



Sammy's Friends

Foster Parent Manual PUPPIES

Welcome to Sammie's Friends!

Thank you for your interest in joining Sammie's Friends in helping the animals of Nevada County. There are so many things we can each do to make the world a little friendlier for our animal friends. By being a foster care parent you are taking a step towards this goal. Without your help, the animals here would not get the quality of care they deserve.

Volunteers are essential to the function and success of our shelter. We appreciate your contribution and are committed to doing our best to make your volunteer experience a productive and rewarding one.

Our Mission

The mission of Sammie's Friends is to provide medical care for the animals at the Nevada County Animal Shelter, making them adoptable, and to support other disadvantaged animals in Nevada County that without help would go to the Shelter or be euthanized.

Shelter Information:

Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter

14647 McCourtney Rd, Grass Valley, CA 95949

(530) 274-1955- Dog Facility

(530) 471-5041- Dog Facility

www.sammiesfriends.org

Facebook: Sammie's Friends

Kennels are open to the public Monday through Saturday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. everyday

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Section 1: Introduction

Foster homes are asked to provide care for the puppies and provide transportation to and from veterinary appointments as needed. Once the puppies

are old enough and weigh enough to be spayed or neutered (typically two pounds), you'll bring them to Sammie's Friends to be fixed and then look for homes. Care for foster puppies includes a strict feeding schedule, cleaning, and lots of snuggling and play time.

Although fostering is a lot of work, it is a very rewarding experience. By participating in this program, you are saving lives and helping animals find families.

Frequently asked questions

What do foster families need to provide?

Foster families need to provide:

- A healthy and safe environment for their foster animals
- Transportation to and from Sammie's Friends and all vet appointments as needed
- Socialization and cuddle time to help teach the puppies about positive family and pet relationships

How much time do I need to spend with the puppies?

As much time as you can. The more time you spend with your fosters, the more socialized they will be to people. The amount of time required for feeding will vary depending on the age of the puppies you are fostering. Very young puppies need to be bottle-fed every two to three hours, while older ones may be eating on their own and needing to be fed just a couple times a day.

Can I foster puppies even if I have a full-time job?

Yes. Sammie's Friends staff will match you with puppies appropriate for your schedule. We will need you to be available, however, to take the puppies to a vet appointment if they are sick.

How long will the puppies need to be in foster care?

Once a puppy weighs two pounds, he/she can be spayed or neutered and then put up for adoption. If you are fostering a litter of puppies, we will try to keep at least two of the puppies together for the surgery, but we want to get everyone spayed or neutered and ready for adoption as early as possible.

What is my role before and after the puppies' spay/neuter surgery?

After the puppies' surgeries, you can choose to pick them up so they can recover in your home for a few days, or they can stay at Sammie's Friends. Sammie's Friends staff appreciates any write ups with the puppy's information to post on their cage. This helps potential adopters make their choice. As you would expect, puppies are usually adopted quickly.

Will I need to give medicine to the foster puppies?

While we do our best to ensure that we are sending out healthy puppies to foster care, most illnesses have incubation periods, meaning that if the puppies picked up something at the shelter, symptoms can arise after you take them home. So, some puppies do not require any medicine, while others do. If your foster puppies need medication, we can show you how to administer it before you take the animals home.

Can I let my foster puppies play with my personal pets?

Puppies are very susceptible to illness and can carry or dogch dangerous ailments easily. For this reason, we require that foster parents isolate foster puppies with their own supplies for at least two weeks to try and ensure that the puppies are healthy prior to exposing them to your personal pets. We also advise that you consult with your veterinarian before fostering to ensure that all of your personal pets are healthy and up-to-date on all vaccines. If, for any reason, your personal pet becomes ill while you are fostering a Sammie's Friends pet, we cannot provide medical care for your personal pet.

Important note: If your personal dog is allowed outdoors, he or she cannot interact with your fosters. Puppies are very vulnerable to illness and we want to limit their risk by not exposing them to anything from the outdoors.

Who will take care of my foster puppies if I need to go out of town?

If you have travel plans while you are fostering puppies, you will need to contact the staff and make arrangements to return your foster group to the shelter for the duration of the time that you are gone. Please provide at least one week's notice to ensure that we have space for your puppies.

What if I want to adopt one of my foster puppies?

If you want to adopt a foster puppy, you will need to complete an adoption application and follow the full adoption process.

What if I know someone who's interested in adopting one of my foster puppies?

If someone you know is interested in adopting one of your fosters, please contact Sammie's Friends staff as soon as possible, because once the puppies are up for adoption, we cannot hold them for anyone. However, we do want to accommodate referrals from foster parents if we can.

Will it be difficult for me to say goodbye to my foster puppies?

Saying goodbye can be the most difficult part of fostering but remember that we always have more animals who need wonderful foster homes. Keep in mind that by fostering these vulnerable pets, you are playing a crucial role in helping to save lives.

Section 2: Preparing for your foster puppies

Your foster puppies should be separated from all other animals in your household and kept in a small area, such as a spare room or bathroom, where they have access to their food and water. And because young puppies cannot regulate their body temperature, this area should also be in a warm, draft-free area. It may be a good idea to consider an area that is easy to clean up in terms of spills and accidents, which will happen since the puppies are learning. Please don't put the puppies in a garage or place that has outdoor access; those lodogions are not safe.

Supplies you'll need

Sammie's Friends will provide you with any supplies that you may need. However, we greatly appreciate any help that you can provide in supplying items for your foster puppies. Here's what you'll need to care for your foster puppies:

- At least one bowl for dry food and one for water
- A supply of puppy food: At Sammie's Friends, puppies will be fed Diamond Naturals puppy dry food and a variety of wet food, so they will need to be fed that brand of food (or better) in the foster home.
- New bottle for each bottle-fed litter and formula for bottle-feeding.
- Puppy pads or towels
- Heat source: Puppies can't keep themselves warm, so you have to provide a heat source. The SnuggleSafe microwave heating pad is recommended.
- A soft place to sleep: Old towels or blankets work well.
- A secure sleeping area
- Toys: Use puppy-safe toys that are easy to sanitize and clean. Puppies can play with them when you're not home.

Puppy-proofing your home

Foster puppies are tiny and cute, but just like children, they are also very curious. They will try to get into everything to explore, so you will need to puppy-proof your home. Here are some tips:

- Put away any small items that a puppy can swallow.
- Hide any breakable items, block electrical outlets and remove toxic plants.
- If your puppies are staying in a bathroom, make sure that the toilet lid is closed at all times.
- Block off any spaces that the puppies could crawl into and hide in.

Section 3: Scheduling appointments for your foster puppies

During the time that you foster puppies, you'll need to make a number of appointments — to pick up and drop off your puppies, take them in for vaccines and spay/neuter, and pick up supplies.

Picking up and returning your foster puppies

To pick up and return puppies, simply schedule an appointment with Sammie's Friends staff. When you speak with staff about picking up some puppies, he or she will assess what age of puppies will work best with your lifestyle.

Scheduling vaccines for your puppies

Sammie's Friends will contact you regarding when to vaccinate your puppies. Healthy puppies are given vaccinations starting at 6 weeks old every two weeks for three sessions: Ages 6 weeks, 8 weeks, and 10 weeks.

Scheduling vet appointments for your puppies

You can call the staff to request a vet appointment seven days a week from 8 am to 5 pm. In the case of an emergency, we expect foster parents to use their best judgment after these hours. The closest emergency vet clinics are Animal Medical Center in Auburn (530) 823-5166 or Loomis Basin Veterinary Clinic (916) 778-6817.

Picking up supplies

Foster parents can pick up supplies from Sammie's Friends any day of the week between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Scheduling your puppies for spay/neuter

When your foster puppies weigh at least two pounds and are 8 weeks old, they can be spayed or neutered. You'll need to call the shelter to schedule the appointment.

Section 4: Caring for your foster puppies

Because puppies are fragile, it is important for you to watch the behavior of your foster puppies closely and monitor their health daily.

Watch for signs of illness, including frequent crying, restlessness, weakness, coldness (hypothermia), diarrhea, dehydration, shallow or labored breathing, paleness or blueness in color. Notify the shelter immediately if a puppy is losing weight, is cold to the touch, or is having trouble breathing (either shallow or heavy breathing).

Puppies are susceptible to illness, so foster puppies must be kept indoors. If your personal dog has access to the outdoors, he or she cannot interact with your

foster puppies. Also, please do not let your foster puppies ride loose in a car. Use a carrier at all times to transport puppies to and from appointments.

Caring for bottle-fed puppies

Bottle-feeding neonatal puppies requires an around-the-clock commitment. Thank you so much for offering your time and attention to these fragile babies. And please remember that we are here to support you. Here's some general info about bottle-feeding.

Milk preparation. You can pre-mix enough formula to last for 24 hours of feeding, but it must be refrigerated at all times. Discard all unused and mixed formula after 24 hours. Only heat enough formula for each feeding and throw away any uneaten warmed formula after each feeding. Do not re-use warmed formula because harmful bacteria can develop in it.

Bottle-feeding tips. It is easier to feed your puppies when they are gently wrapped in a towel or blanket, instead of just using your hands. The towel or blanket is softer and warmer than your hands and being wrapped up makes the puppies feel safer as they eat. If the puppy allows it, the forelegs should be free to allow him to "knead" with his feet. This kneading activity is essential to the puppy's muscle development and helps aid in digestion of the puppy's food. Also, be careful to position the puppy so that his belly is toward the floor. To decrease the chance of formula being aspirated into the lungs, puppies should not be fed on their backs.

Latching on. It may take a couple tries for a puppy to latch on to the bottle nipple. Just be patient; sometimes puppies need some encouragement to eat. Make sure that the nipple you are using on the bottle has an adequate flow of milk. When the nipple tip is punctured with a sterile needle, formula should drip out (one drop at a time, not a stream) when the bottle is inverted 180 degrees. Do not hesitate to call the shelter if you need any help or assistance with feeding your puppies. We are always here for you, ready to answer any questions that you may have.

Aspiration. If liquid bubbles out through the puppy's nose or he starts coughing, he may have gotten formula in his lungs. Pat the puppy very gently on the back to elicit a cough or sneeze, or hold him in an inverted position, tail over head, for a moment to remove the formula from his lungs. Please notify the shelter if this happens so we can determine if antibiotics or a vet visit is needed.

Peeing and pooping. Bottle-fed puppies need help with elimination, so you'll need to stimulate your puppies to pee and poop. After you feed them, wipe each puppy's back end with a baby wipe or warm wet cotton ball. Remember to do this every time you feed them. Puppies should urinate after every meal and should

poop at least once a day. The normal color of puppy poop is various shades of mustard and the consistency is similar as well. When a puppy is first introduced to formula, it is normal for him or her not to poop for 48 hours.

Signs of illness. Watch for signs of illness, including frequent crying, restlessness, weakness, coldness (hypothermia), diarrhea, dehydration, shallow or labored breathing, paleness or blueness in color. Notify the shelter immediately if a puppy is losing weight, is cold to the touch, or is having trouble breathing (either shallow or heavy breathing).

Keeping puppies warm. When puppies are infants (less than two weeks old), they can be kept in small carriers or playpens that can easily be covered by a blanket to maintain heat and reduce draftiness. As they grow and become more mobile, they will need more space to roam and play. Also, don't forget that puppies cannot regulate their body temperatures, so please keep a SnuggleSafe disc warm and with them at all times. Because puppies' skin is very sensitive and prone to thermal burns, the warming disc must be covered by a blanket and puppy pad that the puppies cannot burrow under.

Weighing. Please weigh the puppies before and after each feeding to ensure that they are growing.

How to bottle-feed puppies

Puppies will bottle-feed every two to four hours, depending on their age. Steps for bottle-feeding a puppy:

1. Warm the formula: Place the bottle in a bowl of hot water for a few minutes. Before feeding the puppies, always test the temperature of the formula by placing a few drops on your inner wrist to be sure it is not too hot. It should be slightly warmer than your body temperature.
2. Ensure that your foster puppy is warm before offering food. Do not attempt to feed a puppy who is chilled* because it can have serious health consequences.
3. Wrap the puppy in a towel or blanket and position him so that his belly is toward the floor. Puppies should not be fed on their backs or in an upright position.
4. Turn the bottle upside down and allow a drop of formula to come out. Place the bottle nipple in the puppy's mouth and gently move it back and forth, holding the bottle at a 45-degree angle to keep air from getting into the puppy's stomach. This movement should encourage the puppy to start eating. If at first you don't succeed, wait a few minutes and try again. Usually the puppy will latch on and begin to suckle. If the bottle appears to be collapsing, gently remove the nipple from the puppy's mouth and let more air return to the bottle.

* A puppy's ideal body temperature is 100 to 102 degrees. If a puppy feels cold to the touch, contact the shelter immediately. A puppy who is cold and unresponsive should be warmed right away. Place the puppy on an approved heating pad safely wrapped in two or three layers of towels. Turn the puppy side to side every 5 minutes. To stimulate blood flow, you may, ever so gently, massage the puppy with hand-rubbing.

Weaning puppies

Once your puppies are about four weeks old, it is time to start the weaning process. Your goal is to have the puppies eating on their own consistently by the time they're adopted. So, beginning at four weeks, start offering warm gruel (two parts wet food, one part formula) at all times, along with dry puppy food and water. Every four to six hours, discard any uneaten gruel and provide a fresh batch.

You will still be supplementing the puppies with a bottle every eight hours to ensure that they are getting all the nutrients they need but encourage them to eat gruel before you offer a bottle. To get a puppy interested in trying the gruel, you may have to offer the gruel with a spoon or use your finger to place a small

amount on the puppy's tongue. Ideally, by the end of five weeks, your foster puppies will be happily eating dry and wet food on their own.

It is important to continue weighing your foster puppies every day, after each feeding, to ensure that they are always gaining weight. During the weaning stage, you should also begin to see puppies defecating and urinating on their own without stimulation.

Making formula

Mix two parts water with one part formula. Mix the powder and water until all clumps are gone. Remember, mixed formula only lasts for 24 hours.

Making gruel

Mix 1/2 can of wet food with 1/4 can of formula per puppy. You can add a little water if the puppies seem to like a looser consistency. It's OK make gruel in bulk and refrigerate it, but you'll need to warm it before offering it to the puppies.

Caring for independent eaters

By six to seven weeks old, your puppies should be independent eaters. Dry food should be their primary source of food but offer wet food frequently as well to encourage eating and maximize growth. Replace the water in their water dish twice a day and wipe out the dish if needed.

During this stage, your daily responsibilities include socializing the puppies and exposing them to new situations and environments. It's important to try and keep all experiences positive for the puppies, so give them lots of treats and toys as they learn about new sounds, smells, places and faces. See Section 7 for more tips on how to successfully socialize your puppies.

As always, watch the behavior of your puppies and monitor their health daily.

Weigh the puppies once a day, preferably around the same time, to minimize the variables when tracking the puppies' growth. Look over each puppy every day for physical changes or potential medical problems.

At this stage, play with the puppies several times a day with interactive toys. Play time provides stimulation, encourages socialization and releases excess energy.

Try a variety of toys (balls, squeaky toys, etc.) to see which ones your foster puppies like. Toys don't have to be fancy or expensive.

Don't leave your foster puppies alone with any toys that could be easily ingested or cause harm to them. Also, it may seem cute, but discourage your foster puppies from play-biting your hands and feet. This is something that adopters may not find desirable.

Cleaning up between litters

Once you've returned your group of puppies to Sammie's Friends for adoption, you must sanitize your fostering room or area before you can take home a new batch of puppies. Remove anything the puppies touched and clean it with a weak bleach solution, consisting of one part bleach to 32 parts cold water.

If you have items that can be washed in the dishwasher, please do so since the heat will disinfect those items. Plastic or metal items that need to be sterilized, such as plastic toys, should be soaked in the bleach solution for 10 minutes and then rinsed off. Wash all bedding with bleach and hot water and throw away any toys that cannot be sterilized. Being conscientious about sterilization will help ensure that your next foster group will not dogch any illnesses from the previous group of puppies.

Quick feeding guide

Here's a brief summary of the feeding protocol for puppies up to eight weeks old:

Week 1: Bottle-feeding

Food type: Milk replacement formula

Frequency: Every 2–3 hours (8–12 times per day)

Amount: 3–4 cc per feeding, approximately 3–6 g per puppy

Week 2: Bottle-feeding

Food type: Milk replacement formula

Frequency: Every 3 hours (8 times per day)

Amount: 5–6 cc per feeding, approximately 8–15 g per puppy

Week 3: Bottle-feeding

Food type: Milk replacement formula

Frequency: Every 4 hours (6 times per day)

Amount: 13–17 cc per feeding, approximately 10–20 g per puppy

Week 4: Weaning stage

Food type: Milk replacement formula, gruel, puppy kibble and water

Frequency: Kibble, water and gruel should be available to puppies at all times; bottle-feed every 8 hours (3 times per day)

Amount: 13–17 cc per feeding with the bottle; will vary depending on how much gruel the puppy eats

Weeks 5–8: Solid food

Food type: Dry puppy food, wet puppy food and water

Frequency: Available at all times

You will need to offer fresh wet food 2 to 3 times daily.

Section 5: Fostering moms and puppies

Mother dogs need to be in a calm environment so that they can be stress-free and feel like they are keeping their puppies safe. Sometimes, stress can cause a mother dog to become aggressive or to not care for her babies properly. With that in mind, choose a private and quiet room of your home, away from the daily activities of your family, in which to situate the mother dog and her puppies. It's also important that they be kept away from other pets in the home. Other pets can be perceived as a threat by the mother dog and cause her to act aggressively to protect her young. If you have children and an active home, it may be best to foster when the puppies are four weeks or older. Sometimes mother dogs will behave less defensively if their puppies are older.

Bringing everyone home

Set up your fostering room before you bring the mother dog and her puppies home. You should put the litter box as far away from the mother dog's food and water bowls as possible and provide a couple of different safe places where she can care for her puppies. A dark area equipped with a whelping box is ideal. A whelping box is a box that is large enough for the mother dog to lie on her side slightly away from her puppies with all of the puppies in the box with her. The box should have sides high enough to prevent the puppies from wandering away, but low enough so it's easy for the mother dog to come and go as she needs to. Lining the bottom of the box with puppy pads topped with newspapers will help absorb moisture. You can place an easy-to-clean blanket on top of the absorbent materials to give the mother dog and puppies a soft place to lie on. Please keep all these materials dry so that the puppies are not chilled by dampness. Do not place straw, hay or shavings in the area where the mother and puppies are kept. When you bring your foster puppies and their mom home, put them all in the fostering room and close the door, allowing the mom to explore on her own. Give her a couple of hours before you enter her room and don't be alarmed if it takes a few days for her to stop hiding.

Mom's care of her puppies

The momma dog should take care of her puppies by herself for at least three to four weeks before she starts the weaning process for her babies. Each momma dog that you foster will be slightly different in her level of attentiveness, but there are three basic stages of nursing (see below). If for any reason your momma dog is

not performing one of the listed functions, please notify the staff right away to evaluate whether the mom has a medical concern that we need to address. Puppies are born blind, but they can feel their mother's heat and seek her out to begin nursing within two hours of being born. Mother dogs should be lying on their sides to ensure that their puppies can find the nipples for nursing. Here are three stages of nursing:

- One to two weeks old: The mother dog initiates nursing by licking her puppies to wake them up and curling her body around them. After she wakes all of her babies, the puppies search for a short time period and then quickly latch on.
- Two to three weeks old: The puppies' eyes and ears begin to function and they start to explore beyond the nesting area. This is when the puppies start interacting and playing with their mother. At this age, the puppies start to initiate some of the nursing and momma should comply by lying in the nursing position.
- Four to five weeks old: The puppies begin weaning and, in turn, the mother dog no longer initiates any nursing. If the mother dog still allows the puppies to nurse, it will be initiated by the puppies and can be lateral or upright nursing.

Occasionally, mom dogs develop mastitis when their puppies stop nursing and begin to eat on their own. Mastitis occurs when the mammary glands inflame and harden, creating a very painful infection for the mother dog and causing symptoms such as a fever and listlessness. If you think your mother dog may have mastitis, call the staff. This is not an emergency condition.

The mother dog will groom and lick her babies frequently for the first two to four weeks. She will stimulate her puppies to pee and poop and will generally consume the fecal matter and urine. As the babies become more mobile, they will start to leave the nest and deposit urine and feces nearby.

To ensure that the mother dog has enough to eat, give her access to both wet and dry food at all times. Food intake for a nursing mother can be two to four times the amount eaten by a dog who's not nursing.

When fostering a momma dog, it is very important to observe her behavior daily and watch her interactions with her puppies to spot any problems. Unfortunately, 8 percent of puppies pass away because of inadequate maternal care. This can happen for many different reasons, some of which are beyond our control.

Problem behaviors in momma dogs

Here are some details about problem behaviors in momma dogs and what you can do about them.

Maternal neglect. Sometimes a mother dog stops providing care to one or all of her puppies. The neglect may be because of a birth defect or weakness in the puppy; she may just be trying to follow nature's course, focusing her attention on the stronger puppies. Neglect may also happen because she is inexperienced or she's in a stressful environment. Either way, that's why it's so important to make daily observations to ensure that she is caring for her babies. If she will let you handle the puppies, you should weigh each puppy once a day to ensure that they are gaining weight. If you notice that she is spending all of her time away from the puppies, is not grooming or nursing them frequently, or doesn't respond to their cries, please call Sammie's Friends staff right away.

Maternal aggression toward other animals. Aggressive behavior directed at other animals is common and expected from mother dogs because they have a maternal instinct to protect their young at all times. With that in mind, please do not try to introduce her to the other animals in your home. As mentioned above, the mom dog and her puppies should have a quiet room of their own away from all other pets so that she and her babies can always feel safe. If she has seen another animal and becomes stressed or aggressive, it is very important to leave her alone and not try to comfort her. Give her 20 minutes or so to calm down and then check on her.

Maternal aggression toward people. Sometimes mother dogs will act aggressively toward people. Again, the mother is merely trying to protect her young. We evaluate mom dogs for these behaviors before sending them into foster homes, but sometimes the behaviors develop later. If you have a mother exhibiting these behaviors, do not try to "correct" the behavior with any type of punishment. She is only acting out of instinct to protect her babies and you could cause her aggressive behavior to escalate.

Separating puppies and moms

If all of your foster animals, mom included, are healthy and friendly, we have no reason to separate mom from puppies before they are eight weeks old. But there are a few medical or behavioral reasons for separating them earlier than eight weeks:

- As mentioned above, if the mother dog is showing signs of maternal neglect and is no longer caring for her puppies, the staff may decide to separate her from her puppies.
- If the mother dog is very undersocialized, we may decide to separate the puppies once they are eating on their own consistently and no longer need

to nurse (around four to five weeks old). Separating them would prevent the puppies from learning those behaviors from their mother and help them to become socialized, which increases their chances of finding forever homes.

- If there is a medical concern about the mom or babies, a veterinarian could make the decision to separate the puppies from the mother dog.

The puppies' best chance at survival is to stay with their mom. Please do not separate your foster puppies from their mom for any reason, or attempt to supplement the mother's milk with formula, without consulting the staff.

Section 6: Medical and Emergency Protocols

Veterinary care

Sammie's Friends provides all medical care for our foster animals at our approved veterinary clinics. Because we are ultimately responsible for your foster animals' well-being, our staff must authorize any and all treatment for foster animals at our approved veterinary partners.

If your foster puppies need to go to the veterinarian, please notify staff by phone.

Signs of illness and what to do next

Puppies do a good job of masking when they don't feel well, so determining if a foster puppy is under the weather will require diligent observation of the puppies' daily activity and appetite levels. Be aware that puppies act differently at different ages. For example, a healthy two-week-old puppy will sleep often and get up only to nurse, whereas a healthy six-week-old puppy should have a lot of energy. If you have any questions about the health of your foster puppies, please contact the staff, who will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Eye discharge. It is normal for puppies to have some discharge from their eyes when they wake up. But if a puppy has yellow or green discharge or swelling around the eyes (making it hard for him to open his eyes), you need to contact the staff and then schedule a vet appointment.

Sneezing and nasal discharge. Occasional sneezing is common in puppies. If the sneezing becomes more frequent, examine the discharge coming from the sneeze. If the discharge is clear, the infection is probably viral and medication may not be necessary. But it is important to monitor the puppies in case the problem becomes worse. If the discharge becomes colored, contact staff and then schedule a vet appointment because the puppies may have a bacterial infection. Be sure to monitor the puppies' breathing. If they start to wheeze or have labored breathing, call the staff immediately. Also, once you notice nasal discharge, monitor the

puppies' eating habits more closely to ensure that they are still eating. And, of course, continue to weigh them daily.

Loss of appetite. Your foster puppies may be stressed after arriving in your home, and stress can cause lack of appetite. Unwillingness to eat in puppies can be very serious, so pay close attention to whether the puppies are eating. Puppies should eat on a four- to eight-hour schedule, depending on their age. If a puppy under four weeks old misses two meals or a puppy over four weeks of age goes more than 12 hours without eating, there is cause for concern. With a puppy who is not eating, please do not change the puppy's diet without contacting the shelter staff. An abrupt change in diet can cause diarrhea, which will lead to dehydration.

Lethargy. The activity level of your puppies will vary with each puppy in your litter and with age. Sick puppies may have lower energy levels and just want to sit in your lap or on the floor and not move much or play. If a puppy cannot be roused or seems weak and unable to stand, this is an emergency, so you'll need to call the shelter immediately. Note: Some undersocialized puppies will move less because they are frightened. If you have a fearful group of puppies, it can be more difficult to determine if their energy levels are low. But tracking all behaviors will help you decide whether you should call the staff to schedule a vet appointment.

Dehydration. Dehydration is usually associated with diarrhea, vomiting and/or loss of appetite. To test for dehydration, gently pinch the puppy's skin around the scruff area. If the skin stays taut, the puppy is dehydrated. Please call the staff immediately, as dehydration can be fatal in puppies.

Vomiting. If a foster puppy has thrown up two or more times in one day, please notify the shelter staff. If there is bile or blood in the vomit, please call right away.

Pain or strain while urinating. When puppies first go into a foster home, they may not urinate due to stress. Also, if you notice the puppy straining to urinate with little or no results, or crying out when urinating, please contact the staff immediately because it may be indicative of an infection or a urethral obstruction, which can be life-threatening.

Diarrhea. In puppies, it can be tricky to determine if diarrhea is a problem. Soft stool diarrhea, most likely caused by stress, is normal for the first two days after you take puppies home. Puppies who are nursing tend to have loose stool, but if it is watery or very large in volume, that's a concern. By the time puppies are five weeks old and are eating consistently on their own, they should have firm, normal stool. If your foster puppies have liquid stool, please contact the shelter so that a vet appointment can be scheduled; the puppies may need medication.

If a puppy has bloody or mucoid diarrhea, please contact staff immediately.

Frequent ear scratching. A foster puppy may have ear mites if she scratches her ears often and/or shakes her head frequently, or if you see a dark discharge that resembles coffee grounds when you look in her ears. Ear mites can be treated by a veterinarian, so please call shelter staff for a medical appointment.

Hair loss. Please contact the shelter staff if you notice any hair loss on your foster puppies. It is normal for dogs to have thin fur around the lips, eyelids and in front of the ears, but clumpy patches of hair loss or thinning hair can indicate ringworm or dermatitis. It is important to check your foster puppies' coats every day.

Serious puppy ailments

Puppies are susceptible to these illnesses:

- Fading puppy syndrome: Symptoms include unwillingness to eat, dehydration, lethargy, weight loss, coldness to the touch, and difficulty with breathing or labored breathing.
- Parvovirus: Symptoms include unwillingness to eat, vomiting, diarrhea and/or dehydration. The diarrhea often has a mucoid texture and/or is bloody.

If a puppy is displaying any combination of the symptoms listed above, please contact the staff immediately. These ailments can be fatal if left untreated.

Criteria for emergencies

What constitutes a medical emergency in a puppy? A good rule of thumb is any situation in which you would call 911 for a person. Here are some specific symptoms that could indicate an emergency:

- Not breathing or labored breathing
- Symptoms of fading puppy syndrome or distemper (see "Serious Puppy Ailments" above)
- Signs of extreme dehydration: dry gums, weakness, vomiting, not urinating, skin tenting (when the skin is pulled up, it stays there)
- Abnormal lethargy or unable to stand
- Unconsciousness or unable to wake up
- Cold to the touch
- Broken bones
- Any trauma: hit by a car, dropped, stepped on
- A large wound or profuse bleeding that doesn't stop when pressure is applied
- Loss of appetite for more than 12 hours

If a foster puppy displays any of these symptoms, please call the shelter if between the hours of 8 a.m and 5 p.m. If the emergency occurs after these hours, contact either Animal Medical Center in Auburn or VCA Loomis Basin. If the animal is vomiting or has diarrhea, but is still active, eating and drinking, you can

probably wait until the next day to get help. However, if the animal is lethargic and shows no interest in food or water, start the emergency protocol.

If you think your foster pet may incur permanent damage or pass away if not seen by a veterinarian immediately, please proceed to the approved emergency clinic and leave a detailed message for shelter staff.

Section 7: Socializing and instilling good behaviors in puppies

Your goal as a foster parent is to prepare your foster puppies for forever homes. While a big part of that is helping the puppies to grow and be healthy, another component is helping them develop the good habits that will make them wonderful companions for their adopters.

Discipline

One of your goals as a foster parent is to help prepare your foster puppies for living successfully in a home. So, we ask that you help your foster puppies to develop good habits and skills through the use of positive reinforcement, which builds a bond of trust between you and your foster pets. The basic idea is to reward desirable behaviors and ignore unwanted behaviors.

You must not punish the puppies for behavior that you find undesirable because punishment is ineffective at eliminating the behavior. If a puppy is doing something undesirable, distract him or her before the behavior occurs. It is also important for every human in the foster home to stick to the rules established for your foster pets, which will help them to learn faster.

Play time

Play time is a very important part of puppy development. It is crucial for young puppies to have other puppies to wrestle with in order to develop appropriate play skills and be properly socialized with other puppies. Puppies also need toys to play with so that they can get physical exercise and mental stimulation.

Socializing and handling

Introducing your foster puppies to new things and new experiences will also help prepare them for living happily in forever homes. Follow these rules to positively expose your puppies to new people, environments and noises:

- **New people:** Introducing your foster animals to new people will help them become well-adjusted adult dogs. Monitor all interactions with new people, though, to ensure that they are positive, not scary, experiences for the

puppies. Have new people give gentle pets and treats to the puppies and interact with them using fun toys. If children are visiting, they must always be supervised until they are old enough to understand how to gently interact with a puppy.

- **New environments:** It will help the puppies' adjustment into adopters' homes if you can allow your puppies to experience different parts of your home. Whenever you introduce the puppies to a new space, provide lots of treats and play with interactive toys so that the puppies associate the new space with their favorite things. Keep the exploratory sessions brief so you don't overwhelm your puppies and return them to their living space if they do seem overwhelmed or scared.
- **New noises:** It is beneficial to expose puppies to a variety of normal household noises but, again, try to do it in a positive way. The key is to introduce different noises gradually. For example, start by keeping a radio on low volume and gradually increase the volume over a few days. Another example: Run the vacuum in another room at first, with your puppies at a safe distance. Then, over the course of a few days, move the vacuum noise closer to their room. If another person plays with the puppies while you make the noise, it may help alleviate any stress or fear that they may feel. Some puppies are naturally fearful, so just go even slower with the timid ones.

Another thing you can work on with your foster puppies is getting them comfortable with being in a dog carrier. When you are not using the carrier for transportation, leave the carrier (with the door removed or securely propped open) in your foster puppies' room. Put toys, treats and a soft blanket in the carrier, to encourage the puppies to go in and spend time there.

Guiding your foster puppies' behavior

Puppies need to be socialized to interact appropriately with both humans and other dogs. When you socialize puppies to humans, you're helping to create happy, healthy adult dogs who will make wonderful pets. That's why it's so important to handle, talk to and play with your foster puppies.

Section 8: Development

Puppy development and what you can do

Time and effort are required to properly socialize puppies. In fact, when they're between four and twelve weeks old, daily socialization sessions are important in shaping the puppy's personality and emotional growth.

You'll want your foster puppies to become familiar with having their paws touched (front and back), their mouths opened and their ears touched. Combining this type of handling with regular grooming sessions and body massages helps to prevent skin sensitivity or aversion to touch. And acquainting puppies with a variety of sights, sounds and textures will help them to grow into well-socialized adult dogs. Listed below are some characteristics of puppies at different stages and the steps you can take to help socialize them.

Newborn

Appearance: Newborn puppies should be pink, firm, plump and generally healthy-looking.

Temperature: Normal rectal temperature for newborns is 95 or 99 degrees Fahrenheit.

Eyes and ears: Closed, but they can still hear (though poorly) and respond to bright light with a blink reflex.

Muscles: Healthy puppies will curl their bodies and limbs inward.

1 to 2 weeks

Temperature: Normal rectal temperature has gradually increased to 98-100 degrees F.

Eyes and ears: Open at approximately 11-15 days.

Muscles: Puppies can use their front legs to stand and walk shakily.

What you can do: You can engage in gentle handling and cuddling at this point. These sessions should be very short (one to two minutes), and great care should be taken in the handling process. Rub the hair coat gently with your hands, and gently finger the webbing in between the toes. Rub the ears and muzzle.

2 to 3 weeks

Temperature: Puppies are able to maintain their own body temperature within the normal range (100.5 – 102.5 degrees F).

Eyes: Vision is initially poor, even after the eyes have opened, but continues to develop until three to four weeks of age. If the eyes fail to open and the lids look sticky, wipe the lids very gently with dampened cotton lightly smeared with a little petroleum jelly to ease their opening. The eyelids should never be pulled apart. If a puppy's eyelids still haven't opened by 14 days, contact Sammie's Friends staff.

Muscles: The rear legs can now support the body. Puppies are crawling.

Teeth: Deciduous incisors start to appear, followed by deciduous canines.

What you can do:

- Provide five minutes of handling exercises. Gently roll the puppy over on her back for 5-10 seconds, and then draw her close to you, stroking and cuddling her. Never do this while actively feeding the puppy. Be careful not to startle the puppy with sudden movements or loud sounds.
- Start grooming: Softly and gently brush the puppy's coat with a few strokes, touch the ears and mouth, and pretend to clip the nails by adding gentle pressure to the puppy's paws.

3 to 4 weeks

Eyes and ears: Vision and hearing are normal. Blink response disappears with the development of accurate pupil control. The puppy is now able to use visual clues to locate and approach the mother. The eyes should be completely open by 17 days.

Muscles: By 21 days, puppies can walk with a fairly steady gait. They can also sit and have reasonable control of their toes.

Teeth: Deciduous incisors and canine teeth continue to come in.

What you can do:

- If the mother and puppies are no longer using the whelping box, it's OK to remove it.
- The puppies will start to explore their immediate environment. Provide safe, simple toys to help stimulate them.
- The puppies can be introduced to other people at this time, but this interaction should be carefully controlled. The interaction should be limited to five minutes of time spent in gentle massage and cuddling.
- As the main caregiver, you should continue the grooming and handling exercises: holding, cuddling and stroking each puppy's body, including ears, tail and muzzle.

4 to 5 weeks

Eyes and ears: Vision is markedly improved. From three to five weeks, puppies learn guided paw placement and obstacle avoidance.

Muscles: Puppies are walking normally and start climbing. Social play is prevalent.

Teeth: Deciduous premolars come in.

What you can do: Continue the handling and socialization exercises.

5 to 8 weeks of age

Temperature: Normal range is 100.5 degrees to 102.5 degrees F.

Teeth: Puppies have an entire set of deciduous teeth by five to six weeks of age.

What you can do:

- The puppies are totally dependent on the environment you provide to stimulate and develop them. Play with objects increases around seven to eight weeks of age, so continue to add appropriate toys to the puppies' environment.
- Introduce the puppies to as many different people as possible — people of different shapes, sizes, colors, sexes and ages. Encourage the puppies to allow individual handling by different people: men, women and supervised children. Keep the visits short.
- Expose the puppies to mild sounds, different areas and surfaces, allowing them to investigate.
- As the main caregiver, you should continue the handling and grooming exercises.
- If you choose to, you can introduce the puppies to other animals while their mother is not around. Keep the visits very short and always supervise them. These visits should be calm and pleasant; a traumatic incident at this stage could have a lasting effect on the puppies. Keep in mind that puppies can carry diseases that can be transmitted to other animals.

8 weeks or older

What you can do:

- Protect the puppies from unpleasant or negative experiences. The puppies' environment should be designed to help them develop a sense of security.
- Continue to introduce the puppies to as many different people as possible.
- Continue the handling and grooming exercises.
- At this stage, you can gradually introduce some more intrusive noises, such as whistles blowing, hands clapping, bells jingling and the vacuum cleaner running. Play with the puppies as you introduce the noise in the background.

Puppy Growth Chart

Birthweight approx. 100 grams
 day 3 - 5 approx. 130 - 150 grams / umbilical cord falls off
 day 9 - 12 approx. 210 grams / eyes and ears will open
 14 days approx. 230 grams / starts strolling about a little
 16 days approx. 265 grams / starts cleaning itself and playing
 21 days approx. 325 grams / starts to walk
 25 days approx. 360 grams / first teeth coming through
 28 days approx. 400 grams / rest of the milkteeth are coming through / 1st deworming
 5 weeks approx. 480 grams / becoming housetrained, can run pretty well
 6 weeks approx. 540 grams / no longer need for bottle-feeding / has all milkteeth / can go without mother's milk and can eat independently / 2nd deworming -- 1st vaccination
 8 weeks approx. 600 - 700 grams / 3rd deworming – 2nd vaccination
 10 weeks approx. 850 grams -- 3rd vaccination

SPAY/NEUTER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Dogs and puppies should be free of any symptoms. In case of doubt, call the staff at 471-5041. In order to have your foster puppy spayed/neutered it must:

- Be at least 2 pounds (weigh ahead of time at shelter if necessary)

- Should be completely healthy with no lingering symptoms.
- Nursing mothers should be 3 to 4 weeks past weaning. It is best to allow nursing until the puppies are at least 8 weeks of age, or when the nipple area is flat and not engorged with milk.

🕒 Night before surgery:

- Adults should have nothing to eat after 6:00 PM; puppies, after 8:00 PM. Puppies can have a tiny teaspoon of food that morning.
- Water is allowed.
 - For the safety of the animals, please do not bring them in for surgery if they have eaten. Food in the stomach can cause life-threatening complications during surgery and while under anesthesia.

🕒 Morning of surgery:

- Drop off at the shelter around 8 and 8:15am.
- Puppies (from same foster home) can be in same carrier.

🕒 Afternoon of surgery:

- If puppies will recover at your home, you can pick them up that evening. The spay/neuter coordinator will call to let you know she's on her way back.

AVAILABLE MEDICATIONS AND SUPPLIES

The following supplies and medications are available 7 days a week. Help Sammie's Friends save money by picking up these supplies from the shelter, instead of getting them from a vet.

Pick up hours are 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

EARS

Acarexx (ear mites)

Cleaning solution

EYES

BNP ophthalmic ointment

Erythromycin ophthalmic ointment

Terramycin

PARASITES

Advantage (fleas)

Droncit (tape worms)

Panacur (multiple parasites)

Pyrantel (multiple parasites)

MISCELLANEOUS

Sub-Q fluids (additional bags of fluids and line for long-term treatment)

Nutri-Cal (nutritional supplement)

Probiotics: Fortiflora (digestive aid when on antibiotics, diarrhea)

Clavamox and Orbax: Antibiotics

Metronidazole: diarrhea

Dia-gel

Remember! Foster TIPS

- Act sooner rather than later when it comes to puppies' health. They crash very fast.
- Ask for preapproval for a veterinary visit.
- After Hour Emergencies: We expect our foster parents to have and to use their good judgment when deciding upon taking their foster animal to an emergency vet clinic. If you have a question after hours, you can contact Lorie Hennessey at (530) 802-6167.
- Once deciding upon the need for emergency intervention, call Auburn Animal Medical Center at 823-5166. Their address is 1525 Grass Valley Hwy, Auburn, CA 95603. They are open every day between the hours of 7:30 am and 9 pm. They can even give medical advice via phone.
- If the need arises and Animal Medical Center cannot help, the last option is to take the animal to the emergency vet in Loomis Basin. Their phone number is 916-652-5816. Their address is 3901 Sierra College Blvd, Loomis, CA 95650 and they are open 24 hours. Please take into account that Sammie's Friends does not receive much of a discount from the emergency vets and visits can be extremely costly to us, so there must be a true emergency.
- We want to make this experience enjoyable for everyone. Please refrain from:
 - Keeping puppies too long for no apparent reason. During puppy season, the sooner you get them adopted, the sooner you can pick up another case that is as cute and needy as your previous one!
 - Ignoring calls/emails from volunteers or staff. Reply within 24 hours. It's imperative that we know what is happening with animals in your care.

VETERINARY LIST

Veterinarian	Phone	Address
Alta Sierra Veterinary Clinic	271-0101	10078 Alta Sierra Dr., GV
Animal Clinic LOP	268-1266	10868 Combie, St 130 Auburn
Best Friends Animal Hospital	272-2817	13895 Colfax Hwy, GV
Brighton Greens Vet Hospital	477-6863	996 McCourtney Rd., GV
Brunswick Vet Hospital	477-2287	131 Olympia Park, GV
For the Love of Pets	477-5683	561 Idaho/Maryland Rd. GV
Four Paws Animal Clinic	265-3722	521 Searls Ave. Ste A, NC
Grass Valley Vet Hospital	273-7272	11101 R&R Hwy, GV
Mother Lode Vet Hospital	272-6651	11509 La Barr Meadows, GV
Pine Creek Vet Hospital	478-9141	128 New Mohawk St. NC
Penn Valley Veterinary Associates	432-3135	17404 Penn Valley Dr. PV
Sierra Animal Wellness	346-6611	1506 South Canyon Way, Colfax
Animal Medical Center	823-5166	1525 Grass Valley Hwy, Auburn
Sierra Oaks Vet Clinic	346-6611	10171 Commercial St. PV

Sammie's Friends thanks you for opening your heart and your home to these animals and we are available for questions 8 a.m to 5 p.m every day. The phone number to the dog facility is (530) 471-5041.