, breeders, pet shops, or other locations where dogs are densely housed and subject to high turnover will be quarantined for two weeks.

2. Initiating quarantine

- (a) Dogs should be moved into quarantine in a cohort system (aka "all-in-all-out"). This means that if there are already residents in the quarantine area, no new dogs should be introduced into that area until the residents are moved (typically to adoption). It would be reasonable to get a group of dogs from one animal control facility on one day and a second group the next day, and then hold all of the dogs for 14 additional days. It would not be appropriate to get dogs from one location on a Monday, another group on Friday, and then hold all until the Monday 9 days later (rather, they would need to all be held in quarantine until the Friday 14 days later).
- (b) Dogs going into quarantine should be examined by the veterinarian to get baseline health information, and the following information should be recorded in a record: vaccination, body condition score, weight, signs of dermatological lesions suggesting fleas or mites, results of listening to chest, oral and facial examination, and abdominal palpation. Dogs should receive the same medical preparation as all dogs at the shelter, possibly including vaccines, heartworm testing, flea and other parasite medication, baths, and so forth.

3. During quarantine

- (a) Dogs are in quarantine to determine whether they might be incubating infections that could harm them, other dogs, or staff. They should be observed daily for any signs of infection, which should be reported to the veterinarian

GENERAL CLEANING CONSIDERATIONS

promptly. Signs to monitor specifically include vomiting, diarrhea, blood in the stool or urine, lethargy, sneezing, coughing, eye or nose discharge, changes in behavior, or difficult or labored breathing.

- (b) At the veterinarian's discretion, testing for infectious diseases should be performed, including assays for kennel cough, parvovirus fecal testing, blood testing for distemper, and others.
- (c) Dogs with mild disease, typically mild cough and discharge from eyes and/or nose, should stay in the quarantine area, under treatment of the veterinarian. If the veterinarian determines that the dog has severe disease, s/he may elect euthanasia or move the dog to a hospital/isolation area.
- (d) Dogs with mild disease may receive medication as prescribed by the veterinarian. Trained staff should administer treatments and all treatments should be performed either after handling healthy dogs or using suitable precautions such as wearing a lab coat that does not leave the quarantine area, wearing foot protection, and washing hands, before handling healthy dogs.
- (e) All dogs in quarantine should be fed and handled according to Open Paw protocols established for healthy dogs at the shelter. Staff should be trained on procedures for dogs in quarantine and use precautions as described in #3d when feeding, playing, training, etc.
- (f) Quarantine kennels should be cleaned according to protocols established for all dogs at the shelter. This may involve spot cleaning daily if dogs do not soil the run, or daily scrubbing and bleaching. Where possible, dogs should not be moved around into new runs, but be returned to the same run they were in earlier.
- (g) Dogs in quarantine should have the same access to staff, play, walks, and Open Paw training as dogs in the adoptable kennels. Where possible, all healthy dogs should be walked first, then dogs in quarantine, and then the floor areas where quarantine dogs walked bleached before healthy dogs are walked through that area. However, almost every adoptable dog at the shelter has already been exposed to kennel cough pathogens and/or been fully vaccinated, and is already immune. It is important that quarantine dogs have the opportunity to walk and play, even if minor interaction occurs with healthy dogs.
- (h) Dogs in quarantine are adoptable. Clients should ask to see dogs in this area and be escorted by staff, after they have visited all of the healthy dogs. Staff should remind potential owners that they won't be allowed back among healthy dogs after playing with quarantined dogs. If a new owner does choose a dog in quarantine, they should be encouraged to adopt her and sign a medical release, after being informed what signs to monitor and what actions to take if the dog develops clinical disease.
- (i) Dogs in quarantine should have toys, crates, leashes, etc., but these should be

kept with each individual dog and not shared with other dogs until thoroughly cleaned and bleached.

4. Following quarantine

- (a) Dogs may leave quarantine and go to adoptable dog areas if they're healthy at 14 days and the veterinarian verifies that there are no signs of infection.
- (b) Any dogs with ongoing signs should stay in quarantine or isolation. One option might be to move affected dogs to an isolated small area, freeing up the larger areas for a new batch of incoming dogs.
- (c) Empty runs should be thoroughly cleaned and bleach applied at a 1:32 dilution for a minimum contact time of 30 minutes. The bleach should be rinsed, the kennel dried, and then it is ready for a new group of quarantine dogs.

General Daily Cleaning

NOTE: It is up to you which brands of cleaning products to use, as long as you are sure to use a detergent AND a disinfectant daily, as well as a potent degreaser for occasional deep cleaning. The following example uses "Triple-Two", a combination detergent/disinfectant. You may wish to purchase a copy of "Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff" (Miller, Stephen, and Zawistowski) for cleaning recommendations, as well as scientific studies on the impact systematic cleaning protocols have on the health of shelter animals.

DOG RUNS AND CONTENTS

1. Walk through your assigned area(s) and look at all the dogs in your care. Check for signs of depression, discharge from the nose or eyes, or other abnormalities. Check the runs for vomit, diarrhea or other abnormalities. If you have medical concerns, write them down for the medical staff. Clean that cage after all others.
2. Remove each assigned dog from its run to go for a pee walk. Dogs that have not soiled their kennels or dogs on a crate-training regimen go out FIRST!
3. After the walk, clean the dog's run. The dog should be temporarily placed in a clean run or, if the run has guillotine doors, confine the dog to 1 side while you clean the other side.
4. Scoop any poop and discard in garbage (not in drain).
5. Remove bedding, crates and toys. Take food bucket down and empty the water dish. Leave water dishes that are not visibly soiled in the run. Bedding that has feces on it should be thrown away, not washed for reuse. Put the rest of the dirty laundry next to washer. Discard feces-soiled toys that are not bleachable. Stack bleachable toys and soiled water dishes in a bucket and bring into kitchen.
6. Sweep kennels thoroughly with a broom. Use brush and dustpan to pick up stray kibble, pieces of toys and all other debris; discard dustpan contents in garbage can. Kennels should be completely free of debris!
7. Some dogs do not soil their runs. After sweeping, if you find that the run, the bedding, crate, toys and water dish are completely free of any dirt, feces or urine, AND the dog is not in quarantine or ISO, simply place the dog's possessions back in the run. For Quarantine/ISO dogs and those with soiled runs:
8. At the mixing station, fill the hose-end sprayer with Triple-Two detergent/disinfectant and attach to hose.
9. If soiled, spray the run, including walls, floors and doors as needed. Surfaces should be completely covered with Triple-Two. Allow Triple-Two to soak for 10 minutes while cleaning next soiled kennel.

10. If a crate is heavily soiled on the outside only, spray and scrub as necessary. If the inside is soiled, refer to Deep Cleaning instructions.
11. Hose crate and run with water until clear. Squeegee and towel the kennel completely dry.
12. Fill water dishes with clean water.
13. Place clean bedding and toys in the runs.
14. Raise guillotine doors or return dogs to their clean runs.
15. Quickly re-spray any runs used temporarily. If you find them deeply soiled—sorry—start again with step 10.
16. After all runs are complete, thoroughly clean the walkway and aisle-ways with Triple-Two, then again with water.
17. Clear any debris from drain covers and, if necessary, rinse the debris from behind the kennels and the drain gutter. Clear debris from the drain covers again.

PUPPY ROOM

1. Remove puppies from their cages, and crate them in a non-dog area (such as intake room or volunteer office). Move x-pen and other room contents into hallway.
2. Dispose of newspaper, poop and debris into trash.
3. Bedding that has feces on it should be thrown away, not washed for reuse. Put the rest of the dirty laundry next to washer. Discard feces-soiled toys. Stack bleachable toys and soiled water dishes in a bucket and bring into kitchen.
4. Sweep floor of all debris.
5. From mixing station, fill rolling bucket 1/4 of the way with Triple-Two disinfectant/detergent, and another bucket with clean water.
6. Clean cages and mop floor end to end with Triple-Two. If soiled, also scrub walls, back of door, crates, x-pen, etc. with Triple-Two (allow contact time of 10 minutes.)
7. Mop everything with water. Squeegee and towel the cages completely dry.
8. Place clean bedding, toys, water dishes, x-pen and other contents back in the room.
9. Return puppies to cages.
10. Dip clean rag into Triple-Two and clean the door handle (both sides), area around door handles, light switches and other places that are touched by human hands frequently. Dry with a clean rag.

GENERAL CLEANING CONSIDERATIONS

LEVEL 3 AREA

1. Remove all contents of Level 3 area.
2. Sweep away all debris. Collect and wash all toys and return to L3.
3. From mixing station, fill rolling bucket 1/4 of the way with Triple-Two disinfectant/detergent, and another bucket with clean water.
4. Mop floor end to end with Triple-Two. If soiled, also scrub walls with Triple-Two.
5. Mop everything with water. Squeegee dry.

Weekly Deep Cleaning

OCCUPIED, ISO, QUARANTINE RUNS /DEEPLY SOILED & NEWLY VACATED RUNS

1. Walk through your assigned area(s) and look at all the dogs in your care. Check for signs of depression, discharge from the nose or eyes, or other abnormalities. Check the runs for vomit, diarrhea or other abnormalities. If you have any medical concerns, write them down promptly for the medical staff. Clean that cage after all others.
2. Remove each assigned dog from its run to go for a pee walk. Dogs that have not soiled their kennels or dogs on a crate-training regimen go out FIRST!
3. After the walk, clean the dog's run. The dog should be temporarily placed in a clean run or, if the run has guillotine doors, confine the dog to 1 side while you clean the other side.
4. Put on jumpsuit, boots and disposable gloves.
5. Scoop any poop and discard in garbage (not in drain).
6. Remove bedding, crates and toys. Empty water dishes into drain. Bedding that has feces on it should be thrown away, not washed for reuse. Put the rest of the dirty laundry next to washer. Discard feces-soiled toys that are not bleachable. Stack bleachable toys and all water dishes in a bucket and bring into kitchen.
7. In a clear area, break down every crate that is in an occupied kennel. Place all screws from a crate into its own baggie. (If a kennel is not occupied, its crate should be upside down and previously cleaned for next occupant.)
8. At the mixing station, fill the hose-end sprayer with Triple-Two and attach to hose.
9. Spray each run, including walls, floors and doors (front and back). Surfaces should be completely covered. Allow Triple-Two to soak for 10 minutes while cleaning next kennel.
10. Spray the inside and outside of the crates and let soak.
11. Using a stiff bristled scrub brush labeled for the zone you are cleaning, scrub runs, walkways, aisle-ways, behind runs, and crates; pay special attention to scrubbing corners, cracks, crate seams, edges and any other likely spots where dirt can hide.
12. After all runs are complete, thoroughly spray the walkways, walls and aisle-ways with Triple-Two, let soak for ten minutes then scrub with scrub brush.
13. Remove the spray applicator; hose with water everything scrubbed in step 12 & 13

GENERAL CLEANING CONSIDERATIONS

14. At the mixing station, fill the hose-end sprayer with properly diluted bleach and attach to hose.
15. Spray each run, including walls, floors and doors (front and back). Spray the inside and outside of the crates.
16. Put crates back together and replace, OPEN SIDE DOWN, in run, if run unoccupied.
17. Completely dry the floor and place clean bedding, toys and water dishes in the runs.
18. Raise guillotine doors or return dogs to their clean runs.
19. Spray any runs used temporarily with bleach. If dog has soiled run, spot clean with Triple-Two then spray with bleach.
20. Clear any debris from drain covers, then pour Triple-Two solution into drain gutter; hose all debris from behind the kennels and drain gutter with water. Clear debris from the drain covers again.
21. Fill spray bottle with Triple-Two; spray then wipe around all doorknobs, light switches, and other places that are touched by human hands frequently. Dry with clean rag.

CRATES FOUND HEAVILY SOILED ON A GENERAL CLEANING DAY

1. In a clear area, break down every soiled crate that is in an occupied kennel. Place all screws from a crate into its own baggie. (If a kennel is not occupied, its crate should be upside down and previously cleaned for next occupant.)
2. Spray the inside and outside of the crates with Triple-Two solution and let soak for ten minutes.
3. Using a stiff bristled scrub brush designated for crates, scrub inside and out thoroughly.
4. Spray the zone you are cleaning with Triple-Two, scrub runs, walkways, aisle-ways, behind runs.
5. Pay special attention to scrubbing crate seams, edges and corners.
6. Remove the spray applicator; hose each crate and the general area with water.
7. At the mixing station, fill the hose-end sprayer with properly diluted bleach and attach to hose.
8. Spray the inside and outside of the crates.
9. Put crates back together and replace in runs; towel dry. Clean crates should be left OPEN SIDE DOWN in unoccupied runs.

PUPPY ROOM

(Occupied)

1. Remove puppies from their cages, and crate them in a non-dog area (such as intake room or volunteer office). Move x-pen and other room contents into hallway.
2. Dispose of newspaper, poop and debris into trash.
3. Bedding that has feces on it should be thrown away, not washed for reuse. Put the rest of the dirty laundry next to washer. Discard feces-soiled toys. Stack bleachable toys and soiled water dishes in a bucket and bring into kitchen.
4. Sweep floor of all debris.
5. From mixing station, fill rolling bucket 1/4 of the way with Triple-Two solution and another with bleach solution.
6. Mop floor end to end with Triple-Two solution. Use scrub brush to scrub walls, back of door, crates, x-pen, etc..
7. Mop floor, walls, back of door, crates, x-pen with bleach solution. Let dry completely.
8. Place clean bedding, toys, water dishes, x-pen and other contents in the room.
9. Return puppies to their cages.
10. Dip clean rag into bleach solution and clean the door handle(s) (both sides), area around door handles, light switches and other places that are touched by human hands frequently. Dry with a clean rag.

LEVEL 3 AREA

1. Remove all contents of Level 3 area.
2. Sweep away all debris. Collect and wash all toys and return to L3.
3. From mixing station, fill rolling bucket 1/4 of the way with properly diluted Triple-Two and another with clean water.
4. Mop floor end to end with Triple-Two. If soiled, also scrub walls with Triple-Two.
5. Mop everything with water. Squeegee dry.

Spot Cleaning

DOG RUNS

1. Scoop poop and discard in garbage (not in drain).
2. From mixing station, fill rolling bucket 1/4 of the way with Triple-Two disinfectant/detergent
3. Move dog to the other side of guillotine, or have someone else take him/her for a walk if housed in the indoor runs.
4. Hose any vomit or diarrhea into gutter with water.
5. Spot mop soiled areas with Triple-Two.
6. Rinse area briefly with hose. Squeegee dry.
7. Return dog to run.

PUPPY ROOM

1. Remove puppies from their cages and place in crates in a non-dog area. Move anything in the way into hallway.
2. From mixing station, fill rolling bucket 1/4 of the way with Triple-Two disinfectant/detergent and another with clean water.
3. Spot mop soiled areas with Triple-Two.
4. Spot mop soiled areas with water. Squeegee dry.
5. Return puppies to their cages.
6. Dip clean rag into Triple-Two and clean the door handle (both sides), area around door handles, light switches and other places that are touched by human hands frequently. Dry with a clean rag.

For runs that are deeply soiled anytime after the morning cleaning, proceed to GENERAL CLEANING instructions for healthy dogs, and to DEEP CLEANING instructions for ISO/Quarantine dogs.

Monthly Cleaning

MONTHLY CLEANING IS PERFORMED STARTING ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AND THROUGHOUT THAT WEEK.

ON THE DAYS SCHEDULED FOR A DEEP CLEANING, FOLLOW THE GENERAL DAILY CLEANING PROTOCOLS EXACTLY, BUT REPLACE TRIPLE-TWO WITH **CAGE AND KENNEL DEGREASER**.

Sample Weekly Deep Cleaning Schedule

Monday : Kitchen, lobby, intake room & bathroom, Level 3 Area, cat cages & cat rooms

Tuesday : Outdoor kennels & crates—left side (all kennels, walkways & walls)

Wednesday : Outdoor kennels & crates—right side (all kennels, walkways & walls)

Thursday : Indoor kennels and crates

Friday : Lobby, intake room & bathroom

Saturday : Spot clean all rooms

Sunday : Liaison room & volunteer room

Once a week, prior to disinfection, cages should be cleaned and scrubbed with a degreaser, with careful attention paid to scrubbing cracks around gates, where wall meets floor and any other likely spots where dirt can hide. Doors, areas around light switches, hose handles and any other frequently handled areas should be cleaned.

Use the Degreaser when doing weekly thorough cleaning of these areas. Remember, whenever animals are adopted or change kennel locations, follow the deep cleaning protocol, regardless of the day of the week.

This weekly deep cleaning will ensure we can continue to "spot clean" throughout the rest of the week. Please read through the "General Cleaning Protocols." It is essential for everyone to understand that we **MUST** follow this cleaning regimen. To do otherwise would compromise the health and safety of our animal guests.

Implementing Open Paw: Where to begin

Launching a new program is a large undertaking and should be done in a systematic, yet gentle way. It is important not to alienate or confuse your current staff and volunteers. They are in the habit of doing things the way they were instructed to when first trained, and changing the routine may cause stress and uncertainty. If not handled properly, change can also bring about resentment, even chaos. It is essential to avoid this if you want any new program to succeed. The best way to avoid such confusion is to include and empower your staff and key volunteers from the beginning.

How To Begin: Steps to Take

- Make a presentation to the BOD or shelter administration
- Write an action plan
- Gather resources and materials
- Train Staff (2 parts)
- Implement MMHRs
- Adjust volunteer orientation and training programs and schedule new training sessions
- Determine grace period for existing volunteers
- Train existing volunteers and incorporate key volunteers into new volunteer training program
- Launch new OP orientation and volunteer training program

In many cases, it is most effective to launch an Open Paw pilot program with just a few animals initially participating. Launching a small pilot program will not only allow you to work out the kinks of implementation with minimal confusion, but will also serve as a test group which, when successful, will create enthusiasm for the program which will make the shelter-wide transition go much more smoothly. Open Paw recommends starting with as few as 5 dogs, preferably dogs who are hard to place and who have been in the shelter for over a month. However, it is good to include at least 1 dog that is new to the shelter environment, because doing so will illustrate how easily a dog with no existing “shelter habits” will adjust and improve with the guidance of the program.

Customizing Your Open Paw Program

While most every animal shelter has similar goals and challenges, Open Paw recognizes that every shelter is unique. Each shelter has its own physical layout, access to resources, charter, and community needs. In order to best address your shelter's strengths and weaknesses, and to best utilize your unique resources, it may be necessary to modify the program to suit your individual circumstances.

When modifying the Open Paw Program to suit your specific shelter, it is important to prioritize the animals' immediate needs, always focusing on the activities that will build skills to help get them permanently adopted. When prioritizing the shelter animals' daily activities, it is helpful to divide the activities into two categories—urgent and important—and to focus on the urgent first.

Frequently Asked Questions and Frequently Raised Concerns

Your shelter staff, governing board members, administrators and volunteers will have questions and concerns about the new program. We've included a list of the most frequently raised issues below, as well as some answers to those issues, to help you in your transition to the Open Paw shelter program.

The most important things to keep in mind as you present the Open Paw program to your shelter partners is to do so respectfully and in a spirit of team work. People who work or volunteer at a shelter do so out of a deep love for and commitment to the animals, and they are often far more emotionally committed to the work than almost any other professionals. The obvious benefit of that is that they're often willing to work very hard for very little (or no) pay for the animals in your care. The challenge for you is that your staff and volunteers may be more vulnerable to developing an antipathy to the program because of perceived insult or unfairness, so you must present the changes called for in the new protocols carefully. Regardless of their particular beliefs about animal husbandry, training, and management, though, the belief shared by you and all of your staff and volunteers is the commitment to providing excellent care for your shelter's animals, and the commitment to finding good homes for them. So start with those shared goals and commitments, and show your partners in the shelter how the Open Paw program helps you to best accomplish those goals.

The Divide Between Missions

"Of course it works at a private no-kill; they get to CHOOSE their animals."

The Open Paw program primarily focuses on two things: the mental well-being of shelter animals, and community education and awareness programs to prevent animals from becoming unwanted. The environmental enrichment and humane treatment of incarcerated animals should not be optional, regardless of the ultimate fate of some of the resident cats and dogs. Open Paw has worked with both municipal animal control facilities and private shelters to design the program. All of the Open Paw guidelines have been designed with both open door and private facilities in mind.

It's time for shelters to take it upon themselves to raise the bar for standards of care for shelter animals. There are numerous and rigorous veterinary and physical health requirements for livestock and for laboratory, zoo, and shelter animals. However, apart from zoological environmental enrichment programs, there are few requirements that cater to the animals' social and psychological needs in the shelter setting. If shelter animals are to remain, or become, suitable social companions for people, they require comfort, companionship, communication, education, and entertainment.

As ambassadors for the humane treatment of animals across the nation, it is essential for shelters to place equal value on the mental and physical needs of the animals in their

custody. Attention to an incarcerated animal's mental well-being should not be an afterthought or a bonus, but on par with physical health concerns and part of the standard protocol for care.

"But she didn't mean to bite me—it was my fault, anyway."

Are these people suggesting placing UNSAFE animals with the unsuspecting public? Remember a shelter's reputation depends on the quality of adopted animals the public encounters. People often generalize beyond their immediate experience, so every shelter animal is an ambassador not only for herself and for your shelter, but for shelter animals in general. People who return an adopted dog because of aggression issues do not return to a shelter to adopt again—and their friends, relatives, and acquaintances may never adopt from a shelter if they hear a vivid, memorable story about a bad shelter adoption. Instead, they purchase their next pet from a breeder to avoid getting an "unpredictable shelter dog".

"All lives are precious."

But where should they live? With whom? And how? It is tragic and heartbreaking that some animals have been so damaged by humans that they are now considered unadoptable. The rehabilitation of an animal with severe behavior problems can take years and cost hundreds of dollars in resources. Such an animal can occupy desperately needed space for long periods of time, all without any guarantee of success. Moreover, studies have shown that animals with severe behavior problems often spontaneously recover the undesirable behavior. In general, the shelter world is not ready to deal with long-term housing and rehabilitation at this time. It is important to prioritize to determine where to focus the all-too-scarce resources of the typical shelter. As much as we would love to do so, it is simply impossible to save every animal that comes into our care. And ultimately, putting numerous resources and enormous amounts of time into such rehabilitation does nothing to prevent the next animal from becoming behaviorally damaged. Prevention and education are key. The more prevention and education shelters do now, the fewer animals will need help in the future, which will eventually allow more time for behavior cases and research. But we must not put the cart before the horse.

The Divide Between Methodologies (or no method)

"I just want to walk the dogs/play with the cats."

Our focus in the shelter must be to find good, permanent homes for the dogs and cats. Teaching life skills is one of the most important things you can do for a shelter animal to help her get adopted. Open Paw focuses on walking the dog outside in the real world, integrating training with really big rewards, such as exercise, ranging (exploring around freely) so long as the dog does not pull on the lead, and sniffing. We are not just "taking the dog for a walk," but rather "teaching the dog how to walk on a loose lead." We're not just playing with the cats, but teaching them how to play with their claws in, and solicit

attention from potential adopters. This will not only help to impress potential adopters, but will also help both the new owners and the polite doggy or kitty! Although we do love all of our dog and cat guests, love is not enough. Most shelter cats and dogs are lacking some of the skills that will help them get adopted and stay permanently in their new homes. It is the job of shelter staff and volunteers to teach them these necessary skills; it is the best thing to do for them.

“We already have a dog-walking program in place.”

Whatever your dog walking program, it should be well organized with specific goals in mind, particularly goals that help the animals acquire the necessary skills to get adopted and stay adopted. If the staff and volunteers are not making sure that they follow the protocols for getting dogs in and out of the kennels, and are not walking the dogs with the ultimate goal of adoption in mind, they can actually be undermining the dog’s adoption chances by inadvertently reinforcing rude behavior on walks and when meeting people. While it may not bother you to be hauled down the street by a dog, or jumped all over when you greet the dog, it will very likely bother potential adopters.

“People shouldn’t be required to have a Ph.D. in behavior just to walk dogs.”

Open Paw agrees that dog walking should be relatively easy, and that’s why our Four Level Training Program for shelter staff and volunteers is designed to address the bare bones essence of the skills needed to be up and running with the animals on the very first day of training. However, animal training and behavior is a branch of the sciences of psychology and learning theory, and is actually quite complex; that is why we recommend building your skills gradually, beginning at Level 1 with the basic principles of learning and animal body language. Also, stressed animals in a shelter can be somewhat rambunctious and dangerous; a trained person is less likely to get into a difficult situation or to get hurt. At each level of training, you are putting yourself at risk in a new way. The shelter and Open Paw must place your safety as a priority, and the skills you develop in each level will help you to interact more safely with the animal at the next level.

“The animals need exercise, not training. How will we wear them out?”

The benefits of mental exercise and positive human interaction that training provides dwarves the perceived benefit of a “willy-nilly” playtime free-for-all. It is very difficult to physically tire the average adolescent shelter dog, and too much extreme activity not only makes the dog more fit (and more difficult to tire in the future), but also revs the dog up physiologically, something most shelter dogs already have a problem with due to overstimulation in their kennel. Remember that the shelter’s priority is to find good permanent homes for its shelter residents. A brisk human-dragging session around the neighborhood might make the dog feel better during the session, but the dog is never going to feel truly better until she’s established in a home of her own. We must focus on placing the dogs in permanent homes; all of our activities with the dogs should be aimed at this end. These dogs need to learn basic manners and how to settle down in order to get adopted.

“Dogs need strong leaders or they will try to “get away with” as much as possible in an attempt to dominate you.”

This type of thinking is archaic and potentially dangerous, especially in dealing with stressed-out animals in a shelter environment. Using the principles of learning theory—rewarding desirable behaviors, and ignoring undesirable behavior or removing rewards when the animal behaves in an undesirable way—is much more progressive and humane than relying on physical punishment. Animals make associations with you and with the situation every time you interact with them. Thus, an unfortunate side-effect of using punishment to try to train animals is that, while they may learn to respond to cues, they may also form negative associations to you, to the situation, to people, or to training. Furthermore, often you don’t get the result you wanted from trying to use punishment to train. Take for example a dog jumping on people. It’s not a desirable behavior to people but, in the dog-dog world, it is an appeasing, friendly greeting gesture. If you use punishment to try to get the dog to stop jumping, you have to use a severe enough punishment the first time that it effectively outweighs the positive associations of the friendly greeting gesture. If the punishment is not severe enough, then you are not effectively damping that behavior. You may even unintentionally be rewarding it. Furthermore, some dogs may try to stop the punishment by offering an appeasement gesture rather than by stopping the undesirable behavior—so the result might be more jumping, rather than less.

So, using punishment to train is pretty inefficient, difficult to do correctly and, in order to be effective, must be severe. A much more efficient, friendlier way to train is to teach the dog a desirable, alternative behavior; ask, “If this is ‘wrong,’ what is ‘right?’” In this case, we might train the dog to sit to greet people.

“There are so many opinions and animal “experts” out there. None of them agree. What makes your method so special; why follow OP?”

Open Paw’s Shelter Program is not based on opinion or ideology, but on facts and results. The animal behavior sub-discipline of Psychology is, like other sciences, based on the interpretation of empirical evidence. Theories are judged by the quality of the evidence, and the degree to which the interpretation of that evidence can be defended through rational argument. Differing theories are not matters of “mere opinion,” and therefore relative and incompatible with rational judgment. Judging between two competing views of animal behavior is a matter of judging the ability of each view to rationally defend its interpretive strategy, and the evidence on which it bases its interpretation. Open Paw’s behavior counseling and training techniques are based on decades of research by the foremost experts in animal learning theory, including Edward Thorndike, Dr. B.F. Skinner, Dr. Keller Breland, Dr. Marion Breland-Bailey, Dr. Ian Dunbar, Dr. Pamela Reid, and Jean Donaldson. Each of these behaviorists regularly follow(ed) the scientific method of laying out their interpretive schema, and the empirical evidence on which those interpretations are based, to the peer review of their colleagues. Open Paw’s behavioral and training techniques are based on the most rational, most up-to-date, most strongly argued and most well-grounded evidence available.

Staff, Facility, and Board Issues

“We cannot afford: a volunteer coordinator, a staff behavior consultant, a Level 3 area, a toilet area, enough staff to implement walks (for extended hours).”

Given your shelter’s mission and goals, you can’t afford not to! These are the workings of a functional, successful animal shelter, necessary to achieve the mission. Apply for grants or ask for corporate sponsorship to aid in implementation of the program. You may have to implement the program slowly, using smaller, “pilot” groups of animals to raise grant money and help solicit donations. The shelters we’ve worked with have had good luck in getting excellent press and donations because of the innovation of the program and its impressive results. The program itself is not very costly; most of the changes are emotional or intellectual.

“How will we know which animals have already been cared for (walked, handled, trained)?”

The interactions with animals you’ll be experiencing with the Open Paw Four Level Training Program and MMHR handling recommendations will provide opportunities for an ongoing behavior evaluation that gives you real-time insight into the behavior and temperament of your resident cats and dogs. Be sure to record every interaction with each animal through the use of Open Paw’s various charts, such as the Walk Chart, Levels Chart, Training Observation Form, and Elimination Chart (included in the appendix). Each interaction provides important information about the animal. Daily interaction will not only help staff get a more accurate picture of each animal as a complex living creature, but will allow you to chart progress or deterioration of the animals in your care. Using the charts provides clear and instantaneous communication between all staff and volunteers and actually eliminates excess work.

“Volunteers are more work for the staff than help; they just get in the way and don’t know what they’re doing.”

Volunteers should be trained and treated just like employees. Open Paw has found that, with proper training, guidance, and actual work assignments, volunteers become the greatest allies of an overworked staff. Treat and train them well from the beginning—it’s well worth the initial investment. The Open Paw Four Level Training Program will give volunteers skills to be helpful instead of a hindrance.

“The staff (vet/kennel) doesn’t have the time to wait for good behavior before interacting with the dogs, because we’re too busy.”

Example: Kneeing the dog in the chest or spraying the dog with the hose to gain control instead of waiting for the dog to stop jumping before entering the kennel.

Again, this goes back to determining your mission and being committed to a paradigm shift in sheltering views. Open Paw’s vision for shelters is to raise the bar for basic domestic animal care, as well as to serve as a model for the public. Adopting Open Paw’s

Minimum Mental Health Requirements (MMHR) and practicing efficient animal-friendly and user-friendly techniques for basic care and training of the shelter animals has a tremendous impact on the community. Everyone who enters the shelter observes firsthand that animal care and training can be simple, humane and enjoyable.

At first glance, some of the recommendations may seem unfeasible or too labor-intensive to implement. However, following the MMHRs and adopting the Open Paw volunteer training program actually reduces the amount of time required for husbandry, kennel cleaning and upkeep. This allows staff and volunteers to spend time on the more gratifying goal of interacting with and training the resident animals. For example, by providing access to a separate, appropriate toilet area for dogs (rather than forcing them to soil their kennels), hours of unpleasant daily manual labor is virtually eliminated. Also, toilet-trained animals are cleaner and more adoptable, meaning a shorter stay at the shelter. And what an improvement a clean-smelling Open Paw shelter has over the average, eye-watering facility.

It is true that the first 3 or 4 times you wait for good behavior before entering a kennel, it will take longer than just muscling the dog aside or using a hose. However, with consistent application, the learning curve is very steep for this training—very soon, you'll have a polite dog sitting quietly to wait for you to enter the kennel. Thus, after just a few days, your kennel routine will go much faster than before.

Certainly Open Paw's guidelines require a considerable paradigm shift, and of course there are initial growing pains and adjustments, but the transformation is magical. Once staff and volunteers see calm, contented, and mannerly cats and dogs, they become very eager and excited about participating in the program.

"We have outgrown our current staff; they will never be able to/willing to follow through with the new protocols."

Start at the top. In order to succeed, the program must have the support of the board of directors, shelter director/manager, oversight committee, etc. Present the program to them first. Implementation of the Open Paw program will be more successful if everyone is on board and new protocols are properly trained and mandatory. You may want to use a sample section of your kennel to pilot and demonstrate the benefits and success of the program. Modeling the program is very convincing; once people see Open Paw in action they generally become advocates of the program.

Initiating the Open Paw program will most likely require re-evaluating some of your facility's current operations. While change is an opportunity for improvement, the prospect may be threatening for much of the staff. People may feel that by suggesting a change in the status quo, you're implying they have been doing everything "wrong" up until now. It is important not to make people feel defensive when making changes and re-training staff and volunteers. The same passion that keeps people in such a challenging line of work may mean that they're more vulnerable when change is implemented. Please remember to be kind to your human counterparts. Treat your colleagues and volunteers with the

same patience and understanding as you do the animals. Reward successive approximations of the behavior you would like to see more of in the future.

Be sure to identify your common goals, such as permanently re-homing as many animals as possible.

Remember, people save animals—include them, don't alienate them, regardless of who they are and what role they play.

The key elements for staff support are:

- Acceptance or buy-in
- Education
- Consistency
- Patience

However, if a staff member or volunteer is genuinely obstructing the program and is not showing evidence of progressive change after you've given them patient direction and consideration, as well as time to adjust, you will need to be a manager: sometimes someone does need to be fired. Follow all of the above advice with your staff and volunteers, consider and address their legitimate concerns, show patience and gentle firmness, but don't be afraid of ultimately letting someone go if they simply can't follow the rules of the shelter.

“I have been doing this for years; I already KNOW what works best for the animals.”

If you are happy with the quality of your adoptions and care of the animals, are meeting your adoption numbers and length-of-stay goals, meeting your mission and have a very low return rate, then perhaps you do know what works best and do not need to implement a new program. However, if you are having trouble with any of the items above, it may be useful to try Open Paw's innovative recommendations to help your shelter meet and exceed its goals.

“Why can't we have multiple programs in place simultaneously?”

As with cats and dogs, humans learn best through consistency and repetition. It is too confusing to mix and match methodologies and programs, and doing so only results in compromising all of your efforts. Furthermore, conflicting programs can often undermine and undo the progress you've accomplished with the animals under the Open Paw program. For example, you may have Open Paw volunteers spending several hours teaching an especially rambunctious adolescent how to sit politely before anyone enters his kennel. If your dog walking program isn't compatible with the Open Paw levels, though, a dog walker might easily come up to the kennel, wrestle a jumping dog back into the kennel (remember, dogs don't generalize well, so everyone has to make them sit before entering the kennel until they get the picture and begin to offer it right away), clip the leash

on a wriggling, jumpy dog, and bestow the ultimate reward—a walk—for really unruly behavior, thus undoing in 2 minutes what a volunteer or staff member just spent 30 minutes training. Not only does that undermine the training for the dog, but it's extremely frustrating to the Open Paw volunteer or staff member.

Logistics

“Where do we put the Level 3 area? Doggy toilet?”

You do not need a lot of room for a doggy toilet. Location is a secondary concern; it is more important to give dogs several regular opportunities to use a doggy toilet and to use the proper substrate than to fret about location or size. An unused kennel or two will make a fine doggy toilet.

“While we're initiating the program and everyone is at Level 1 or Level 2, the animals are not getting enough walks/attention/training.”

When the program begins there may be a temporary shortage of qualified Level 4 dog walkers. There are many ways to avoid this pitfall, such as: training all staff and key volunteers through all of the levels prior to implementation, starting the program with a small sample size of your population to ease transition, or to grandfather in a few walkers for a few months until they can eventually be trained up to Level 4.

“What about long standing pre-Open Paw-trained volunteers? And staff for that matter.”

See Staff, Facility, and Board Issues

“Level 1 volunteers have less access to the animals than the public.”

Level 1 volunteers are serving a very different role than the public, and their lack of direct contact with the animals will be very temporary if they show some commitment and stay with the program. Level 1 work is the foundation of all other levels and makes the staff's job much easier. The importance and impact of Level 1 should not be overlooked. Also, Level 1 volunteers serve as a wonderful model for the public and may spark interest in training and behavior in the average shelter visitor.

“We don't HAVE enough volunteers to make this work. Who will hand-feed and walk the dogs on days when few volunteers show up?”

There are days that will be busy or short-staffed; in the shelter environment this is often the case. However, Open Paw's toilet training protocol and the UC Davis Shelter Medicine cleaning protocols allow for much less cleaning and more time for interactive activities, such as hand-feeding and training. On days when you are very low staffed, you may have to prioritize and just do the toilet breaks (which should be very short—no more than 5 minutes per dog!) plus a bare 20 minutes of walk training or Level 3 training per dog. As we mentioned, you may want to start with a small pilot program while you build your

volunteer base, train your staff, and get the program up and running. Use the incredible improvement in those pilot animals to recruit volunteers and get their buy-in, and to demonstrate to the staff how quickly the potty walks can go, and how much less time is necessary for kennel cleaning under the Open Paw program.

“Isn’t all of this in and out of the kennel too stimulating or stressful for the dogs? They are very reactive when other dogs walk by their kennels.”

If the program’s guidelines are followed appropriately, the dogs should desensitize, not sensitize, to the new protocol. This will be most difficult for long-standing shelter residents with existing habits, so be patient. Dogs that come into the shelter post-implementation will fall right in line with the new status quo. See Level 3 in the Open Paw Four-Level Manual for People and Dogs for a description of how to manage dogs through the kennel for the potty walks and training breaks.

Sanitation Concerns

“If food sits outside/on the bottom of cages there will be an increase in bacteria.” “If the dogs share a communal doggy toilet, they will give each other parasites.” “People should wash hands between feeding every dog to prevent the spread of disease, and that will make hand-feeding far too onerous and time-consuming.” “Hand-feeding will spread disease.” Concerns about communal cat rooms, cat handling and contagious disease.

In your healthy, adoptable dog and cat population, none of these should be an issue—it’s no different from petting or giving treats to several dogs in the dog park. We particularly brought these issues to the attention of the UC Davis Shelter Medicine Program to be sure that our MMHR and training protocols would be safe and sanitary; they have assured us that they foresee no problem with the protocols. It should also be noted that none of the shelters implementing Open Paw’s shelter program since the inception of the program in 2000 has experienced a problem with parasites or bacteria developing from the protocols.

If you want to implement the protocols with your quarantined animals, you should follow the same precautions that you follow in all handling situations: clean hands between feeding and establish a separate toilet area for quarantined animals.

Concerns about Stress

Stressing the animals by “having food close yet so far. It is teasing them.” “Dogs are pack animals and like to eat when the rest of the pack is eating.” “The increased stress of ‘teasing’ (through hand-feeding) will frustrate the animals and they will be so ‘amped up’ that there will be more occurrences of bites.”

This has not been the experience of any of the shelters that have used Open Paw. The animals are busy during the day—they're focused on their stuffed chew toys while in the kennel, they are appropriately tired from training exercises and, as a result, they don't pay attention to the buckets at all. Because the food is coming from people (not directly from the buckets), the dogs don't really associate the food with the buckets—they associate the food with people.

Since the dogs do learn quickly to associate the delivery of their food with people visiting the kennels, the exercise becomes a proactive safety plan. Contrary to the worry about an increase in biting, dogs (and cats) learn to enjoy and look forward to the approach of visitors to their kennel. The decrease in stress helps to decrease the incidents of biting.

A lot of the information out there on wolves is based on faulty, archaic research done through poorly developed studies that have since been soundly disproved. Aside from that, the fact is—dogs are not wolves. Far from being primarily "pack" animals, dogs have long been village scavengers living largely alone. Dogs, as opposed to wolves, have not developed eating in packs, but picking small bits of food throughout the day that they find and eat on their own.

Protocol/Implementation Concerns

"Will hand-feeding allow the animals to eat enough? Will they starve? Will all of this anticipation cause them to gorge and bloat when given the chance?"

We've never run into this problem in shelters, and in fact, in our experience, dogs thrive under this protocol because of all the interaction and enrichment. Food is a passive reinforcer, whereas training and chew toy interaction actually enhances the eating experience for the dogs.

Dogs developed, and are meant, to scavenge regularly and gorge occasionally; Open Paw is not recommending that you change the amount of food you feed your dogs (although many shelters actually do overfeed their dogs, so you might want to reassess the daily rations each of your dogs are getting for optimal health), just that you feed it in a different way. The "schedule" of feeding for dogs on the Open Paw program is actually closer to the dog's natural diet than the traditional way of feeding dogs once or twice a day out of a bowl.

"It will be difficult to monitor the eating habits and rationing of the animal's food."

You're giving the dogs the same rations, and putting those into the buckets hung on the front of the kennels, so it's no harder to keep track of than a protocol in which you put the rations into a food bowl. On the contrary, because you're interacting with the animals so much each day, you get a very clear indication if the animals are having any issues with their food.

“All of this interaction with the animals requires more supervision (of volunteers and the public).”

Yes, it will require regular supervision. On the other hand, should volunteers and the general public be left unsupervised under any circumstances with carnivorous animals with sharp teeth? Your shelter does have a legal liability, as well as an ethical responsibility, for the public who visit your shelter, as well as the volunteers who come to help you.

Ultimately, this is an issue about the quality of your program. Although shelters often have to invent clever solutions and cut back on expenses for some things because of economic difficulties, there are some things that simply can't be compromised, and the mental well-being of the animals in your care, as well as the safety of the public, are some of the most important of those things.

“How do we know which volunteers are trained for certain activities?”

Open Paw has included volunteer training sheets and spreadsheets in the Volunteer Coordinator section of the Shelter Manual. So that the public and staff can keep track of which volunteers are trained at which levels, you should create simple tags or pins that volunteers can wear that indicate levels of training.

“What about specials diets?”

It's quite simple to make a separate bowl of soaked kibble for the dogs on a special diet. Furthermore, if the dogs are on special diets because they're stressed or unwell, there's all the more reason to provide them with the entertainment and enrichment that will help them to settle down and feel more comfortable in the kennel.

Staff Training Outline

Depending on how you split up the training, a general staff training to get everyone up to speed will take about 4 days, or 2 full days and 4 half days. We've included time estimates based on our experience next to each section of training to help you plan your training sessions.

Existing Shelter Policies and Procedures (8 hours)

Before orienting your staff to the Open Paw shelter methods, you should review the existing policies and protocols of your shelter to update wherever is necessary and make appropriate changes (for example, staff schedules, particularly for those caring for dogs, will probably need to change to incorporate Open Paw protocols).

We recommend that you start your staff's Open Paw orientation with a review of your facility's policies and protocols, with an emphasis on the changes and updates.

The following would be important to cover as an introduction to your staff training:

Open Paw related policies

Your facility rules and mission, with an emphasis on how the Open Paw program can help you to achieve your mission.

Dress code. With the increased outreach and public mission involved in the Open Paw shelter program, it's important that the public be able to distinguish between shelter staff and themselves. Staff will be doing a great deal of handling and interaction with the animals in the Open Paw program, so a dress code, even if it's a minor one, is important for safety on several levels. Not only will appropriate shoes, shirts, and pants help your staff avoid injuries but, if the staff is dressed like members of the general public, and the public sees them interacting heavily with the animals, they may think that the public is allowed to, for instance, enter kennels, physically interact with the animals without staff supervision, etc..

Staff Schedules. You'll almost certainly have to make some adjustments to staff schedules, including the weekly, daily, overtime, break, and lunch schedules. We've included some example staff schedules in this section to help you plan.

Chain of command/roles within the shelter. If your shelter does not already have a strongly established chain of command and clear roles for each person in the shelter, now is the time to establish one. With new schedules, expectations and rules, strong and clearly established leadership will be indispensable during the change-over period.

Volunteer relations/utilizing volunteers. Talk to your staff about how Open Paw training makes volunteers into well-trained assets, almost unpaid workers at the shelter, upon

whom staff can rely for help. Strongly emphasize that the staff should be polite and respectful of volunteers and that the volunteers, rather than nuisances who are in the way, will be an asset to the program. Give a quick outline to the staff about the training volunteers will receive, so that they understand what volunteers can be relied on to help with, and tell the staff how to recognize the volunteers and their level of training. (You'll want to have identifying tags or some other item so that staff and the public can recognize your volunteers).

Communication. Communication among staff, managers, and volunteers will be key, especially as volunteers can be so helpful in completing many of the daily duties. Open Paw has created several charts and log entries to help you keep track of when dogs have been walked, when and at what level they've been trained, and what each trainer has noticed during training, as well as to help you keep track of what level of training your staff and volunteers have received. You don't want to accidentally walk one dog several times during a walk period and ignore another because of crossed wires between staff and volunteers. For safety, you also want to be sure that each staff member and volunteer is working with the animals at the appropriate level (particularly during the transition, when not everyone will be trained at every level right away). Without a strong and reliable system of communication, the shelter's daily activities can become very confused: there are many goals that will be accomplished in the day, and a whole new category of workers (your volunteers) helping to do them, so communications will be key. Review the walk charts, training charts, training logs, and the animals' kennel cards (example included) with the staff, go over where each chart/template/log will be located, and explain how to fill them in and why it's important to update them daily.

Working with Local Trainers. Although Open Paw's shelter training program is designed to be executed by any shelter, municipal facility, or rescue organization that is committed to the program, there are some aspects of responsible adoption, euthanasia, and/or rehabilitation that must be done under the advice of a professional animal trainer.

Open Paw's Four Levels program and Minimum Mental Health Requirements are designed to deal with the normal and expected stress a dog or cat will feel when suddenly transferred to a shelter environment; to help the animals learn to feel comfortable in the shelter and happy to see strangers approach the kennels; and to address training issues like over-exuberance, boisterous behavior, potty and chew toy training, loose-leash training, and other training issues that most dogs will develop in the absence of clear and consistent direction. We've designed the programs so that everyone can safely and easily learn to address these issues, and help the shelter's animal residents learn the skills they need to find and keep homes.

However, behavioral issues are significantly more complex and difficult to deal with. Shelters should work with local trainers who have been recommended or approved by Open Paw for procedures like intake evaluations/evaluations of adoptable animals, behavioral rehabilitation (if that is one of your facility's goals and is within your facility's capabilities), regular behavioral assessments, and consultations for any post-adoption behavioral prob-

lems (post-adoption training problems can be addressed by trained volunteers using our phone follow-up and adoption counseling materials—see Chapter 3, Adoption Counseling Guidelines). If your facility does not already employ a professional trainer/trained behaviorist, consult Open Paw at info@openpaw.org for help finding an Open Paw approved trainer in your area. Ideally, you can find someone to work hands-on with the animals in the shelter for several hours per week. If that isn't possible, you should at least find a trainer to consult via phone for behavior evaluations, intake assessments, and behavior problems that crop up.

Other Policies to Review

The following policies will probably not be affected by the Open Paw program, but it might be helpful to review them at this time.

- Company vehicles
- Phone calls
- Staff visitors
- Absences from work/time off/punctuality

Daily Priorities and Protocols

Cleaning. Because of the Open Paw housetraining program, your daily cleaning protocols should become simple and less time-consuming, and your staff will be able to spend less time mucking the kennels and more time doing interesting and meaningful training and behavioral work with the animals. Review the cleaning procedures and protocols (included in this section) with your staff and emphasize the changes. Because you're changing the whole system, the cleaning protocols may seem more difficult during the transition; but once the staff becomes accustomed to the new procedures, cleaning will be significantly faster and simpler.

Basic animal care. Review the feeding schedule and chart with your staff. It is sometimes the case that animals in shelters are overfed, so you may want to review each animal's food allotment and discuss the new food allowance with the staff. Review Kong-stuffing routines. Review with your staff basic ideas about handling and caring for the animals, and what changes, if any, your shelter will be making in the ways in which you handle and interact with the animals. Review the procedures below in your kennel and emphasize the changes with the staff.

Remember that every moment is a training moment with animals, and that they're always learning how they feel about interaction with people. It's important that you give the

animals the feedback you want them to have regarding people, the kennels, and the care they receive. Even when the staff is in a hurry and needs to get something done quickly, procedures should be set up so that it's an appropriate learning moment for the animal.

You should review and make appropriate changes to the following procedures in your facility:

Moving animals from place to place. For example, if you squirt the animals with a hose to get them to move from place to place, they experience the kennel as an unsafe place, and can perceive you, the kennel, or even water, to be threatening and unpleasant. This is a major safety issue. If the animals perceive you as threatening, they're much more likely to bite, or to injure themselves trying to avoid you. Instead, incorporate cleaning procedures with the dogs' daily walks, which is more efficient, safe, and pleasant for everyone.

Moving animals from their kennel to another location in the facility. Refer to the section on managing animals through the facility in Level 3 of the Open Paw Four Levels book. Staff should be sure to avoid allowing dogs to fence fight, and avoid having to drag the animal amidst chaos, whenever they need to move the dogs from place to place.

Medical treatments. The dogs should be moved out of their runs for unpleasant medical treatments, even simple ones. While it may seem to be quicker and easier to do simple medical treatments inside the animals' kennels, they may learn to perceive the kennel as threatening if they associate their kennels with unpleasant medical procedures. Remember that it's important to maintain not just good medical health, but good mental health as well, and that dogs who feel comfortable in their environment are likely to be calmer, happier, and friendlier (therefore more adoptable) when the public visits. Getting chewy heartworm pills is perfectly pleasant, so that needn't be done elsewhere; something like ear cleaning or eye drops might be scary and threatening, so move the dog out of her kennel to do those procedures.

Adoptions

Customer Service. Remember that your facility's main goal is to get those adoptable animals into permanent homes! So quality customer care of your potential adopters/shelter visitors is key. The adoption counseling process is a wonderful opportunity to educate the public about how to train and care for a new dog or cat, and to significantly reduce the "recidivism" rate for the resident animals. While certain shelter staff members and volunteers will have the bulk of the adoption counseling duties for the shelter, every staff member and volunteer will have a certain role to play in this vital process.

First impressions are very important. Remember that most people are anxious or overwhelmed when visiting an animal shelter. Friendly guidance can go a long way towards making the public comfortable at your facility. The educational process should begin right

at the front of the shelter, with a friendly greeting and some guidance from either a member of the front desk staff or a volunteer docent (see our Adoption Counseling section for specific training for docents and front desk staff).

Public Education. Open Paw's protocols are devised so that the process of rehabilitating and re-homing the shelter animals can be used as an educational opportunity for prospective and existing pet owners in the community. Open Paw's shelter program provides practical experience and education to shelter staff and volunteers (prospective pet owners themselves) and, by using the Open Paw program in the animals' daily care, staff and volunteers model easy, animal-friendly training and management techniques to the visiting community. Thus, the very process of providing daily care provides practical education for prospective and existing pet owners.

Enhancing Adoptability. Open Paw's protocols and procedures are designed specifically to address the adoptability and mental well-being of shelter animals. By following the Four Levels recommendations and being sure to enforce the Minimum Mental Health Requirements, you're enhancing the adoptability of resident animals every day.

Adoption Counseling. Adoption counseling will be one of the most important efforts in the shelter. You should identify staff members who have especially good people skills and diplomacy to train as adoption counselors. For the general staff training session, go over the "Front desk staff/docent" section of the Adoption Counseling chapter, so that everyone on the staff knows the general rules about how to greet visitors, what materials to use and documentation to reference, and where the paperwork is located. Show the staff where the pre-screening paperwork for potential adopters is located, and where to find the dog and cat characteristics charts to consult. (See Chapter 3, Adoption Counseling.)

For staff and volunteers who will be training as adoption counselors, set up separate training sessions using the whole Adoption Counseling section in this manual.

Open Paw Overview (8 hours)

Open Paw Orientation. Follow the orientation script included in Chapter 5—Volunteer Coordinator—of this manual. Go all the way through to the end of the script (including the brief demonstrations of each level) and tell them that you'll go more deeply into each level during subsequent training sessions.

Behavior Problem Quiz. Give the quiz out a week in advance, and have the staff complete the quiz for the day of the Open Paw Overview training. Use the quiz as a training tool as you talk the staff through the right answers. (Answer key included in this section).

What is adoptable. Review our handout "What is Adoptable" (included in this section).

Review of Shelter Mission and Euthanasia Policy. Quickly review your shelter's mission and discuss your euthanasia policy. It's each shelter's prerogative to set its own criteria for adoptability, admissions, and euthanasia, but we strongly recommend that you do have a

set policy in place and that you stick to the policy. This way, procedures are clear during emotional times and decisions are made according to the policy, rather than according to emotion.

Reading Canine Body Language and Basic Safety in Animal Handling. Review Open Paw's handout "Reading Animal Body Language" (included in this section). For a clear, concise, more detailed explanation of dog body language and safe handling, consult *On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals* by Turid Rugaas.

Dog-Dog Play. Dog-dog play is an enticing activity for shelter staff; however, for adoptable animals that spend less than one month in the shelter, it is a very low priority, as other training and activities are much more likely to make the dogs adoptable and give them the skills to stay in their new homes. Since staff members often enjoy conducting dog-dog play sessions, though, go over Open Paw's dog-dog play recommendations (included in this manual) and hand out copies to staff.

Open Paw Levels: Detailed Training

There should be a limit of 10 participants for each training session. The time period for each session will vary depending on how many people are being trained.

Follow Open Paw's *Four Level Training Manual for People and Dogs* for staff training in each level. We do not recommend training all 4 levels in one day; you can easily combine Levels 1 and 2 into a single training day, but we recommend that you conduct Level 3 and Level 4 training in their own, half-day-long sessions, as each of these levels contains a great deal of information to process and retain.

- Level 1: Dogs (1 hour)
- Level 2: Dogs (3 hours)
- Level 3: Dogs (4 hours)
- Level 4: Dogs (3 hours)
- Levels 1-5: Cats (4-1/2 hours)

Future Training Sessions

The following training is important, but can be conducted once the full staff has undergone the basic training sessions:

Adoption Counseling. Friendly, helpful adoption counseling is a key to helping place your animals in good homes. After your staff members have undergone the basic Open Paw training, identify skillful individuals with good people skills and use the Adoption

Counseling section of this manual to train them. This should be one of your first priorities after the basic Open Paw training.

Behavior Problems in Dogs and Cats. If your shelter has decided that it is capable and willing to try to rehabilitate dogs and cats with behavior (not just training) problems, those animals should be referred to and handled by the professional, Open-Paw-recommended trainer working with your facility. Behavior problems are much more difficult to work with than training issues, and should be addressed by a trained professional.

Intake Assessment. Staff should be trained to do temperament evaluations in order to determine which dogs and cats should be put up for adoption. Refer to our surrender questionnaire so that you have as much information as possible from private surrenders, and refer to the Emily Weiss' SAFER Behavior Assessment for a quality intake assessment test.

Protocols and Procedures—Sample Daily Schedule For Kennel Attendants

7:30—8:30 am	Take all dogs to doggie toilet, choosing clean/crated dogs first. If dog does not eliminate within 3 minutes, return to kennel and confine appropriately (kennel or crate). Try again at the end of the rotation. Record elimination activity on walk chart.
8:30—10:00 am	Designated cleaning according to chart in cleaning binder. Initial each required cleaning when complete. Rotate morning breaks.
10:00—10:30 am	Put out fresh water, food buckets and stuffed Kongs.
10:30—11:00 am	Level 3 training: each attendant should bring a dog to the Level 3 area and work them independently on-leash for Level 3 activities. Attendants can bring non-quarantine dogs to either Level 3, the intake room or the training room for Level 3 and 4 activity. Quarantine dogs can be worked, but in a separate area from the healthy population, or in their kennels. Record all levels training and observations in the Open Paw binder.
11:00 am—3:00 pm	Begin second potty walks. Each dog not on a walk should be calm and in kennel with a stuffed Kong. During public hours, first priority is to remain on the floor; at least one attendant should be on the floor at all times. Attendants on the floor should be assisting potential adopters, practicing Level 1 and 2 activities, Gentle Leader desensitization, and working on jumpy, mouthy behavior. Quarantine dogs can be worked, but in a separate area from the healthy population, or in their kennels. Record all levels training in the Open Paw binder. Rotate breaks, lunches and relief reception coverage. Work on any behavior modification plans currently in place.
3:00—4:00 pm	Third potty walks, 5 minutes maximum for each dog.

Additional Daily Activities (to occur every day, after scheduled tasks are completed)

Spot clean kennels (includes sweeping up uneaten kibble), sweep floors, wipe down door-knobs in cat rooms with Triple-Two on a rag, stuff Kongs, socialize cats, complete Open Paw training for the dogs, "Doggie Downtime" (accompany dog to intake room and reward calm, attentive behavior), etc..

Extra Activities (when ALL tasks above are completed, listed in order of importance)

Human-dog 1-on-1 play time (e.g., fetch, tug), mini-field trips for dogs, teaching cats and dogs tricks, grooming cats and dogs, bathing dogs, dog-dog play (if qualified).

Sample Schedule for Evening

4:00 pm	Check walk chart to be sure all 3d walks have been completed; walk any dogs that have not been out.
4:00—6:30 pm	During public hours, first priority for the customer service attendant is to remain on the floor. If customer service attendant is out showing a dog or attending to other duties, at least 1 kennel attendant should be on the floor at all times. Attendants on the floor should be practicing Level 1 and 2 activities, Gentle Leader desensitization, and working on jumpy, mouthy behavior. Attendants can bring non-quarantine dogs to either Level 3, the intake room or the training room for Level 3 and 4 activity. Quarantine dogs can be worked, but in a separate area from the healthy population, or in their kennels.. Record all levels training in the Open Paw binder. Rotate breaks, lunches and relief reception coverage. Work on any behavior modification plans currently in place. Complete daily activities.
6:30—7:00 pm	Collect food buckets and discard uneaten portions. Check that all dogs have fresh water. Wash all dishes in the sink.
7:00—7:30 pm	Clean Level 3 area. Unlock all dog cages. Unlock all cat cages and check that all felines have fresh water and clean litter boxes and all kittens have full food bowls.
7:30—8:15 pm	Final potty walks, 5 minutes maximum for each dog. Crate the dogs who need crating.
8:15—8:30 pm	Final sweep, empty all open trash bins, put all food items away in sealed containers, check that all doors are locked and all lights are off.

Additional Daily Activities (to occur everyday, after scheduled tasks are completed)

Replace any soiled litter with fresh litter and assure all cats have water, spot clean kennels (also includes sweeping up uneaten kibble), sweep floors, wipe down doorknobs in cat rooms with Triple-Two on a rag, stuff Kongs, complete Open Paw training for the dogs, "Doggie Downtime" (accompany dog to intake room and reward calm, attentive behavior), etc..

Extra Activities (when all the above tasks are completed; listed in order of importance)

Human-dog 1-on-1 play time (e.g., fetch, tug), teaching cats and dogs tricks, grooming cats and dogs, bathing dogs, dog-dog play (if qualified), etc..

Reading Animal Body Language

Remember that behavior is always changing, so we want to look out for changes in all our shelter guests.

Dogs

Whenever you're interacting with—or deciding whether to interact with—a dog, pay attention to its body language. What does the dog do as you approach? Does she approach you happily, wiggle, sit, lift a paw, or press her side against the kennel bars (or against you, if you're meeting outside of the kennel)? If he's barking and/or jumping, is he bending his front elbows, hanging his tongue out, or interrupting the jumping or interspersing the barking with play bows or quick, small turns from side to side? If so, he probably feels comfortable with your presence.

On the other hand, is the dog cowering in the back of the kennel or backing away from you as you approach? Is she holding herself, particularly her front legs, very stiff, rolling her eyes to look at you, pulling her tongue back from her teeth (or doing any of these while barking), or running forward to bark and then retreating? If so, this dog feels very uncomfortable about being in the shelter and/or having you approach.

Occasionally, a dog will be more difficult to read when you assess body language, because he simply holds very still, rather than engaging in any of the behaviors listed above. If you're uncertain about how the dog feels, try stepping back a few paces and holding out a food treat to the dog. Will she approach to take the food from your hand? If not, you're probably dealing with a very uncomfortable dog. If he does approach, does he walk over with an easy and confident gait with bent elbows? After she takes the treat, does she seem more comfortable (cocking her head to ask for another food treat, remaining in proximity, sitting or lifting a paw)? If so, then after a bit more classical conditioning that dog will probably feel comfortable with your approach and interaction. Or does he approach cautiously for the treat, watching you carefully? Does he then retreat immediately, putting distance between you again? Does he continue to hold quite still, without relaxing limbs at all, after he takes the treat? If so, you're dealing with an uncomfortable dog.

It's quite normal and natural for a dog to feel stress when she first enters a kennel environment (or a new kennel, if the dog is a transfer). If you needn't interact with the dog immediately, hold off and continue to use your most low-key form of classical conditioning. Walk past the kennel at an ordinary walking pace and, at first, don't even turn to face the dog as you pass by—just casually toss a piece of kibble and move on. (Use higher-value treats, such as liver, sparingly, and only with dogs who are having trouble adjusting). Go work with another dog for a few minutes, and then pass by the stressed dog again, still very casually and without pressuring the dog at all. Only when she begins to show comfort with your approach should you begin to spend any time facing her in front of her

kennel, even to toss treats. And only when she is displaying the comfortable behaviors listed above (which may be several days later) should you begin to use reward training. If you must interact with the dog immediately, continue to use classical conditioning with high-value treats to make the experience as comfortable as possible for the dog, and use your facility's methods for dealing with frightened animals.

For a more in-depth discussion of dog body language, we recommend *On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals* by Turid Rugaas.

Cats

Cats can be subtle in their displays of stress and anxiety, but it is important that you take note of these indications that a cat is not comfortable with her circumstances or with you. Stress signals indicate that you are moving too fast. Make certain that you move at a pace determined by the cat, not by you.

Signs of stress are indicated by dilated pupils, not accepting the reward, not paying attention to you or turning his back on you, tensing or hunching up, breathing rapidly, licking or scratching at a body part, yawning, vocalizing, hissing, swatting, flattening ears, pulling whiskers back, and retreating.

Signs of desirable behavior are when a cat looks at you with normal-sized pupils or eyes half-closed, sniffs at the food offered, eats in your presence, purrs, sits or lies in a relaxed manner, holds ears forward, stretches her head towards you or the object/food in a curious manner, stretches her entire body in a relaxed manner, accepts the food, approaches you, rubs her body/head on you, or solicits attention.

What is Adoptable?

The question of what is adoptable is a somewhat subjective one, as the answer to this question will vary depending on the mission, resources, and community of your shelter or rescue. The important thing is to have clear, definable, pre-determined criteria in place and to make the process of determining adoptability as objective and quantifiable as possible. Doing so keeps the responsibility off of one single person and alleviates second-guessing and laying blame. Open Paw offers basic guidelines to quantify the process, as well as questions to ask, that will aid you in creating a definition of “adoptable” for your specific circumstances.

It is important to develop a measurable list of criteria, weighted by score, as a starting point for any behavior evaluation. When you develop these criteria (or evaluate an assessment/test that has already been developed), try to avoid using subjective terms of opinion when describing the animals. For example, instead of using the word “hyper” to describe a dog, try to specifically identify what the dog is doing and then quantify it. Remember that “hyper” will mean different things to different people; it is an opinion term. In this case, instead of labeling the dog with an opinion, quantify how much activity you observe in a measurable amount of time. “The dog paced for 10 minutes without stopping at the beginning of the test.” Or, “the dog jumped up on me 17 times in one minute.” This not only allows everyone to be on exactly the same page, which keeps communication clear, it also serves as a starting point for measuring improvement or deterioration in behavior.

Emily Weiss’s SAFER assessment and the San Francisco SPCA behavior evaluation are good behavior assessment tools to help you with this.

After an initial behavior evaluation has been completed, it is very useful to conduct an “objective quantification of subjective opinion”—in other words, a simple yes-or-no vote in favor of or against going into the kennel with a particular dog or picking up/holding a particular cat. In this circumstance, opinion is useful because it is the collective, educated opinion of many animal professionals and lay people. The voting team should be an odd number of people (3, 5, or 7 will do) of different sexes and backgrounds (perhaps even a child or teen if possible). No one will touch the dog or cat, but will simply spend 2 minutes observing the animal in the kennel to determine whether or not they would be comfortable entering the kennel with, or picking up, the animal in question. Generally the vote is unanimous; however if it is not, it can be very telling. Who was uncomfortable with the animal? A man with a beard? A young child? Why were they uncomfortable? You should note all of the reactions in detail.

The vote alone will not determine adoptability, but will offer further insight and input into the final decision.

Because behavior is always in motion and mammals are such complex creatures with a wide range of personality traits and reactions, the best way to get a complete picture of each of your resident animals is to both objectively and subjectively assess each one on

a daily (or hourly) basis from the moment they enter your facility. The *Open Paw Four Level Training Program* and MMHR handling recommendations will provide opportunities for an ongoing behavior evaluation that gives you real-time insight into the behavior and temperament of your resident cats and dogs. Be sure to record every interaction with each animal through the use of Open Paw's various charts, such as the Walk Chart, Levels Chart, Training Observation Form, and Elimination (Potty) Chart. Each interaction provides important information about the animal. Daily interaction will not only help staff get a more accurate picture of each animal as a complex living creature, but will allow you to chart progress or deterioration of the animals in your care.

Here are some questions to consider when determining your criteria for adoptability:

Who is your community made up of? In other words, who will adopt your animals—mostly suburban families with young children? Urban, childless, adults? Farmers?

What is the general cultural attitude towards cats and dogs in your community? Do your shelter animals fit that model?

How would you like your organization to be perceived by your community? The animals you adopt out are your biggest advertisement for future adoptions. It is essential that when a member of the public comes into contact with an animal that came from your organization, they have a pleasant experience.

Determine for each individual cat or dog: who would adopt this animal?

Would you send him/her home with one of your own family members (assuming you wouldn't be around to provide intensive help)?

What issues need to be worked on to facilitate a successful adoption? Are they training issues or behavioral issues? Will your shelter take an aggressive animal? What is your shelter's definition of aggression? Where will your facility draw the line? Will you take fearful animals? How fearful an animal will you take? What specific, quantifiable behaviors will indicate that an animal is aggressive or fearful?

How much training or behavior modification will each animal need to live successfully in an average home?

Does your shelter have the resources to provide the necessary training and behavior modification?

What is the average length of stay at your shelter? What is the ideal length of stay?

What is your return rate? Why are animals returned to you? Can you identify a pattern of problems with animals you adopted out? Be brutally honest with yourself—might this problem be the result of a bit of magical thinking on the part of you or your staff? Do you have the resources it would take to rehabilitate animals? Remember that every time you adopt out an animal with much greater problems than a new owner could reasonably be

expected to manage, you don't just damage that new owner and the family—you do great damage to the reputation of your shelter and of shelter animals everywhere.

What is your shelter's volume and capacity? Can you afford to use up kennel space for long-term care or training?

Do you have a follow-up program both for the support of adopters and for keeping statistics? (This is very important, not just for maintaining a realistic vision of what your facility can handle, but also for obtaining grants and for other fundraising efforts).

The three most important things a shelter must decide, and all its workers and volunteers adopt, in order to be efficient and successful are:

1. Goals
2. Resources
3. Criteria for adoption

And the more efficient and successful you are as a shelter, the more animals and people you can assist in the future.

Intake Criteria Recommendations

Introduction

Assessing behavior is an ongoing process. Temperament and social status are contextual and mutable. It is impossible to evaluate any being's personality and temperament based on a single interaction, especially in only one context. Any one test is just a snapshot in time; behavior is variable and fluid. All living beings are reactive in certain circumstances; although there are reactions that are too severe to be ignored, a single behavior assessment test is only a small piece of a very large pie. It is one way to collect data but, on its own, does not provide a fair and complete behavior evaluation.

The only comprehensive assessment of temperament is an ongoing real time collection of data based on regular observation of the dog in many situations, reacting to as many stimuli as possible.

Assessing an adult dog (especially if it is of unknown origin) and deeming it adoptable is a tremendous responsibility. Placing a dog in a new home is an even bigger responsibility. It is important to get the most information possible about each dog to decide if placement is a responsible option, as well as to determine the most suitable home. Keep in mind that domestic cats and dogs are not at zero population growth and, in the public's eyes, shelter animals are still largely considered inferior companions. Dogs and cats who come out of shelters must be wonderful ambassadors for shelter animals. It is essential to place only friendly, safe, and social cats and dogs into the community.

Intake

The first thing to consider is how you acquired the dog.

Owner surrender: This is the best circumstance, because you can get the most information about the dog. Use the Open Paw surrender questionnaire and observe the dog with the owner.

Office stray (a dog brought in by a member of the general public): The second best option because it allows you to interview a novice handler about how s/he captured the dog, where s/he found it and what the dog was doing. If the person who found the dog held on to him for more than 7 days, proceed with the surrender questionnaire. If not, use Open Paw's Animal Control(OPACO) form.

Field stray/Animal Control picked up animal: Use the OPACO form, a short questionnaire for the animal control officer about his/her experience with the dog. (Did they have to snare the dog? Did the dog come with a lure or jump into the car? Did a neighbor call and do you have information from neighbor?)

Abandonment on site: The dog was left in drop box or tied up outside shelter. Assess whether you're able to handle the dog for a behavioral evaluation and, if so, follow your facility's procedure for handling strays.

(Support materials are: The Open Paw Owner Surrender Questionnaire, OPACO form, your facility's behavior assessment form.)

If possible, the dog should stay in the shelter for 3 days before formal assessment. The animal should be given a chance to feel more comfortable in the shelter before it is assessed, not only because its whole future is riding on the test, but because it's fairly common for animals to suppress some behaviors if they're frightened—so potentially dangerous reactions might be hidden in a premature assessment test. During the 3-day wait, apply as many of the 4 levels and MMHRs as possible; this will provide an ongoing real-time assessment that should be considered in addition to the formal assessment when evaluating the dog's adoptability. At the very least, practice hand-feeding and leash-walking when possible—both will give an incredible amount of information about the dog. Whether the dog will stay at the shelter or not, it should be treated humanely while in residence.

Tips for Developing Your Criteria for Adoptability/Intake Criteria

It is important to remember that the assessment process is not designed to deem dogs unadoptable in order to influence adoption statistics, nor is it designed to push dogs into reacting—any dog will react with enough provocation—but should focus on identifying highly adoptable animals—animals that will be the safest and best to place. By evaluating each dog's disposition, the shelter can make sound decisions regarding placement, quality of life, and euthanasia.

For any assessment protocol to work, it is crucial for the facility to have a pre-determined plan for marginal animals. Determine your own objective, quantifiable criteria for animals suitable for adoption, for euthanasia, and somewhere between the two.

When determining criteria for adoption: identify your target market. Who are your adopters? This will be different for every shelter. Is your community family-oriented? Rural? Urban?

Identify your facility's resources and limitations. Do you have the staff, volunteers, time, and resources to implement, for example, a food-guarding rehabilitation protocol? How many volunteers do you have? How much training do volunteers receive? Do you have a behavior counselor on staff? What is your shelter's mission? Are you a rehab facility or do you just need to place as many animals as possible? Are you a high volume shelter? What kind of post-adoption support can you provide for adopters? Will you take marginal resource-guarders and work with them? Does your facility have a plan? What does the assessment mean for your facility? This should all be determined before you put an assessment protocol in place. There should not be a gray area when determining adoptability: dogs should fall into 3 categories: animals that pass with flying colors, animals that you

definitely have the resources to rehab, and animals that are euthanized. Avoid sheltering animals that aren't up to adoptability standards but aren't up to euthanasia standards, either.

Practice quantifying subjective opinion—enlist an odd number (3 or 5 is sufficient) of people from the shelter with different levels of experience—everyone from high-level volunteers to behaviorists—and have them vote on 3 things: Would you go in the kennel with this dog? Would you hug this dog? Would you recommend this dog for adoption? The voting scale should be 1 to 4, to avoid ambiguous answers. Add the average to your assessment data.

Observe the dog's kennel presentation: Does the dog kennel well? Certain dogs may not be able to be humanely kenneled—this should be taken strongly into consideration. If the dog exhibits incessant barking, licking, chewing, spinning, jumping or other obsessive behaviors, you might want to consider a foster home or humane euthanasia.

There should be a process by which staff and volunteers report experiences with animals as they go through 4-levels training—handling, responsiveness, playfulness, reactivity, etc.

How do the animals react to people outside the kennel? Expose the dog to many different types of people: children of different ages, if possible; men; women; if possible, people in wheelchairs, infants in baby strollers, teens on skateboards. This can be done before the official assessment. Introduce new objects or people one at a time.

Tips for choosing and scoring a formal behavior assessment

Regardless of the test you're using, identify specific responses you are testing for and have objective criteria in mind.

1. Clearly identify what you're looking for with each part of the test, and make sure the test is set up to genuinely reveal what you're looking for: Reactivity? Bounce back? Friendliness or sociability? Reactions to specific situations or objects? For example, if you're looking for general friendliness or sociability, make sure you're exposing the dog to as many types of people as possible (men, children, tall people, short people, people on crutches—as many different variables as possible). If you're testing for resource-guarding, make sure you test several different kinds of resources. If you test using only a food bowl and a pig ear, you will not uncover the Golden Retriever that only guards tissue, but does so viciously.
2. Quantify the results. Of the reactions the dog can have to each test, which reactions will mean that the dog "passes" that section? How much weight should each test be given for the final grade, bearing in mind your facility's mission?
3. Make the test as realistic (lifelike) as possible, considering the circumstance you're testing for. For example, if someone is going to try to take away a dog's pig ear in

real life, they'll either take the pig ear away, or the dog will react and they won't take it (no one in real life is going to attempt to take a pig ear away from a dog 10 times in a row, especially if the dog is responding poorly). Try to get a series of the most realistic possible snapshots of the dog's reactions, and the intensity of the reactions. Reaction in and of itself should not earn a negative mark. Reaction is natural—determine whether or not the response is acceptable, manageable, or dangerous in a home environment. A lengthy, rigid assessment is aversive and stressful for the animal and, again, doesn't give a realistic picture of the animal's behavior. If you keep repeating an assessment, you're escalating the dog's annoyance level. You won't really see the dog's temperament. On assessment day, as you're testing several dogs, rather than testing one dog sequentially on each segment, do each segment of the test with each dog and put the dog away in between each segment. Don't test for more than 15 minutes on any one dog for any segment. There's no reason for you to repeat a segment more than twice to see the dog's response. One's first response is one's true response. A second response is helpful if you were unclear or missed the reaction. Anything beyond a 3rd response is unnatural and puts too much pressure on the dog. In a naturally occurring situation, very few of these scenarios would be repeated more than twice, unless you think there is some underlying, potentially dangerous behavior that you are trying to flush out with the test.

4. Make sure to include the records of "daily-life" assessments from 4 Levels interactions in your evaluation of the overall temperament assessment.
5. Behavior is always changing, and animals should be retested every 2 weeks during their stay at the shelter. This also allows you to catch deterioration or anything new that's cropped up before it's too late, as well as to note improvement.
6. Whenever possible, avoid emotional language—use objective, descriptive terms. For example, don't call the dog "dominant," when you can objectively say, "dog attempted to mount me five times." Don't call the dog "aggressive." Say "the dog snapped at my hand and missed". Not only does this avoid emotional assessments, but it also allows you to include more helpful information in the evaluation. One person's "friendly" might be another person's "pushy" and, if such language is used, there's no basis on which to make an objective assessment of the behavior. The place for subjective observations is in the voting portion of the test.

All of the tips above will assist in the decision-making process when determining adoptability, and will help keep the process as objective as possible. It is essential to have solid protocols and criteria in place to avoid staff and volunteer burnout, finger-pointing and hostility.

Sample Surrender Questionnaire Telephone Script

Thank you for inquiring about placing your dog at the (name of your shelter).

Despite our efforts to provide a peaceful, loving environment for dogs and cats, the shelter is still terribly stressful. We recommend that you surrender your pet to a shelter only as your last option. Notify friends, family members, neighbors and co-workers that you need to re-home your pet. This type of networking can have very positive results.

NOTE: If you wish to surrender a stray dog, please recognize that there may be a frantic owner looking for her/him. Posting signs with a photo near where you found the dog is often helpful, and it is best to bring the animal to your city's animal control agency so s/he will be logged into the lost and found system and, hopefully, reunited with her/his owner.

At our shelter, dog guests learn or retain social skills and basic manners instead of losing those skills in the shelter environment. We want pets to leave the shelter equipped to live successfully in a new home. To this end, dogs living in the (name of your shelter) shelter are hand-fed their meals and receive daily socialization, veterinary care, basic obedience training, 3 walks per day for exercise and housetraining, and a tremendous amount of love and affection during their stay. We provide toys, crates, blankets and beds to keep them comfortable and happy while we look for the right home for them.

(THE FOLLOWING MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO YOUR SHELTER: No dog is ever euthanized unless s/he develops serious health or behavior problems that make her/him unadoptable. The (name of shelter) accepts adoptable animals only. This allows us to fulfill our mission of placing pet animals in quality, loving homes. All animals must undergo and pass a rigorous intake evaluation that includes a behavior assessment and medical examination.)

We would be delighted to provide you unlimited free behavior consultations by phone if you are motivated to keep your dog in your home. We can also provide names of professional trainers to work with you and your dog in your home. Phone (xxx) xxx-xxxx, ext. x during business hours (Day-Day, time-time) and ask to speak to a behavior consultant.

If you feel you must surrender your dog, we are here to help. However, please understand that our help may come in the form of providing you with other resources. Domestic dogs become stressed and miserable after what seems like an eternity in a kennel run. (Your shelter) considers it inhumane to accept animals that will fare poorly here or that will have to stay here for many months. Please note that older dogs and breeds that are common in municipal shelters can be harder for us to place. We always make our decision about taking your dog based on what is best for your animal, and will always provide alternatives if we must say "no".

We do not charge for a surrender assessment or intake, though the process is costly. Donations in any amount are appreciated. If we do accept your dog, we will contact you when s/he is placed, so you can put your mind at ease!

CHAPTER 2. DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

The more you can tell us about your dog, the easier it will be to find her/him a new home. Thank you for helping us begin the process by providing all of the information requested on the following pages. You can complete the form on your computer by deleting the lines allocated for your response as you type. Otherwise, please use ink, write legibly, and provide as much detail as possible.

Sample Surrender Profile—Dog

Your Name: _____

Daytime phone: _____

Today's Date: _____

Dog's Name: _____

Approximate age or exact birthdate if known: _____

Is your dog spayed/neutered? _____ Date of surgery: _____

Breed: _____ Approximate weight: _____

How long have you had this dog? _____ Is s/he your first dog? _____

Where did you get him/her? _____

What was the main reason you got this dog?

Please tell us why you need to give up your dog:

Is your dog licensed? _____

If yes, please provide license number and issuing city: _____

Has a complaint ever been filed with animal services regarding this dog? _____ If yes, please provide details: _____

Please tell us about any medical issues your pet might have now or in the past:

Is your dog current on vaccinations? _____

Please provide the name and phone number of your veterinarian:

When was his/her last trip to the vet? _____

How many people has your dog nipped, mouthed, bruised, or scratched with his/her teeth? _____

CHAPTER 2. DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

Can you tell us what led up to this happening?

Has this dog ever broken a person's skin with her/his teeth? yes no

If yes, please describe the situation.

Has this dog attended an obedience course? yes no

If yes, please tell us how old the dog was then and provide the name of the instructor or training center.

How often does your dog get walked on a leash? _____ Does he/she meet dogs on walks? yes no

If yes, please briefly describe his/her reaction to other dogs while on a walk:

Do you let your dog sniff/touch/play with other dogs? yes no

If yes, please describe her/his style of playing:

What form of exercise does your dog get, and how often? _____

How long do you leave your dog alone each day? _____

Where does your dog stay when you leave him/her alone at home?

IMPLEMENTING OPEN PAW: WHERE TO BEGIN

Do you use, or have you ever used, a dog crate for this dog? yes no

Do you have a yard? yes no If yes, how often does the dog stay alone in the yard?

Is the dog loose or tied when in the yard? _____ For how long at a time? _____

Is the dog loose or tied when in the yard? _____

How many times has your dog escaped from the yard? _____

What does your dog chew when left alone? _____

Where does the dog sleep at night? _____

Please list all people, and the ages of those people, who live in the household with your dog:

Please list other pets that live in the household with your dog:

If your dog has experience with children, what were their ages? _____

Describe your dog's behavior when s/he interacts with children:

Does your dog have experience with cats? yes no If yes, how does s/he respond to cats?

Has your dog ever injured another animal? yes no If yes, please describe what occurred:

How many fights has your dog had with other dogs? _____ Has your dog injured another dog in a fight? yes no

CHAPTER 2. DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

What are your dog's favorite games/toys?

Does your dog have another dog as a special playmate? yes no If yes, what is the other dog's breed, age, and gender?

What do the dogs do when they play together?

When you/your family/housemates are eating a meal at home, where is the dog?

Does your dog enjoy dog food? yes no

When someone tries to take something away from your dog (for example, a food bowl, a bone, a toy), what is the dog's response?

If your dog picks something up that you don't want him/her to have (for example, a chicken bone, a piece of garbage, a shoe), how does the dog react when you try to take it from her/his mouth?

Which people cause your dog to bark, to be nervous, fearful, assertive, or unsure?

How does your dog react when people come to your house to visit?

What areas of your dog's body does s/he NOT like you to touch?

IMPLEMENTING OPEN PAW: WHERE TO BEGIN

How do you know s/he doesn't like it?

Tell us your favorite thing about your dog:

How do you correct your dog when s/he does something wrong?

Where does your dog urinate and defecate? _____

How many house-soiling mistakes does your dog have each week? _____

If you could change one thing about your dog's behavior, what would it be?

What do you think the ideal home for your dog would look like?

How much longer can you keep your dog in your home? _____

If you were placing an ad to re-home your dog, what would it say about him/her?

PLEASE SIGN

I certify that all statements above are true and correct.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for completing the surrender profile. The (Name of Shelter) will use it to assess you dog's adoptability. Submission of this profile in no way guarantees that (Name of Shelter) will accept your dog.

A behavior consultant from (Name of Shelter) will review your responses and will contact you at the phone number you provided. The consultant may ask you to bring your dog to the (Name of Shelter) for a behavior assessment or may discuss other options to assist you in placing your dog.

Open Paw's Animal Control Officer Questionnaire (OPACO Form)

Please give a detailed description of where you found the animal:

Did the animal have a leash, collar, chain dragging, rope, or other tethering equipment when you found him/her? Please describe in detail:

Did the animal have identification on him/her? yes no

What was the animal's physical condition when you found him/her? Did the animal have any physical problems (e.g., emaciation, dehydration, visible wounds, worn down pads) when you found him/her?

How did you catch the animal? Did you have to pursue, or did the animal approach you? Did you need to get a snare pole, could you catch the animal with a lure, or did it come to you willingly? Please describe in detail:

Would the dog take food or water from you? Could you handle the dog physically? Did you need the help of a partner to catch the animal? Did the dog respond to any verbal or hand signals?

Chapter 3

Adoption Counseling Guidelines

The adoption counseling process is a wonderful opportunity to educate the public about how to train and care for a new dog or cat, and to significantly reduce the "recidivism" rate for the resident animals. While certain shelter staff members and volunteers will have the bulk of the adoption counseling duties for the shelter, every staff member and volunteer will play a role in this vital process.

Front Desk Staff/Docents

First impressions are very important. Remember that most people are anxious or overwhelmed when visiting an animal shelter. Friendly guidance can go a long way towards making the public comfortable at your facility. The educational process should begin right at the front of the shelter, with a friendly greeting and some guidance from either a member of the front desk staff or a volunteer docent. All front-end staff and docents should have copies of a current list of shelter residents and their relevant adoption characteristics, and be trained to hand out a pre-screen questionnaire, Open Paw's "How to Select a Dog or Cat," and a guide to the shelter.

On busy days, docents should try to split up so that some are in the kennel areas and some are near the front desk. On slower days, docents can practice Open Paw levels 1 and 2 (with dogs) and appropriate Open Paw levels (with cats) until visitors enter.

Greet each visitor right away.

"Hi, how are you today? Are you beginning to think about getting a dog or cat?"

- If the visitor says "No, I'm just here to look around": "Great! Our shelter has adopted an exciting new program designed to help the animals to get, and stay, adopted, and to help keep today's pets from becoming tomorrow's shelter animals. Here's a handout to tell you a little about our shelter." Give them the guide to the shelter.

-
- If the visitor says “I’m thinking about it, but I’m not ready to adopt today”: “Great! Feel free to visit our dogs and cats from outside their kennels (give them a quick overview of where to find the kennels). We have a really helpful handout designed to help you select the best possible match for your family and lifestyle—this will help you think about what qualities to look for as you begin your search.” Give the visitor a copy of “How to Select a Dog or Cat” and direct them to the Open Paw website for their free copy of BEFORE You Get Your Puppy and for other free information on dogs and cats.
 - If the visitor says “Yes, I’m looking for a dog/cat/puppy/kitten”: “Wonderful! We have a short questionnaire designed to help you select the best possible match for your family and lifestyle. If you’ll take a minute to fill this out, and bring it back to me when you’re finished, we can show you some of the adorable dogs/cats we have here that would be the best match for you.” (If the visitor is already in the kennel area when you greet him or her, you can ask the questions and fill out the questionnaire yourself). Hand them “How to Select a Dog or Cat” and the questionnaire. Some people will reply that they “just want to look around.” It’s preferable that they fill out the pre-screener and that you guide them to appropriate dogs, to cut down on the “he’s all wrong for me but I have to have him” syndrome and, if you’re very matter-of-fact about the procedure, most people will go along with it. It’s not worth arguing with people over the pre-screener though, and inappropriate matches can be weeded out later, so if a visitor prefers to look for herself, tell her “Okay. Dogs/cats have a wide range of personalities, behaviors, and activity needs. Each dog/cat has a card on the front of his or her kennel telling you what kind of home would be a great match for that animal. If you’d like to meet any of the animals, just ask me or any of the docents or front desk staff.” After the pre-screener is filled out, consult your list of shelter animals and their characteristics and make a list of the appropriate animals for the visitor. Check the red flag sheets to be sure that there are no previously noted worries about this adopter. Front desk staff, find a docent for the visitor and give the docent the pre-screener and list of dogs or cats. Docents, guide the visitor to each appropriate animal and give a brief introduction. As you approach each kennel, tell the visitor about the purpose of the buckets and explain that the Open Paw shelter program is designed to maintain or train sociability to people and other dogs/cats, potty training, chew toy training, and good manners. Hand the visitor some kibble to feed, and take some kibble yourself to help the dog or cat show off her polite sitting/friendly greeting and any cute tricks. Talk up all of the animal’s good points and its suitability for the visitor’s lifestyle and family, but don’t gloss over any training issues the animal has—it’s not fair to either the visitor or the animal to be dishonest. Any animals in the adoptable sections of the shelter should have fairly fixable issues, so you can give a quick explanation of how to manage and train out any problems the animal has (the adoption counselor will go into more detail if the person is interested in adopting). If and when the visitor is ready to meet a particular dog(s)/cat(s), introduce her to an adoption counselor. Hand the adoption

counselor the pre-screen questionnaire and advise which animal(s) the visitor would like to meet.

Adoption Counselors

Your role is to engage visitors in open-ended conversation and to observe the visitors interacting with the animals in order to help make the best match between resident animals and potential adopters. Encourage potential adopters to talk and to think through their lifestyle, expectations, and needs. All family members should meet the dog or cat before adoption, and existing family dogs should meet the dog before adoption. If a single family member is interested in an animal, that person can either meet the animal first and come back again with the whole family for a group meeting, or wait until the whole family can visit before meeting the animal. It is essential that all household members agree on the selection in order to assure a permanent placement.

Explain to the potential adopter(s) that you will first go to the meet-and-greet area to meet the animal and that, if the match looks good, at that point the potential adopter will be asked to fill out an adoption application form and to show proof of home ownership or permission from a landlord to have that type of pet. Some shelters institute a 24-hour waiting period, allowing the adopter to ready the home. If your shelter has such a policy, explain the wait period to the potential adopter. After the meet-and-greet, those interested in a dog will take the dog for a test walk and, if all goes well, will continue with the adoption procedure.

Bring the potential adopter(s) and the dog or cat to the meet-and-greet area and allow them to interact while you observe them together.

Look for the following:

- Does the animal seem comfortable with all of the family members? Does it approach them readily and happily accept physical contact? How do the family members react if the animal shies away from their contact? How do they react if the animal jumps up or paws them, or plays roughly? If their first reaction is to pressure or punish the animal, how do they react when you politely and respectfully explain positive reinforcement and classical conditioning training as a training solution? How does the animal react to their admonishment?
- Do all of the family members seem comfortable with the animal? Particularly watch the children—do they greet the animal enthusiastically but gently? Do they shy away at all when the animal approaches? Do they treat the animal roughly? How are the parents with the children? If the child is being too rough with the animal, do the parents gently correct him or her immediately and explain how to treat an animal, or do they ignore the behavior? If the child is timid around the animal, are they

sensitive to the child's discomfort, or do they dismiss the shyness or try to pressure the child to interact with the animal? How do the parents react if you politely and respectfully point out that the child seems shy, or explain to the child how to handle animals?

- How do the family's other pets and the potential adoptee respond to one another? Do they play happily and immediately (or ignore one another happily and comfortably, with cross-species, cat-cat, or low-energy dog- low-energy-dog introductions)? How do the potential adopters react to the introduction? Do they seem comfortable and calm? Do they try to pressure animals to interact or punish rowdy-but-friendly interactions? How do they react if you politely and respectfully explain animal play, if they have misinterpreted an interaction?

When you're talking to the potential adopters, remember to give them some time to gather their thoughts after you ask a question. One strong temptation we often have when we "know the answer we're looking for" is to jump in when the other person hesitates, and try to prompt answers from them. Keep in mind that the potential adopter doesn't know the script, and may not have thought through all of these issues yet. Our role is to help them think through the answers, not to interrogate them or "quiz" them, so give them a chance to absorb the questions you ask and to form their own opinions. Also, a person's first instinct might be to give simple yes or no answers to your questions. Often, simply sitting silently and looking interested will prompt them to elaborate on their answers. Don't be afraid to let the room be silent for up to 10 seconds while you look politely at the potential adopter and wait for them to elaborate. If they don't elaborate after you've silently counted to 10, try to draw them out at more length. Train yourself to listen, as well as educate.

Questions to ask potential adopters

- Do you know about errorless housetraining? If they say "Yes," ask them where they plan to locate their long-term confinement area, how they'll set up short-term confinement, and which hollow chew toys they have for the animal. If they have an intelligible answer to those questions, great. If not, treat it as a "no." If they say "No," explain that errorless housetraining is a wonderful, pet-, people-, floor-and-furniture-friendly method of training the animal to eliminate in the appropriate place (as chosen by the adopter) and to chew only chew toys and scratch only scratching posts rather than sofa legs, shoes, and curtains when they're bored and need an activity. Tell them that, even if they've potty-trained many dogs or cats in the past, they will love errorless housetraining and wonder how they ever got along without it, and that using it right will mean that there is never a potty mistake in the house. Then quickly describe how to do errorless housetraining and give them a flyer directing them to download their free copy of BEFORE You Get Your Puppy from Open Paw's website (kitten booklet coming soon).

- “What kind of activities do you like to do? Which activities would you like to share with your dog/cat?” For dogs: “How many times a day will you take her on leashed walks? Trips to the dog park? Long hikes?” Draw the potential adopter out as much as possible here—some people think that if they get a dog, it will “cause” them to become more active. The activity level of the dog should match up with realistic expectations about what kind of activities the person is likely to pursue. If the person is active outdoors and would like to take the dog on off-leash activities, explain that recall has to be trained in gradually, starting somewhere easy (the backyard) and building up slowly to more and more exciting places. Point out that whenever they take the dog to a more exciting place for the first time, they should expect to have a more difficult time recalling the dog, and explain why they should always have dozens of “play” recalls (where the dog is recalled, the leash is snapped on, the dog is given a couple of treats and is released back to play or explore) on any trip. If the potential adopter plans on taking the dog on leashed walks, explain the 4 basic methods for training and maintaining loose-leash walking. For cats: “do you know how to train the cat to play gently without using claws or teeth?” Explain how to play “dead mouse” to encourage the cat to play gently.
- “Where will the animal stay during the day?” (This question is on the questionnaire, but ask again and give them a chance to elaborate). If the answer is “outside,” ask the person if they prefer the animal to stay outside because they’re afraid it will create a mess in the house when they’re away, or because they want the animal to enjoy itself more because it’s “out in nature.” Regardless of whether they say “inside” or “outside,” remind them of how easy and effective it is to use errorless housetraining to train the animal to chew or scratch appropriate objects when it’s bored. Point out to them that dogs and cats need to have things to do during the day just as we do, but that they won’t sit down and watch Montel like we might—they need doggy and kitty things to do, like chewing and scratching. It’s up to us humans to show them what we’d like them to chew and scratch, to make that the most desirable thing to do while we’re away, and to provide appropriate activities and outlets. The second most common reason people give for keeping the animal outdoors during the day is that many people assume that the cat or dog prefers to be outside because it’s an animal and it will want to be closer to nature. Explain that studies show that many dogs really prefer to be indoors, that they can be trained to behave appropriately indoors even while you’re away, and that outside, there are many more stimuli to induce the dog to bark, seriously annoying the neighbors. Keep in mind, though, that with a well-built doghouse on a raised platform, fresh water, a comfortable bed, an accessible dog run, and an enriched environment (a variety of stuffed chew toys distributed each morning, made to challenge and engage the dog), an outside home is not a bad place for the dog to be. If you’re showing a highly adoptable dog who can pick and choose among potential adopters, then be picky; an outdoor residence, so long as it meets the standards listed above, should not necessarily be a deal-breaker, though. Kittens and cats can also, with some effort, be trained to stay within the back

yard, so that they can enjoy the outdoors without incurring the risks of wandering completely free.

- “Are you planning on having children/more children in the near future (within the next couple of years)?” If the answer is “yes,” counsel the person to wait until the child is several years old before thinking about getting a new animal. Explain that new children in the household change things dramatically, and that a major reason for surrender to shelters is that the animal becomes “too difficult” with a new child—even those dogs and cats who were the apple of their peoples’ eyes.
- “Are you planning on having the cat declawed?” Many, many people are completely unaware of what declawing involves—in fact, some veterinarians have assured them in the past that it doesn’t hurt cats. Please don’t assume that the person would be a bad guardian if he or she says “yes” to this question. Respectfully explain how declawing is done, and explain that it often leads to back and leg problems as well as litterbox problems (because the litter becomes painful to scratch). Explain how important it is for a cat’s muscles and bones to be able to scratch, and remind the potential adopter that it is quite simple to train the cat to scratch only at scratching posts, or suggest cats that have already been declawed.

Other things to discuss with the potential adopters

- How to introduce a new animal to the home—explain that, although they’ll be tempted to let the dog or cat have a few “free” days with no rules, it’s not fair to the animal to suddenly change expectations once it’s settled in a new home. Rules should be clear from the start, long-term and short-term confinement areas should be ready to go and, as tempting as it is to spend every minute of the first few days with the new companion, you should begin alone-training right away—for just 1 or 2 minutes at a time if the animal is having difficulty being alone, but working up to getting ready for your first day back at work. Explain that it’s not fair to the animal to build expectations that you’ll be around and giving constant attention, and then suddenly leave it entirely by itself for 10 hours. Go over the handout “The First Two Weeks” or “What Every Cat Needs” with the potential adopter, and send them home with the handout and directions to the Open Paw website to get other free dog and cat information.
- Supplies they’ll want to get before they bring a dog home: at least 6 hollow chew toys and stuffing supplies (high-quality kibble to soak and stuff, honey to dribble inside, wet food to seal the ends); a comfortable bed; a crate with a comfortable pad, big enough for the dog to stand up and turn around in; a sturdy water bowl; a 6-foot lead and head collar or martingale collar; a flat collar for daily wear; gates to block off long-term confinement areas if necessary; a litter box and appropriate substrate

for the long-term confinement area; *BEFORE You Get Your Puppy* and “The First Two Weeks”; high-value treats, such as liver treats, for training.

- Supplies they’ll want to get before they bring a new cat home: a variety of hollow chew toys and stuffing supplies; a comfortable bed; a crate or other place to withdraw for private time; a sturdy water bowl; 2 litter boxes and high quality litter (the home should contain 1 litter box per cat plus 1 extra); several scratching posts with sturdy bases, a variety of different surfaces (not carpet), and dangling toys; “What Every Cat Needs”; and high value treats for training.

For dogs: If the discussion and meeting go well, take the dog and potential adopter for a walk together. Observe the potential adopter and family to be sure that they seem able to control the dog on leash, and explain and demonstrate the 4 basic techniques to train loose-leash walking. Explain why these methods are much more efficient and appropriate for training. If the dog requires a head collar or no-pull harness, demonstrate how to dress it in the head collar or harness and show them how to walk with the head collar.

For Dogs and Cats: If all discussions and observations indicate that this will be a good match, take the potential adopter to the front desk to fill out the adoption form, and explain again the 24-hour wait period policy if applicable.

If your observations indicate at any point that this particular animal will not be a good match, but that the client is otherwise a potentially good adopter for another cat or dog in the shelter, gently guide the person to the animals you think will be a good match. Talk about the reasons you think other potential animals will be great for that person, accentuating the positive. If there are no potential good matches currently in the shelter, explain how important it is that the animal match the adopter’s lifestyle and encourage the adopter to come back. If the person continues to want an inappropriate cat or dog, explain, without accusing the person in any way, why you think this would not be the best match. If you do not match that adopter with a more appropriate cat or dog, fill out a “red flag” form just to be sure that he or she does not come back, armed with the “right answers” that you have now provided, and try to adopt the animal through a different adoption counselor.

If the person would not make a good match for any dog or cat, present your reasons in terms of why the dogs’ or cats’ needs, or the particular circumstances, make it impossible to adopt. Do not accuse the person in any way or present your reasons in terms of problems with the person. Remember that, even if the person is not a good match for any dog or cat, it is the match, and not the person, that is problematic. Fill out a “red flag” form to be sure that he or she does not come back and try to adopt through a different counselor.

Adoption Questionnaire

Congratulations! You're beginning a process of bringing a life-long companion and family member into your home. We wish you many years of joy with your new companion animal. This questionnaire is designed to help achieve that life-long companionship, by helping you select the dog or cat who is best suited to your family and lifestyle. Please be sure to visit www.openpaw.org for free and low-cost books, booklets, pamphlets, and other advice to help you train and raise a wonderful, well-behaved companion.

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Are you interested in adopting a dog, or cat?

How many of the following reside in your household (include roommates) or visit your household often?

male adults female adults male children female children dogs cats
 other animals

Are the dogs or cats that live with or visit you spayed or neutered? yes no

What are your childrens' ages? _____

Are you planning on having children in the near future? yes no

Where will the animal stay during the day? _____ At night? _____

Who will be responsible for the animal's care (e.g., feeding, walking, cleaning litterbox/scooping poop, training, stuffing chew toys, making and keeping regular vet appointments, clipping nails, brushing teeth, washing or making and keeping regular grooming appointments)?

What is your past experience with dogs/cats?

How much time per day do you plan to spend with your new companion?

About how many hours per day do you spend at work? _____

What kind of activities would you like to share with your dog/cat?

How much time do you want to spend exercising your dog per day?

How much time do you want to spend grooming your dog/cat?

Are you planning on having your cat declawed? yes no

Red Flag Form—Potential Problems with Would-be Adopters

Your Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

Name of Potential Adopter: _____

Physical Description of Potential Adopter: _____

Describe the circumstances that worried you:

Keep these Red Flag forms in a designated place in the shelter so that adoption counselors and others involved in the adoption process can look through the forms before they complete an adoption.

Dog and Cat Evaluation Spreadsheets

The dog and cat evaluation spreadsheets in the appendix are fast, convenient tools for everyone in the shelter to keep up with the needs and personalities of your shelter guests. They will help your staff and volunteers direct potential adopters to the best possible matches. Update the spreadsheets every week to add new shelter guests and include new behavior observations. Keep several copies of the spreadsheets around the shelter in designated areas so that your adoption counseling volunteers and staff can easily refer to them while they help potential adopters.

Example Animal Adoption Follow-up

Date: _____ Adoption Date: _____ Follow Up: call 1 () call 2 () call 3 ()

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Animal: dog cat other

Name: _____

Age: _____ Sex: M F

Breed/Color: _____

Notes:

Call 1 PASS ON TO COUNSELOR?: No Yes:

Notified By: email phone this form

Call 2 PASS ON TO COUNSELOR?: No Yes:

Notified By: email phone this form

Call 3 PASS ON: No Yes: Dog Counselor Cat Counselor

Notified By: email phone this form

Follow Up By: Call 1: _____ Call 2: _____

Call 3: _____

Form Reviewed By: Call 1: _____ Call 2: _____

Call 3: _____

1. How is _____ adjusting to his/her new home?
2. Do you have other pets? If yes, how are they adjusting?
3. Do you have children? yes no If yes, how are they interacting? Do you have any concerns about _____'s behavior around children? (if yes, pass on to counselor)
4. Are you and your pet currently enrolled in any form of training or will be in the future?
Self Training?
5. Are you having any housetraining or chewing problems? If so what are they and what have you done to try to correct it? (if having problems, pass on to counselor)

6. Are you having any other behavioral problems that you would like further assistance with? (if yes, pass on to counselor)

7. Is _____ showing any protective behavior around the following... food, toys, rawhides, you, territory? If yes what are you doing to correct it, if anything?

8. Where does _____ sleep?

9. What kind of exercise is _____ getting?

10. Has _____ improved your life? If yes, how?

11. What type of identification is _____ wearing? (Inform about easy-to-make tags.)

12. If you or your family wanted to get another pet, would you choose to adopt from another shelter or humane society again? Why or why not?

13. How has your overall experience been with us? Do you have any suggestions to help us to increase our adoption rate and maintain quality placements?

Open Paw's Guide To The First Two Weeks With Your New Dog

Congratulations on the new addition to your family! With a little work, some planning, and forethought, your new dog will be an effortless, well-behaved companion for years to come. It is important to recognize that first impressions are lasting ones, and habits begin to develop from day one. Be sure to instill good manners and habits from the first day you bring your new puppy or dog home. Remember, good habits are as hard to break as bad ones. If you follow these simple guidelines, your dog's transition into your home will be a piece of cake for both you and your new best friend.

1. Teach your new dog the rules of your house from the beginning. In the words of Dr. Ian Dunbar, "If you want your dog to follow the rules of the house, by all means do not keep them a secret." When your dog first gets home, he or she may be a little confused and unsure of the new living situation. Even though your home is undoubtedly more comfortable than the shelter, it is different, and different can be stressful. It is important to remember dogs do not speak our language and will best understand your expectations through training and management. Training and management should begin the very moment your new dog arrives in your home.

Your instinct may be to give your new friend a few days to unwind and adjust before imposing rules and restrictions. While you may mean well, this delay of training has the potential to be both frustrating and damaging. Right from the very first day, it is crucial to convey your expectations to the dog and to establish an errorless training system. If you do this, your dog will succeed in learning house rules right from the beginning. If you change the house rules a few days after your dog has arrived, he will not understand why things have changed. Your dog may have already formed new habits and will have a difficult time adjusting to yet another set of expectations. It is much more efficient to teach your dog everything you would like her to know from the outset.

2. Try not to overwhelm your new dog with too much activity during this initial adjustment period (individual dogs' adjustment periods will vary). It is very exciting to have a new dog. Of course you want to introduce her to all of your friends and family and, of course, you want to take your new pal everywhere! All this excitement, however, could be exceptionally stressful for your dog. Please keep in mind that, even in the best of shelters, your dog's world was probably limited to a handful of environments and activities. It is best for your dog to spend the first couple of weeks quietly settling in and getting to know you, with frequent, brief outings to continue the socialization process. In the beginning, limit introductions to just a few visitors at a time. If your dog has time to become familiar with you and your home surroundings, she will be more confident when setting out on adventures beyond your immediate neighborhood.

3. Keep your new dog either safely confined with appropriate chew toys, or supervised, at all times. This is the best way to keep your new friend (and house!) out of trouble when you are unable to monitor his actions. Your dog requires a dog-proof, safe place: a "doggie den"—the equivalent of a toddler's playpen—where he can rest and chew appropriate

items in your absence. There are many options for your “doggie den,” but a crate or small room in your house is ideal. However, you may also choose an outside kennel run. Initially when your dog is loose in the house or yard, you must be around to gently redirect your dog when he chooses an inappropriate activity. If you are vigilant about supervising your dog and showing him what you expect, your dog will learn to settle down quietly, to chew only appropriate chew toys and eventually to become trustworthy in your absence.

FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES WITH YOUR NEW DOG FOR AT LEAST THE FIRST TWO WEEKS. PLEASE REMEMBER, MOST PUPPIES AND EVEN SOME ADULT DOGS WILL TAKE LONGER TO ADJUST—SO BE PATIENT.

-DO immediately show your dog to his/her appropriate toilet area.

-DO take your dog to the designated toilet area once an hour, every hour, on leash (except overnight). Allow supervised free time only after he relieves himself in the appropriate area. If your dog does not eliminate on one of these trips, confine him to his “doggie den” OR keep him on leash and supervised, until the next scheduled potty break.

-DO confine your dog to a “doggie den” whenever you are physically (or mentally!) absent, such as when you are at work, paying bills, making dinner, sleeping, etc.

-DO throw away your dog food bowl! Instead, feed your dog throughout the day out of a hollow Kong or other chew toy stuffed with kibble and snacks, especially when she’s in her “doggie den” or when you are busy. Also use part of your dog’s daily ration while on walks, during training, or when meeting new people. All food should come either out of a Kong or from somebody’s hand.

-DO provide plenty of appropriate chew toys to keep your dog busy and prevent chewing “casualties” in your home and yard. Redirect any chewing “mistakes” by directing your dog to an acceptable alternative. This will also help establish an appropriate chewing habit throughout your dog’s life.

-DO introduce your dog to new people and other pets gradually so as not to overwhelm him. Use kibble and treats to help form a positive association to new people. Be sure he has access to his “den” in case he needs a break from all the activity.

-DO enroll in a basic obedience class right away! This will help you learn how to better communicate with your dog in a way she will understand.

-DO look for a Certified Pet Dog Trainer (CPDT) that uses dog-friendly training methods. Contact APDT.com or call 1-800-PET-DOGS to find a trainer in your area.

-DON’T allow your dog free run of the entire house right away, or else your new friend may learn all sorts of bad habits. First take the time to teach him good habits.

-DON’T take your dog off-leash in public until you have successfully completed an obedience class and have built a strong positive relationship with him.

For more information about training your dog, please read “After You Get Your Puppy”. To place an order, visit the James & Kenneth website at jamesandkenneth.com.

What Every Cat Needs

Like all of us, cats have basic needs which must be met for them to be happy and healthy, both behaviorally and physically. In addition to making sure a new kitty is provided with ample, daily opportunities to satisfy its fundamental needs, it can be helpful to review the household arrangements whenever there are changes in the home (the addition of new pets, new people, etc.), the household routine (new work hours), or whenever you see signs of behavior problems or stress in your cat(s).

In a multi-cat household, it is particularly important to make sure that each and every cat can get what it needs without having to compete with the other cats. Depending on how well the cats get along, this may mean providing multiple food and water stations, multiple scratching posts, extra beds, more perches, and so on. Cats are extremely sensitive to smells, and may decline to eat out of a bowl or share a litter box used by another cat whom they fear or dislike.

Physical Needs:

Food. Cats can be very fussy, not only about the quality and freshness of their food, but about the location and presentation of it. Many dry foods (kibble) are coated with fat in the last stages of processing, and the fat can oxidize (go rancid) very quickly when left out. Offering smaller amounts more often can help keep kibble fresh. Food bowls should be washed frequently, with old food particles removed, and the area around the food dish should be kept clean. Food bowls should be placed where the cat can eat in peace, without being disturbed by other pets or human traffic. If you have multiple cats who aren't completely comfortable eating side-by-side or at different times, provide additional feeding stations so each cat has a chance to eat at the same time, undisturbed.

Water. Cats need continuous access to fresh, clean drinking water. Water bowls should be refilled daily. Provide extra water bowls in a multi-cat household.

A Clean Litter Box. For multiple cat households, the general rule is 1 litter box per cat, plus 1 extra. Litter boxes should be located in low-traffic, quiet areas with easy access routes, and should not be so tucked away that the cat will feel trapped in it if a human or other pet approaches. Boxes should be age and size appropriate—boxes with very tall sides may be hard for very young kittens or senior cats to get in and out of, and larger-than-average cats may find small boxes cramped. Litter boxes must be kept clean; urine clumps should be removed regularly, and feces ideally should be scooped immediately.

Sleeping Places. Cats spend a great deal of time catnapping, and need to have places to sleep which are comfortable and safe. Most cats prefer to have several napping choices, and will select favorite-for-now spots depending on the temperature—warm places when it's cold and cool places when it's hot. In a multi-cat household, every cat should have a range of options, so that they don't compete for the one warm (or cool) bed in the house.

A Scratching Post. Cats need to scratch, both to help remove the outgrown sheathes on their claws and to stretch, keeping their muscles and spines supple. Posts wrapped in sisal or other natural fiber rope are often preferred to ordinary carpet but, whichever style you choose, teaching a cat to use a scratching post will discourage the use of your furniture for that purpose.

An elevated perch or other vertical space. Whether it's a floor-to-ceiling cat tree or the top of your bookcase, cats need to climb and visit high places. If you don't want cats climbing your furniture or drapes, be sure to provide them with safe, legal alternatives such as cat trees, cat shelves or window seats.

Places to Hide. Even the most social cat needs solitude at times, and hidey-holes are an absolute must for the mental health of shy cats. In addition to "natural" household hiding places beneath and behind furniture, you can satisfy both your cat's need to hide and the urge to explore and "get into" things with temporary hiding places, like brown paper grocery bags (remove handles first—cats can get their necks caught in them), empty cardboard boxes, baskets and the like.

Escape Routes. Cats need ways to move from one area to the next—from food dishes to water bowls to litter boxes to scratching posts—without feeling trapped by resident dogs, other cats, scary humans or blocked exits. Particularly in multi-pet households, cats need ways of getting away from other animals without confronting them in a hall or doorway. Whenever possible, try to locate a cat's food, water, bed and litter box in places with more than one way to get out.

Grooming. Short-haired cats usually require only occasional brushing or combing, while long-coated varieties may need more frequent and extensive care. Regardless of coat type, cats should be kept free of mats, and grooming sessions should be used to check the cat for injuries, external parasites and/or signs of illness. Most cats are naturally fastidious, and any cat that stops caring for his coat should be examined carefully for dental problems, mouth lesions or other disease. All cats also need regular nail trimming.

Regular veterinary care. Routine check-ups, vaccinations, dental care and parasite control are necessary for a cat's health and well-being.

Social Needs

Social interaction with their humans. Cats vary tremendously in their sociability, from semi-feral barn cats who are happiest when people aren't around, to die-hard lap cats who love as much human attention as they can get. Most cats fall somewhere in between. But don't be misled by the feline reputation for aloofness and independence: most pet cats may not need as much attention as dogs, but they still need it. Interactive playtime, petting and cuddling, grooming and reward training are all excellent, positive ways to enjoy time with your cat.

Exercise and mental stimulation. In addition to the social aspect of playing, cats—particularly indoor cats—need exercise to keep them fit and healthy. They also need opportunities to hone their predatory skills and fulfill their natural urge to explore and investigate. In addition to interactive games, cats can be amused by faux prey items in the form of catnip mousies, wadded up pieces of paper, balls, cat Kongs stuffed with kibble or other treats—or any small, novel item which is safe to play with. Providing exercise and mental stimulation suitable for the age and activity level of the cat will alleviate boredom, reduce or eliminate destructive behaviors, and result in a healthier and happier pet.

Respect for their individual preferences with other pets. Depending on their experiences as kittens, whether they grew up accustomed to other animals, and their individual temperaments, cats can range from terrified or hostile to actively congenial with other pets. Many cats will take readily to one pet, but not another. Others will tolerate other cats (or dogs) but never show any real signs of bonding or affection, while yet others will bond deeply with a feline or canine friend. Wherever a cat is on the social scale, he deserves to have his preferences considered before introducing another pet into the home, and careful thought should be given to how to make the introduction positive and the new relationship successful.

Shelter Guide

(Shelter Logo Here) A Guide to Our Shelter

Welcome to [Name of Shelter]! Our facility is committed to giving the best possible care to our guests, and to reducing the surrender of unwanted dogs and cats. [Name of Shelter] has adopted the Open Paw® Shelter Program to help the animals remain physically and mentally healthy during their stay; retain or learn socialization to people and other animals; retain or learn potty and chew toy training; and learn good dog or cat manners, like greeting people politely and playing with claws retracted. Shelter staff and volunteers work with the animals every day to help them develop these fundamentally important skills so that they are more adoptable, and more likely to settle easily into their new homes. The process of teaching these skills to our animals also models humane, friendly, training and management techniques to the public; our shelter animals help to keep today's pets from ever having to be surrendered! We hope you enjoy your visit to our facility.

As you walk around the shelter, you'll notice

Buckets of kibble on the outside of the kennels. Hand-feeding animals is the simplest, and one of the most powerful tools we have to help them feel good about having all kinds of people approach them. The idea is simple: animals like their food very much; we want animals to like having strangers approach them in their kennels very much; every time a person approaches the kennel and tosses in 1 or 2 pieces of kibble, it strengthens the animal's association of the approach of a person with the delivery of lunch or dinner. Before long, the animals in our shelter feel great about having lots of complete strangers approach them in their kennels! In just a 10-minute visit, you can do an enormous amount to help make our shelter guests healthier and happier.

Animals chewing intently on oddly-shaped rubber chew toys. Animals get bored just like people. Unlike people, they don't read the paper or do crosswords to amuse themselves. What do animals do when they're bored and need an occupation? They chew, scratch, dig, or make lots of noise. By stuffing hollow chew toys with part of their daily ration of food, we can accomplish amazing things! Every time the animal chews on the toy, she is rewarded by some bits of food—wow, that makes it the best toy ever! Not only is the animal happily occupied, calm, and quiet, she quickly learns to love to chew her chew toy better than couches, shoes, curtains, and socks. Each animal adopted goes home with his own chew toy, and an instruction sheet for his new guardian about how to stuff the toy full of goodies.

If you'd like to donate to help us supply chew toys, beds, buckets, and food for our animals, please visit the front desk on your way out. For more information on [Name of Shelter], visit [website]. For more information on Open Paw, and to download free training and adoption materials, visit www.openpaw.org. Thank you!

Ask the Right Questions to Help You Find a Lifelong Companion

Bringing home a new puppy, kitten, dog, cat, or any companion animal, is an exciting time, as you envision a lifetime of fun together with your new family member. Getting an animal is a lifelong commitment, so you'll want to make sure that you find the animal that is the best choice for you. Open Paw is here to help you find that furry friend, and to help you both to live happily ever after.

You should first think carefully about what kind of animal is the right match for you and your family. The following questions will help you.

The Right Companion for You and Your Family

When you think about a new dog or cat, what is your dream picture? What do you see yourself doing with your new companion, and how do you see her fitting into your life? Do you want a dog as a jogging partner, or a lap warmer while you read the paper? Do you want a cat who constantly explores and plays, or one who will quietly cuddle with you for hours on the couch? Your **lifestyle and expectations** will be the most important factors in selecting the best companion for you and your family. Take the time to research different breed and group characteristics to find a type of dog or cat that suits your routine. You can find a lot of breed information online. Make trips to your local dog parks and pet stores to interact with the owners of all sorts of animals. You will learn so much by talking to people who already own a pet. Consider these lifestyle questions:

- **What do a typical day and week look like for you?** It is helpful even to write out a schedule of your typical day and week, and see where animal care will fit in and how much time you can afford.
- **What are the rules of your house? For example, will the animal be allowed on the couch? In the kitchen?** It is best to discuss and determine these rules as a household before adding the complication of a new, live creature in your house. Things will go more smoothly if everyone in the house is on the same page. And you must know what your house rules are before you can teach them to your new dog or cat.
- **How active is the household? Do you hike every weekend, or watch sports on T.V.? How often and to what extent will you exercise your pet?** Be honest: if you've never been a jogger, don't try to convince yourself you will suddenly be motivated because you have a Dalmatian puppy. If you prefer lounging in the living room to running laps around the track on weekends, the presence of a dog will most likely not spontaneously turn you into a marathon runner. Instead, you will end up with a furry bundle of energy with not enough outlets. Your Dalmatian pup will turn into a pressure-cooker, and the steam will eventually blow, with or without your guidance. If you don't take the time to exercise your pet, this undirected energy will

be expended on projects of your dog or cat's liking—such as re-landscaping your garden. Do yourself a favor—objectively assess your exercise habits and take the time to research breeds and breed types that best match your lifestyle.

- **How often will you play with the dog or cat, and how rambunctious do you want the play to be?** If you like the idea of wrestling around on the floor with your big dog, great! Look at a large, hearty breed or mix. Some breeds may be too fragile or uninterested in rough, physical play. Alternately, if you want a dog and have a small apartment with neighbors below, perhaps you should choose a smaller dog, a couch potato, or at least a dog that is light on its feet (such as Greyhounds, which tend to be both light on their feet and couch potatoes). Similarly, cats have a wide range of preferred play styles. Be sure to choose one that fits your family's needs.
- **Do you have children? What are their ages? Are they comfortable around animals of all sizes? Do they have friends over a lot? What is their activity level? Will doors, cabinets, or gates get left open?** Just some general things to think about before you decide to get a pet. Some pets are more likely to roam or escape than others. This type of information will be especially useful if you decide to adopt a dog or cat with established habits and history.
- **Where will the pet have her "downtime" space (to go when she needs a break from the activity of the house)?** Again, this question is simply part of good planning. The more you've thought things through in advance, the easier the transition will be once your new pet arrives. For more information, see our handouts "The First Two Weeks with Your New Dog" or "What Every Cat Needs".
- **Do you travel often? If so, will you/can you take your pet with you? If you will not be taking your pet along, who will care for him in your absence?** Familiarize yourself with pet care options and costs in your area. Travel with a pet may change your travel plans and may prove difficult. Pet care can be pricey in some areas, and that could put a dent in your travel budget.
- **Do you entertain often? If so, do your friends and family like dogs or cats? Are they fearful or allergic?** If you do entertain often, you may do well to get a friendly, gregarious breed and personality, rather than a guarding breed with potential to be reactive around strangers, or an animal with a shy personality who prefers the company of only a few select people.
- **Where will your pet sleep at night? When you are at work?** Planning, planning, planning! Something to discuss with other family members before your pup or kitten arrives.
- **What will he do when you are busy? When you have a party? When you travel? While you're at work? Who will provide daily care? Who will provide vacation care? Are you willing to pay for pet care?** Once again, these questions involve

expense and planning. For example, if you decide to get a young puppy that requires several trips to a toilet area at regular frequent intervals, and you work 10 hours a day, who will attend to your pup for the first 6 months or so? Will you hire a pet sitter or dog walker? Is someone in the family home and willing to help with pet care? How much would professional animal care cost, and can you afford it? Are you willing to spend the money?

- **What do you expect a cat or dog to provide for you and your family? Affection? Protection? Amusement?** This question goes back to lifestyle and expectations. Food for thought and meant to facilitate discussion and planning to aid in your selection process.
- **Does everyone in the household want a pet?** Many animals are surrendered to shelters because of conflict within the family regarding the presence of the pet or the training methods and expectations. Open Paw strongly believes that everyone in the household must be in agreement, not only regarding whether or not to get a pet, but also on what kind of pet to get.
- **Can/will you adjust your routine to the demands of a new feline or canine family member?**
- **Who will take the dog to training class? Will everyone in the family go to class?** Enrolling in some sort of training program is highly recommended, but it will take time and commitment, not to mention money. Determine who will be in charge of training your new dog, and research the going rate for pet dog manners classes in your area.
- **How much time are you willing to spend grooming?** Long hair and double coats require regular grooming, such as brushing, bathing and, in some breeds, regular haircuts! Research different coat types and determine how much time or money you are willing to spend on this necessary task.
- **How much does fur bother you? Don't just think about allergens, but also about fur on the carpet, the furniture, and your clothes.** All cats and dogs shed or drop fur. Some coat types shed more than others. If you get a dog or cat, you will have fur on your clothes, in your car, in your house and in your life. How often are you willing to vacuum the house?
- **How much money are you willing to spend on: food; the veterinarian; exercise; training; toys; grooming; boarding?** A large dog will cost more annually than a small dog or cat.

It is also important to consider your needs and those of other household members when you think about choosing an animal.

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- **Is anyone in the family allergic to animals?** The number 1 reason given for animals surrendered to a shelter is the allergies of a family member. There is suspicion this is often used as a convenient, inarguable excuse to “give up” on an animal when training and behavior problems crop up. Perhaps there are no allergies after all. However, as it’s the number 1 cited reason for surrender, Open Paw feels it is necessary to say that, if you or someone in your family is allergic to cats or dogs, please reconsider adding one to your household.
 - **Are there any elderly people in your household, or visiting regularly?** Again, think of lifestyle. If your elderly parent visits frequently, cares for your children regularly, or may move in with you in the near future, consider their physical abilities and how much they will be expected to interact with, or care for, your new pet. Can Granny handle an 85-pound Labrador Retriever? Will she enjoy interacting with a rambunctious young cat?
 - **Are you pregnant, or do you plan to become pregnant soon?** How many children do you plan to have? The care and training of a new pet demands a significant amount of time and energy; Open Paw does not recommend getting a new companion animal if you are pregnant or have very young children in the household. Wait a few years until your children are able to be part of the selection process and routine care. Furthermore, your lifestyle, expectations, and needs change when a new child comes into the family, and this may affect your relationship with your pet; you may find you have less time to dedicate to the care and companionship of a cat or dog than you thought would be the case.
 - **Do you have noise-sensitive neighbors?** Good fences may make good neighbors, but so do quiet, well behaved dogs. If you live in close proximity to others, how will adding a dog to your family affect your neighbors? Some breeds and breed types are more vocal than others. Please think about how you feel about barking, and about the noise tolerance of those around you. Then do research to find a type of dog that will meet your expectations.
 - **How many animals will your new pet have to interact with? (Do you already have animals? Do your immediate neighbors have animals? Do friends bring their animals to visit?) Are the other animals in your life large or small?** Think of the size differential between types of dogs and, to a smaller extent, cats. To avoid accidents and keeping physical safety in mind, do not get dogs on opposite extremes of the size spectrum. Open Paw does not recommend having a dog of more than 50% less of the adult size of the other dog/s in the household. Before choosing a breed type, consider the other species of animals in the house. For example, if you have a Finch aviary, perhaps it is unwise to bring a dog meant for flushing out birds, such as a spaniel, into your home.
 - **How often will you walk the dog or play with the cat? Will the dog go to off-leash parks, or mostly on leashed walks?** Dogs who go on leashed walks through

neighborhoods will have to be very friendly to people and animals. Think about the exercise needs of your preferred breed type, your access to parkland, and the type of regular exercise you are able to provide.

- **What is your living situation? If you rent, do you have permission from your landlord to have an animal? Will you be moving soon, or do you move frequently?** Moving is another common reason given for surrendering a pet to a shelter. Finding an apartment that allows cats or dogs can be very difficult, and pet deposits can be very expensive. Please think about your living situation before getting a pet. Pet ownership is a lifelong commitment, and it is important to look into your future to be sure you will be able to provide a permanent home for your dog or cat, not just for this year.
- **What kind of activities do you want your cat or dog to participate in with you (sports, car companion, sitting at cafes, going to the dog park, camping, etc.)?** Once again, take time to identify what your lifestyle is like and to select a suitable breed type and personality.

Only after you have considered the above questions should you think about preferences. Keeping in mind what you learned from thinking about the questions above, now ask yourself:

- **Who is your favorite cat or dog?** Think of an actual animal you know.
- **What is that animal like?** What is it that you find appealing about him or her?
- **What kinds of things have affected her personality?** Has that particular dog had a great deal of training? Is it an older cat that is already trained and calm?
- **Would that cat or dog's personality, behavior, energy level, and needs fit in well with your family?**
- **Do you prefer that the animal live indoors, or in the yard?** Keep in mind that dogs often develop barking, digging, and escaping problems if they are left all day in a yard without significant environmental enrichment. Outdoor animals should always have a shelter on a raised platform, a supply of fresh water, and a source of shade. Fences should be at least 8 feet high for dogs. Also keep in mind that dogs can easily be trained to eliminate out of doors only and to chew appropriate toys. If adult dogs have a chance to relieve themselves and exercise in the morning and when you return from work, they can generally go for 8 hours without a potty break.
- **Do you want to adopt a dog or cat, or to purchase one from a breeder?**
- **Would you like a kitten/puppy, an adolescent, or an adult cat/dog?** Puppies and kittens take the most time and energy, with adolescents coming in a close second.

Adult dogs and cats with sound temperaments make wonderful, virtually ready-made companions.

Once you have a good idea of what your companion should be like, you can begin to evaluate the cats and dogs you meet at the breeder's or in a shelter. Open Paw does not recommend purchasing a dog or cat from a pet store unless they adhere to the Open Paw Minimum Mental Health Requirements for kenneled animals.

- You should select a dog or cat with the behavior and temperament that is right for you. Emotional issues and activity levels are very hard to change. An animal that is frightened of children, for example, might learn to tolerate children, but will probably never be easy or comfortable around them. On the other hand, behavioral issues (jumping up, playing with claws out, chewing, potty training, play biting, pulling on leash, etc.) are simple to change with training and management.
- Study the body language of the animal when she is around you, your children, and your other pets if you have them. Does the cat or dog approach each of you readily? Does she accept touches happily? Does she seem relaxed, or does she try to put distance between you, stiffen up, watch you warily, pant heavily or lick her lips continually? (Yawning can also be a sign of stress.) Watch the body language of your children or other animals around this animal. Do they seem comfortable and respectful around her?

With care and education, you can find a lifelong, loving companion for yourself and your family.

Chapter 4

Behavior Counseling

Dr. Dunbar's "Behavior Blueprints" and the accompanying Open Paw Behavior Sheets included in this section are tools for your staff or volunteers who work with animals. They facilitate phone counseling, adoption counseling, or Adopters Anonymous counseling, and can also serve as handouts for your clients. To learn how to counsel clients, staff members and volunteers should read *BEFORE and AFTER You Get Your Puppy*, Dr. Dunbar's *Good Little Dog Book* by Dr. Ian Dunbar, and *Culture Clash* by Jean Donaldson. Serious behavior modification problems should be immediately referred to a local APDT dog trainer (see www.apdt.com for a list of trainers in your area).

Our Behavior Matrix and the companion key and definitions, in the appendix, are meant to serve as quick guides to behavior counseling. The matrix lists the top 14 challenges faced by owners and refers the counselor to a variety of recommended training processes, in order of importance. The answer key gives a quick review of what each training process consists of. These are meant to be used as a reference, in conjunction with the books listed above.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Cat Manners

Before you get a new kitten or adopt an adult cat, make sure you complete your own education about kitty education. If you are already living with an untrained cat with existing problems, simply designate today as the first day at Kitty College for both of you. Kitten training techniques work perfectly well with adult cats.

Adopting a New Kitten

Check that the kitten was raised indoors, around human companionship and influence. Ask the breeder how many strangers, especially including men and children, have handled and gentled the kittens. Spend at least an hour observing, playing with, and hugging and handling (restraining and examining) your prospective kitten. At 8 weeks of age, kitten activity recycles every 40 minutes so. To get a representative feel for your kitten's overall demeanor, make sure that you observe her while she sleeps, when she plays, and when she is wild. Check that the kitten already uses a litter box and her scratching post.

Adopting an Adult Cat

Choosing an adult cat is a very personal choice: choose the one that likes all family members best, and choose the one you all like best. The secret to adopting the perfect cat is patience, patience, patience, and selection, selection, selection. The perfect cat is waiting for you somewhere, and so take your time to choose with your head as well as your heart.

Teaching Household Manners

The first week your kitten or cat spends in your home is the most important week of her life. From the very first day, start an errorless housetraining and scratching post training program so that you prevent any housesoiling and destructive clawing or chewing problems. When you are not at home, leave your kittycat in a long-term confinement area (cat playroom) which has a comfortable bed, fresh water, a litterbox, and a scratching post with several cat toys and chewtoys (stuffed with food) hanging from the top. Long-term confinement prevents mistakes around the house and maximizes the likelihood your kittycat will learn to use her toilet, learn to play with her toys and to use her scratching post. When you are at home but cannot pay full attention to your kittycat, confine her to a small, short-term confinement area (cat carrying crate) with a couple of stuffed chewtoys and dangly cat toys. Confining your kittycat prevents any mistakes around the house, maximizes the likelihood she will learn to play with her toys, and allows you to predict when she would like to relieve herself. Knowing when your kittycat wants to go makes litterbox training easy, because all you have to do is show her where to go and reward her for going. Closely

confining a kittycat temporarily inhibits elimination. Give her hourly access to the litterbox, and she will promptly pee (and sometimes poop). Then voice gentle appreciation and give her 3 liver treats as a reward. Confinement is a temporary management and training measure. Once your kittycat has learned where to eliminate and what to scratch, she may enjoy full run of your house for the rest of her life. Until she is trained, do not feed your kittycat from a food bowl. Set aside some kibble to use for safety training, and stuff some of her food into hollow Kong chewtoys with the odd piece of freeze-dried liver. Moisten dry kibble, squish it into the Kong cavity, and place it in the freezer overnight. In the morning suspend the stuffed Kongs from the top of her scratching post. Your kittycat will spend a long time eating and, in the process, will be automatically rewarded for playing with her toys and scratching post. If eventually you would like your kittycat to eliminate outdoors, use soil in her litterbox instead of commercial litter. Your kittycat will quickly develop strong substrate and olfactory preferences for eliminating on soil and will naturally want to eliminate outside.

Safety Training

When cats are scared, they run and hide; sometimes they remain in hiding for several days. Indoor cats are especially scared if they escape outdoors (usually when strangers visit the house). Whether you intend your cat to be allowed outdoors or not, safety training is essential. At the very least you should teach your cat to come when called. The process is simple. Before every mealtime, call your cat and have him follow you from room to room before putting his stuffed Kongs (and your cat) in his confinement area. From time to time, call your cat and handfeed a piece of kibble or freeze-dried liver when he comes. Back up and repeat the process several times. If you like, you can use a silent dog whistle instead of calling your cat.

Indoor cats have a longer life expectancy than indoor-outdoor cats. If you intend to let your cat outside, you must teach him to remain in the yard, otherwise you will take several years off his life expectancy. First, neuter your cat and he or she will be less likely to roam. (Circulating sex hormones fragment normal brain function.) Second, make sure your fence is cat-proof. Third, convert a section of your yard into a cat activity center—hang a number of stuffed Kongs and dangly cat toys from a tree, for example. Fourth, you must provide your cat a “freeway” escape-route back into the safety of your house. For the first few weeks your cat begins to investigate your yard, reserve all food for this exercise. Open the yard door and let your cat poke his nose out and then immediately call him back inside for a piece of cheese. Next time call him back for a freeze-dried liver treat after he has gone just one yard outside. Repeat this over and over, each time letting your cat venture a little further outside. To learn more, read our Cat Behavior Booklets.

To raise and train your cat, you will need a cat-carrying crate, a comfy cat bed, water bowl, litter box, scratching post, hollow chewtoys, catnip toys, and freeze-dried liver.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: New Puppy

Your puppy will grow up very quickly. Train him right and he will become a good natured, biddable, and well-mannered adult dog. Before you get a new puppy, make sure you know exactly what kind of puppy to look for and how to raise and train him. If you are still searching for a puppy, please read *BEFORE You Get Your Puppy*. And if you haven't done so already, purchase a dog crate, 6 Kong chew toys, and some freeze-dried liver treats before your puppy comes home.

Deciding Which Type of Puppy

The breed, type, size, activity level, hair color, hair length, and sex of your prospective puppy are personal choices and best left entirely up to you and your family. Once you have all agreed on a choice, go to your local humane society or dog training school to look for and "test-drive" at least 6 adult dogs of the type that you have selected. Test-driving adult dogs will teach you more about what to expect from a puppy than any book or video. Also, the experience of test-driving will ensure you know how to teach and control adult dogs before you get your puppy. Really, the process of choosing a dog is not much different from choosing a car. First, you need to learn to drive and, second, you want to choose a car that looks and feels right to you. You will probably have read lots of well-meaning advice from pet professionals that advise you, for example, not to get certain breeds if you have children, not to get large dogs if you live in an apartment, and not to get active dogs in the city. In reality, all breeds and types of dog can be wonderful or problematic with children. It very much depends on whether or not the puppy was trained how to act around children and the children were taught how to act around the puppy. Because of their lower activity levels, large dogs adapt more quickly to apartment living than little dogs. Big dogs just take up more space. And active dogs can live in cities just as active people live in cities. In fact, city dogs tend to be walked and exercised more than suburban dogs. In the long run, it will be you who will be living with your puppy and teaching it to adjust to your lifestyle and living arrangement.

Selecting Your Individual Puppy

It is vital, however, that you know how to evaluate whether your prospective puppy is physically and mentally healthy. Research your prospective puppy's lineage to confirm that his grandparents and great-grandparents all lived to a ripe old age, and to check how many of his doggy family suffered from breed-specific problems. Long life is the best indicator of overall physical and behavioral health and the best predictor of your puppy's life expectancy. Research well; you want your puppy to enjoy his sunset years with you. My first malamute died when he was just 5 years old. Heartbreaking. In terms of behavioral development, by 8 weeks of age your prospective puppy should be housetrained and chew

toy-trained, outgoing, friendly, and sociable and, at the very least, know how to come, sit, lie down, and roll over. Any signs of fearfulness are absolutely abnormal in an 8-week-old pup. Check that the puppy was raised indoors, around human companionship and influence. Check that the puppy uses a dog toilet, rather than urinating and defecating all over the floor (which he will continue to do if you take him home). Check that hollow chew toys stuffed with food are readily available. Ask the breeder how many strangers, especially men and children, have handled and trained the puppies. Check for yourself how easy (or difficult) it is to hug and handle (restrain and examine) your prospective puppy. Also check how quickly (or slowly) the puppy learns to come, sit, lie down, and roll over for each family member.

Raising and Training Your Puppy

The first week your puppy comes home is the most important week of her life. From the very first day, start an errorless housetraining and chew toy-training program so that you prevent any future housesoiling, destructive chewing, excessive barking, or separation anxiety problems. When you are not at home, leave your puppy in a long-term confinement area (puppy playroom), which has a comfortable bed, fresh water, several chew toys stuffed with food, and a temporary indoor toilet. Long-term confinement prevents mistakes around the house and maximizes the likelihood your puppy will learn to chew chew toys and use her toilet. When you are at home but cannot pay full attention to your puppy, confine her to a small, short-term confinement area (doggy den or dog crate) with a couple of stuffed chew toys. Confining your puppy to a den prevents any mistakes around the house, maximizes the likelihood your puppy will learn to chew chew toys, and allows you to predict when your puppy would like to relieve herself. Knowing when your puppy wants to go makes housetraining easy because now you can show her where to go and reward her for going in the right spot. Confining a pup to a den temporarily inhibits elimination, so that every hour you can take her to an appropriate toilet area. When she promptly pees (and sometimes poops), give her 3 liver treats as a reward. Confinement is a temporary management and training measure. Once your puppy has learned household manners, he may enjoy full run of your house for the rest of his life. If you already have a new puppy, read *AFTER You Get Your Puppy* and *Doctor Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book*, and watch the award-winning SIRIUS®Puppy Training video.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: New Adult Dog

Adopting an adult dog can be a marvelous alternative to raising and training a puppy. Alternatively, a new adult dog can be a full-time project. Adult dogs can be perfect or problematic—carrying the behavioral baggage of their previous owners. Take your time to search for the right dog for you and only choose one that you know your family can train. Some shelter and rescue dogs are purebred, but most are one-of-a-kind mixed-breeds. Some shelter dogs are well trained, well behaved, friendly, and simply in need of a caring human companion. Others may have a few behavior problems (housesoiling, chewing, barking, hyperactivity, etc.) and require their puppy education in adulthood. Other dogs are shy and fearful and require a dedicated owner who is going to spend the time that it takes to rebuild the dog's confidence. Raising and training a puppy requires a lot of time and know-how. The puppy's behavior is always changing, for better or for worse, depending on his socialization and training. However, an adult dog's behavior and temperament are already well established, for better or for worse. Traits and habits may change over time but, compared with the behavioral plasticity of young puppies, an older dog's habits are much more resistant to change. Whereas temperament problems may take longer to resolve in a adult dog, good habits are also just as hard to break. Thus the key to adopting a good shelter or rescue dog depends on selection, selection, selection! Take your time to test drive plenty of prospective candidates. The perfect dog is waiting for you somewhere. Be patient, search well, and be realistic about your choice, i.e., choose with your brain as well as your heart. When selecting an adult dog, you need to evaluate whether you like the dog, whether the dog likes you (and other people), and the dog's basic manners and household etiquette.

Mutual Affection

All family members must be involved in the selection process and agree 100% on the final choice. Likewise, you must check that the dog likes all family members. Make sure that the dog eagerly approaches each family member and thoroughly enjoys being handled and stroked. Additionally, check that the dog likes other people. Observe the dog's behavior when he interacts with a wide variety of people, especially children, men, and strangers. The most important quality in a companion dog is friendliness: he should enjoy the company and attentions of people. If he is at all fearful or standoffish, you will need to devote time to teach him that people are non-threatening.

Test-Driving

Make sure that you get a good feel for your prospective dog before you take her home. First, check her general demeanor. Is her kennel soiled or clean? Does she play with chew toys? Is she calm and quiet, or hyperactive and barking? Make sure all family members

spend plenty of time “test-driving” the dog. Check to see that everyone can get the dog to pay attention, come when called, sit, lie down, and roll over. Take the dog for a spin around the block to evaluate how she walks on leash. Especially spend lots of time handling and petting (examining) and hugging (restraining) the dog. Check that she enjoys having her muzzle, ears, neck (and collar), paws, and rear end handled. If you find she has areas that are sensitive to touch, check to see how she responds to progressive desensitization exercises. There is little point in sharing your home with a dog that you (or others) cannot handle.

Your Dog’s First Couple of Weeks at Home

An environmental change offers a wonderful opportunity for a dog to learn new household rules. First impressions are extremely important and leave an indelible impression. Regardless of your new dog’s presumed housetraining and chew toy-training status, teach her where to eliminate, what to chew, and how to settle down calmly and quietly during her first couple of weeks at home. In the beginning, your dog is likely to be somewhat stressed with all the recent changes in her life. She may be depressed, or she may react with exuberance (hyperactivity and barking) in her new home. She may become anxious (bark, chew, pee, and poop) when left alone. It is incredibly important that your dog does not establish any bad habits during her first couple of weeks at home. Consider a short-term and long-term confinement program (see our Home Alone booklet), so that housetraining and chew toy-training are errorless. For the time being, do not feed your dog from a food bowl. Instead, have family, friends and strangers handfeed most kibble as training lures and rewards for housetraining, classical conditioning, and teaching basic manners. Stuff the rest of her kibble into Kongs to teach her to settle down quietly, calmly, and confidently. Once your dog adapts to her new surroundings and human companions, she has a lifetime to enjoy full run of her new home.

Fearful Dogs

Many dogs are undersocialized and may become fearful in the shelter environment. You are a saint to rescue a fearful dog from the stress of a shelter environment, but you must realize that, for fearful dogs, confidence-building can be an extremely lengthy and heart-rending procedure. You must have both the time and the know-how. The last two dogs that I adopted were fearful and aggressive toward men and strangers. Both dogs became friendly and confident, but it did take time and patience to help them reach that goal. (For information on how to rehabilitate a fearful dog, read the Fearfulness booklet.) To learn more, read the *Open Paw Four-Level Training Manual* and *Doctor Dunbar’s Good Little Dog Book*, and watch the Open Paw Training video. To locate adolescent and adult dog training classes in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at 1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Housetraining

Housetraining is a spatial problem. Your puppydog has been allowed to eliminate in the wrong place. Housetraining quickly becomes a bad habit because dogs develop strong location, substrate, and olfactory preferences for their improvised indoor toilet areas. To housetrain your puppydog: first, prevent any more mistakes; and second, teach your puppydog where you would like him to eliminate.

Prevent Mistakes

Mistakes are a disaster since they set a bad precedent and create bad habits, which can be hard to break. Consequently, you must prevent mistakes at all cost. Whenever you are not at home, leave your dog in a long-term confinement area, such as a single room indoors with easy-to-clean floors (bathroom, kitchen, or utility room). This will be your puppydog's playroom. Provide your dog with fresh water, a number of stuffed chew toys for entertainment, a comfortable bed in one corner, and a doggy toilet in the corner diagonally opposite from his bed. Your dog will naturally want to eliminate as far as possible from his bed, and so will soon develop the good habit of using his toilet. Good habits are just as hard to break as bad habits. For a doggy toilet, use sheets of newspaper sprinkled with soil, or a litter box filled with a roll of turf, or a concrete paving slab. Thus your dog will develop olfactory and substrate preferences for eliminating on soil, grass, or concrete. The purpose of long-term confinement is to confine your dog's natural behaviors (including urinating and defecating) to an area that is protected (thus preventing any mistakes around the house when you are not there), and to help your dog quickly develop a strong preference for eliminating on soil, grass, or concrete.

Teach Your Dog to Eliminate in the Right Place

When you are at home, confine your dog to a short-term confinement area with a number of stuffed chew toys for entertainment. A portable dog crate makes an ideal doggy den. Alternatively, keep your dog on a short leash fastened to an eye-hook in the base board near her bed, or attach the leash to your belt. This way your dog may settle down beside you while you read, work at the computer, or watch television. Every hour on the hour, say "Let's go pee and poop" (or some other appropriate toilet instruction), and hurry your dog (on leash) to her toilet (in your yard, or at curbside outside the front door of your house or apartment building). Stand still with your dog on leash and repeat the instruction to eliminate. Give your dog 3 minutes to empty herself. When your dog eliminates, praise her enthusiastically and offer 3 freeze-dried liver treats. Most puppies will urinate within 2 minutes on each trip to a toilet area, and defecate within 3 minutes on every other trip. Once your dog realizes that she can cash in her urine and feces for tasty treats, she will want to eliminate in her toilet area. Soiling the house just does not have comparable

fringe benefits. Moreover, after a dozen or so repetitions, you will have taught your dog to eliminate on command. If your dog does not eliminate during the allotted 3-minute toilet break, put her back inside her crate for another hour. The purpose of short-term close confinement is to prevent any mistakes around the house when you are home (but cannot devote undivided attention to your dog) and to predict when your dog needs to eliminate. Temporarily (for no more than an hour at a time) confining a puppydog to a small space (e.g., a dog crate) inhibits elimination, since the dog does not want to soil her sleeping area. Consequently, your dog will want to go immediately upon release from confinement—especially since hurrying to the toilet area will jiggle her bladder and bowels. Since you choose when to release your dog, you may choose when your puppy eliminates and, since you can predict when your dog needs to eliminate, you may be there to show her where to go, to reward your dog for going, and to inspect and immediately clean up after your dog. Never confine a puppy or an unhousetrained adult dog to a crate for longer than an hour. A dog confined too long will be forced to soil her crate, making her extremely difficult to houstrain. Once your pup is old enough to go on walks, make sure she eliminates (in the yard, or in front of your house) before each walk. If your dog does not go within 3minutes, put her back in her crate and try again an hour later. However, if your dog does go, praise and reward her as usual and then say "Let's go for a walk." With a no-feces/no-walk policy, you will soon have a very a speedy defecator. Moreover, elimination close to home facilitates clean-up and disposal; you will not have to stroll the neighborhood weighed down with a bag of doggie doo. If you require a more detailed description of houstraining, read *BEFORE You Get Your Puppy* and watch the *Training The Companion Dog Video II: Behavior Problems & Household Etiquette*. To houstrain your dog, you need a dog crate, a number of chew toys, and some freeze-dried liver treats.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Chewing

Chewing is essential for maintaining the health of your dog's teeth, jaws, and gums. Puppies especially have a strong need to chew to relieve the irritation and inflammation of teething. Dogs chew to relieve anxiety and boredom, as well as for entertainment. Your dog's jaws are his tools for carrying objects and for investigating his surroundings. Essentially, a dog's approach to all items in his environment is "Can I chew it?"

Chewing is Normal, Natural, and Necessary

Dogs generally sleep at night and in the middle of the day. However, chewing is your dog's primary form of entertainment during his morning and late afternoon activity peaks. After all, there are only so many things your dog can do when left at home alone. He can hardly read a novel, telephone friends, or watch the soaps! Indeed, most chewing sprees stem from your dog's relentless quest for some form of occupational therapy to pass the time of day when left at home alone. Chewing is a perfectly normal, natural, and necessary canine behavior. Prevention and treatment of destructive chewing focus on management and education—to prevent your dog from chewing inappropriate items and to redirect your dog's natural chewing-urge to appropriate, acceptable, and resilient chew toys.

Prevent Destructive Chewing

When leaving home, confine your puppydog to a long-term confinement area, such as a single room—your puppydog's playroom—with a comfortable bed, a bowl of water, a doggy toilet (if not yet housetrained), and nothing to chew but half a dozen freshly-stuffed chew toys. Housetrained adult dogs may be confined (with their chew toys) to a dog crate. When you return, instruct your dog to fetch his chew toys so you can extricate the freeze-dried liver pieces and give them to your dog. Your dog will happily settle down and entertain himself with his chew toys as soon as you leave in the morning, and he will be more inclined to search for chew toys when he wakes up in anticipation of your afternoon return. This is important since most chewing activity occurs right after you leave home and right before you return. When you are home, confine your puppy to his doggy den (crate) with nothing but a freshly-stuffed chew toy for entertainment. Every hour on the hour (or at longer intervals with housetrained adult dogs), take your puppydog to her doggy toilet (see Housetraining blueprint) and, if she goes, praise her and play some chew toy games with her before putting her back in her crate with a freshly stuffed chew toy. The purpose of confinement is to prevent your dog from chewing inappropriate items around the house and to maximize the likelihood your dog will develop a chew toy habit.

Redirect Chewing to Chew Toys

The confinement schedule described above optimizes self-training; your dog will train herself to chew chew toys. In fact your dog will soon become a chew toyaholic. With a good chew toy habit, your puppy will no longer want to destroy carpets, curtains, couches, clothes, chair legs, computer disks, children's toys, or electrical cords. Your dog will be less likely to develop into a recreational barker. And also, your dog will happily settle down calmly and quietly and will no longer be bored or anxious when left alone. You must also actively train your dog to want to chew chew toys. Offer praise and maybe a freeze-dried liver treat every time you notice your dog chewing chew toys. Do not take chew toy chewing for granted. Let your dog know that you strongly approve of her newly acquired, appropriate, and acceptable hobby. Play chew toy games with your dog, such as fetch, search, and tug-of-war. Chew toys should be indestructible and nonconsumable. Consumption of non-food items is decidedly dangerous for your dog's health. Also, destruction of chew toys necessitates their regular replacement, which can be expensive. However, compared with the cost of reupholstering just one couch, 70 dollars worth of chew toys seems a pretty wise investment. Kongs, Biscuit Balls, Big Kahuna footballs, and sterilized long-bones are by far the best chew toys. They are made of natural products, are hollow, and may be stuffed with food to entice your dog to chew them exclusively. To prevent your dog from porking out, ensure that you only stuff chew toys with part of your dog's daily diet (kibble or raw food). Firmly squish a piece of freeze-dried liver in the small hole in the Kong, fill the rest of the cavity with moistened kibble, and then put the Kongs in the freezer. Voila, a Kongsicle! As the kibble thaws, some falls out easily to reinforce your dog as soon as she shows interest. Other bits of kibble come out only after your dog has worried at the Kong for several minutes, thus reinforcing your dog's chewing over time. The liver is the best part. Your dog may smell the liver, see the liver, (and maybe even talk to the liver), but she cannot get it out. And so your dog will continue to gnaw contentedly at the Kong until she falls asleep. Until your dog is fully chew toy-trained, do not feed her from a bowl. Instead, feed all kibble, canned food, and raw diets from chew toys, or handfeed meals as rewards when you notice your dog is chewing a chew toy. If you would like better insight into your dog's chewing psyche, read chapter 3, "It's All Chew Toys to Them," in *The Culture Clash* by Jean Donaldson. If you require a more detailed description of chew toy training, read the "Chewing" booklet and *BEFORE You Get Your Puppy* and watch the *Training The Companion Dog Video II: Behavior Problems & Household Etiquette*. To chew toy-train your dog, you need a dog crate, a number of hollow chew toys, and some freeze-dried liver treats.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Digging

Dogs dig to bury bones, and later to dig them up again. Dogs dig cooling hollows in the summer, and warming pits in the winter. Dogs dig after eavesdropping on private ultrasonic conversations of subterranean critters. Bitches dig dens when they are pregnant. Dogs dig out of boredom, and dogs dig to escape. But, by and large, most dogs dig for the sheer fun of it.

Dogs Don't See Your Problem

Dogs consider digging to be a perfectly normal and natural doggy activity. In fact, terriers consider digging to be their very reason for being. It would therefore be fruitless to try to stop your dog from digging altogether. Prevention and treatment of digging focus on management and education: preventing your dog from digging in inappropriate areas and redirecting your dog's natural digging-desire to a suitable area.

Prevent Digging in Your Absence

When you are away from home, keep your dog indoors. When you are at home, try your best to accompany your dog outdoors to supervise and teach garden rules. Housesoiling, destructive chewing, and hyperactivity are the most common reasons why dogs are relegated to unsupervised, solitary confinement in the yard, where they predictably learn to bark, dig, and escape, and become over-excited whenever let indoors. Consequently, it is important to housetrain and chew toy-train your dog. (See Housetraining and Destructive Chewing blueprints.) Teach your dog to settle down calmly and quietly indoors, and to sit when greeting visitors (see HyperDog! blueprint). Then your dog may remain safely indoors whether you are home or not. Your air-conditioned and centrally-heated house is the safest and most comfortable place for your dog to spend the day. When you are at home, go outside and enjoy your garden with your dog. Some dogs dig to escape because they cannot bear the boredom and anxiety of solitary confinement in the yard. Escaping is exceedingly dangerous for your dog's health. So, if you decide to leave your dog in the yard, make the yard more interesting and be sure to fix the fence. Also make sure your dog has a cool resting place in the summer and warmth in the winter. Teach your dog to dissipate digging energy with other activities. Make sure your dog is well exercised (psychologically as well as physically) and entertained and, thus, has no need to dig to escape from the yard. Teach recreational diggers to become recreational chewers. If your dog is busying himself with a chew toy, he has little time to dig. Consequently, chew toys stuffed with breakfast kibble are the best objects to leave indoors, or to bury in your dog's digging pit. You must teach your dog how to entertain himself outdoors. This means your dog needs chew toys outside, too.

Redirect Digging to a Digging Pit

Since you consider your dog's choice of digging locations to be inappropriate, choose a location to your liking and teach your dog to dig there. Build your dog a digging pit (much like a child's sandbox) in a suitable corner of the yard. Bury a cow's femur (the whole thing) in your dog's digging pit. Your little doggie will be utterly delighted when she finds a huge meaty bone. Now, this single simple procedure may not totally prevent holes in other areas of the garden, but your dog will now be much more inclined to dig in her digging pit. I mean, in 1849 everyone started rushing westwards to California. They didn't rush to New Jersey. And why did they rush to California? Because one person discovered a nugget of gold at Sutter's Mill. They didn't find gold in New Jersey, and so they didn't rush to New Jersey. And so it is with dogs. After just one remarkable find, your dog will prefer to excavate in that California corner—her digging pit, where she once found something very worth finding. Every morning, fill several chew toys with your dog's breakfast kibble and bury them in her digging pit. Your dog will discover that the digging pit is a virtual treasure trove where she can find toys for sustenance and entertainment.

Garden Rules

Once the dog's digging activities have been redirected to a suitable location in your yard, you might consider protecting other parts of the garden. Lay down chicken wire or chain-link fencing over the lawn and flower beds, add plenty of topsoil, and reseed. Use boundary fences to partition the yard into doggy and non-doggy zones. The fences are not meant to be dog-proof; rather, they are used as training aids to clearly demarcate lawn and garden boundaries to help you teach the rules. Always try to accompany your dog when he goes outside, especially during puppyhood or the first few months an older dog is at home. Remember, an owner in the yard is worth 2 in front of the television! It is not fair to keep garden rules a secret from your dog and then get angry with the dog for breaking rules he didn't even know existed. Encourage and praise your dog for walking on paths and for lying down in dog zones. Tie a number of stuffed chew toys to ground stakes or hang them from tree branches in dog zones to encourage your dog to want to spend time in those areas. Discourage your dog from entering non-doggy zones. If you require a more detailed description, read the Digging booklet and watch the Training The Companion Dog Video II: Behavior Problems & Household Etiquette. To teach your dog to use a digging pit, you will need numerous stuffable chew toys and some freeze-dried liver treats.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Barking

Some dogs get extremely worked up when visitors ring the doorbell, or when dogs walk by the house. Some spaniels and terriers bark at the drop of a hat. And our good friend Larry Labrador will bark whenever a leaf falls from a tree 3 blocks away. Barking is as characteristically doggy as wagging a tail or burying a bone. It would be inane and inhumane to try to stop your dog from barking altogether: "You'll never bark in this town again!" After all, some barking is extremely useful. My dogs are much more efficient than the doorbell and much more convincing than a burglar alarm. The goal, then, is to teach dogs normally to be calm and quiet, but to sound the alarm when intruders enter your property. The barking problem may be resolved to our advantage by management and education: first, immediately reduce the frequency of barking before we all go insane; and second, teach your dog to "Woof" and "Shush" on cue.

Reduce the Frequency of Barks

The easiest way to immediately reduce woof-frequency is by exclusively feeding your dog from hollow chew toys. Dogs bark the most right after their owners leave home for the day. Each evening, weigh out and moisten your dog's kibble or raw diet for the following day. Squish the gooey food into hollow chew toys (Kong products and sterilized bones) and put them in the freezer overnight. In the morning, give your dog some frozen stuffed chew toys. Your dog will spend well over an hour extricating his breakfast from the chew toys. And, if your dog is busying himself with chew toys, he will be lying down quietly! (For detailed chew toy-stuffing instructions, read the Chewing booklet.) Do not leave an excessive barker outdoors. Yard-bound dogs are exposed to many more disturbances and their barks more easily penetrate the neighborhood. Leave your dog comfortably in a single room (away from the street) with a radio playing to mask outside disturbances. If you have been leaving your dog outside because he soils or destroys the house, housetrain and chew toy train your dog so he may enjoy indoor comforts when you are away from home.

Teach "Woof" and "Shush" On Cue

It is easier to teach your dog to shush when he is calm and focused. Therefore, teaching your dog to "Woof" on cue is the first step in "Shush" training, thus enabling you to teach "Shush" at your convenience, and not at inconvenient times when the dog decides to bark. Moreover, teaching "Shush" is now much easier because your dog is not barking uncontrollably—barking was your idea! Station an accomplice outside the front door. Say "Woof" (or "Speak," or "Alert"), which is the cue for your assistant to ring the bell. Praise your dog profusely when he barks (prompted by the doorbell); maybe even bark along with your dog. After a few good woofs, say "Shush" and then waggle a tasty food treat

in front of his nose. Your dog will stop barking as soon as he sniffs the treat because it is impossible to sniff and woof simultaneously. Praise your dog as he sniffs quietly, and then offer the treat. Repeat this routine a dozen or so times and your dog will learn to anticipate the doorbell ringing whenever you ask him to speak. Eventually your dog will bark after your request but before the doorbell rings, meaning that your dog has learned to bark on command. Similarly, your dog will learn to anticipate the likelihood of sniffables following your "Shush" request. You have then taught your dog both to speak and shush on cue. Over repeated "Woof" and "Shush" trials, progressively increase the length of required shush-time before offering a food reward—at first just 2 seconds, then 3, then 5, 8, 12, 20, and so on. By alternating instructions to woof and shush, the dog is praised and rewarded for barking on request and for shushing on request. Remember, always speak softly when instructing your dog to shush, and reinforce your dog's silence with whisper-praise. The more softly you speak, the more your dog will be inclined to pay attention and listen (and therefore, not bark).

Teach Your Dog When to Bark

Invite a dozen people for afternoon tea to teach your dog when, and when not, to bark. Instruct your visitors (some with dogs) to walk by the house a number of times before ringing the doorbell. When the first person walks by the house, it will take all of your attention to keep your dog shushed. But persevere: it will be easier when the same person walks by the second time, and again easier on the third pass by. Eventually your dog will habituate and will no longer alert to the same person's presence in the street. Profusely praise your dog and offer treats for silent vigilance. Repeat reinforcement for quiet vigilance several times on subsequent passes by. But when the visitor starts up the garden path, eagerly and urgently say "Speak! Speak! Speak!" Praise your dog when he woofs, and then instruct him to sit and shush at the front door while you welcome the visitor. If your dog exuberantly barks and bounces at this point, simply wait until he sits and shushes and then praise and offer a treat. Have the visitor leave and come back a number of times. Eventually, your dog will greet him by sitting in silence. This procedure becomes easier with each new visitor. Your dog soon learns to watch passersby in silence and to give voice when they step on your property, but to sit and shush when they are invited indoors—a trained neighborhood watchdog, which even non-dog-owning neighbors will welcome on the street where they live. If you require a more detailed description, read the *Barking* booklet and watch the *Training The Companion Dog Video II: Behavior Problems & Household Etiquette*. To teach your dog to be calmer and bark less, you will need numerous stuffable chew toys. To teach your dog to "Woof" and "Shush" on cue, you need some freeze-dried liver treats.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Home Alone

Your new puppydog needs lots of attention (companionship, education, and play), but also to be taught how to entertain himself appropriately and how to thoroughly enjoy his time when left at home alone. Otherwise, a social vacuum can be a very lonely place. Puppies and dogs predictably develop housoiling, chewing, digging, and barking problems if allowed too much freedom and too little supervision and guidance during their first few weeks at home. Puppies and newly adopted dogs may become overdependent if allowed unrestricted access to their owners during the initial time in their new home. Overdependent dogs often become anxious when left at home alone, and they attempt to adapt to the boredom and stress of solitary confinement by busying themselves with doggy activities—chewing, digging, barking—which soon become owner-absent behavior problems. What else is there to do? Severely stressed dogs may work themselves up into a frenzy and spend the day circling, pacing, and panting.

A Special Place

Dogs are den animals, and they value their own special place—a place for peaceful retreat, a methodical chew, or even a snooze. A doggy den (a collapsible and portable dog crate and dog bed) is an ideal training tool. Apart from its obvious use for transporting dogs by car or plane, a crate may be used for short-term confinement when you cannot supervise your puppydog—to keep him out of mischief and prevent him from making housoiling, destructive chewing, and digging mistakes. In addition, the crate may be used specifically to create good household habits: to houstrain your puppydog; to establish a hard-to-break chew toy habit; to reduce excessive barking; to prevent inappropriate digging; and to foster confidence and calmness. Right from the outset, when you are home, regularly confine your pup for “little quiet moments” in his dog crate in order to teach household manners and imbue confidence. Then your dog can look forward to enjoying a lifetime with the full run of your house, whether you are home or not.

Teach Your Puppydog to Enjoy His Doggy Den

A dog crate is really no different than a child's crib, playpen, or bedroom. The first item on the agenda is to teach your puppydog to thoroughly enjoy spending time in his doggy den. Stuff your puppy's first meal into a hollow chew toy (see our Chewing blueprint), tie the chew toy inside the crate, and leave the door open so the pup may come and go as he pleases. Praise your puppy while he chews the chew toy and supervise the puppy if he leaves the crate. Once the pup has settled down for a quiet chew, you may close the crate door. For your pup's second meal, put the stuffed chew toys inside the crate and shut the door with the puppy on the outside. Once your puppy worries at the crate to get to his dinner, let the puppy enter his crate and close the door behind him. From now on, always

give your puppy a stuffed chew toy when confining him to his crate. Your pup will soon learn that confinement is for a short time—and an enjoyable time.

Teach Your Dog to Teach Herself

When at home, always confine your puppydog with a variety of hollow chew toys stuffed with kibble and treats. Confining a dog to a crate with an attractive chew toy is like confining a child to an empty room with a video game. This is called autoshaping. All you have to do is set up the situation, and your dog will automatically train herself. Each treat extricated from the chew toy progressively reinforces chewing chew toys and settling down calmly and quietly. Your dog will soon become hooked on her chew toy-habit, leaving very little time for inappropriate chewing, digging, or barking. And if your puppydog is happily preoccupied chewing her chew toy, she will fret less.

Housetraining

A dog crate may be used to predict when your puppy needs to relieve herself. Regular, but short-term (one hour or less) confinement inhibits your puppy from eliminating. This means that she will want to eliminate immediately when released each hour and taken to her toilet area, where she is handsomely rewarded with tasty training treats. However, never confine your unhousetrained puppy to her crate for longer than an hour, or when you are away from home; otherwise, the poor pup may be forced to soil her bedroom. As a temporary necessity until your puppy is housetrained, leave her in a special long-term confinement area. (See our Housetraining blueprint.)

Home-Along Dogs Need An Occupation

Preparing dogs for inevitable periods of solitary confinement—and specifically teaching them how to occupy their time when spent at home alone—is the most pressing humane consideration for any new puppydog in any household. Every dog requires some form of enjoyable occupational therapy. Vocational chew toy chewing is the easiest and most enjoyable solution. Dogs are crepuscular (most active at dawn and dusk), and so it is pretty easy to teach them how to calmly pass the time of day. During your puppydog's first few days and weeks at home, regularly confine him to a crate with stuffed chew toys. Prepare the pup for your absence when you are present. When at home, it is possible to monitor your pup's behavior when he is confined for numerous short periods throughout the day. Your puppydog's first impressions of an established daily routine create an acceptable and enjoyable status quo for years to come. Remember, once your puppydog is confident, independent, and trained, he may enjoy free range of your house and garden for the rest of his life. If you require a more detailed description, read our "Home Alone" booklet and

AFTER You Get Your Puppy. To teach your dog to be calmer and bark less, you will need a dog crate, a number of hollow chew toys, and some freeze-dried liver treats.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Puppy Biting

Puppies bite. And thank goodness they do! Puppy play-fighting and play-biting are essential for your puppy to develop a soft mouth as an adult.

Puppy Biting is Normal, Natural, and Necessary!

Puppy biting seldom causes appreciable harm, but many bites are quite painful and elicit an appropriate reaction—a yelp and a pause in an otherwise extremely enjoyable play session. Thus, your puppy learns that his sharp teeth and weak jaws can hurt. Since your puppy enjoys play-fighting, he will begin to inhibit the force of his biting to keep the game going. Thus your puppy will learn to play-bite gently before he acquires the formidable teeth and strong jaws of an adolescent dog. Forbidding a young puppy from biting altogether may offer immediate and temporary relief, but it is potentially dangerous because your puppy will not learn that his jaws can inflict pain. Consequently, if ever provoked or frightened as an adult, the resultant bite is likely to be painful and cause serious injury. Certainly, puppy play-biting must be controlled, but only in a progressive and systematic manner. The puppy must be taught to inhibit the force of his bites, before puppy biting is forbidden altogether. Once your puppy has developed a soft mouth, there is plenty of time to inhibit the frequency of his now gentler mouthing. Teaching your puppy to inhibit the force of his bites is a 2-step process: first, teach the pup not to hurt you; and second, teach your pup not to exert any pressure at all when biting. Thus the puppy's biting will become gentle mouthing. Teaching your puppy to inhibit the frequency of his mouthing is a 2-step process: first, teach your puppy that, whereas mouthing is OK, he must stop when requested; and second, teach your pup never to initiate mouthing unless requested.

No Pain

It is not necessary to hurt or frighten your pup to teach her that biting hurts. A simple "Ouch!" is sufficient. If your pup acknowledges your "ouch" and stops biting, praise her, lure her to sit (to reaffirm that you are in control), reward her with a liver treat, and then resume playing. If your pup ignores the "ouch" and continues biting, yelp "Owwwww!" and leave the room. Your puppy has lost her playmate. Return after a 30-second time-out and make up by lure-rewarding your puppy to come, sit, lie down, and calm down before resuming play. Do not attempt to take hold of your pup's collar, or carry her to confinement; you are out of control and she will probably bite you again. Consequently, play with your puppy in a room where it is safe to leave her if she does not respond to your yelp. If she ignores you, she loses her playmate.

No Pressure

Once your pup's biting no longer hurts, still pretend that it does. Greet harder nips with a yelp of pseudo-pain. Your puppy will soon get the idea: "Whoaahh! These humans are soooo super-sensitive. I'll have to be much gentler when I bite them." The pressure of your puppy's bites will progressively decrease until play-biting becomes play-mouthing. Never allow your puppy to mouth human hair or clothing. Hair and clothing cannot feel. Allowing a puppy to mouth hair, scarves, shoelaces, trouser legs, or gloved hands, inadvertently trains the puppy to bite harder, extremely close to human flesh!

Off!

Once your pup exerts no pressure whatsoever when mouthing, then —and only then— teach him to reduce the frequency of his mouthing. Teach your puppy the meaning of "Off!" by handfeeding kibble (see the SIRIUS Puppy Training video). Your puppy will learn that gentle mouthing is OK, but he must stop the instant you ask him to stop.

Puppy Must Never Initiate Mouthing

At this stage, your puppy should never be allowed to initiate mouthing (unless requested to do so). Please refer to our Preventing Aggression booklet for a detailed description of the essential rules for bite-inhibition exercises such as handfeeding, play-fighting, and tug-of-war. By way of encouragement, mouthing-maniac puppies usually develop gentle jaws as adults because their many painful puppy bites elicited ample appropriate feedback. On the other hand, puppies that seldom play and roughhouse with other dogs, puppies that seldom bite their owners (e.g., shy, fearful, and standoffish pups), and breeds that have been bred to have soft mouths may not receive sufficient feedback regarding the pain and power of their jaws. This is the major reason to enroll your puppy in an off-leash puppy class right away. Should a dog ever bite as an adult, both the prognosis for rehabilitation and the fate of the dog are almost always decided by the severity of the injury, which is predetermined by the level of bite inhibition the dog acquired during puppyhood. The most important survival lesson for a puppy to learn is that bites cause pain! Your puppy can only learn this lesson if he is allowed to play-bite other puppies and people, and if he receives appropriate feedback. For more detailed information about bite-inhibition exercises, read our "Preventing Aggression" booklet and watch the SIRIUS® *Puppy Training* and *Biting* videos. If you feel you are having any difficulty whatsoever teaching your puppy to play-bite gently, seek help immediately. To locate a Certified Pet Dog Trainer (CPDT) in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at 1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Fighting

Many people have unrealistic expectations about dog-dog social behavior. Dogs are expected to behave perfectly and get along with all other dogs, even though people have difficulty being universally accepting and friendly. However, although people may often disagree, argue, and sometimes resort to pushing and shoving, very few people inflict severe injuries. When tempers flare, extreme physical aggression is strongly inhibited. Really, dogs are not that much different. Most dogs have frequent disagreements and arguments and, on occasion, resort to scrapping noisily, but only extremely rarely does one dog severely harm another. Whereas it is unrealistic to expect dogs never to squabble, it is perfectly realistic to raise and train dogs to never hurt each other when fighting. To teach canine social savvy: first, socialize your puppy to be friendly, so that it would rather play than fight; second, prevent predictable adolescent desocialization but, most important: teach your puppy bite inhibition, so that if it does scrap as an adult dog, it causes no harm.

Socialization

Socializing a young puppy is as easy as it is enjoyable. Enroll in an off-leash puppy class, visit different dog parks on a regular basis, and walk your puppy at least once a day. To socialize your puppy, he must meet unfamiliar dogs on a regular basis.

Prevent Developmental Desocialization

Adolescence is a particularly stressful time for young dogs, especially males, who are repeatedly harassed by older dogs, especially males. The ritualized harassment is both normal and necessary, allowing older dogs to put developing youngsters "in their place" before they are strong enough to compete on the social scene. Harassment is triggered by rude adolescent behavior and by extremely elevated testosterone levels in 5- to 18-month-old adolescents. Castrating your puppy will prevent most harassment from older dogs. Additionally, to maintain self-confidence and offset the stress of adult-doggy discipline, an adolescent dog requires many positive social interactions. Regular play sessions and repeated friendly encounters are vital. However, for many dogs, socialization with other dogs is abruptly curtailed at between 6 to 8 months, usually following the first couple of scraps. This is especially true for small dogs and large dogs. Worrying that a little dog may get hurt, the owner is more likely to pick him up and less likely to let him play. Similarly, worrying a large dog might hurt other dogs, the owner now tends to keep her restrained on a tight leash. Thus, at a crucial developmental stage, many dogs are seldom allowed to interact with unfamiliar dogs. A vicious cycle develops—the dog desocializes and its bite inhibition begins to drift, whereupon fights and potential damage now become more

likely, making it even more difficult to socialize the dog. To prevent your puppy from becoming asocial or antisocial during adolescence, he must continue to meet unfamiliar dogs on a regular basis. Always praise your puppy for meeting, greeting, and playing with unfamiliar dogs. Never take friendly behavior for granted. Always let your dog know that you are very happy when he is friendly. Throughout adolescence and adulthood, praise and reward your dog with food treats after every friendly encounter with another dog.

Bite Inhibition

Most dogs, especially males, are involved in a number of scraps during adolescence. If the dogs acquired good bite inhibition during puppyhood and learned how to resolve differences without causing harm, there is little, if any, damage. However, if the dogs did not learn bite inhibition as puppies, there may be substantial damage. Dog fights are noisy and scary, and many owners insist: "He fights all the time and is trying to kill the other dogs!" It is essential to objectively assess which dogs are dangerous and which are not. Calculate the dog's fight/bite ratio by asking, "How many times has the dog fought?" and "How many fights warranted veterinary treatment for severe bites?" The observation (that the dog fights a lot of the time) and the assumption (that the dog is trying to kill other dogs) are quite contradictory. If the dog is trying to kill other dogs, then obviously he is not that good at it, since he has had numerous attempts and failed on every occasion. On the contrary, a large number of fights and the absence of injury offers proof the dog is definitely not trying to kill other dogs. (If one dog were truly trying to harm another dog, the physical damage from a single incident would be extreme.) Certainly he is undersocialized, but he has marvelous bite inhibition. "Growl classes" provide an effective solution for scrappy dogs that have never harmed another dog. Owners can safely practice controlling their dogs in a controlled setting, and dogs may gradually rebuild their confidence so that eventually they may resume socialization and play. For dogs that harm other dogs, common-sense and precautionary management are the only options. The dog should be kept on-leash and muzzled whenever on public property. Allowing a dog that harms other puppies and dogs the opportunity to interact with other dogs would be unfair, irresponsible, and dangerous. Bite inhibition is the key. The issue is not really whether dogs fight, but whether or not one dog harms another. Puppies that had ample opportunities to socialize, play-fight, and play-bite with other puppies usually develop good bite-inhibition. They learned how to inhibit the power of their jaws and consequently may resolve adulthood differences without causing harm. Bite inhibition can only safely be established during puppyhood. Giving your puppy the opportunity to develop good bite inhibition is the most important reason for enrolling in puppy class. To learn more, read *AFTER You Get Your Puppy* and the "Fighting" booklet and watch the *SIRIUS®Puppy Training* and *Fighting* videos. To locate puppy classes and "growl classes" in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at 1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Fear of People

Socializing a puppy to people is the easiest and most enjoyable aspect of raising a dog. On a regular and ongoing basis, puppies need to meet, play with, and be handled and trained by a wide variety of people, especially strangers, men, and children.

Narrow Window of Opportunity

Old dogs can indeed be taught new tricks. An adult dog may learn basic manners and good behavior (where to eliminate, what to chew, and when, and for how long to bark) at any time in its life. However, socialization must occur during puppyhood—during the critical period of socialization, which ends when puppies are 12-13 weeks old. Shy and fearful dogs can be substantially rehabilitated, but they will never develop the confidence and social savvy of a well-socialized puppy. They will never become what they could have been. Puppy socialization is critical for your puppy to develop the confidence and social savvy to continue socializing with people as an adult dog. Unless your puppy meets unfamiliar people every day, it will become fearful. After 8 weeks of age, puppies start to become shy and wary of unfamiliar people, and between 5 and 8 months of age, they become fearful of strangers, especially men and children. Fearfulness and aggression worsen very quickly because, once a dog becomes fearful or aggressive, normal socialization all but stops. If your puppy becomes fearful, his life as a companion dog will be riddled with anxiety and stress and he will be useless as a working, competition, or protection dog. If you notice any signs of shyness, standoffishness, or fearfulness in your puppy or adolescent dog, seek help immediately. Contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com) to locate a Certified Pet Dog Trainer (CPDT) in your area.

Neonatal Handling

There is no better time to accustom puppies to enjoy being handled than when they are still neonates. The puppies cannot see or hear, but they can taste, smell, and feel. The puppies recognize and accept the handlers as strangers. What could be easier than inviting friends and family to gently hold, handle, and stroke neonatal puppies? Additionally, the ideal time to accustom puppies to sudden movements and loud, strange, and sudden noises is when the eyes and ears begin to open (between 2 and 3 weeks).

Socialization in the Puppy's Original Home

To fully enjoy life as a human's companion, a puppy must be taught to thoroughly enjoy the company and actions of all people, especially strangers, men and children. It is not sufficient for puppies to meet the same small circle of familiar friends each day. Puppies

need to meet unfamiliar people every day—especially men and children. Before they are 8 weeks old—and the critical period of socialization is almost 2-thirds over—puppies need to have been handled and trained by at least 100 different people. Puppy socialization and handling exercises are so simple, so important, and so much fun. Each person should use kibble to lure-reward each puppy to come, sit, lie down, and roll over. Then visitors can pick up, cradle, cuddle, and stroke the pups, while looking in their eyes and gently examining their jaws, paws, ears, belly, and private parts. Remember to maintain routine hygiene: All people should leave outdoor shoes outdoors and wash their hands before handling puppies less than 12 weeks of age.

Socialization in the Puppydog's New Home

By 8 weeks of age socialized puppies will start to become shy and wary of unfamiliar people. Consequently, it is necessary to accelerate their socialization program. During his first month in his new home, a puppy needs to be handled and trained by an additional 100 different people—at least 3 strangers daily. Puppy handling is still so easy and enjoyable. (Please note: All these exercises will work with adult dogs, they just take much more time.) Weigh out the puppy's dinner kibble and divide it into bags to give to each guest to handfeed to the puppy. Put a few treats into the men's bags and lots of treats into the children's bags. Each guest will train your puppy for you, using kibble and treats to lure-reward the puppy to come, sit, lie down, and roll over. Each person will also pick up and handfeed the pup, examining his mouth, ears, paws, and rear end, before passing the puppy to someone else. "Pass the puppy" is marvelous game and prepares the puppy for handling and examination by veterinarians and groomers. At the end of the evening, your puppy will love household guests and especially enjoy the company and actions of men and children.

Puppy Classes, Walks, and Parties

As soon as your puppy is old enough, enroll in a puppy class so your puppy may socialize with other dogs and people and fine-tune his bite inhibition. Without a doubt, walking your puppy is the very best socialization and confidence-building exercise. Stop every 25 yards and instruct your puppy to sit (for control), and occasionally to settle down (with a stuffed chew toy) and watch the world go by. Handfeed dinner when anyone approaches—1 piece of kibble for a woman, 3 pieces for a man, 3 pieces of freeze-dried liver for each child, and 5 pieces of liver for a boy on a bike or skateboard. You may allow passersby to handfeed your pup once you have shown them how to lure him to sit to say hello. Above all, don't keep your puppy a secret. Continue to have regular puppy parties at home and invite family, friends, and, especially, neighbors to meet your puppy. Instruct each person to bring a friend. When you socialize a puppy properly, you will find your

own social life improves dramatically. For a more detailed socialization agenda and information on lure-reward training, read *BEFORE You Get Your Puppy*, *AFTER You Get Your Puppy*, *Doctor Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book*, and make sure to watch the *SIRIUS®Puppy Training video*. To locate puppy classes in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at 1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Dogs & Children

Babies and children should never be left unsupervised with puppies or dogs. Learning to respect, understand, care for, and successfully control a dog gives a dramatic boost to any child's self-esteem. But these benefits do not come by magic. Children and parents alike must realize that cartoon dogs are fantasy, and Lassie was played by several well-trained dogs. Both Lassie and Timmy were acting. In the domestic environment, both dogs and children must learn how to act around each other. All dogs must be taught how to act around children, and all children must be taught how to act around dogs.

Teaching Dogs How to Act Around Children

To improve children's confidence and self-esteem, it is vital their puppy- and dog-training exploits succeed. Success depends upon adult planning, participation, and direction. First, adults must teach the puppy or dog how to act in a controlled manner and, second, adults must teach children how to control the now-mannerly puppy or dog. Adults should use kibble to lure-reward train the puppy to come, sit, lie down, stand, and roll over. "Come," "Sit," and "Lie down" are the basic control commands, and "Stand" and "Roll over" are the best commands for examining the dog's body. Additionally, adults should handfeed kibble while cuddling (restraining) the puppy and while stroking and fondling (examining) his muzzle, ears, paws, belly, and rear end. The puppy will soon learn to positively associate restraint and examination with food. Provide children with tasty treats (in addition to kibble) and instruct them how to lure-reward train the now-easily-controlled puppy. The puppy will quickly learn that training is fun and being trained by children is especially fun. Families without children at home must invite children to meet, handfeed, and train the puppy during his first 3 months in his new home. Young puppies are impressionable, cute, and non-threatening. Invite family, friends, and neighbors with children, i.e. children the puppy is likely to meet as an adult. Instruct the children how to use kibble and treats to lure-reward train the puppy or dog to come, sit, lie down and roll over. By approaching and sitting close, the dog voluntarily accepts and enjoys the child's company. By sitting, lying down, and rolling over, the dog acknowledges and respects the child's requests. In other words, the child asks and the dog agrees. Or, we could say, the child commands and the dog willingly complies. Moreover, by rolling over on request, the dog shows voluntary and happy appeasement. Quite frankly, willing compliance and happy deference towards children is the only workable solution for pet dog training. Additionally, as a major beneficial side effect of lure-reward training, the dog grows to like and respect its trainer: "Wow! Children are fun; they give lots of treats. Of course, you have to sit to receive them...but then that's just common canine courtesy!" All owners should seek family puppy training classes, where children can interact with puppies off their leash.

New Baby

All dogs must be taught to thoroughly enjoy the presence and actions of babies. The solution is classical conditioning. From the outset, integrate your dog into all new baby moments and routines. When feeding the baby, sit down comfortably, and handfeed kibble to your dog at the same time. Pick up the baby whenever he cries and then call your dog and offer a treat as you cuddle and shush the baby. (You will find the baby calms down more quickly if you are slightly distracted by talking to the dog.) When changing the baby's diapers, handfeed freeze-dried liver to the dog. (Keep a treat jar on the diaper-changing table.) In no time at all, your dog will form strong positive associations with the baby's feeding, crying, cuddling, and diaper-changing. You may find your dog adopts her baby-minding role with great enthusiasm. Your dog may promptly alert you whenever your baby cries or messes his diapers. Yes, you will have trained a Dirty Diaper Detection Dog.

Teaching Children How to Act Around Dogs

Ideally, learn how to teach your children (and yourself) how to teach a puppy or dog before you get a puppy or dog. Observe a puppy class so your children may learn training skills. Many class instructors will welcome children's participation, since socializing puppies with unfamiliar children is a major reason for puppy classes. Additionally, observe an adolescent or adult dog class, so you can preview the predictable problems you are going to encounter (or better, prevent). And, most important, make sure your children have ample opportunity to test-drive a variety of puppies and adult dogs. See if your local Humane Society has a volunteer program. When selecting a puppy or dog, make sure all family members, especially children, love the dog, feel completely at ease around the dog, and are able to easily control the dog before you decide to welcome him into your home. Teach children to train and control the dog using training techniques they can master—classical conditioning, lure-reward, and reward-training techniques. By using brain instead of brawn, even 3- and 4-year-olds can master these exercises. Sit with your children, hold the pup's bowl, and jointly handfeed her first few meals. Instruct your child to occasionally offer treats (tastier than the dog's kibble). Your puppy will soon learn to love the presence and presents of children. Warn children never to approach any dog without supervision. Teach children how to train puppies to approach them: instruct children to stand still, to always speak softly, and to keep one hand in their pocket while luring and rewarding the dog with the other hand. Any child who cannot get a puppy to come, sit, and lie down should never be allowed to play with that pup unsupervised. A single child (or adult, for that matter) with no control can ruin a good puppy within minutes. Insist on training before playtime. And in no time, the child will be play-training the puppy. Children feel great because they can control puppies with verbal commands and handsignals. Puppies are ecstatic because they have discovered that sitting is the secret command that trains children to stand still and deliver treats on cue. And adult owners feel relieved

and deservedly proud to know that their soon-to-be adolescent dogs are congenial and compliant with children. For more information, please watch *Dog Training For Children, Every Picture Tells A Story*, and the *SIRIUS®Puppy Training videos*. To locate puppy and dog classes in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at 1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Hyperdog

Puppies are naturally noisy and hyperactive. Puppies are exuberant when greeting, playing, and when expressing friendliness and appeasement. However, adult dogs are noisy and hyperactive because they are untrained and have unintentionally been encouraged to act that way. For example, eagerly jumping puppies are petted by people, who later get angry when the dog jumps up as an adult. The dog's only crime? It grew! Sadly, adult dogs receive considerable abuse for expressing their enthusiasm and exuberance. For example, "The Trainers from the Dark Side" recommend teaching a dog not to jump up by shouting at the dog; squirting him in the face with water or lemon juice; swatting him on the nose with a rolled-up newspaper; yanking on the dog's leash; hanging the dog by its choke-collar; squeezing the dog's front paws; treading on his hind paws; kneeling the dog in the chest; or flipping the dog over backwards. Surely these methods are a bit cruel for a dog that's just trying to say hello. Indeed, in the words of Confucius, "There is no need to use an axe to remove a fly from the forehead of a friend." Why not just teach dogs to sit when greeting people? Be smart. Be kind. Teach your puppy (or adult dog) to settle down and shush when requested and how to greet people in a mannerly fashion. Both dog noise and exuberance may be controlled and channeled into appropriate outlets.

Sit and Settle Down

Lure-reward train your puppy or dog to come, sit, and lie down. Simple instructions such as "Sit" and "Lie down" are extremely effectively solutions for nearly all doggy activity problems. Rather than telling the pup "No, no, no!" and "NO!" for everything she does that annoys you, simply ask her to lie down, and then praise and reward her for doing so. If she lies down obediently, she cannot run around the living room, chase her tail, chase the cat, hump the cat, jump on the furniture, jump up and down in the car, run out the front door, or chase and jump on children. Lying down and most behavior problems are mutually exclusive; your dog cannot lie down and misbehave at the same time. Take the initiative and direct your puppy's behavior by teaching him to lie down on request. Rather than feeding your puppy from a bowl, weigh out his kibble in the morning and use individual pieces as lures and rewards during oodles of 5-second training interludes throughout the day. Practice in every room of the house, in the car (while stationary), and on walks. Pause every 25 yards and instruct your puppy to perform a series of body positions: for example, sit-down-sit-stand-down-stand. Within just a couple of days you'll have a totally different dog. Reward training methods also work wonders with out-of-control adolescent and adult dogs. Hold a piece of kibble in your hand but don't give it to your dog. Stand perfectly still and give no instructions; simply watch to see what your dog does. Characteristically, the dog will run through his entire behavior repertoire. Your dog will wiggle, circle, twirl, jump up, lick, paw, back up, bark and then, eventually, he will sit or lie down. Praise him and offer the piece of kibble as soon as he sits (or lies down—your

choice). Then take a gigantic step (to reactivate Rover), and stand still with another piece of kibble in your hand. Repeat the above sequence until Rover sits immediately after you take each step and then begin to progressively increase the delay before offering the kibble. Maybe count out the seconds in "good dogs" —"Good dog one, good dog 2, good dog 3, etc." If Rover breaks his sit while you are counting, simply turn your back on him, take a 3-second timeout, and repeat the sequence again. In no time at all you will be able to count out 20 "good dogs" as Rover sits and stays calmly, looking up at you expectantly. Move from room to room repeating this exercise. When walking Rover, stand still every 25 yards and wait for him to sit, then praise him and continue the walk. After handfeeding your dog just one meal in this fashion indoors, and on 1 long walk with sits every 25-yards, you'll have a calmer and much more attentive dog.

Jumping Up

Jumping up deserves a special mention because it is the cause of so much frustration and abuse. Right from the outset, teach your puppy to sit when greeting people. Sitting is the obvious theoretical solution because a dog cannot sit and jump up at the same time. However, it may initially be difficult to teach your dog to sit when greeting people because he is so excited that he doesn't hear what you say. Consequently, you will need to troubleshoot his training. First practice sits (as described above) in locations where your dog normally greets people, e.g., on-leash outdoors and, especially, indoors by the front door. Then invite over 10 friends for a dog training party. Today your dog's dinner will be handfed by guests at the front door and by friends on a walk. After eventually getting your dog to sit to greet the first guest, praise your dog and have the guest offer a piece of kibble. Then ask the guest to leave and ring the doorbell again. In fact, repeat front-door greetings until your dog greets the first guest in a mannerly fashion 3 times in a row. Then repeat the process with the other 9 guests. In one training party you will probably practice over a 100 front-door greetings. Then ask your all your guests to leave one at a time and walk round the block. Put your dog on leash and walk around the block in the opposite direction. As you approach each person, instruct your dog to sit. Praise him when he does so and have the person offer a couple of pieces of kibble. After 5 laps, you will have practiced 50 side-walk greetings. Now your dog will be ready to sit to greet bona-fide guests at home and strangers on the street.

Put Doggy Enthusiasm and Activity on Cue

To be fair to your dog, make sure that she has ample opportunity to let off steam in an acceptable fashion. Sign up for flyball and agility classes. Play fetch with tennis balls and Frisbees and do yo-yo recalls (back and forth between 2 people) in the park. Formalize "crazy time"—train your dog to jump for bubbles, or play "tag" and chase your dog around the house. And maybe train your dog that it is acceptable to jump up on cue—to

give you a welcome-home hug. To learn more, read *Doctor Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book* and our "HyperDog" booklet and watch the *Training The Companion Dog Video III: Walking on Leash & Preventing Jumping-Up*. To locate puppy, adolescent, flyball, and agility classes in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Pulling on Leash

By and large, leash-pulling masks the real problem: without a leash you would probably be without a dog. It is indeed a sobering thought to think that most dogs prefer to forge ahead to sniff the grass or other dogs' rear ends than to walk by their owner's side. There are, of course, some dogs who simply don't want to walk beside people who keep yanking the leash. However, regardless of why your dog pulls, all dogs need to be trained to walk nicely on leash. If not, they are unlikely to be walked at all. Trying to teach a dog to heel using leash prompts and corrections requires a lot of skill and time. And, even then, all you have is a well-behaved dog on-leash. Let him off-leash and he's history; you cannot safely take him for off-leash rambles, and you still cannot control him around the house, where he is off-leash all the time. Luckily, there are more effective and enjoyable ways to get the job done. First, teach your dog to follow off-leash. Second, incorporate many sits and stays for control and attention. Third, teach your dog to heel off-leash and on-leash. After following these steps, you will find it is easier to teach your dog to walk calmly on-leash.

Teach Your Dog to Follow Off-Leash

Your dog's desire to follow and remain close is the necessary foundation for walking politely on-leash. You must become the center of your dog's universe. You need to stimulate and strengthen your dog's gravitational attraction towards you by moving away enticingly and heartily praising your dog all the time he follows. Click your fingers, slap your thigh, or waggle a food treat or a toy in your hand to lure the dog to follow. Proceed with a happy heart and a sunny disposition: talk to your dog, tell him stories, whistle, walk with a jaunty step, or even skip and sing. Do not accommodate your dog's improvisations; you are the leader, not the dog. Whenever your dog attempts to lead, accentuate his "mistake" by doing the opposite. Stretch the psychic bungee cord: if your dog forges ahead, slow down or smartly turn about; if your dog lags behind, speed up; if your dog goes right, turn left; and if your dog goes left, turn right. Practice in large areas, such as in your backyard, friends' yards, tennis courts, dog parks, and safe off-leash areas. Feed your dog his dinner kibble, piece by piece as you walk. Once your dog is following closer, time yourself while practicing following courses at home, going around furniture, from room to room, and from the house to yard.

Sits, Downs, and Stays

Enticing your dog to follow off-leash takes a lot of concentration and it is easy to let your dog drift. Consequently, instruct your dog to sit or lie down and then stay every 10 yards or so. Frequent sits, downs, and stays teach your dog to calm down and focus. They also give you the opportunity to catch your breath, relax your brain, and to objectively assess

your dog's level of attention. Sitting is absolute: either your dog is sitting or not. Only have the dog sit or lie down for a couple of seconds (just to check that he is paying attention) and then walk on again. Occasionally ask your dog to lie down for a minute or so to watch the world go by. You will find that the more down-stays that you integrate into the walk, the calmer and more controlled your dog will be when walking.

Teach Your Dog to Heel Off-Leash

Instruct your dog to sit, and then lure him to sit using a food or toy lure in your right hand. Transfer the lure to your left hand, say "Heel," waggle the lure in front of your dog's nose, and quickly walk forwards for a few steps. Then say "Sit," transfer the lure to your right hand to lure your dog to sit, and maybe offer the kibble as a reward if your dog sits quickly and stylishly. Repeat this sequence over and over. Practice indoors and in your yard, where there are fewer distractions, before practicing in the dog park and off-leash walking areas. Then just attach the dog's leash and you will find he heels nicely on-leash.

Walking On-Leash

Teach your dog not to pull while you are both standing still. Hold the leash firmly with both hands and refuse to budge until your dog slackens the leash. Not a single step! It doesn't matter how long it takes. Just hold on tight and ignore every leash-lunge. Eventually your dog will stop pulling and sit. As soon as he sits, say "Good dog," offer a food treat, and then take just 1 large step forward and stand still again. Hold on tight; your dog will likely explode to the end of the leash, thereby illustrating the reinforcing nature of allowing your dog to pull for just a single step. Wait for your dog to stop pulling again (it will not take as long this time). Repeat this sequence until your dog walks calmly forward (because he knows you are only going 1 step) and sits quickly when you stop and stand still. Your dog quickly learns he has the power to make you stop and to make you go. If he tightens the leash, you stop. But if he slackens the leash and sits, you take a step. After a series of single steps and standstills without pulling, try taking 2 steps at a time. Then go for 3 steps, then 5, 8, 12, and so on. Now you will find your dog will walk attentively on a loose leash and sit automatically whenever you stop. And the only words you have said are "Good dog." Alternate heeling and walking on-leash. For most of the walk, let your dog range and sniff on a loose leash but, every 25 yards or so, have your dog sit, heel, and sit, and then walk on again. Always sit-heel-sit your dog when crossing a street: sit before crossing, heeling across, and then sitting on the other side of the street. To learn more, read the *Open Paw Four-Level Training Manual* and *Doctor Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book* and watch the *Training The Companion Dog Video III: Walking on Leash & Preventing Jumping-Up*.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Puppy Training

When watching puppies in class having a good time playing off-leash and responding happily and willingly to verbal requests and handsignals to come, sit, heel, and down stay, I tend to forget the 2 most important reasons for attending puppy classes: bite inhibition and socialization with people. Off-leash classes provide an educational forum for pups to play-fight and play-bite with other dogs and to develop the confidence and social savvy for friendly interaction with people, especially with children and men.

Basic Manners

Some form of training is necessary for all owners to learn how to control their dogs' body position, location, and activity. Certainly, all aspects of obedience training may be accomplished at any time in the dog's life. But it just so happens to be easier, quicker, and more enjoyable to train the dog as a pup. In fact, by using modern psychological, dog-friendly, and owner-friendly training methods, off-leash control and hand-signals may be taught when your pup is just 3 months old.

Behavior Modification

Similarly, a dog's natural behavior may be modified at any time in the dog's life, although the older the dog, the harder the prospect. To re-educate a dog, it is necessary to first break the existing bad habit before instilling a good habit. Since good habits are just as hard to break as bad habits, smart owners teach their puppies appropriate and acceptable behavior right from the outset—what to chew, where to eliminate, where to dig, when to bark, how to walk nicely on leash, and how to greet people

Socialization

Socialization and bite inhibition, however, have pressing deadlines. Unlike obedience training and behavior modification, socialization and bite inhibition training **MUST** be accomplished during puppyhood. Preventive intervention is the key; to delay is utter folly. Preventative measures are easy, efficient, effective, effortless, and enjoyable, whereas trying to resolve temperament problems in adult dogs can be time-consuming, difficult, and often dangerous. The temperament of every dog needs to be modified to some degree—that is, molded to suit the owner's lifestyle. All dogs are different. Some dogs lack confidence, whereas others are too pushy. Some are sluggish and others are too active. Some are shy, reserved, standoffish, asocial, or antisocial, whereas others are overly friendly and rambunctious. People tend to forget that a domestic dog is not fully domesticated until he has been adequately trained and socialized to enjoy the company of people, other dogs,

and other animals. Most potential dog-dog problems take care of themselves if your pup is given sufficient opportunity to play with other puppies and dogs. Puppies virtually train themselves to be friendly and outgoing, and a friendly dog would much rather play than hide or fight. Your puppy does, however, require significant help to develop confidence around people, especially around children, men, and strangers. Your mission, Understanding Owner, is to teach your puppy not just to tolerate but, rather, to thoroughly enjoy the presence and actions of people. Specifically, you must desensitize your puppy to every conceivable potentially threatening situation, including petting, handling, hugging, and restraint, especially by children, men, and strangers, and especially around valued objects such as a food bowl, toys, and bones. In addition to attending puppy classes, host a puppy party at home. Do not keep your pup a secret. Let other people enjoy the puppy, and give your pup the opportunity to enjoy other people. Socialization parties are a marvelous opportunity to teach a lot of people how to help you train your dog.

Bite Inhibition

Bite inhibition is by far the single most important quality in any companion animal, and bite inhibition must be acquired during puppyhood. Bite inhibition is a dog's fail-safe mechanism, preventing him from injuring other animals and people. Bite inhibition does not mean that your dog never reacts when scared or upset. Instead, bite inhibition clicks in when your dog does react to the unexpected: for example, when a child trips and falls on a dog when he is gnawing on a bone. Most dogs react when they are hurt, frightened, or startled. A dog with good bite inhibition would only yelp, growl, or snap, causing little if any injury. The prognosis is good since the problem may be resolved easily and safely with increased socialization and classical conditioning. However, a dog who did not acquire bite inhibition as a puppy might inflict deep puncture wounds and cause serious injury. Dogs learn bite inhibition, i.e., learn that their jaws can hurt, when they play-fight and play-bite as youngsters. Puppies amp each other up until one puppy bites another too hard. Play stops immediately as the injured puppy yelps and takes the time to lick his wounds. When play resumes, it is slower and gentler. Puppy classes and, later, off-leash dog parks, offer the best venues for your puppy to learn solid bite inhibition and develop a soft mouth. Enroll in a puppy class right away. To learn more about the importance of bite inhibition and socialization, read *AFTER You Get Your Puppy* and *How To Teach A New Dog Old Tricks*, and watch *SIRIUS®Puppy Training*. To locate puppy classes in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers at 1-800 PET DOGS or www.apdt.com.

Dr. Dunbar's Behavior Blueprints: Come—Sit—Down—Stand—Stay

Leashless training methods are essential for pet dogs, because they are usually off-leash indoors. Lure-reward and reward-training techniques make training quick, easy, effective, and enjoyable for dogs and their owners. Reward training is as owner-friendly as it is dog-friendly. Since reward training depends on brain rather than brawn, the techniques are easily mastered by all dog owners, including children. Weigh out the puppy or dog's daily allotment of kibble and put it in a container for family members to use for all of these exercises. Every piece counts as an individual lure and reward. Use kibble to train throughout the course of the day.

Come

For puppies, simply say "Puppy, come," do something silly, and your puppy will come running. Praise your pup as she comes running towards you, and grab her collar and offer a food reward when she arrives. For adult dogs, say "Doggy, come" and then squat down and waggle a food lure in front of you. Two or more family members may practice yo-yo (back and forth) or round-robin recalls. Say "Puppy, go to Jamie" as a cue for Jamie to call the pup. Once Jamie has hold of the puppy's collar, it is his turn to choose whom to send the puppy to. This is a great way to teach your puppy "Go to..." commands, as well as the names of family members.

Sit

Hold a food treat in front of your dog's nose, say "Sit," and move the lure upwards and backwards just above the dog's muzzle. As your dog looks up to follow the treat, she will sit down. If your dog jumps up, you are holding the treat too high. If your dog backs up, work with the dog in a corner. When she sits, say "Good girl!" (or "Good boy!"), and offer the kibble as a reward. From now on, ask your dog to sit in front of you after every recall.

Down

Say "Down," and quickly lower the treat from the dog's nose to a point in between the dog's forepaws. Praise the dog when she lies down ("Good girl!") and offer the treat. It is easier to entice your dog to lie down if she is already sitting, since her hindquarters are already down. To teach your dog to lie down when she is standing, hold the lure between finger and thumb and lower the hand (palm downwards) to rest on the floor. As the dog worries at the lure, she will likely place the side of her muzzle on the floor ("Good girl!") and then assume a play-bow with elbows and sternum on the ground ("Gooood girl!").

By gently moving the lure towards the dog's chest and between her forepaws, her rear end will collapse backwards and she will lie down ("GOOOD GIRL!!!") Now step back and ask your puppy to come, sit, and lie down. An upward motion of your hand (held palm-upwards) has become the handsignal to sit, and a downward motion of your hand (held palm-downwards) has become the handsignal to lie down.

Stand

Stand is a very useful command when you want (or your veterinarian wants) to examine your dog. Say "Stand" and move the lure away from the dog's nose, wagging it in the position where your dog's nose will be when she stands. When she stands, say "Good girl" and offer the lure as a reward. Repeat sequences of the 3 body positions (sit, down, and stand) in random order, e.g., sit-down-sit-stand-down-stand. Initially, praise and reward each correct response. Once your dog responds fairly reliably, only reward her quicker and snazzier responses. Have family competitions to see how many body position changes your dog will do for just 1 food reward.

Stay

Initially, praise and reward your dog the instant she sits, lies down, or stands. With successive trials however, continue to praise correct responses but progressively delay offering the food reward for a little longer each time: for 2 seconds, then 3 seconds, 5, 8, 12, 20, 40, 60, and so on. Before you know it, your dog will happily respond quickly and remain in place for several minutes.

Phasing Out Food Lures and Rewards

Initially, use training treats both as lures to entice your dog to come, sit, lie down, and stand, and as rewards for doing so. Thereafter, use different items as lures and rewards. For example, lure the dog with a Kong but reward it by throwing a tennis ball. Or, lure the dog with a food treat but say "Go play!" as a reward. After a few repetitions dispense with food lures entirely—your verbal instructions and handsignals will suffice; from now on only use kibble as a reward. Finally, dispense with training treats as rewards. Instead, ask your dog to sit and / or lie down before every enjoyable doggy activity. Have your dog sit, lie down, or stand-stay before you scratch her ear, before throwing her ball, before letting her off-leash, and before inviting her to share the couch: i.e., replace food rewards with more meaningful life rewards. Now you will be able to ask your dog to sit for her supper in a bowl because you no longer need to use her kibble as training lures and rewards. To learn more about lure-reward training, read *Doctor Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book* and watch *Training Dogs With Dunbar*.

The Recall: Teaching Your Dog to Come Reliably When Called

Many dog owners like to torment themselves with the following scenario, much to the amusement of bystanders: first, having never practiced recall with their dog before and, without even having demonstrated to the dog what “come here” means, they let the dog off leash at the dog park, where she encounters squirrels, rabbits, birds, approximately 6,000,000,000 new smells, and other dogs to play with. Then they scream “come here” fruitlessly at their dog for the next 30 minutes, while the dog joyfully “ignores” them and jaunts about playing and sniffing. Finally having caught the dog through sheer luck, they yell at her and drag her off to the car and home. Smart bystanders know that this method will guarantee that next time, the dog will be sure not to get caught after a mere 30 minutes.

As this scenario demonstrates, most problems with recall come from asking the dog to do too much too soon—and from punishing the dog instead of rewarding her when she does finally come back. Even dogs with very good recall in the back yard will have a very difficult time coming when called at the park, where there are so many interesting dogs to meet and smells to smell that they simply can’t see the logic in returning to their guardian.

Running around the park and amusing the other dog owners is one thing, but every time the dog is running and not under the control of his owner, he is in danger. He needs to be taught to return to his guardian pronto if she calls him.

There are many reasons why the scenario above is so common. One reason is because dogs learn contextually, and the park is a very different context than the home where most training sessions take place. Another explanation is that the dog does not associate the word “Come” with the act of returning to his owner. Remember, dogs do not learn words as cues very easily and are most likely responding to context and visual body cues when they follow your requests. It is possible to teach your dog to respond reliably to a verbal request, but it must be done in a specific sequence for the dog to learn. Yet another possibility is that the bar is simply set too high. Perhaps you have practiced “coming when called” with Fido in your quiet, fenced back yard, but nowhere else. A recall in a small, familiar space with little or no distraction is the equivalent of a Kindergarten recall, while a recall at a public park or in the woods is the doggy equivalent of a Ph. D. There are many “grades” in between that must be mastered before attempting a doctorate level program. The final, most common reason a dog may not return to her owner when called is that it has simply not been rewarded. Worse, coming when called may have led to punishment in the past. It does not matter whether this punishment was intentional (such as yelling at your dog for coming too slowly) or unintentional (such as only calling your dog at the end of a play session, clipping on the leash and leaving the park, or calling your dog and throwing him right in the bathtub). The result is the same. The dog has learned that coming to you when you call for him generally means bad news for him or, at the very least, the end of fun. If your dog does not like to come to you when called, it is a sign there is something amiss in your relationship or that your dog does not know what you would like him to do when you call him. The good news is the solution is the same, regardless of the reason your dog

does not come when called. Systematically teach Fido what you would like him to do, and then reward him for doing it.

Training A Recall

It is our responsibility to teach dogs that training and fun are not mutually exclusive. In fact, training should be the most fun that can be had! That way, the dog will *want* to come when he's called. Dogs also need to know what we mean by our commands—that way we will not, as in the immortal Farside® cartoon, merely be yelling “Blah, blah, blah, Ginger!” at them.

When training recall, keep in mind the following “rules of thumb”: (1) Start small, with something very easy for the dog to do—she needs to have success in order to figure out what you want from her when you utter your request. (2) Reward, reward, reward your dog when she comes to you, with yummy treats, a favorite toy, and lots of praise. You want her to want to come to you and, remember, you're competing with lots of interesting and fun things. (3) Work up very gradually from a very easy recall to harder and harder ones, with more and more distractions. (4) Make sure that you recall your dog many times in a session, and then let her go back to the game/walk/activity. This way, she does not associate coming when called with ending the fun. (5) Never, ever, punish the dog when she does come back. If your dog gets to run and play while ignoring a request to come back, but gets punished when she does come back, then she quickly learns the obvious lesson: it's a big mistake to come back to you.

To train recall, first, *don't let the dog off leash in a public place until he reliably comes when called in the back yard, from out of sight anywhere in the house, on leash on walks in the neighborhood, and in class.* Begin with something quite easy: say, the back yard or even indoors. Start from fairly close to the dog when he's not terribly distracted, and say in a quiet, happy voice “come here.” Waggle a treat and back up a bit, when he comes to you, praise him and offer the treat. (For some dogs you may have to start quite close and on leash.) Then tell him to “go play” and let him go back to what he was doing for about 30 seconds, and call him over again. With lots of repetitions of these recall “relays,” the dog begins to learn that coming when called does not necessarily mean that the fun is over—it often means only a treat, a quick pat, and a return to the fun. Once he reliably comes from a short distance, begin to gradually increase the distance, and to work off leash if he had to be on leash to begin with. Practice this “low impact” recall in various safe places, e.g., a friend's fenced yard, a local tennis court after hours, or different parts of the house.

Now begin to add distractions, like toys nearby, or a good doggy friend around. When you first start adding distractions to the mix, you should start recalling fairly close to the dog. Gradually increase the distance until the dog reliably comes from afar, even with the most irresistible distractions. As soon as the dog comes when called, she can return to the toys, the new smells, or her friend for a bit, until she's called again for a treat and some

praise—then it’s back to the fun. It’s best when working with distractions to employ an accomplice. If the dog does not come when she’s called with a low, quiet voice the first time, immediately increase the volume to a loud, commanding (not angry) tone and demand “FIFI. Come Here!” When she comes after the second call, praise her and show her the treat but *do not give it to her*. Instead, back up a few steps and say in your soft voice “Come here.” When she comes over, praise her and give her the treat. This way she learns that, in order to earn the treat, she must come the first time she’s called. If she does not come even after hearing the commanding voice the second time, the accomplice should either leash up the other dog and end the play, or remove the treat or toy that was distracting the dog. Thus, the dog is not rewarded (with continued play time) for not responding to your request. She also learns that, if she does come over, the play quickly resumes, but if she doesn’t come over, the game ends immediately. Good reason for coming over quickly!

Gradually increase the number of distractions until the dog is ready for the biggest distraction of them all: the park. Remember to start very small again when this giant play land and smell-scape is presented to the dog for the first (and second, and third) time. Begin with the dog on a lead and fairly close. Only once he is reliably returning on leash can he be let off leash, and then immediately begin to do recall relays before he gets too involved in the fun. Call him over many times, reward and praise him, and release him back to fun and games while touring the park. Out of 50 recalls, then, only 1 will result in the leash and home — the vast majority will mean reward and back to play. With those odds, “coming when called” is most certainly worth the gamble. Plus, coming back to a happy owner with a yummy treat or friendly belly rub, even if it means leaving the park, is not such a bad deal.

Remember that the dog will need to keep practicing these recall relays every time she goes to the park. It’s quite easy for you to do, and lots of fun for the dog. Also remember that new territory is always more distracting, so a trip to a new park will mean starting back a step or 2 at first.

With practice and patience, the dog will reliably return whenever he’s called—which could save his life some time and will certainly make life easier for you.

It’s Still Not Working

There are 2 possibilities if the dog doesn’t seem to be “getting it” when she’s learning recall. One is that you are moving too far, too fast. Dogs differ in their ability to ignore distractions, and an individual dog may simply need to move more slowly when new distractions or greater distances are introduced.

The other possibility constitutes a behavioral emergency: the dog may be *afraid* to return to you when called. This is usually because, in the past, he’s been punished, sometimes severely, when he (finally) returned. If you think this is the case, reprimand yourself for having caused an awful rift in the relationship, and for having taught your dog to stay

far away when called. This relationship must be repaired, but it must be done carefully. You should also start very slowly and in safe circumstances, when the dog is not very distracted. Backing slowly away from the dog and speaking softly, sweetly ask the dog to “Come here.” Toss treats at every step—this way every step the dog takes toward you is rewarded. It may take a while before the dog gets near enough for you to be able to touch his collar. Once he does get near enough, gently and quickly touch the collar, reward immediately with a treat, and release. Repeat as often as necessary until your dog comes happily when called.

Escaping

The Problem

Dogs who escape fall into 2 general categories: those who escape from the back yard, and those who fly out the front door whenever an unwary guardian or guest leaves it open for too long (i.e. for more than 1 split second). In both of these cases, the most likely reason for the escape is that the dog is bored, and has decided to amuse herself by taking a nice jaunt through the neighborhood. It's always best to leave the dog inside when he's not supervised. Being confined outdoors without companionship or entertainment leaves a dog bored, lonely, and very susceptible to dangerous potential entertainment, like chasing cats or squirrels out of the yard, or wandering around looking for aimless fun. Most dogs are left outside while their guardians are away because they simply can't be trusted inside—they'll soil the house or chew everything in sight.

The Solution

The first line of defense against escaping, then, is to teach the dog toilet training (see "House Soiling") and chew toy training (see "Chewing") so that she can stay safely inside when her guardians are away.

Chew-toy training is also a large part of *environmental enrichment*. The best idea is always to offer a dog acceptable entertainment opportunities, teach him that these are the entertainment options he's allowed in the household, and show him what fun those options are. If the dog is provided with lots of stuffed chew toys and shown how to use them, he will naturally pick out his toys to play with when he's bored and needs a little entertainment.

If the dog must be left outside for reasons other than houstraining or chewing issues, she should be provided with a comfortable den, a dog run in which she has plenty of room to romp about, and a variety of toys—many of them stuffed chew toys—so that she can amuse herself by chewing on the approved toys, rather than by escaping.

Of course, all dogs need exercise each day, and it may be that the dog is escaping because she simply isn't getting enough exercise. Make sure that she gets at least 1 walk a day, preferably with an opportunity for some dog-dog interaction and some off-leash play time. Nothing beats the entertainment and exercise value of romping with other dogs!

It's Still Not Working

If the dog is an inside dog with plenty of fun toys to play with and a daily walk/play regimen, but is still escaping whenever he can slip through the door, the guardian may want to work on instilling a very strong recall (see "No Recall"). The idea here is that the

dog may still slip out when the opportunity arises, but *he will come back when called*. In order to “proof” the dog against the incredible allure of the great outdoors, you will have to use very high value rewards (liver treats, an adored toy, perhaps even anchovies) and very gradually work up from a situation in which the dog will return easily when called, to ever-so-slightly-more-difficult situations. For example, work from coming when called in the back yard without a leash, to coming from just a foot or 2 away on leash at the park; then to a few feet away, then more, then to coming when called from just a few feet away without the leash, etc. Gradually add in distractions so that the dog will come away from very interesting things when he is called. Eventually, work on recall (starting very small again) in the front yard, until the dog will return even as he’s headed across the front yard to explore new frontiers.

Reactive dogs—Behavior Problem Counselor Copy

Reactive: **a:** readily responsive to a stimulus **b:** occurring as a result of stress or emotional upset. The term applies regardless of whether the dog is reacting to people, other animals, or noises.

Reactivity is one of the most common problems in shelter dogs and generally occurs when a dog is either tethered, on leash, or behind a see-through barrier such as a window or a chain link fence. Reactivity problems are likely to be one of the top reasons recent adopters contact your shelter for help. Reactivity does not necessarily equal aggression, but it is scary, embarrassing, and frustrating to the average owner. It is very important to address the problem of reactivity in dogs from a shelter, because often the problem leads to a slippery slope of relationship deterioration between the dog and owner. Dogs that are reactive are less likely to get walked or taken on car rides, trips, or to the park. This leads to further lack of socialization, increased reactivity, and boredom (which leads to other problem behaviors such as barking, chewing, or digging.). All of the problems listed above can lead to a breakdown in the bond between dog and owner and eventually affect the quality and permanence of the adoption.

It is no surprise that shelter dogs tend to become reactive. They live in an environment that is both over-stimulating and thwarting at the same time. In most shelters, the dogs do not have enough downtime, environmental enrichment, or socialization to meet their needs. Reactivity can manifest as a symptom of all of the above.

A responsible shelter will attempt to prevent increased reactivity in their shelter dogs, but will also have a behavior modification handout ready for recent adopters who are dealing with the problem of reactivity. Below are some suggestions on how to both prevent and treat reactivity in shelter dogs.

Prevention

Downtime. If a dog does not get downtime—time to just settle and relax without worrying about the close proximity of other dogs, strangers, loud noises, and the offensive smell of kennel chemicals—their stress levels may increase. A stressed animal in a shelter is like a pressure cooker that is tightly sealed, with no steam valve for release. She needs an outlet. Quiet downtime in a “real life” room can alleviate some of the daily stress of being in the over-stimulating shelter environment.

In-Kennel Treatment of Reactivity

For dogs that are already reactive or do not seem to know how to settle down and relax, crate and chew toy training are essential. These dogs can be identified behaviorally by the

way they pace or vocalize virtually non-stop. This type of dog also often ignores even the most palatable chew toys and snacks that are left in her kennel, has chronic loose stool, and often rapidly drops weight while in the shelter environment. A dog in this state of being is both behaviorally and physiologically at risk, and will probably be difficult to adopt due to the way she acts in the kennel and her difficult time connecting with people. The best options for this type of dog are a foster situation or an office foster and crate/chew toy training regimen. At the very least, you should conduct a week-long crate-and chew toy-training program in the actual kennel environment.

The In-kennel Crate and Chew-Toy Training Settle Down Program

For the dog that needs to learn how to settle down and relax, or is simply far too over-stimulated in the shelter environment and cannot be fostered, the best option is to crate-train the dog to thwart acting out (stop the bad habit from happening), while simultaneously providing a calmer auto-shaping environment that sets the dog up for success (i.e., create new, preferred habits).

The dog should be settled into an appropriate sized crate inside her kennel run. The crate should be covered with a lightweight opaque sheet or blanket. The idea is to reduce both noise and visual stimulation and, therefore, stress. During the training program the dog should only receive food from stuffed chew toys such as Kongs, SquirrelDudes, or hollow sterilized cow femurs. There should be no bowl or hand-feeding during the entire process.

Measure out the dog's daily ration of kibble and soak it in a separate container from the rest of the Kong-stuffing materials so you can keep track of this specific dog's food intake. Stuff all of the day's ration into appropriate toys, and deliver them to the dog one at a time throughout the day, leaving one for overnight as well. The first day or 2 might be rough, with the dog still too agitated to settle down long enough to eat but, generally, by the 3d day most dogs are happily eating from the toys.

The idea is to provide an alternative energy outlet to the undesirable pacing, whining, barking, jumping, etc. The chew toys are the steam valves of the pressure cooker. Eating all necessary food out of the toy will also form positive associations, not only with the appropriate chew toys, but with the crate itself. If you're really lucky, some of the association may even extend to the shelter environment as well. However, even if she doesn't learn to like the shelter, the dog will learn how to self-soothe in an acceptable way (chew toy chewing), to develop a strong chew toy habit, and learn that the crate is a good, calm place to retreat to to get away from the chaos of shelter life.

It is essential to get the dog out of the crate for 4 toilet breaks each day, preferably outside, on an appropriate substrate such as grass. One of those daily breaks should also serve as training and human interaction time. During this short-term Settle Down Program, avoid revving the dog up with activities such as dog-dog play, out-of-control walks, or free time

in the kennel. All exercise and interaction should be productive and calm, such as manners training, playing fetch, or a controlled, leisurely walk.

If you are worried about crating impeding adoption, remember: this is a very temporary situation that will ultimately aid in the adoption and building transitional skills in a troubled dog who might otherwise sit in the shelter as an “undesirable” indefinitely. You may also choose to make a special kennel card with a photo of the dog, explaining the idea and process of crate and chew toy training (example included in 3). What an opportunity to educate the public!

Environmental Enrichment (outlets)

Environmental enrichment for shelter dogs is an excellent outlet for excess energy and stress. Training, chew toys, interactive toys, and field trips are examples of appropriate environmental enrichment. Please see Open Paw’s Minimal Mental Health Guidelines and Kong-stuffing handout for more information.

Socialization

Sometimes dogs become over-reactive around other dogs because, while they are inherently compelled to meet other dogs, it is not always possible or beneficial for dogs to meet in the shelter environment. Dog-dog socialization may alleviate some of the stress of the constant frustration that is intrinsic to shelter life. If a non-aggressive dog has been in the shelter for more than 1 month, it is time to set up regular dog-specific interaction. Please see Open Paw’s dog-dog socialization guidelines for more information.

Treatment of Low-Level Reactivity in the New Home—Behavior Problem Counselor Copy

Once a dog is in her new home, the best way to deal with low-level reactivity is to harness the power of classical conditioning. The goal is to change the dog's emotional response to the presence of the reactivity stimulus (other dogs, new people, cars, cats, etc.) from an over-excited (or *stress response*) to a calm and happy state of mind in the presence of the former trigger.

To accomplish this, it is essential to hand-feed the dog all of her meals while in specific training scenarios designed to reduce reactivity. All food is presented and offered only in the presence of the trigger. Whenever the stress trigger is present, we throw a party for the dog before she has a chance to react aversely.

Several times a day (at least 3 to 5 times) take the dog to an area where the problem stimulus can be easily and frequently located, and where you can control the distance from the trigger.

For instance, if the dog is reactive to other dogs while on leash walks, find a bench somewhere near (but not too near!) an entrance to a park where many dogs will pass by with their owners regularly; other options are the parking lot of a large pet supply store, or your local veterinary hospital.

Sit quietly with the dog at a distance where she can take notice of the other dogs passing by without reacting above mild interest. Stay at a distance where she will take food while looking at the other dogs. Feed her quietly while you both watch the world go by. The goal is for the dog to make the pleasant association between the presence of other dogs and her dinner, not to mention the calm attention of a relaxed human. If, at any point, the dog becomes stressed, stops taking food, or begins barking and lunging, you are above threshold and must create enough distance to get the dog's attention back.

If this is done properly, your dog will begin to anticipate a portion of her meal (food reward) at the first sign of another dog. When you get to the point where your dog looks at you when another dog comes into view you are well on your way to success. Good dog!

Do not move forward until the dog is completely comfortable, even bored with the current distance, and will look at you when another dog comes by as if to say "Hey, there's another dog coming. Great! May I have my reward now, please?" When your dog is comfortable, move forward just enough to start the process over again. Repeat the entire process until your dog can comfortably sit 4 to 6 feet away from the trigger without reacting.

When your dog is comfortable in close proximity to other dogs and can be in their presence without reacting negatively, it is time to sign up for a basic manners obedience class. There you'll both learn the communication skills necessary to strengthen and develop your bond.

When to Seek the Help of a Certified Professional Trainer

If the dog has ever snapped at or bitten anyone, cannot be in the presence of the trigger, even at 200 yards, or will not take food in the situation at all, even after 5 days of no other dining options, the problem most likely requires the assistance of a professional dog behavior problem counselor. Please go to www.APDT.com to find a Certified Pet Dog Trainer in your area.

Does Your Dog Bark, Lunge, or Growl at People or Other Dogs? (Or Shopping Carts, Garbage Trucks, and Bicycles?) Here's How You Can Treat Low-Level Reactivity in Your New Pet

The best way to deal with low-level reactivity is to harness the power of classical conditioning. The goal is to change the dog's emotional response to the presence of the reactivity stimulus (other dogs, new people, cars, cats, etc.) from an over-excited (or *stress response*) to a calm and happy state of mind in the presence of those dogs, people, cats, or cars (the *trigger*).

The first, *essential* step to accomplish this is HAND-FEEDING! That means no more food out of a bowl while you're doing this training. This training WILL NOT WORK unless your dog eats all of her meals out of your hand during reactivity training. You should hand-feed your dog her meals while in specific training scenarios designed to reduce reactivity. All food is presented and offered only in the presence of the trigger. Whenever the stress trigger is present, we throw a party for the dog *before* she has a chance to react aversely.

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Separation Anxiety

There's a lot of controversy surrounding the term "separation anxiety." It is definitely a real, diagnosable problem, although it is frequently over-diagnosed. Below are lists of probable and possible symptoms to help you determine if your dog has real separation anxiety, and some tips to help you solve simpler problems that are sometimes diagnosed as separation anxiety.

Probable Symptoms

These behaviors would indicate that your dog may, indeed, have separation anxiety:

- Not eating food or treats that are left out while you're away, especially if it's something they really love and they eat it right away when you get home (so they've clearly realized it was there but they were too stressed to eat while you were away)
- Destructive chewing, scratching, clawing at exit routes, such as blinds, doorways, windowpanes (if dog is indoors) or fence, gates and door to the house (if dog is outdoors). Is the destruction severe and intense? Many animals will paw at a crate door a bit, but will stop. If the exit route has sustained damage, or the animal's nails, pads, or teeth are worn down or the dog is panting from exhaustion, then it's an indication of real separation anxiety.
- Pacing, whining, panting, drooling, following you more than usual during your departure routine (e.g., every time you get your car keys out, put on your "work" shoes or make-up, or dry your hair—anything that serves as a "cue" that you're departing).
- Excessive whining, panting, drooling while you were gone (e.g., the neighbors tell you they heard the dog crying, the bedding in a crate might be soaked through, or the dog will still be exhibiting the stress behaviors when you return).
- Dilated pupils

Possible Symptoms

The following are possible indicators of separation anxiety, but are more likely indicators of simpler problems:

- Barking and whining. Is the dog sitting and barking at a window when people, dogs, squirrels, cats, etc. walk by? Is the barking or whining excessive (doesn't stop until you return or they become exhausted)? Remember that when you're first crate training or alone-training your dog, you should expect more barking or whining

initially. Always leave a stuffed chew toy or several stuffed chew toys when your dog is left alone; this will help you determine if the dog is merely barking out of boredom or if he really has separation anxiety. If your dog is barking recreationally, the stuffed chew toy should eliminate the problem within a few weeks.

- House-soiling. House-soiling alone is never separation anxiety. You must see at least 1 other behavior from the “probable” category to consider this separation anxiety. See our handout on “houstraining” to help your dog learn house manners.
- Chewing. If your dog is not specifically targeting and destructively chewing exit ways, then she is more likely chewing for recreation. Leave some stuffed chew toys whenever your dog is left alone. If your dog is chewing recreationally, after a few weeks she should learn to chew the chew toys rather than other items. Also see our handout on houstraining to learn more about chew toy training.

If you are ONLY seeing the behaviors in the “possible” category, try other solutions first. A good test is to leave an extremely tasty treat for the dog—a meaty bone, fish—whatever is your dog’s favorite thing to eat—go through your regular routine and leave. Drive around for 5 minutes. If the treat is still there when you come home, and your dog has any of the other indicators listed, then your dog may have separation anxiety.

If you are still unsure whether or not your dog has true separation anxiety, or if your dog does have 1 or more “probable” symptoms, the good news is that it can be treated by a professional. Because the treatment is complex and very specific, we strongly suggest that you enlist the help of a professional rather than attempting to do it by yourself. Below is a list of reputable resources.

To Find a Trainer

The Association of Pet Dog Trainers

To find a suitable, dog-friendly professional trainer in your area, go to www.apdt.com

Additional Resources

The following books are meant to be an additional resource, **not** a solution in and of themselves. Please seek professional help to treat separation anxiety.

These books can be purchased at www.dogwise.com.

Canine Separation Anxiety Workbook, James O’Hare

I’ll Be Home Soon, Patricia McConnell

Dogs Home Alone, Roger Abrantes

Dogs are From Neptune, Jean Donaldson

How to Stuff a Chew Toy

Stuffing chew toys is another wonderful thing we can do for our dogs. By stuffing hollow toys with the dogs' daily ration, we help them to settle down quietly with an exciting project and develop a strong preference for those toys (so that, when they are bored at home, they will chew on the toys rather than the sofa or the most expensive shoes in the house).

How to "Stuff It":

1. Get a hollow toy made of a natural product, like bone or rubber.
2. Soak a portion of the dog's daily ration overnight, so that it expands and becomes mushy.
3. Smear honey around the inside of the toy. This makes the toy even more delicious, and also acts as an antibacterial agent.
4. Fill the chew toy just shy of the end with soaked kibble.
5. Seal the end(s) of the toy with some wet dog food or peanut butter.
6. Present the toy to your dog.

Once the dog has gotten very good at chewing the toy, you can begin freezing it. Not only does it take the dog longer to get all of the food out (giving the dog a longer period of calm, engaged activity), but the cold is very soothing on the teeth and gums.

Isn't it mean/teasing the dog to make it so hard to get her food?

On the contrary, it's much kinder than giving him/her all her food at once in a bowl. In the wild, much of an animal's time is spent finding food. If you give an animal food in a bowl, eating takes just a minute or 2 in the morning and/or evening, then s/he has nothing to do for the rest of the day. Giving food in a chew toy gives your dog an activity that is engaging but calming, and keeps him/her quietly busy for a good amount of time. Bored dogs that are fed out of bowls quickly gobble their food, then entertain themselves by barking, pacing, whining or through destructive activities. Dogs who eat out of stuffed chew toys settle down happily for 20 or 40 minutes for a good chew and then, relaxed and sleepy, take a nap.

Chew toys stuffed with food are obviously the most alluring objects around to chew on, and the dogs quickly develop a strong preference for those toys. When they need a chew during the day while you are absent, they'll seek out their chew toys rather than the myriad inappropriate objects they could chew on in the house. Good dog! (Of course, a new dog should never be given the run of the house until s/he is fully trained).

Chapter 5

Volunteer Coordinator Guide

Includes the following

- List of tips for recruiting and retaining volunteers
- Open Paw orientation script and outline
- Volunteer handout
- Introduction script and “Cheat Sheets” for each volunteer level
- Guidelines for volunteer trainers for conducting levels proficiency tests
- Template for instructor feedback for volunteer levels proficiency tests
- Sample schedules for volunteer orientation and levels trainings
- Sample sign-up sheets for levels training

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers

Volunteers are the key to successful implementation of Open Paw in the shelter—but recruiting and, more importantly, retaining volunteers can be a challenge for the average shelter.

To some extent, merely offering the Open Paw program for volunteers will improve participation. In our experience, members of the public are very excited about the innovative shelter training techniques we offer, and about the opportunities to transform shelter animals’ lives and futures. Because volunteers learn so much about behavior and training and, because there are so many fun things to do at each level, public interest in volunteering and volunteer retention generally jumps up immediately in a new Open Paw shelter.

Volunteer recruitment and retention remains an ongoing challenge, though, in any shelter. Below are some tips for recruitment opportunities and retention techniques based on our experience in introducing Open Paw to different types of shelters.

Recruitment Resources

1. Nearby high schools and colleges are often wonderful places to recruit volunteers. It's true that many students move after they graduate, but a 2-to-4-year retention for volunteers isn't bad at all! Students often have fairly flexible schedules as well, and are often able to volunteer during the daytime at least 1 or 2 days a week. Some colleges also have service fraternities, sororities, or clubs that you can contact for instant recruits.
2. Craigslist and other local Internet clearinghouse sites.
3. Try to generate contacts with the local press. Small, local papers are often looking for stories, and a short announcement asking for volunteers at the end of a feature can generate a lot of interest in volunteering.
4. Post notices on bulletin boards at local parks (be sure to check for permissibility from the park service).
5. Set up a small table at local venues, like farmers' markets, street fairs, and festivals. Shelters tend to ignore venues that can't accommodate animals, but a few pictures of the shelter animals, some literature on the Open Paw program, and a sign-up sheet for potential volunteers could also generate some great opportunities for recruitment.
6. Local training clubs or breed clubs are full of animal-savvy people already interested in animal-related activities.
7. You may be able to set up an agreement with a local college whereby students get internship credit for volunteering at the shelter. This is ideal, in that the students get a grade for their work, so they're likely to be more dedicated to it.

Retention

1. Organization is crucial. Work out a system and schedule for orientations, training, and supervised volunteer hours immediately, and make sure that front-line staff is fully informed of the system. If potential volunteers can't find out how to sign up for orientations, if they come for an orientation and things are disorganized, if they hear conflicting information from different people, or if they come for a training session that is suddenly cancelled or changed, they'll be frustrated and disillusioned from the start.

2. Regular communication is also a key factor in keeping your volunteers happy and motivated. Ask for e-mail addresses on volunteer forms and add them immediately to your address list. Just a simple e-mail update letting them know which animals have been adopted over that month, and what upcoming events you're planning, and thanking them for their help will help them to feel appreciated and 'in the loop.'
3. Personal contact is also very helpful. We recommend some kind of semi-permanent name tags for the volunteers, so that staff members can learn their names quickly and address volunteers by name regularly. The feeling that there's a personal contact with the shelter not only makes them feel better about coming, it makes them feel more personally obligated to the shelter as well.
4. Scheduling helps. If possible, ask all new volunteers to commit to a certain day and time, at least 2 times a month. Forming a habit of volunteering makes it much more likely that they'll continue to come. Naturally, you can be flexible with their commitment when their available hours change, but it really helps if they get into a habit of coming regularly right from the beginning. Also, a specific commitment feels more obligating than a general promise to come in 'when I can.'
5. If possible, have the shelter itself open during "realtor's hours" (so that it's easier for the general public to visit), and have volunteer hours extend even further than that. Weekdays are the most difficult time for shelters to attract volunteers but, if the shelter is open in the evening, the animals can still get their quota of visits every day.
6. Invest in training your volunteers thoroughly to insure they are helpful and not a hindrance to employees.
7. Be sure that the staff understands how helpful volunteers can be, and understands that they can make use of the volunteers. Many volunteers become discouraged because they get the feeling from the staff that they're in the way and a pest—but when the staff realizes how much well trained volunteers can contribute, their friendliness and good cheer can do wonders for volunteer commitment!

Orientation and Training

Introduction

Hello, and welcome to Open Paw! (Introduce self). At this facility, the staff and volunteers do all that they can to make this a great place for the animals to stay. But wouldn't it be even better if the animals never had to be in a shelter in the first place—if they had stayed in their happy homes with a loving family? Open Paw is a non-profit organization dedicated to decreasing the surrender and abandonment of unwanted animals by making sure that they don't become unwanted. We accomplish this in three ways:

1. by educating prospective pet owners before they get their pets
2. by providing practical hands-on experience and training for shelter staff and volunteers, and for prospective and existing pet owners, and
3. by promoting the adoption of Minimum Mental Health Requirements for shelter animals.

Owner Education

Most shelter animals were once perfectly normal, well behaved, loveable and loved puppies and kittens. Yet many are surrendered to shelters or abandoned when they are 6 months to 2 years old. Why have these animals become unwanted? In most cases, because of behavior, temperament or training problems, all of which could easily have been prevented. Many of these problems are already well established before 3 months of age—that is, before owners normally come into contact with pet professionals who could help them.

The solution is to *educate prospective pet owners before they get their pets*. By teaching people what to expect and what to watch for, and teaching them variety of user-and-animal-friendly training techniques and preventive measures, we can help people to raise their new puppies and kittens into perfect dogs and cats. Thus, animals are happily kept in their original homes and many fewer animals end up in shelters. Let's focus on preventing the problem.

To accomplish this, Open Paw advertises and distributes FREE educational materials to prospective and existing pet owners and veterinary students. And we offer the Open Paw Community Lecture Series, an informative, fun, and FREE series of talks by renowned behaviorists and trainers giving crucial advice to potential and existing pet owners in the community (if applicable to your shelter). By championing this preventive approach, we ensure that animals do not become unwanted in the first place.

Community Educational Centers

Day-to-day shelter operations usually consist of the collection, routine care, and re-homing of unwanted cats and dogs. But shelters don't have to be limited to that role! Why don't we make shelters much more involved and active in their communities—why don't we make shelters into places that focus on education and prevention, places where potential and existing pet owners can learn about training so that they can avoid the tragedy of surrendering a pet?

Rather than limiting shelter operations to the routine care of resident animals, Open Paw has devised protocols so that the process of rehabilitating and re-homing the shelter animals can be used as an educational opportunity for prospective and existing pet owners in the community. Open Paw's shelter program provides practical experience and education to shelter staff and volunteers (prospective pet owners themselves) and, by using the Open Paw program in the animals' daily care, staff and volunteers model easy, animal-friendly training and management techniques to the visiting community. Thus, the very process of providing daily care provides practical education for prospective and existing pet owners.

You are a vital part of the community education center!

Minimum Mental Health Requirements

As a volunteer, the single most important thing you'll do is to help the animals form positive associations to all kinds of people. This will help make them more calm, quiet and friendly when people approach the kennel, which will help them to get adopted, and will make them better socialized to people once they're out in the "real world," so they stay adopted. You'll learn how to teach the animals fundamentally important skills, like friendliness and handle-ability. You'll learn how to teach cats how to cuddle without using their claws or dogs how to walk on a loose leash and to greet people politely. In sum, you'll learn how to teach the animals the skills they'll need to get along well in a domestic environment, so that they can impress the heck out of potential adopters, and settle peacefully into their new homes.

Many animals have behavioral baggage when they come to the shelter and, sadly, many animals rapidly deteriorate after only a short time in the shelter environment. Shelter animals often become de-housetrained, hyperactive, noisy, anxious, and lonely. If they do not become intimidated when strangers walk up to their kennels, their delight and excitement at seeing people is expressed as uncontrollable exuberance. Unless a vigorous socialization and training program is in effect, the animals—particularly puppies and kittens—become less and less adoptable with each day that they stay.

Open Paw has created a set of Minimum Mental Health Requirements to provide for the essential needs of sheltered animals, specifically regarding their adoptability, comfort, and

needs for companionship, entertainment, and education. You are a crucial part of providing that comfort, education, entertainment, and training.

Open Paw is a non-profit organization separate from this facility. Its shelter program can be adopted by any shelter, municipal facility, or rescue group that is dedicated to changing the focus of sheltering animals.

(Ask if there are any questions so far.)

How Animals Learn

Animals are very efficient in their behavior. If a behavior is inherently pleasurable (eating, playing, chasing), or if it gets something pleasurable for the animal (like food, attention or interaction), the animal will display that behavior more and more often. If a behavior is not pleasurable, or if it does not work to obtain something pleasurable, the animal will use that behavior less and less. Whenever you interact with an animal, you're constantly giving her feedback about what works to get pleasurable things and what doesn't work. If a dog jumps up and gets attention, even if the attention is that you push him down, then he knows that jumping "works"—that is, it gets him attention. If a cat play-bites and you don't end the game, then he knows that play-biting "works" — the fun continues.

The good news about this is that we can easily use the way animals learn to "sculpt" their behavior, by consistently rewarding the desirable behaviors, and ignoring or interrupting the undesirable behaviors. Gradually, you will see the animal behaving more and more in desirable ways, and less and less in undesirable ways.

But what about, for example, dogs who jump all the time? Well, that's just it: no dog ever jumps literally *all the time*. Even with a dog that jumps a lot, there's a moment when she *isn't* jumping, so reinforce that moment with attention and some food! If you don't like what she's doing, show her what you *would* like her to do.

Repetition and patience are the keys to animal training. There's never a magic moment when the animal understands the meaning of our requests. Animals gradually become conditioned, through lots of repetition, that certain behaviors in certain situations will or will not "pay off."

We use these principles—rewarding desirable behaviors, and ignoring undesirable ones or removing rewards when the animal behaves in an undesirable way—in Open Paw training, and do not use physical punishment. Animals make associations with you and with the situation every time you interact with them. Thus, an unfortunate side effect of using punishment to try to train animals is that, while they *may* learn to respond to cues, they may *also* form negative associations to you, to the situation, to people or to training. Furthermore, often you don't get the result you wanted from trying to use punishment to train. Take, for example, a dog jumping on people. It's not a desirable behavior to people

but, in the dog-dog world it is an appeasing, friendly greeting gesture. If you use punishment to try to get the dog to stop jumping, you have to use a severe enough punishment the first time, that it effectively outweighs the positive associations of the friendly greeting gesture. If the punishment is not severe enough, then you are not effectively damping that behavior. You may even unintentionally be rewarding it. Furthermore, some dogs may try to stop the punishment by offering an appeasement gesture rather than by stopping the undesirable behavior—so the result might be more jumping, rather than less.

So, using punishment to train is pretty inefficient, difficult to do correctly and, in order to be effective, must be severe. A much more efficient, friendlier way to train is to teach the dog a desirable, incompatible behavior; ask yourself, “if this is ‘wrong,’ what is ‘right’? In this case, we might train the dog to sit to greet people.

(Ask for questions.)

Levels of Training

We teach our volunteers training techniques in four levels: OP Cats or OP Dogs Level 1, 2, 3 and 4. There are also several specialties you can train for once you’ve passed OP 4. Specialties include working with animals with special behavior needs, doing adoption counseling, bathing/grooming and mobile adoption.

Why Do We Have Several Levels of Training?

We train you in stages for several reasons:

1. Dog and cat training is a VERY complex undertaking. We can’t make you into a master trainer overnight but, because we have divided the training into 4 user-friendly levels, you can be up and working with dogs or cats on the very first day, if you want to.
2. The things you learn first are the MOST IMPORTANT THINGS you will learn in animal training. The methods and ideas you learn in Open Paw Level 1 are the underlying principles for all the training we do in the program, no matter how complex. These methods are very powerful, and will affect the animals in the most important way possible: by making them feel comfortable in their environment and with people, and by making the environment itself less stressful through teaching the dogs to shush. (Barking, and hearing dogs barking, raises blood pressure and heart rates and contributes to greater stress and illness for both dogs and cats). It is also vitally important that you understand these basic principles before you do any further training. The particular methods will only make sense if the underlying principles make sense, and the best way to understand these foundational principles is to use them and to see them in action.

3. **For your SAFETY and for the SAFETY of the animals.** We work hard to make the shelter as comfortable for the animals as possible, but any shelter environment will always be more stressful for an animal than all but the worst home environment. Because they are unusually stressed, it will take less for these animals to react than if they were pet animals in a home. Also, animals will react differently to different people—that's one reason why our volunteers are so important to us, but it also means that we all have to be cautious.

By practicing at every level before you move on to the next, you not only help to lower the stress level of the animals by performing the critical methods of Level 1 training for them, but you also learn essential skills such as recognizing animal body language and defusing potential reactions. At each stage in the training you are compromising your safety in a new way. Consequently, **we must insist that you meet a certain level of proficiency at each level before moving on to the next.** If you are a professional animal trainer, or if you have a lot of experience in training and feel confident at any or all of the levels, you may ask for a personal proficiency test at any time to move through the levels more quickly.

Demonstration

(Tell them how to sign up for further training.)

(Split class into those who want to work with dogs and those who want to work with cats)

Demonstrations—Dogs

Open Paw Dogs Level 1

Now we'll learn Open Paw Level 1. At the end of this lesson, you'll all be Open Paw Level 1 volunteers, and can work with the animals today.

In Open Paw Level 1, we use 2 different training methods: Forming Positive Associations/Classical Conditioning and Reward Training.

Forming Positive Associations/Classical Conditioning

In "forming positive associations," we train the dogs and cats to associate something they already like very much (dinner!) with something we want them to like: being in their kennel, and having people approach the kennel. The Open Paw dogs in this facility are hand-fed all their kibble; they do not eat out of a bowl, but take all their food from people's hands or from a stuffed chew toy. Because a great many people will toss in or hand-feed a piece of kibble to the dog as they approach the kennel, the animal will progressively form a positive association with all sorts of people, and will look forward to seeing people approach the kennel. Because an association has been established between people and kibble, the dog responds to people in anticipation of being hand-fed. As people approach the kennel, the animal will no longer become stressed at the sight of an approaching stranger. The dog will then be less inclined to bark, lunge, growl or hide. He'd much rather approach with a happy face and a wagging tail!

Because you're only trying to get the dog to form a positive association to people approaching the kennel, you are going to give the dog a piece of kibble **no matter what she's doing when you approach**. In "forming positive associations," we're only trying to establish a positive emotional reaction in the dog; we're NOT trying to get any particular "behavior" from the dog. This is the most important thing we'll do in our training. If the dog is alarmed every time she sees someone approaching the kennel, we obviously can't do any other training with her. She needs to be relaxed and comfortable for her own health, and for any further training.

Here's what you do in classical conditioning (demonstrate classical conditioning as you talk the method through.)

Reward Training

In reward training, we sculpt the dog's behavior by rewarding things we like with attention, praise and a piece of kibble, and ignoring things we don't like. Dogs (like most of us most of the time) perform certain behaviors because they're rewarding in some way or

another: either because the behavior itself is rewarding (like chasing a stick or eating) or because the behavior works to get the dog something that's rewarding (like attention, play time or food). The more times a certain behavior works to get the dog attention and a piece of kibble, the more likely it is that she will repeat that behavior in the near future. And the more the dog tries out a behavior and it **fails** to get attention or kibble, the less likely it is that she'll repeat it in the future. As lots of different volunteers continue to reward behaviors like approaching in a friendly way, making eye contact, being quiet, sitting or lying down, the dog will begin to offer those behaviors to anyone who comes up to the kennel. As lots of volunteers continue to ignore behaviors like jumping up, barking and lunging, the dog will offer those behaviors less and less and, eventually, the dogs will stop lunging and barking altogether in their kennel.

As you do reward training, simply walk quietly up to the kennel and let the dog offer behaviors to you. Then pick any desirable behaviors to reward. Don't ask for any particular behavior; the dog may not know the voice command and then you and the dog may both become frustrated. Also, don't have a single particular behavior in mind; this often stops you from picking up on perfectly adorable behaviors because you're concentrating on one behavior in particular. Just watch the dog and reward any adoptable behaviors you see.

Another very important thing you can do is to actively train the dogs to "shush". First, put the barking on command, so that you can work with the dog when she doesn't particularly want to bark. To do this, ask the dog to "speak" and then make a noise (knocking on a piece of wood is usually an effective noise) that will set her off barking. Ask her to "shush" and waggle a very tempting treat under her nose. Once she settles down and shushes, praise her and give her the treat. Repeat until she begins to bark immediately upon hearing the request to speak. (You can also use the dogs' potty walks in this exercise: pick one dog, and simply time the exercise so that you ask the dog to speak right before each of the other dogs is taken out for his or her potty walk. The sight and sound of another dog being taken out for a walk almost always sets the dogs to barking.)

After she is barking reliably upon request, ask the dog to bark when she is fairly calm, and praise her for doing so; then ask her to "shush" and waggle a treat in front of her nose. When she stops to sniff, offer the treat and praise the dog.

Repeat this sequence many times. No matter how long it took the dog to shush the first time, it will get shorter and shorter with repetition! Once the dogs get very good as shushing when they don't particularly want to bark, it becomes much easier for them to shush upon request when they are actively barking at something.

(Demonstrate reward training.)

Chew-toy Stuffing

Stuffing chew toys is another wonderful thing we can do for the animals in the shelter. By stuffing hollow toys with part of the dogs' daily ration, we help them to settle down

quietly with an exciting project and develop a strong preference for those toys (so that, when they are bored at home, they will chew on the toy rather than the sofa or the most expensive shoes in the house).

To stuff a chew toy, start with a hollow toy made of a natural product, like bone or rubber. Soak a portion of the dog's daily ration overnight, so that it expands and becomes mushy. Squish the soaked kibble into the chew toy and seal the end(s) of the toy with some wet dog food or peanut butter (this part is optional). You can also smear honey around the inside of the toy before you stuff it. Honey makes the toy all the more delicious, and also acts as an antibacterial agent.

Once the dog has gotten very good at chewing the toy, you can begin freezing it. Not only does it take the dog longer to get all of the food out (giving the dog a longer period of calm, engaged activity), but the cold is very soothing on the teeth and gums.

(Ask for questions.)

(Options: either very quickly describe each of the coming levels, or, if there's time, quickly demonstrate the forthcoming levels. Outlines for demos of levels 2-5 are below.)

Open Paw Dogs Level 2

Unfortunately, one of the fastest ways for a dog to convince a person not to adopt her is by offering a friendly greeting to that person. This is because happy, exuberant greeting behavior to a dog looks like scary, intimidating behavior to a human—the dog jumps up, paws or mouths, and maybe even barks loudly. This is “hyper” activity. The dog is as happy and excited as she can be, but the person is thinking, “No way could I live with this!”

Fortunately, we can use the training ideas we learned in Open Paw Level 1 to teach the dog to greet people in a socially desirable way. Potential adopters are very impressed when they see the dog they like sitting quietly and politely to be dressed in her collar and lead, and sitting again to exit the kennel. Now they're thinking, “Wow! What a great dog!”

The goal of Level 2 is to desensitize the dog to people entering the kennel and to getting her collar and lead on. This makes the dog much less likely to get overexcited and do things like jump, mouth and paw. At Level 2 we continue to use classical conditioning and reward training—only now, the reward is **you**. You will reward calm, quiet sitting by opening the kennel door and coming in to the kennel, and by putting the dog's collar on. As you repeat the steps of Level 2, you are also conditioning the dog to learn that getting her collar on is not as exciting as she thought. Sure, it's still rewarding, but it doesn't necessarily mean that a walk is forthcoming. Thus, it becomes easier and easier for the dog to behave properly at the sight of a person with a collar and lead. Not only does this make the dog more adoptable, it also makes her much easier to get ready for a walk once

she's in a home: instead of trying to put a lead onto a dog doing her best imitation of a jumping bean, the owner can easily get the quietly sitting dog ready to go.

Remember that opening the kennel latch, opening the kennel door, going into the kennel and putting the dog's collar and lead on are all rewarding for the dog. Since you are giving a reward by doing any of these things, you should only do them if the dog is behaving himself and being polite—that is, sitting and being quiet.

Here's what you should do (demonstrate Level 2 as you talk through the method.)

(ask for questions)

Open Paw Dogs Level 3

In Open Paw Level 3, we'll continue to use classical conditioning and reward training techniques. We'll also learn reward and lure reward training—the same training used for killer whales, grizzly bears and most working dogs (like search and rescue dogs). In Open Paw Dog 3, you'll take the dogs outside their kennel and train them in a designated area.

In Open Paw Level 3 you'll learn how to:

1. use lure-reward training to teach the dogs basic obedience skills like sit, down, stand and watch
2. check the dogs safely for sensitive spots and desensitize the dogs to being touched in those spots
3. teach the dogs to take food and toys politely and to play tug according to the rules
4. use play as a reward in training, and
5. teach the dogs how to greet people politely!

Lure Reward Training

In lure-reward training, you use the dog's love of kibble or toys to literally lure him into the body position you want to teach. Essentially, the dog's nose will follow the kibble or toy wherever you move it. So, if you start with some kibble right in front of the dog's muzzle and slowly move it up and over his head (keeping it close to the top of his head, otherwise he'll jump for it), the dog's muzzle will follow the kibble up. Since it is almost impossible to do this standing up, he'll automatically sit!

Here's how you do lure-reward training. (Demonstrate lure reward training as you talk through the techniques.)

Handling/Progressive Desensitization

In handling/progressive desensitization, we carefully learn what, if any, parts of its body the dog is uncomfortable having touched, and teach him to tolerate and even enjoy being handled. This is tremendously important because, in a home environment, there are many situations in which the dog will be touched, and even accidentally stepped or pulled on. A dog who has been taught to like being handled, even roughly, will adapt well to these situations; but a dog who can't stand, for example, to have her tail touched, is in a potentially explosive situation if a 3-year-old visits (or if Dad accidentally steps on her tail on his way to get the phone). By classically conditioning the dogs to like being handled (that is, by making a positive association to being touched), we better prepare them for the kinds of things they'll face all the time in their home environment: going to the vet's, getting their nails clipped, being groomed, having children and strangers approach and pet (and sometimes pull) them, having their ears and teeth checked, etc. If they are comfortable with these activities, think how much happier and safer their lives are!

Here's how we do handling/progressive desensitization (demonstrate as you talk through these techniques): Some of the most common sensitive areas for dogs are their paws, ears, rump, tail, muzzle and collar. An easy way to tell immediately if the dog does not like to be touched in a certain spot is to hold a hand full of kibble in front of the dog's muzzle while you carefully brush your other hand over her body. If the dog stops worrying at the kibble (licking, nibbling, nudging etc.) at any point, you may have touched a sensitive spot. You will learn how to address these sensitive spots in your Open Paw Level 3 training.

Open Fist/Closed Fist (at this point you may have the dog on a long line, anchored)

This exercise (also sometimes called Off! or leave it/take it) is another immensely important part of the dog's education. In open fist/closed fist, we teach the dog that she may only take something if a person tells her she may, and that she must release whatever she has if a person tells her to do so.

Here's how we do open fist/closed fist. (Demonstrate as you talk through these techniques.)

Tug-of-War (or Chase-and-Fetch) Rules and Play in Training

Tug-of-war is so much fun, and a wonderful way to teach the dog a whole bunch of important things! 1). By teaching the dog the tug-of-war rules, we continue to make a safer dog who is happy to have strangers and children approach his toys and is happy to release the toys on command, and who never puts his teeth on skin. 2). Once the dog knows the tug-of-war rules, he can release tons of energy by happily playing. 3). We can now use play as a reward in training, so that now you have double the fun to offer the dog for good

behavior! 4). And, by combining play with short training interludes, you teach the dog how to settle down quickly, even when he's very excited.

Here's how we establish the tug-of-war rules. (Demonstrate as you talk through these techniques.)

Once the dog is good at following the rules, you may begin to really get into the game. Play for a few minutes at a time, taking frequent breaks to settle the dog down and do some basic obedience, then begin the game again as a reward for good behavior.

Polite Greeting

Unfortunately, jumping to greet is one of those places where natural dog etiquette and human etiquette clash! In the dog world, jumping up to greet is a polite sign of enthusiasm, welcome, and even appeasement. Of course, to humans, having a 60 lb. dog jumping on them when they come in the door is less than pleasing.

In this exercise you'll learn a productive way to teach the dog to sit or stand quietly to greet people. We use reward training to teach him that sitting or standing quietly gets attention and kibble, while jumping up means no attention and no kibble (in fact, it makes the potential kibble and attention go away)!

Here's how we teach the dog to greet people politely. (Demonstrate as you talk through these techniques.)

(Ask for questions.)

Open Paw Dogs Level 4

Open Paw Level 4 focuses on walking the dog outside in the real world, integrating training with really big rewards such as exercise, ranging (exploring around freely, so long as the dog does not pull on the lead) and sniffing. We are not *just* "taking the dog for a walk," but rather teaching the dog how to walk on a loose lead. This is very impressive to potential adopters.

(Demonstrate the 4 methods we use to teach the dogs to walk on a loose lead.)

Open Paw Dogs Level 5

We have lots of great opportunities to do specialty work with the dogs once you've passed Open Paw Dogs Level 4:

1. Working with "project" dogs (these are dogs who have particular behavior or training issues that need to be addressed quickly and intensively)

2. Adoption counseling
3. Teach other volunteers at each level of training
4. Mobile adoption
5. Making adoption callbacks (talking to adopters and advising them about their new pups)
6. Grooming and bathing the dogs
7. Being a counselor at Adopters Anonymous

Demonstrations—Cats

Open Paw Cats Level 1

Forming Positive Associations/Classical Conditioning

In "forming positive associations," we train the cats to associate something they already like very much (food, petting, and playtime with toys) with something we want them to like: being in their kennels or rooms and having people approach. Because Level 1 cats are "Easy to Handle", they usually do not have to be convinced that people are good to be around, but we want them to maintain that attitude. They also seem to have adjusted well to the shelter setting and appear to be at ease (though, of course, we do not know what they are thinking!). Offering food by hand, petting them or engaging them in play with toys help them associate people with good things. Here's what you do in classical conditioning: (demonstrate as you talk the method through).

Reward Training

In reward training, we sculpt the cat's behavior by rewarding things we like through attention, praise, playtime with toys, and food, and by ignoring things we don't like. Cats (like most of us most of the time) perform certain behaviors because the behavior itself is rewarding (like eating, grooming or chasing a wad of paper), or because the behavior works to get the cat something that's rewarding (like getting a head rub or a back scratch, or getting that tasty treat). The more times a certain behavior works to get the cat attention and a piece of kibble, the more likely it is that she will repeat that behavior in the near future. And the more the cat tries out a behavior that fails to produce attention or food, the less likely it is that she'll repeat it in the future. As lots of different volunteers continue to reward such behaviors as approaching in a friendly manner, making eye contact, head rubbing, reaching out a friendly paw, and purring, the cat will begin to offer those behaviors to anyone who comes up to the kennel or enters the room. As lots of volunteers continue to ignore behaviors like hissing, growling, swatting, and cowering in the back of the kennel, the cat will offer those behaviors less and less and, eventually, stop them altogether. As you do reward training, simply walk up to the kennel or enter the community cat room and let the cat offer behaviors to you. Then choose any desirable behaviors to reward. Don't request a particular behavior. The cat may not know the voice command and both you and the cat may become frustrated. Also, don't have a single particular behavior in mind since this may stop you from picking up on cute behaviors because you're concentrating on a certain behavior. Just watch the cat and reward any adoptable behaviors you see.

(Demonstrate reward training.)

Open Paw Cats Level 2

A cat that cowers at the back of his cage or in the corner of his room at an animal shelter is more likely to be overlooked by someone in search of a new feline companion. Cats that exhibit fearful behavior could be afraid of people or the environment. The goals of working with Level 2 cats (fearful at being handled) is to help cats feel good about people they encounter, to feel more at ease in the shelter setting and, eventually, to show their best selves to the public. Classical conditioning using food helps to accomplish these goals. Reward techniques using food, praise, and playtime with toys are used to reinforce any shows of bravery, until a confident presentation by the cat is the norm. Work at this level requires extreme patience and the ability to move at the cat's pace. Calm and minimal body movement is necessary. In fact, reading silently or aloud to the cat while sitting some distance away is one of the early activities employed to desensitize the fearful cat to human presence and the sound of a voice.

Open Paw Cats Level 3

Some people don't mind when a cat play-bites, plays with her claws unsheathed, or kicks with her hind feet when someone attempts to give her a friendly petting. Nonetheless, there are those people who do. In fact, a percentage of the cats that exhibit these behaviors have likely found themselves homeless and in animal shelters because of their behavioral tendencies. Open Paw Level 3 for Cats (difficult and boisterous but safe to handle) focuses on ignoring the identified behaviors we don't like, specifically play-biting, play-scratching, and play-kicking, in order to relegate those "games" to the category of "no longer any fun." When the cat responds to handling in these undesirable ways, the person immediately "plays dead mouse" (ceases physical movement). After a period of waiting, the handling resumes. Next, by rewarding even the shortest cessation of these undesirable play behaviors, we aim to gradually increase the amount of time a cat will allow handling while remaining calm. The goal is to shape behavior so play-biting, play-scratching, or play-kicking is only a vague memory. Consistency, timing, and patience are essential for success in changing the behavior of Level 3 cats.

Open Paw Cats Level 4

In Open Paw Level 4, you'll work with cats who are behaviorally lovely, but more difficult to adopt because of issues like coat color, age, or medical issues. You'll teach these cats fun and funny tricks and behaviors that will help them catch the eye of potential adopters—and thus help them get adopted more quickly—and keep them occupied and engaged during their stay in our shelter.

Open Paw Cats Level 5

Open Paw Level 5 involves working with cats that aggressively bite or scratch (difficult and dangerous to handle). Wearing protective clothing and gloves is a prerequisite. Classical conditioning methods using food and catnip will be used to encourage these cats to feel that people are a good thing. Attention to body posture and movement is important as desensitization techniques and lure-reward training are employed to attempt even the slightest handling. Extreme caution will be necessary at this level.

Volunteer Orientation Handout—Dogs

Hello, and welcome to Open Paw! Open Paw is a revolutionary animal-and-people education program founded in January of 2000, designed to help stop the surrender and euthanasia of unwanted dogs and cats.

Every year, millions of dogs and cats are surrendered to animal shelters, most of them for easily predictable, easily preventable reasons like chewing inappropriate objects, barking or clawing, or lack of housetraining. It's not that their guardians were bad or lazy; it's just that most people don't know what to expect from their new dog or cat, and most don't know how to train their new animal to express their animal behavior appropriately in a home. Furthermore, once the animal goes into the shelter, even in a very good shelter, they often become de-trained in many ways. This means that the new guardian is faced with behavior difficulties when they adopt the animal, and the guardian *doesn't know where to go to find out how to deal with the problems*. Many then feel forced to surrender a beloved animal back to the shelter.

Open Paw is a unique program designed to address these issues through the education of people and animals. Our primary goal is to educate animal guardians and prospective guardians. Our second goal is to turn every animal shelter into a pleasant, friendly, quiet place where members of the community can go to learn about animals, and about basic training and behavior. And thirdly, we want to change the way shelters are set up, so that animals learn or retain animal and people social skills, housetraining and basic manners while they're in the shelter, instead of losing those skills. Thus, pets leave the shelter much better able to live successfully in a domestic environment.

We want to turn every animal shelter into a Dog and Cat University, where not only animals, but people, can learn.

And our Dog and Cat Universities are where you come in. As a volunteer, the single most important thing you'll do is help the animals to form positive associations to all kinds of people. This will help make them more calm, quiet and friendly when people approach the kennel, which will help them to get adopted, and will make them better socialized to people once they're out in the "real world," which will help keep them in their homes permanently.

We teach our volunteers training techniques in 4 levels: OP Cats or OP Dogs Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4. There are also several specialties you can learn once you've mastered OP 4. Specialties include working with animals that have special behavior needs, doing adoption counseling, bathing/grooming and mobile adoption. Consult your training manual for a complete list of dog and cat specialties.

Open Paw Dogs Level 1

In Open Paw Dogs Level 1 you learn the 2 most powerful and effective training methods available: forming positive associations (classical conditioning) and reward training! You will be amazed at what you can do with these 2 simple techniques. Simply by standing outside of the kennels and hand-feeding pieces of kibble to the animals, you will be able to

1. teach resident dogs to enjoy their environment and to enjoy people approaching their kennels
2. teach the animals beautiful kennel presentation (that is, to impress the heck out of potential adopters), and
3. establish and maintain a quiet kennel (really, it's true)!

If you can do this, you have already lowered the animal's blood pressure and heart rate and, consequently, made it much more comfortable for the dog to be in her kennel. Your work will help make the dog more friendly and approachable for potential adopters and their families, and give her a much better chance of being adopted.

Open Paw Dogs Level 2

Unfortunately, one of the fastest ways for a dog to convince a person not to adopt her is by offering a friendly greeting to that person. This is because happy, exuberant greeting behavior to a dog looks like scary, intimidating behavior to a human—the dog jumps up, paws or mouths, and maybe even barks loudly.

The goal of Level 2 is to desensitize the dog to people entering the kennel and to getting her collar and lead on. This makes the dog much less likely to get overexcited and do things like jump, mouth and paw. You will reward calm, quiet sitting by opening the kennel door, entering the kennel, and putting on the dog's collar. As you repeat the steps of Level 2, you are also conditioning the dog to learn that getting her collar on is not as exciting as she thought. Sure, it's still rewarding, but it doesn't necessarily mean that a walk is forthcoming. Thus, it becomes easier and easier for the dog to behave properly at the sight of a person with a collar and lead.

Open Paw Dogs Level 3

In Open Paw Level 3 you'll learn how to:

1. use lure-reward training to teach the dogs basic obedience skills like sit, down, stand and watch

2. check the dogs safely for sensitive spots and desensitize them to being touched in those spots
3. teach the dogs to take food and toys politely and to play tug according to the rules
4. use play as a reward in training, and
5. teach the dogs how to greet people politely!

Open Paw Dogs Level 4

Open Paw Level 4 focuses on walking the dog outside in the real world, integrating training with really big rewards, such as exercise, ranging (exploring around freely, so long as the dog does not pull on the lead) and sniffing. We are not *just* "taking the dog for a walk" but, rather, teaching the dog how to walk on a loose lead. This is very impressive to potential adopters.

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Open Paw Cats Level 2

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In Open Paw Level 4, you’ll work with cats who are behaviorally lovely, but more difficult to adopt because of issues like coat color, age, or medical issues. You’ll teach these cats fun and funny tricks and behaviors that will help them catch the eye of potential adopters—and thus help them get adopted more quickly—and keep them occupied and engaged during their stay in our shelter.

Open Paw Cats Level 5

Open Paw Level 5 involves working with cats that aggressively bite or scratch (difficult and dangerous to handle). Wearing protective clothing and gloves is a prerequisite. Classical conditioning methods using food and catnip will be used to encourage these cats to feel that people are a good thing. Attention to body posture and movement is important as desensitization techniques and lure-reward training are employed to attempt even the slightest handling. Extreme caution will be necessary at this level.

LEVEL 1 CATS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Level 1 is essential to our goal: increasing the adoptability of resident cats! Please continue to work with Level 1 cats every time you visit, even if you've moved on to higher levels! We will use these basic classical conditioning (forming positive associations) and reward training techniques to reward and reinforce good behavior, manners and temperament, and to make sure these friendly cats continue to like all sorts of people.

Classical Conditioning (Forming Positive Associations)

Use classical conditioning to reward resident cats for looking forward to people approaching their kennel. The cat will progressively form a positive association to people and look forward to seeing people approach the kennel; the cat will then be less inclined to hiss, huddle in a corner, or hide.

- DO approach the kennel (or enter the community cat room) and place food in front of the cat or offer it from your hand, regardless of the cat's reaction. If you are a child or a man, please give more pieces of kibble.
- DO speak gently to the cat.
- If the cat approaches you, DO offer a finger or hand in greeting for the cat to sniff.
- DO pet the cat if he approaches you and seems interested.
- DO 'play dead mouse' (become completely still) if the cat seems annoyed, then slowly move your hand away and return to doing what the cat seemed to like (or move on to another cat).
- DO use toys, not your hands, to engage the cat in play.
- DO NOT hover or pressure the cat.

Reward Training

Use reward-training techniques to teach resident cats excellent kennel presentation, specifically, to solicit attention when people approach. On each visit, approach the kennel and stand outside to observe the cat; patience is the key! Wait, WITHOUT saying anything, until the cat does something you like. Then reward with praise and a piece of kibble. Please keep in mind the adoptable traits we are looking to reinforce (e.g., friendly approach, eye contact, reaching out a paw in greeting, rubbing against you or the kennel bars, etc.)

- DO identify and reward desirable kitty behavior with a piece of kibble.

- DON'T call the cat to get his attention.
- DON'T verbally request or try to lure the cat to perform specific behaviors.
- DO take advantage of training opportunities that present themselves. For example, a cat swatting or hissing at another cat is a great opportunity to teach a cat to tolerate another cat's presence without hissing or growling. If the cat hisses or growls, wait for him to stop hissing for at least 3 seconds, then reward the cessation of hissing or swatting.
- DO keep your mind open. Cats may surprise you with the wealth of their behavioral repertoire, so don't approach the cat with an idea of exactly what you want him to do. The cat may come up with a variety of adorable behaviors, such as rubbing against the cage bars and doing a somersault immediately after, or jumping onto your shoulders and rubbing against your ears. Acting cute is one of the best ploys for the cat to get out of the shelter and into an adopter's home. Never miss an opportunity to reinforce cuteness.
- DON'T reward the cat for behavior that the average adopter would not consider desirable.

Level 1 Safety

Always read the kennel card and behavior notes BEFORE interacting with ANY resident animal, and please work only with animals designated for your level of training. If a cat is huddled at the back of her kennel or hiding, do not attempt to interact with her until you've used classical conditioning and made her feel comfortable with your presence. Remember to follow your local facility's guidelines (such as dress code) for safety when interacting with the animals.

LEVEL 2 CATS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

The goal of Open Paw Level 2 for Cats is to desensitize fearful cats to people and their environment. The focus is to teach a fearful cat to react positively when people approach him or enter his room, and to behave in a fairly relaxed manner in the shelter environment.

Remember at all times to BE PATIENT, and proceed at the cat's pace.

Classical Conditioning Fearful Cats

- DO sit or stand quietly a tolerated distance away from kitty. Slowly move further away if kitty shows signs of stress.
- DO offer food by gently tossing kibble or tasty treats towards kitty, or placing food near kitty. (Choose whatever method kitty will accept without retreating.)
- DO read aloud, talk, or sing to kitty quietly, allowing her to slowly become comfortable with your presence. Remember to remain a tolerated distance away from kitty.
- DO continue to gently toss food treats to kitty.
- DO demonstrate extreme patience by always waiting for kitty to make a move before proceeding.
- DO be certain not to loom over kitty and not to make direct eye contact.

Reward Training Fearful Cats

- DO wait for kitty to show the tiniest sign of desirable behavior, then immediately reward him with food. Desirable behaviors include showing an interest in people and the environment.
- DO acknowledge kitty's show of stress or undesirable behavior by "playing dead mouse" (freezing in place), then slowly moving away until kitty calms down or relaxes.
- DO wait for kitty to show the slightest sign of positive behavior (such as being quiet, or looking at you), then reward her and end the session.
- DO acknowledge that a show of stress indicates that you have progressed too quickly.
- DO NOT request or encourage a behavior; DO wait for a desirable behavior.

Safety

Always read the kennel card before interacting with any resident animal, and please work only with animals designated for, or below, your level of training. Always proceed with extreme patience at Level 2. If you find yourself losing patience, please avoid working with Level 2 cats. Working with a partner or a mentor might frighten Level 2 cats, but do ask an Open Paw Trainer for assistance if you should have questions or problems. Always follow your facility's guidelines for safety when interacting with the animals.

LEVEL 2 KITTENS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Quality Time for Shelter Kittens

To give kittens the best chance at a great life, they need to start out on the right foot. We want them to have well-rounded personalities and to take delight in all sorts of human affection and play. The more comfortable they are with their world, the less likely it is that stress-related behavior problems will develop and complicate their lives later on. During their short stay with us, we want our kittens to develop habits that will make them welcome in any home for their whole lives—not just the homes of us indulgent cat people!

Getting to know your kitten

We don't have much time to get to know our kittens, so it helps to think clearly about a few of their qualities from the start—this helps us decide which activities to spend time on.

Well socialized or under-socialized?

A well socialized kitten has had so many good experiences with people—and so few bad ones—that she's come to associate people with positive experiences. For an under-socialized kitten, the opposite is true. These kittens may respond to people initially with hissing, cowering, ignoring, or even defensive scratching and biting. Under-socialized kittens urgently need delicate and diligent work from volunteers. Like all kittens, under-socialized kittens loved to eat, cuddle, and play with their cat families: we will help them discover that humans can provide all these wonderful things. There are special activities and games for just this purpose.

Outgoing or shy?

In shelter situations, shy or cautious kittens are at a great disadvantage compared to their outgoing littermates. Do not confuse shy kittens with under-socialized kittens (although shyness can stunt socialization). Most shy kittens already associate humans with good things, but they approach everything new with caution and quickly relinquish the scene to their rambunctious littermates. We will learn a few strategies for helping shy kittens.

Running and jumping? Snuggling and cuddling?

Most kittens are both athletic and cuddly, but lean more toward one or the other. We can help them best by expanding on their favorite activities, and encouraging them to

reconsider their less favored activities. Most adopters will eventually appreciate the full range of behavior in a kitten or cat. With this in mind, we will learn games and activities to help round out our kittens' personalities.

Biting, scratching, squirming: kitten shows all, some, or none

Kittens who bite, scratch or squirm are heading for trouble, so we need to put them on a different course. This requires diligent use of Open Paw techniques which we will review shortly. Kittens that don't show any of these behaviors are fortunate, and must be handled in a way that preserves this blessed state.

Precautions "Humans are not toys"

When playing with kittens, your hands should always be holding a play object—never use your hands to wrestle with a kitten, lure a kitten to pounce, etc. Cats that bite and scratch in play can quickly become too rough and cause serious injury to a person. Not everyone who adopts and loves a kitten is 'cat-smart'—if these people use physical punishment to discipline a cat, or are lax and ignore the behavior, the situation will deteriorate and the cat will be abandoned one way or another. We want to make certain this never happens to our darling kittens.

"Humans are not scratching posts or jungle gyms"

Kittens love to climb up jeans and bare skin. Sometimes they are using us as a scratching post, sometimes as a 'high place', and sometimes they just want to get as close to our faces and hearts as possible. For all these ends, we must provide and insist upon alternative means. In each case, first remove the kittens from your legs and return them to the floor. Do this in a businesslike way that neither punishes nor reinforces the behavior. Next, try to provide an immediate alternative by placing them by a scratching post, a high place (like the sink) or, after inviting them into your hands, cradle the kittens near your face for a cuddle. A shelter cannot provide the environment a kitten needs—you may need to be creative and make do with what's available.

Guiding Principles and Techniques

- **Wait for the kitten to come to you.** Please do not approach him and do not pull him from his hiding place. If you force the kitten to do something, you may frighten him or reinforce his fears.
- **Offer the kitten your finger to sniff in greeting.** Encourage the kitten to approach you by using food or a toy, and wait as long as it takes.

- **Hand-feed.** Offer the kitten a piece of kibble from the flat of your hand. Be careful not to get nipped by an enthusiastic eater.
- **Engage kitten in play.** USE TOYS, NOT YOUR HANDS. If kittens learn it is acceptable to bite, claw or kick human hands, feet, clothing or hair, they will continue this practice as adults. Cat bites can result in serious illness in people, so it's extremely important that kittens learn to treat human skin with respect early on.
- **Physical contact between people and kittens should be gentle.** After a kitten approaches you and sniffs you, stroke her gently and calmly by petting her around the back of her ears; along the back of her neck; from head to tail along her back. Observe where the kitten likes being petted the best, then return to stroking her there when you want to pet her.
- **Time to withdraw your attention.** If a kitten nips, scratches or kicks you, immediately "play dead mouse" (freeze), say "OUCH" with emphasis, or whimper. Slowly withdraw your hand when the kitten removes his teeth, claws or hind feet. Then turn your back to the kitten, or return him to his cage and close the door and end the interaction. The game is over. Totally ignore him. Or turn your attention to another kitten. Or simply leave the room. Wait several moments before interacting with the kitten in any way.
- **"Good Kitty!"** Reward kittens immediately (within 3 seconds) with food, praise or play time with toys when they allow you to pet them without using their claws, teeth or hind feet.
- **Know when to stop.** Over-stimulated kittens will not appreciate all that people have to offer. If a kitten is running around wildly and engaging in vigorous behavior, quiet him down every three minutes with a "time out".
- **To calm a kitten.** Hold him upright against your chest, with his back to you, your fingers wrapped around his chest, hold him securely under his front legs. Take a few deep breaths and wait 1-2 minutes, no matter how much he squiggles, before releasing him to play once again. Wait until he stops squirming for at least a second before releasing him. Repeat every few minutes.
- **Reward bravery in shy kittens.** If a kitten shows fearful/shy behavior (stays in a corner, scurries away, or startles easily), ignore that behavior. Wait until the kitten is being brave, then reward his show of confidence (stroke, praise, give food). Be certain to give fearful kittens a significant amount of attention, equal to or more than confident kittens.
- **Encourage fearful/shy kittens to approach you using food or toys.**
- **Turn sideways and scrunch up your eyes as the kitten approaches you.** Narrowed eyes are a friendly sign for cats.

- **Move slowly and try to avoid making sudden movements or loud noises.**
- **Let the kitten explore and sniff you before you attempt to pet him.**
- **Give generous praise for shows of bravery.**

How to Pick up a Kitten

- Place one hand under the kitten's chest, with 2 or 3 fingers between his front legs. Pick him up, supporting his bottom with your other hand. Hold the kitten close to you so he will feel safe.
- If the kitten struggles, put him down gently. Be careful not to drop him or let him jump out of your hands. Ideally, put him down before he starts struggling.
- Praise the kitten for being quiet and calm.

Ideas for Games

If you are upstaged by the kittens' siblings, you may choose to put all but one kitten back in the cage (they have all day and night to play together!)

- **Making toys disappear under and behind things.** Show the kittens that you are hiding their toy under a towel, cup, paper towel, etc. Make it reappear and give them peeks to hold their attention. They may try to scoop the toy out or may pat it to find out more. Wiggle the toy. If the kittens lose interest immediately, their brains may not be ready to process hidden objects, but they will understand objects zooming behind or under things. They will anticipate the object's reappearance on the other side and feel quite clever.
- **String or chain toy.** Place a small string or sturdy chain around and behind objects and yourself. Do this slowly, allowing the natural twists, turns, and dips to intrigue the kitten.
- **Stick under paper.** Place the end of a stick under some covering, possibly torn-up newspaper. Let the kitten find the end and pounce on it, etc.
- **Film canisters, balls, toys to bat around.** Put a penny in an empty, plastic film canister and bat it around a few times to activate a kitten's curiosity. Then let the kitten do the rest. Do the same with soft balls, ping pong balls, crumpled pieces of paper, felt toys, etc. Pipe cleaners can be twisted and given to a kitten to play with. Watch them bat around these nearly weightless objects.

- **Toss small objects.** Toss these over your knees or to the far end of the room. Some kittens even fetch!
- **Kitten in a box.** If the kitten's cardboard carrier is in the room, it can be used for play. Lay it on its side with the opening facing away from you. Entice the kitten to play through the holes.
- **Fun in the sink.** Turn the water on in the basin and let the kittens investigate. They will probably find it most exciting.
- **Towel tent.** Sit on the floor with knees bent and draped with a towel. Place a toy in and around the tent. If the siblings are engaged in this game, they will particularly enjoy ambushing each other from inside or outside the tent.
- **Window.** Hold the kittens up to your chest and show them the world outside the cat room. They will see people and dogs rushing about. Be tentative the first time—you do not want the kitten to panic.
- **Paper bags.** Open a large paper bag and place on the floor. Throw in a ball, enticing the kittens to follow. Let them do the rest, running in and out of the bag.
- **Straw.** Hold one end of a straw and play the other end with the kitten.
- **String-on-pole toy.** Save this toy for last, since there may be no 'coming down' from it. The best way to play this is to sit cross-legged in the middle of the room and make yourself into a 'maypole' with your hands high over your head. You can then fling the toy several times around your body until capture. To avoid lopsided development of the kittens' strength, alternate directions. This method works better than the simple back and forth from one end of the room to the other—it provides 3 dimensions and a brief disappearance behind your body.

Strategy for the Well Socialized, Shy Kitten

Shy kittens will not reach their potential if they must constantly compete with their bolder, pushier littermates. We have actually seen shy kittens lose strength for jumping and running because their littermates dominate the games. For this reason, it is best to play first with the dominant kittens and then put them back in their cages. If the shy kitten won't come out of the cage, remove the dominant kittens from the cage and put them temporarily in their carriers.) You will be amazed by how quickly and fully shy kittens blossom when they are the stars of the show! If the dominant kittens are in a carrier, be sure to make a game of it by occasionally running toys in and around the openings—we don't want them to feel punished. Finish up the play session by letting everyone out for a short game together.

Special games for under-socialized kittens

Under—socialized kittens have not been handled enough by people during the first few weeks of their lives. They may or may not be shy, but they sometimes act aloof or are afraid of people because of this lack of handling. We want them to learn that people can be a source of comfort, companionship, and fun. None of this can happen until these kittens are encouraged to make positive associations with people. This is accomplished in 3 ways: through hand-feeding, tactile pleasure through petting and grooming, and teasing out their curiosity through playtime with toys.

Starting Out: Inside the Cage

With one hand, carefully move a small string or chain toy a few inches inside the cage, then slowly drag it out again. Do this a few times, varying the retreat route to entice curiosity. You may try to move the toy sideways away from the kittens as well. Just remember that the enticing part for the kittens is the toy moving away from them. Take care with your body language: your movements should be smooth, casual and slow; your eyes should be sleepy; your voice should be soft. Kittens instinctively understand our body language in most ways, but the adoring stare of a cat lover is alarming to them—keep your eyes as soft and sleepy as you can. If the kitten seems confident enough, you can gently drop 1 end of the toy in their 'safe-place', be that a bed, litterbox, or mountain of towels. Draw the toy slowly away from them. The first session should be short. You may get some interest in the form of pricked ears and a tentative paw. Keep teasing the curiosity until the kitten begins to withdraw. They will stop participating, and may even turn their back to you and stare at the wall of their cage. Take the hint and come back another time—the kittens will be much further along, thanks to your efforts and those of other volunteers. NOTE: Be certain to always supervise play sessions with strings, ropes, cords, ribbons, etc.—anything a cat can ingest. A lapse in attention can result in expensive surgery or even death.

Progress: Outside the Cage

Your kittens may already show interest in what lies beyond their cage. You can encourage this by moving back slightly from their cage during your play sessions. The point will come when they want to jump out but are still too scared. This is where the towel comes in. Sit on the floor in front of their cage and make a tent with your knees and the towel. Drag the toy over, in, and around the 'tent'. The kittens will eventually jump out. They may jump on top of the tent, so it is important to make the top solid—no gap between your knees. Play with the kittens by making the toy disappear behind the towel, then reappear. The kittens will find a 'safe place' again — it may be a far corner of the room, under the tent, or back in their cage (always keep the path to their cage open: we don't want them feeling trapped by us.). Soon the kittens will be playing next to you, under you and on top

of you! They will become accustomed to the size, smell, and heat of the human body while having fun. This is what we want. For this reason, this game is preferable to the pole-toy game, which is better suited to well socialized kittens. Your shy kittens may soon graduate to games for well socialized kittens.

Safety

Safe toys (no strings or cords) that a kitten can bat around on its own may remain in the cage, allowing a kitten to have some amusement when people are not around. Examples include kitty Kongs, balls, or paper toys. Interactive toys (chain/string toys, wand-like toys, peacock feathers, etc.) should be outside the kittens' cages unless a person is interacting with the kitten. Reserving these toys for playtime with people will encourage the kitten to associate fun with people, creating positive experiences for the kitten when people are around.

LEVEL 3 CATS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Level 3 cats are cats who are boisterous and unruly in their play, but not dangerous. These are cats who play-bite, play with their claws out, or kick during play, but who don't break skin or cause serious damage, and who are friendly toward people (just too rough when they interact with people).

Some people don't mind when a cat play-bites, plays with her claws out, or kicks with her hind feet when someone tries to pet her. But many people do, and one reason people surrender or return cats to shelters is that the cat plays far too roughly for the family.

Level 3 focuses on teaching cats that play-biting, play-scratching, and play-kicking are no longer fun, so that the cats will learn to play in a way that's fun for humans, too!

Reward Cessation

- DO make sure to offer a toy for the cat to play with.
- DON'T let the cats play with your bare hands, fingers, clothing, or hair.
- DO play "dead mouse" whenever a cat becomes too boisterous in her play (playing with claws out, biting in play, or kicking): immediately freeze and stay completely still, so that you're no longer interesting to play with.
- DO play "dead mouse" immediately whenever the cat gets too rambunctious. We must make our rules very clear and easy to discern, especially when we're introducing new rules to a cat's life.
- DO end the game if the cat bites, scratches, or kicks you 3 times during play. If our cats are to understand the rules of play, consequences must be immediate and clear.

Reward Training

- DO resume the game once the cat has stopped biting, scratching, or kicking for a few seconds. At first, you can resume play after just a moment of calm behavior.
- DO wait for longer intervals of calm as the cat gets better and better at remaining calm for just a second. At first, just wait for 3 seconds, then 5, then 10, and on and on until the cat is gradually phasing out the "crazy" play and is playing calmly most of the time.
- DON'T reward behavior that the average owner is unlikely to like. While you may not mind very boisterous play, many potential adopters do, and our job is to teach our cats the skills they'll need to get adopted and to stay in their new homes.

Safety

Always read the kennel card and behavior notes BEFORE interacting with ANY resident animal, and please work only with animals designated for, or below, your level of training. If a cat is huddled at the back of her kennel or hiding, do not attempt to interact with her until you've used classical conditioning and made her feel comfortable with your presence. Remember to follow your local facility's guidelines (such as dress code) for safety when interacting with the animals. At Level 3, appropriate clothing is especially important.

LEVEL 4 CATS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Level 4 cats are cats who are perfectly lovely in their behavior, but who aren't immediately appealing to potential adopters because of color, coat length, or special medical needs. Since these cats tend to have longer-than-average stays, they are also at risk for becoming desocialized or depressed.

Level 4 focuses on providing extra mental stimulation to harder-to-adopt cats so that they stay healthy and happy during their time with us, and giving these cats a "boost" in adoptability by helping them to stand out and charm the heck out of potential adopters!

Reward Training

- DO use reward training to desensitize cats to harnesses and on-leash walking as a bonus skill to make them more attractive.
- DO look for charming and cute behaviors offered by the cats, and reward the heck out of those behaviors. Some charming cat "tricks" worthy of rewarding can be things like: rubbing their face against the kennel bars, sitting (the more it's rewarded, the easier it will be to put on cue, and a cat sitting on command is quite impressive to people!), raising a paw ("high five"), or both paws ("high ten"), rolling over, spinning around, or rolling onto their backs ("play dead")—but keep your mind open! You never know what cute things cats will come up with on their own.
- DO NOT reward behavior that the average owner probably will not like. While you may not mind very boisterous play, many potential adopters do, and our job is to teach our cats the skills they'll need to get adopted and to stay in their new homes.
- DO NOT make a verbal request for a specific position or trick.
- DO use reward training to teach cats to go into their kennels on cue.
- DO keep training sessions short—about 10-15 minutes per session, several times a week, is ideal for cat learning.

Progressive Desensitization

- DO work with staff to develop a plan for each individual cat, based on his particular needs and strengths.
- DO take baby steps to gradually desensitize chosen cats to ride comfortably in cars.
- DO gradually desensitize chosen cats to a variety of locations in preparation for appearances in classrooms, at off-site adoption events, or at other programs the shelter sponsors/works with.

- DO reward the cats with treats or a favorite toy after EACH progressive move toward the car or a new location.
- DO progressively desensitize by gradually increasing the proximity to, and length of stay in, each step toward the car or new location.

Safety

Always read the kennel card and behavior notes BEFORE interacting with ANY resident animal, and please work only with animals designated for, or below, your level of training. If a cat is huddled at the back of her kennel or hiding, do not attempt to interact with her until you've used classical conditioning and made her feel comfortable with your presence. Remember to follow your local facility's guidelines (such as dress code) for safety when interacting with the animals.

LEVEL 5 CATS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Open Paw Level 5 involves working with cats that aggressively bite or scratch (difficult and dangerous to handle). Level 5 is divided into 2 steps. In the first, volunteers will work with difficult kitties while they are in their cages. Classical conditioning methods employing social distance, food, and catnip as treats will be used to get these kitties accustomed to approaching people, and the kitties will be reward-trained for any signs of confidence, friendliness and calmness.

In the second level of Open Paw Level 5, kitties will be desensitized to increasing levels of social interaction, including having their cage door opened, and being touched and handled. They will continue to be encouraged and rewarded for all confident, calm and friendly behaviors. Extreme caution will be necessary at this level, and wearing protective clothing and gloves during handling exercises is a prerequisite. Patience and careful attention to body posture and movement is vitally important at both levels.

Stage 1

Classical Conditioning Difficult and Dangerous Cats

- DO work with kitty in a cage, preferably in a quiet room. Approach calmly and casually at an oblique angle and drop a pinch of kibble or catnip through the front of the cage.
- DO move away immediately, without looming or lingering.
- DO speak or sing softly when approaching, helping kitty to get used to human voices and begin associating people with good things.
- DO repeat the approach frequently, while giving kitty time between sessions to investigate the treats.
- DO very gradually begin increasing the amount of time spent at the cage before moving on.
- DO watch kitty closely for increased stress or arousal and stop working immediately with any cat that shows signs of panic, attempting to fight her way out of the cage or lunging offensively at the front of the cage. Give over-aroused cats at least an hour to settle before attempting work again, and this time, work more slowly.
- DO watch for signs that the kitty is ready for the next step—calmness, curiosity and tolerance.

Reward Training Difficult and Dangerous Cats

- DO wait for kitty to show the tiniest sign of desirable behavior, then immediately reward him with both yummy treats and increased social distance—i.e., dropping a treat and immediately retreating from his cage. Desirable behaviors include not hissing or spitting, eye contact, curiosity and approaching calmly, with no signs of aggression.
- DO withdraw when kitty misbehaves so she learns that it is her own undesirable behavior that is making you retreat”?
- DO slowly increase the amount of calm and confident behaviors kitty must show before you retreat.
- DO wait for kitty to show the slightest sign of positive behavior (such as not hissing, showing an interest in you), then reward him and end the session.
- DO acknowledge that a show of stress indicates that you have progressed too quickly.
- DO NOT request or encourage a behavior.
- DO wait for a desirable behavior.

Stage 2

Classical Conditioning Difficult and Dangerous Cats

- DO approach kitty’s cage, touch the door or wiggle the latch. Kitty will probably retreat to the back of the cage; drop a pinch of kibble or catnip and wait, without looming or making eye contact. Repeat frequently, until kitty remains calm when you stand at his cage and open the door a tiny crack.
- DO speak or sing softly to kitty while you work with him.
- DO gradually increase the size of the crack, until kitty remains calm with his door open enough for you to put a gloved hand in.
- DO slowly begin introducing your gloved hand into the cage. Drop kibble or catnip at the front of the cage at first, then slowly begin moving your gloved hand closer to the cat.
- DO gradually and gently offer the gloved hand for kitty to sniff.
- DO slowly offer kitty treats in the gloved hand; if kitty takes them, celebrate quietly! If not, leave them in the cage for him.

- DO begin touching kitty's head with a gloved hand, rub kitty's chin or scratch kitty's ears, and give food treats for each touch.
- DO touch kitty for longer and longer periods of time, while continuing to dispense treats frequently.
- DO watch kitty closely for any signs of arousal or stress and stop working with him immediately if he spits, growls, or swats. Give over-aroused cats at least an hour to settle before attempting work again, and work more slowly.
- DO watch for signs that the kitty is ready for the next step—calmness, curiosity and tolerance.

Reward Training Difficult and Dangerous Cats

- DO wait for kitty to show the tiniest sign of desirable behavior, then immediately reward her by opening the cage and putting in yummy treats or catnip. Desirable behaviors include approaching, making calm eye contact, rubbing against the cage door, sniffing at the glove, or soliciting affection or attention.
- DO repeat until kitty is offering calm, friendly behaviors to get you to open the cage door and reward her.
- DO speak or sing softly to kitty, and praise her quietly for desired behaviors.
- DO slowly increase the amount of calm and friendly behaviors kitty must show before you open the door and reward her.
- DO wait for kitty to offer a friendly, positive behavior, then reward her and end the session.
- DO acknowledge that a show of stress indicates that you have progressed too quickly.
- DO NOT request or encourage a behavior.
- DO wait for a desirable behavior.

Safety

Always read the kennel card before interacting with any resident animal, and please work only with animals designated for your level of training. Always proceed with extreme caution at Level 5. If you are not completely confident and comfortable working with dangerous cats, please avoid working with Level 5 cats. Working with a partner or a mentor might frighten Level 5 cats, but do ask an Open Paw Trainer for assistance if you should have questions or problems. Always follow your facility's guidelines for safety when interacting with the animals.

LEVEL 1 DOGS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Level 1 is essential to our goal: increasing the adoptability of resident dogs! Please continue to do Level 1 exercises every time you visit, even if you've moved on to higher levels! We will use these basic classical conditioning (forming positive associations) and reward training techniques to achieve good behavior, manners and temperament, and to get the dogs to like all sorts of people; the ultimate goal is a totally quiet kennel! Please carry a leash with you at all times to desensitize the dogs to seeing people with leashes.

Classical Conditioning (Forming Positive Associations)

Use classical conditioning to teach resident dogs to enjoy people approaching their kennel. The dog will progressively form a positive association to people and look forward to seeing people approach the kennel; the dog will then be less inclined to bark, lunge, growl or hide.

- DO approach the kennel and toss or hand-feed kibble to the dog, REGARDLESS of the dog's reaction.
- DO NOT hover, pressure or encourage the dog to come forward, and DO NOT request any specific behavior.

Reward Training

Use reward-training techniques to teach resident dogs proper kennel presentation, specifically to sit and shush when people approach. On each visit, approach the kennel and stand outside to observe the dog. Patience is the key! Wait, WITHOUT saying anything, until the dog does something you like. Then reward with praise and a piece of kibble. Please keep in mind the adoptable traits we are looking to reinforce (e.g., friendly approach, eye contact, sitting, lying down, silence, etc.) If a dog stops barking or stops bouncing around for at least 3 seconds, reward it.

- DO identify and reward desirable doggy behavior with a piece of kibble.
- DO NOT make a verbal request for a specific position, call the dog or lure him into position.
- DO keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities, particularly with barking dogs: if you hear a dog begin to bark, continue to work at what you were doing, but pay attention for the moment when the dog stops barking (and he will eventually stop). Then hurry over and throw a party!

Shush

We can also actively teach a dog to shush:

- DO put the barking on command, so that you can work with the dog when she doesn't particularly want to bark.
- DO ask the dog to bark when she is fairly calm and praise her for doing so; then ask her to "shush" and waggle a treat in front of her nose. When she stops to sniff, offer the treat and praise the dog.
- DO repeat this sequence many times. No matter how long it took the dog to shush the first time, it will get shorter and shorter with repetition!

Level 1 Safety

Always read the kennel card and behavior notes BEFORE interacting with ANY resident animal, and please work only with animals designated for, or below, your level of training. Never stick your whole arm or hand through the kennel fence. Remember to follow your local facility's guidelines (such as dress code) for safety when interacting with the animals.

LEVEL 2 DOGS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

The goal of Level 2 is to desensitize the dog to seeing the leash and to people entering the kennel. This will decrease the likelihood of overexcited displays like jumping, mouthing, pawing, etc. The focus of Level 2 training is to teach the dog to display appropriate manners while a person enters and exits the kennel, to teach the dog to sit politely while his collar and leash are attached, and not to jump up.

Entering the Kennel

- DO wait for (or lure) the dog to sit before opening the kennel door. If the dog jumps up as you are lifting the door latch, step back and wait for him to sit again before attempting to enter.
- DO repeat this process as many times as necessary until the dog remains sitting while you open the door and enter the kennel. Practice makes perfect!
- DO NOT push the dog aside with your arm or leg as you squeeze in.
- DO NOT open the door and enter the kennel while the dog is jumping up, pushing to get past you, or barking.

Once Inside the Kennel

- DO wait for the dog to calm down again before interacting with him (i.e., ignore jumping, etc.)
- DO wait for (or lure) the dog to sit before putting on the collar/gentle leader or attaching the leash.
- DO start over every time the dog breaks position.
- DO repeat this process several times in a session.
- DO NOT put on collar/gentle leader OR attach the leash while he is standing or jumping.
- DO NOT physically push the dog into position.

Exiting the Kennel

- DO lure the dog to sit and back out carefully OR toss a few pieces of kibble to the far side of the run and slip out backwards.
- DO always face the dog when entering and exiting the kennel.

Level 2 Safety

Enter and exit the kennel quickly and carefully, and always keep your eye on the dog. Be sure that your dog's equipment fits properly. We recommend practicing Level 2 with a partner; consult your local facility for guidelines. Once inside the kennel, NEVER turn your back on the dog. If you are feeling overwhelmed, shout for help. In an emergency, toss all of your kibble AWAY from you, scattering it over the floor, and exit promptly.

LEVEL 3 DOGS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Level 3 is complex; if you don't feel comfortable at the end of your training session, we strongly encourage you to sign up for another. At Level 3 we begin to train the dogs in basic obedience, use play in training as a reward, and assist the staff with daily care such as toilet training and grooming. Instilling appropriate manners for playing (or, in some cases, actually teaching the dog to play) is an added bonus at this level.

Exiting the Kennel with the Dog

- DO follow ALL procedures for Levels 1 and 2 when entering the kennel and leashing the dog, including waiting for a sit before opening the kennel door.
- DO lure the dog into a "heel" position at your side with a food treat, and quickly take him to the designated toilet area FIRST! Whenever taking a dog from its kennel, immediately give him a chance to relieve himself in an appropriate area.

Lure-Reward Training

(in an enclosed designated training area)

- DO lure the dog through the standard training sequence: WATCH, SIT, DOWN, SIT, STAND, DOWN, STAND (vary this sequence regularly).
- DO hold a food lure in your hand to guide the dog into position.
- DO reward the dog with a food treat at least once in the sequence.
- DO NOT touch the dog to place him in position.

Handling and Progressive Desensitization

- DO cautiously/lightly brush hands over the dog's entire body to identify sensitive areas.
- DO acknowledge (and back off) at any sign of stress indicated by the dog.
- DO progressively desensitize sensitive areas by gradually increasing the pressure and length of the physical contact.
- DO feed kibble after EACH touch (unless the dog is already like putty in your hands)
- DO handle: COLLAR, PAWS (all), EARS (both), RUMP, TAIL, MUZZLE

Open Fist-Closed Fist

(at this point you may use a long line, anchored)

- DO hold a piece of kibble in your closed fist; allow the dog to sniff and lick, but gently say "Leave it."
- DO allow the dog to worry at the kibble; eventually she will give up and withdraw her muzzle.
- DO say "Good dog, take it" the instant the dog breaks contact with your hand, and offer the kibble by letting it fall into the flat palm of your hand.
- DO repeat this several times. Each time, delay offering the kibble a bit longer after the dog breaks contact.

Tug of War

- DO practice a release command ("Leave it") before getting into the game. Give the dog a tug toy and prompt her to release by saying "Leave it," and offering a food treat. Once she releases the toy, reward her immediately and then offer the toy back to the dog and say "Good dog, take it."
- DO practice this several times before you start the tug of war game.
- DO train the dog to only take or re-take the object when invited to do so. Whenever you initiate the game, say "Take it" and present the appropriate tug toy at the same time.
- DO have a time-out for at least 1 minute if the dog tries to re-take the toy without being invited to do so. Then invite the dog to take the toy again.
- DO end the game if the dog makes the same mistake 3 times in a row: we must make our rules clear and meaningful to the dogs and teach them that there are consequences for breaking the rules. Go back to "leave it/take it."
- DO alternate frequently between playing the game and doing obedience training (asking the dog to sit, lie down, stand, let go of the toy, etc.). This will help reinforce obedience in the dog when she is excited over anything, and you can use the continuation of the game as a reward for obedience.
- DO dramatically screech "OUCH!!" if the dog accidentally touches your hand or any other body part while taking the toy, and have a time out for at least 1 minute.
- DON'T slack off about enforcing the rules.

Polite Greeting (Teaching the dog not to jump up)

- DO work regularly on the "sit" command, and always reward with play, affection or food.
- DO tie the dog on a 6' lead to the wall or floor and approach the dog; as you come up to the dog, say "Off."
- DO walk away from the dog and ignore her for at least 30 seconds if she jumps up or paws.
- DO reward the dog with a piece of kibble and attention if the dog stays down or sits.
- DO ignore or walk away from the dog if she jumps up on you at any point in your training, and reward a sit with attention, kibble, or the continuation of the game.

Safety

- DO keep the dog on a very short leash (about 12 inches) while walking through the facility and past other dogs.
- DON'T let the dog go up to other dogs in the kennel.
- NEVER take the dog out of the kennel without a leash on.
- Be aware that most dogs are fully capable of jumping walls and fences up to 8' high. Keep your dog on a leash or on a long lead at all times.
- Never leave your dog alone in the Level 3 area.

LEVEL 4 DOGS: VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Level 4 focuses on walking the dog outside in the real world, integrating training with really big rewards such as exercise, ranging and sniffing.

Exiting the Kennel with the Dog

- DO follow ALL procedures for Levels 1 and 2 when entering the kennel and leashing the dog, including waiting for a sit before opening the door.
- DO lure the dog with a food treat into a "heel" position at your side, and quickly take him to the designated toilet area FIRST! Whenever taking a dog from its kennel, immediately give him a chance to relieve himself in an appropriate area.

Off-Leash Training

(In designated Level 3-4 training area)

- DO warm up with some Level 3 basic obedience exercises.
- DO wait for (or lure) dog to sit before removing the leash.
- DO walk freely about the room and reward the dog with kibble for following OR eventually approaching.
- DO encourage the dog to play, frequently pausing to settle the dog with a sit, down, watch or handling/petting.
- DO practice luring the dog into the heel position, including a sit by your side when stopped.

Dog Walking

- DO practice red light-green light
- DO practice changing speed and direction
- DO practice sit, watch, let's go! (baby steps)
- DO practice lure-reward heeling
- DO use leash ranging and sniffing as rewards for paying attention and for not pulling.
- DO NOT walk if the leash is taut.
- DO NOT pull or jerk the leash to get the dog's attention.

Safety

- Field trips must be authorized by the shelter director or dog behavior manager.
- DO keep the dog on a very short leash (about 12 inches) while on shelter premises.
- DO NOT let your dog meet other dogs unless specifically told to do so.
- DO call out to other dog walkers that you are approaching, especially in doorways or when rounding corners.
- Close gates and doors behind you.
- NEVER LET THE DOG OFF LEASH OUTDOORS!

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 1 Dogs

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the first level of training, volunteers must understand the difference between classical conditioning and reward training, and must demonstrate that they understand why we do classical conditioning, and why reward training. Classical conditioning makes the dogs more comfortable in their environment and more comfortable with people approaching their kennel, by building up an association between all kinds of people approaching the kennel and the dog's dinner being handed out. Since they like to get their dinner, the dogs gradually come to look forward to having people approach the kennel. Reward training shapes animals' behaviors by rewarding the behaviors we like and ignoring the behaviors we don't like. The volunteer should demonstrate that she understands at least the basic behaviors we are trying to reinforce: sit, down, wagging tail, friendly approach, eye contact, quiet and "4 on the floor."

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the dog has been rated for their level
- Sticking whole hand or arm into kennel

Red Flags

- Pressuring dog
- Requesting a behavior, calling the dog or luring the dog into position

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 2 Dogs

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the second level of training, volunteers should understand the goal, which is to desensitize the animals to things that normally make them over-reactive, and to teach them that they should sit quietly whenever a person approaches the kennel door, enters the kennel or puts on the dog's collar. This level uses a combination of reward training (opening the kennel door etc. is rewarding, and should only happen when the dog is sitting quietly) and classical conditioning (we associate entering the kennel and putting on the collar with a pat and a kibble, and break the old association between the collar and an immediate walk).

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the dog has been rated for their level
- Going into the kennel while the dog is standing, jumping or barking
- Pushing the dog aside while entering
- Opening the kennel door when another dog is passing by or another kennel door is being opened
- Turning their back to the dog while inside the kennel
- Getting down on the ground with the dog inside the kennel
- Physically placing the dog into position
- Turning their back while exiting the kennel
- Failure to look and call out before exiting the kennel

Red Flags

- Giving a verbal request for a sit
- Lifting the latch while the dog is standing

- Putting the dog's collar on while the dog is standing
- Putting the collar or gentle leader on incorrectly
- Interacting with the dog when it is not seated and calm

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 3 Dogs

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the third level, volunteers should understand the basics of lure-reward training and how it differs from reward training. They should remember to lead the animal through all of the body positions (sit, down, stand and watch) and should vary those positions. They should remember to check all areas of the dog's body when they check for sensitivity (both ears, muzzle, all 4 paws, hindquarters, collar and tail), and should gradually increase duration of touch. They should remember to go through all of the training segments with the dog and cover important steps in each process.

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to read kennel card to see that dog is rated for their level
- Failure to follow any of the Level 1 or 2 safety procedures
- Dog's leash not shortened to 12" or less
- Allows dog contact with other kenneled dogs
- Allows dog contact with other dogs or people outside kennel (except if approved by designated shelter or Open Paw supervisor)
- Failure to follow facility safety rules for Level 3 area
- Failure to call time-out if dog's teeth touch skin

Red Flags

- Failure to wait for dog to sit before exiting kennel
- Any Level 1 or 2 red flags
- Failure to go to the toilet area
- Pushing dog into position

- Not backing off when dog shows signs of stress
- Allowing dog to tug anything other than tug toy

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 4 Dogs

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the fourth level, volunteers should understand that we are not taking the dogs for a walk, rather, we are teaching them how to walk on a loose lead so they will present well to potential adopters, and will be pleasant, controllable companions for their adopters. They should use and show understanding of the 4 walking techniques, and should remember to warm the dog up with some off-leash work in the Level 3 area before going outside to begin walking.

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to follow Level 1, 2 or 3 safety procedures
- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the dog has been rated for their level
- Taking the dog off leash outside
- Continuing to walk while the dog is pulling on the leash
- Allowing the dog contact with other dogs or people outside the kennel (except if approved by a designated shelter or Open Paw supervisor)
- Jerking the dog's leash

Red Flags

- Going around corners with a loose lead or letting the dog precede them around corners
- Failing to use or show general understanding of the techniques

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 1 Cats

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the first level of training, volunteers must understand the difference between classical conditioning and reward training, and must demonstrate that they understand why we do classical conditioning, and why reward training. Classical conditioning makes the cats more comfortable in their environment and helps them associate people approaching their kennel with excellent rewards, such as food, play sessions, and praise. Since cats enjoy these rewards, they come to look forward to having people approach the kennel. Reward training shapes animals' behaviors by rewarding the behaviors we like and ignoring the behaviors we don't like. The volunteer should demonstrate that she understands at least the basic behaviors we are trying to reinforce: a friendly approach, meowing or purring, eye contact, a paw reaching out, head rubbing.

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the cat has been rated for their level
- Removing cat from cage rather than waiting for indication that cat wants to exit, if at all. Picking cat up before proper introduction and allowing get-acquainted time
- General failure to follow directions

Red Flags

- Failure to reward the behaviors we like
- Failure to ignore the behaviors we don't like
- Requesting a behavior

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 2 Cats

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the second level of training, volunteers should understand that their goal is to teach cats that the presence of people is a good thing, and to desensitize them to things that normally make them fearful. This level uses a combination of classical conditioning (offering food and remaining quietly present), reward training (offering food for desirable behaviors, e.g., shows of bravery), and desensitization/handling (offering food, petting and praise, or playing using toys, to the extent tolerated).

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the cat has been rated for their level
- Approaching too closely with body or hand; hovering, looming over, or staring at cat
- Proceeding too quickly
- Failure to follow any of the Level 2 safety procedures
- Failure to wait for cat to make a move(s)
- General failure to follow directions

Red Flags

- Not backing off when cat shows signs of stress
- Not rewarding the slightest shows of desirable behavior

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 3 Cats

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the third level, volunteers should understand the basics of desensitization and reward training. They should remember to react immediately to undesirable behavior and show consistency and patience when increasing the duration of touch.

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to read kennel card to see that cat is rated for their level
- Failure to follow any of the Level 1 or 2 safety procedures
- Failure to approach initially with object/toy rather than body (hand or finger)
- Failure to “play dead mouse” immediately when undesirable behavior begins
- Failure to wait before resuming training after “playing dead mouse”
- Failure to reward desirable behaviors
- General failure to follow directions

Red Flags

- Failure to end session if undesirable behavior is extreme or volunteer has lost patience
- Not backing off when cat shows signs of stress

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 4 Cats

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the fourth level, volunteers should understand the basics of desensitization and reward training. They should remember to react immediately with rewards for desirable and extra-charming behavior, and with cessation of rewards for undesirable behavior, and to show consistency and patience when desensitizing chosen cats to car rides or new locations.

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to follow Level 1, 2 or 3 safety procedures
- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the cat has been rated for their level
- Hovering or pressuring cat
- Failing to take frequent breaks
- Attempting to handle a cat that is hiding in the back of the kennel, hissing, has flattened ears, or shies away from volunteer; failing to note that behavior and report it
- Failure to reward desirable behaviors
- General failure to follow directions

Red Flags

- Not backing off when cat shows signs of stress

Volunteer Trainer Guidelines—Level 5 Cats

We do not expect volunteers to be perfect at each level before they train for the next. The important thing is that they demonstrate that they understand the underlying ideas at each level of training and that they follow safety precautions. If the volunteer fails to follow any of the safety precautions, she should practice more, with the help of an OP Trainer, before she begins to train at the next level (i.e., she should not graduate). If the volunteer makes a mistake with regard to the red flags, you can use your judgment about whether or not she is qualified to go on to the next level of training. Keep in mind that you may prompt her a few times with regard to those aspects of the training.

At the fifth level, volunteers should understand the basics of classical conditioning and progressive desensitization.

Immediate Failure for Safety Issues

- Failure to follow Levels 1-4 safety procedures
- Failure to read the kennel card to see that the cat has been rated for their level
- Hovering or pressuring cat
- Failing to take frequent breaks
- Failing to wear gloves
- Attempting to handle a cat that is hiding in the back of the kennel, hissing, has flattened ears, or shies away from volunteer

Red Flags

- Moving forward with training before cat is thoroughly comfortable with the established exercise
- Failing to use or show general understanding of the techniques

Feedback for Volunteer Proficiency Test

Level _____ comments for _____

Here are the things you did particularly well:

Here are some things you should concentrate on when you practice:

You showed proficiency at Level —continue on to level when you feel comfortable

You should continue to practice at Level —contact any of the Open Paw Trainers to help you and to take the level test again.

Signed: _____

Sample Orientation and Training Schedule

(Requires 2 trainers on first Wednesday evening, and first, third, and fifth Saturday morning of each month)

	1st Wednesday	3rd Wednesday	1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturday	2nd and 4th Saturday
Orientation and L1	6:30-9 p.m.		10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	
Level 2 Training		6:30-7:30 p.m.	10-11 a.m.	10-11:30 a.m.
Level 3 Training	6:30-7:30 p.m.		12-1 p.m.	
Level 4 Training		7:30-8:30 p.m.		12-1 p.m.

Training Sign-up Sheet

Name and Logo of Your Shelter Here



LEVEL __ TRAINING SIGN-UP SHEET

Date

Level __ training sessions are limited to 10 people because of space and time limitations.

Name

Phone or email

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____

Appendix A

Walk Charts

Place the Walk Chart prominently where both staff and volunteers can consult it easily. Inform your staff members and volunteers to fill out the charts after each training session, to keep track of each animal's walk schedule.

The two following pages are meant to be taped together.



Appendix B

Open Paw Training Chart

Place the Open Paw Training Chart prominently where both staff and volunteers can consult it easily. Inform your staff members and volunteers to fill out the charts after each training session, to keep track of each animal's Open Paw training.

The two following pages are meant to be taped together.

Open Paw Training Chart													
Please initial after completing each training.													
Mark all walks on Walk Chart as well.													
NAME	NOTES	SUNDAY				MONDAY				TUESDAY			
		L1	L2	L3	L4	L1	L2	L3	L4	L1	L2	L3	L4
Riley	OK levels 1-4												
Goodie	OK levels 1-4												
Maverick	OK levels 1-4												
Dogs in medical quarantine—very contagious—wash hands between each interaction.													
Landon													
Staff only to interact with.													
Sage													

APPENDIX B. OPEN PAW TRAINING CHART

Open Paw Training Chart Please initial after completing each training. Mark all walks on Walk Chart as well.															
WEDNESDAY				THURSDAY				FRIDAY				SATURDAY			
L1	L2	L3	L4	L1	L2	L3	L4	L1	L2	L3	L4	L1	L2	L3	L4
Dogs in medical quarantine—very contagious—wash hands between each interaction.															
Staff only to interact with.															



Appendix C

Housetraining Chart

For those dogs who are being crate trained to improve their bladder control, the following chart helps staff keep track of the dog's crating and walking schedule.

Housetraining Plans for _____

date

(EXAMPLE)

	Walked at: (time)	Result:	Crate at: (time)	Walked at: (time)	Result:	Crate at: (time)	Walked at: (time)	Result:	Crate at: (time)
Dog:	7:30 a	1/2	8:30 a	10:30 a	1/0	11:30 a	1:30 p	1/2	2:30 p
Current Bladder:	4:30 p	1/0	5:30 p	7:00 p	1/2	DONT	8:00 p	1/0	8:00 p
Target Bladder:									

Crate over-night? Y N

	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:
Dog:									
Current Bladder:									
Target Bladder:									

Crate over-night? Y N

	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:
Dog:									
Current Bladder:									
Target Bladder:									

Crate over-night? Y N

	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:	Walked at:	Result:	Crate at:
Dog:									
Current Bladder:									
Target Bladder:									

Crate over-night? Y N

Appendix D

Dog and Cat Evaluation Charts

The charts on the following pages serve as quick reference guides for adoption counseling. Keep the charts updated each week with observations from staff and volunteers.

After speaking with the potential adopter and getting a sense for the dog or cat qualities that would make a good match, refer to the charts to see which dogs or cats have those qualities. Then you can guide the potential adopter directly to those animals.

Dog's Name	Kennel	Active?	Children?	Men?	Cats?	Potty Trained?	Bark level	1st time owner?	Polite?	Pull on Leash?	Chew-toy trained?

APPENDIX D. DOG AND CAT EVALUATION CHARTS

Cat's Name	Kennel	Active?	Children?	Men?	Cats?	Potty Trained?	Declawed?	1st time owner?	Polite?	Scratch post trained?	Chew-toy trained?



Appendix E

Behavior Matrix

Our Behavior Matrix and the companion key and definitions are meant to serve as quick guides to behavior counseling. The matrix on the following page lists the top 14 challenges faced by owners and refers the counselor to a variety of recommended training processes. The numbers in each cell represent the order of importance for each recommended training process. The answer key and definitions give a quick review of what each training process consists of. These are meant to be used as a reference, in conjunction with the following books:

BEFORE and AFTER You Get Your Puppy, *Dr. Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book* by Dr. Ian Dunbar, and *Culture Clash* by Jean Donaldson.

Serious behavior modification problems should be immediately referred to a local APDT dog trainer (see www.apdt.com for a list of trainers in your area).

	Classical Condit.	Operant Condit.	Lure-Reward	Reward	Shaping	Total Integr.	Counter Condit.	Trouble-shooting	Progres. Desens.	Reward Cess.	Extinc.	Total Mgt	Kong Stuff.	Hand feed
New Puppy	2	6	4		6	5						1	2	3
New Adult	4	6	5		7	5						1	3	2
House-sotling		4		3			2					1		
Chewing							3					1	2	
Barking	if fear motivated	6		4				3	if fear motivated	5		1	2	
Digging							3					1	2	
Escaping								3				1	2	
Jumping Up		7		5	6	4		1		2	3			
Leash Pulling		7	5	6	8	4	3			2				on walk
No Recall	6	5		3		4						1		2
Remedial Social-ization	1								3					2
Biting if L3 or less	3	if mouthy							4	if mouthy		1		2
Fighting	2	6		4			7		3	5		1		
Fearfulness	2			6	5		4		3					1

Behavior Matrix Key and Definitions

Classical Conditioning

Establishing a positive association between two things. Pairing something the animal already enjoys (food, attention, sniffing, playing, access to a favorite toy) with a situation, person, animal, or object that has either no intrinsic value or an established negative connotation to the animal, in order to establish or improve the emotional response to the latter.

Example: New pup should be hand-fed by children and men to ensure she grows up to feel comfortable and confident around them. A confident, relaxed dog is less likely to become reactive and/or bite.

Example: Fido barks and lunges at other dogs when he is on leash. Whenever a dog approaches Fido when he's on leash, point out the approaching dog and give Fido a high value treat or a favorite toy, and lots of positive attention. Eventually Fido learns to associate the presence of dogs with "good things for Fido", and stops reacting negatively.

Operant Conditioning

Providing immediate consequences in order to change behavior. An increase or decrease in conscious behavior as a result of the consequences that follow the animal's responses. Simply put, if a behavior "works" for the animal—that is, if the animal gets something it likes as a result of its behavior— it will exhibit that behavior more often; if the behavior does not "work," it will happen less often and eventually disappear.

Rewards result in an increase in the frequency of behavior. Punishments, or ignoring the behavior, result in a decrease in the frequency of behavior.

Example: When my owner calls me in the park and I respond by coming, she always either throws the tennis ball or gives me a piece of freeze-dried liver, and then I almost always get to go play again immediately. Coming to my owner in the park = a fun game of fetch or a tasty treat. I'd better get there in a hurry!

Lure-Reward Training

Using a desirable item such as a food treat or toy to coax the animal into a desirable position or location. Used as a way to manipulate an animal's body without physically touching the animal. Best for initial teaching only, should not become a necessary "crutch".

Example: To teach the pup "sit" on cue, hold a lure right in front of the dog's nose and slowly raise it above her head. Nose goes up, rear goes down, and voila! The dog sits! Also works very well for heeling or polite leash walking.

Reward Training

Rewarding behavior you would like to see more of, when it naturally occurs.

Example: Every time your new dog eliminates outside, or in the proper designated area, reward with a piece of freeze-dried liver. Your dog will soon prefer to eliminate in the spot where he has previously been rewarded for doing so, and will quickly become housebroken.

Shaping

Rewarding successive approximations of a behavior, increasing the criteria for rewards regularly, until you shape the animal into a new behavior. In other words, start small and take what you can get. Reward the best response you see, even if it is not the end behavior you want to teach the dog. As your dog gets better at 1 level of the desired behavior, begin to get pickier about the response so that you are gradually getting closer and closer to the ultimate desired outcome.

Example: The goal is to teach Fido to sit politely when greeting people, but he is so excited that he jumps up and licks faces instead. He is too excited initially to sit still. Start by rewarding a simple “4 feet on the floor”, instead of asking for a “sit” right away. When Fido is no longer jumping up but, perhaps, standing and wiggling happily, then add the cue for “sit”, and only reward the greetings where Fido sits.

Total Integration

Teaching the relevance of your request. Nothing In Life For Free: utilizing “life rewards” (that is, using all of the things your dog enjoys as rewards for desirable behavior, rather than giving them to her for free), using training preludes (short bits of training before doing something enjoyable with your dog, so the enjoyable thing functions as a reward for the good behavior) and, frequently, interludes (briefly interrupting enjoyable activities for bits of training, so that the resumption of the activity functions as a reward for good behavior).

Example: To increase the value of, and response to, “sit”, always have Fifi sit before throwing the Frisbee for her. Fifi loves to play fetch, and every time you throw the toy you are unintentionally rewarding whatever she was doing immediately before you threw the frisbee—it may as well be a behavior you would like to see more of.

Counter Conditioning

“If this is wrong, what is right?” Train in an alternative and, ideally, incompatible behavior.

Example: Teach, “sit” for polite greeting, instead of jumping up on people to say hello.

Counter Conditioning (troubleshooting)

Set up a problem-specific training session. Plan a scenario to teach and repeatedly practice a desirable response.

Example: Teach polite greeting at the door with a “visitor” (a friend who’s willing to help you out by patiently ringing your doorbell and entering your house multiple times.) Repeat the “visit”, doorbell and all, several times in a row, until the dog sits voluntarily when you answer the door.

Progressive Desensitization

Gradually desensitizing the animal to situations, people, or objects with which he is uncomfortable. We do this by rewarding tolerable approximations of a situation that is stressful for the animal, and gradually increasing the criteria (often proximity) as the animal’s tolerance threshold rises due to continued positive experiences (classical conditioning).

Example: Fido does not like his feet touched. When he is calm and hungry, trade touches for kibble, starting as far away from his feet as possible. As you gradually move towards his feet, increase the value of the reward. As you reach his feet, reward each touch with his favorite food. See The Open Paw Four Levels Training Program Manual for a detailed protocol.

Reward Cessation

Removing opportunity for rewards as the consequence of an undesirable action. Discontinuing the rewarding factor of an animal’s behavior in order to decrease and, eventually, extinguish an undesirable behavior. This is usually combined with the introduction of rewards for desirable behavior.

Example: To stop Fifi from pulling on leash, never move forward while she is pulling. Fifi pulls on leash because she wants to move forward and, perhaps, even sniff something. If pulling never helps her reach her goal, she will learn to stop pulling so the walk can continue.

Extinction

The disappearance of a behavior due to lack of reinforcement. The behavior no longer “works”, so the animal stops doing it. Remember, if the animal is accustomed to being

rewarded for a behavior, he won't give it up right away—he's going to "up the ante" several times before he gives up, so the behavior will often get worse before it disappears. This is called an "extinction burst."

Example: Never reward or acknowledge a dog that is jumping up to say hello. Wait for a calm moment to greet him. If jumping up never gets the desired result (friendly greeting and attention), Fido will stop using jumping as a greeting, because it is a waste of energy.

Total Management

Managing the animal's entire environment in order to control all of the consequences (rewards and punishments) the animal experiences throughout the day. If you control the consequences, you control the behavior. Manipulating the environment to assure errorless learning and to develop desirable habits and avoid the unintentional reinforcement of undesirable behavior.

Example: Providing a long-term confinement area for the dog or cat to establish house-training. See Dr. Ian Dunbar's "Before You Get Your Puppy" for the full details on long-term confinement.

Kong Stuffing

Stuffing a portion of the animal's daily ration into a "Kong"—a virtually indestructible hollow rubber toy. Kong-stuffing teaches the animal to focus on appropriate chew toys and provides mental and physical stimulation to pass the time. See the Open Paw Four Level Training Manual for more details.

Hand-feeding

Example: Feed the animal's daily ration of food by hand, preferably by many people in many situations, rather than feeding from a bowl. Hand—feeding allows you to control one of the most important activities in the animal's life so that you can use it for training and rewards. This is a very powerful form of classical conditioning.

Appendix F

Example Crate Training Sign

Many people misunderstand why we put a dog in a crate, and interpret its use as cruel punishment. This is a fine opportunity to educate the public about the many benefits of crate training.



Hi, my name is

Can you imagine suddenly finding yourself in a shelter, surrounded by weird noises you can't identify, strange chemical smells from cleaning products, and lots of strangers coming by all the time? Wow, how scary and over-stimulating!

I'm doing crate and chew-toy training for the next few days, so that I can learn how to settle down and feel better about being in my kennel.

The blanket over my crate is to cut down on all the noise, so it's less stimulating in here. The crate is like a little den where I can feel safe and have a break from all the activity of the shelter. And I'm eating all of my food out of stuffed chew toys—chewing soothes me, and by eating out of stuffed toys I learn a chew-toy habit so I know what's good to chew when I feel lonely or bored!

Appendix G

Example "Out Training" Sign

So that your dogs don't miss out on potential matches while they're out training, we recommend that you make a sign for each dog's kennel. The sign should feature a picture of the dog and a brief note to explain that she's out learning important obedience skills. We've included an example on the following page.



Hi, my name is

I'm out learning good manners!
Flip this card over to learn all
about me.
I'll be back in about 20 minutes.