



NCBR Foster Home Information Packet

The information contained in this document is for the sole and exclusive use of individuals specifically authorized in writing by NorCal Boxer Rescue ("NCBR") to use it. NCBR is not responsible for any unauthorized use of this document or of the information contained within it. Any unauthorized individual found to have disseminated this document or any information contained within it without the express written permission of NCBR shall be solely responsible for any financial, legal, or any other consequences related to the unauthorized dissemination, and shall fully indemnify and hold harmless NCBR from any liability arising out of the unauthorized dissemination.



Liability Protocol

Preamble

Because NCBR business involves the recognition of some level of risk in carrying out NCBR's mission, it is vitally important that all NCBR foster homes and their assigned mentors understand and follow the protocol set forth below when dealing with any event or occurrence involving a dog owned by NCBR that could result in legal action taken against NCBR. Such events or occurrences may include, but are not limited to, an NCBR dog biting another dog or a person, an NCBR dog destroying property of a third party, or an NCBR dog acting in any way that leads to the destruction of property or injury of another dog or person. NCBR fosters and mentors must use their own individual judgment when evaluating such circumstances, but are encouraged to err on the side of caution if any potential event could reasonably be the basis for a finding of legal liability on the part of NCBR.

PROTOCOL

1. Immediately upon the occurrence of the event which in the opinion of a reasonable person could lead to any legal action taken against NCBR, or as soon as reasonably practical thereafter, the foster home or mentor will first contact the President of the NCBR Board of Directors by telephone. Each mentor and foster home will be provided this contact information upon acceptance of a position with NCBR, and shall maintain the information in a safe place. Foster homes and mentors shall not provide this contact information to any third party without express written consent of the NCBR Board President.
2. If the President is not available to speak by telephone, the mentors or foster homes shall leave a brief message indicating only the following: "This is [NAME] calling from NCBR. I need to speak with you urgently. Please return my call at your soonest convenience at [NUMBER]," or words to that effect. No details or other information of any kind are to be left on a voice message.
3. If the President does not return the call within 30 minutes, the mentors or foster homes may send a text message to the President at the cell phone number provided. The text message shall only reflect as follows: "This is [NAME] from NCBR. I need to speak with you urgently. Please call me at your soonest convenience at [NUMBER]," or words to that effect.
4. At no time shall foster homes or mentors send any written communication of any kind, other than as set forth above, to any individual – either affiliated with NCBR or a third party – regarding any event or occurrence the foster homes or mentors believe may lead to any legal action taken against NCBR. "Written communication" includes emails, text messages, and any other writing, electronic or otherwise.
5. If a foster home is unable to reach the President within one hour of the event or occurrence, the foster home shall contact the mentor assigned to that foster home. The foster home may verbally relay the facts surrounding the event or occurrence to the



mentor, and at that point the mentor shall be primarily responsible for contacting the President as set forth above. The foster home shall not thereafter discuss with any individual (other than the NCBR President) or outside organization anything regarding the event or occurrence without the express written authorization of the President or an order of the court.

6. If the mentor is unable to contact the President within one hour of speaking with the foster home, the mentor may call the NCBR Executive Director, whose contact information will be provided to each mentor upon acceptance of a position with NCBR. The mentor may verbally relay the facts surrounding the event or occurrence to the Executive Director, and at that point the Executive Director shall be primarily responsible for contacting the President as set forth above. The mentor shall not thereafter discuss with any individual (other than the NCBR President or Executive Director) or outside organization anything regarding the event or occurrence without the express written authorization of the President or an order of the court.
7. In the President's judgment, the President shall be responsible for contacting any individual or organization involved in the reported event or occurrence to address any issues which may involve NCBR. The President may consult with the full NCBR Board of Directors regarding any remedial action that NCBR may wish to take concerning a reported event or occurrence if the President believes such to be prudent. The President shall inform the full Board of Directors of any event or occurrence reported no later than the next scheduled Board meeting. Said information shall also include any remedial action taken.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT TO COMPLY WITH PROTOCOL

By your acceptance of this document in conjunction with the execution of the foster contract with NCBR (hereby incorporated as though set forth fully herein), you acknowledge the protocol set forth above, and further acknowledge that you fully understand it. You further agree to comply with this protocol in your capacity as a foster home and/or mentor for NCBR. Should you have any issue with your obligations regarding this liability protocol, you may contact your NCBR mentor to schedule an appointment to discuss the rights and obligations arising under this protocol with NCBR's legal counsel.



Table of Contents

Introduction to Fostering	7
Foster Home Requirements	8
Who to Contact	8
Volunteer Resource Website	9
Preparing for Your Foster Dog	9
Bringing Your Foster Dog Home	9
The First 48 Hours	9
After Week One	11
After Week Two	11
Medical Information	12
The Basics	12
Common Ailments	12
Euthanasia	13
Medical Treatment Protocol	13
Examples of Symptomatic Treatments	14
List of Approved Over the Counter (OTC) Medications	14
Training Information	15
The Basics	15
Teaching Sit	15
Nothing in Life is Free (NILF) Program	16
Dogs and Children	16
General Rules	16
Emergencies	17
Marketing Your Foster Dog	17
Foster Dog Profile Page	17
Writing Your Foster Dog's Bio	18
Pet Fairs/Events	18
Event Guidelines	18
Preparing Your Dog for Events	18
Adoption Process	19
Supplement A: Introducing a Foster Dog to Resident Dog(s)	21
Supplement B: Introducing a Foster Dog to Resident Cat(s)	23
Supplement C: Heartworm Treatment	24
Heartworm Treatment Procedure	24
Stage 1 of Treatment	24



Stage 2 of Treatment	25
Alternative Treatment	25
Stage 1.....	25
Stage 2.....	25
After Care Instructions	25
Retest	25
When to Contact Your Mentor	25
Supplement D: Kennel Cough	26
How Contagious Is It?	26
How Is It Treated?.....	26
Approved OTC Medications	26
What You Can Do to Help.....	27
When to Contact Your Mentor	27
Supplement E: Spay After Care	28
Food & Water	28
Exercise & Activity	28
Eliminations.....	28
When to Contact Your Mentor	28
Supplement F: Neuter After Care	29
Food & Water	29
Exercise & Activity	29
Eliminations.....	29
When to Contact Your Mentor	29
Supplement G: Diarrhea	30
Suggested Feeding for Dogs with Diarrhea	30
Approved OTC Medications	30
When to Contact Your Mentor	31
Supplement H: Demodectic Mange.....	32
Supplement I: Sarcoptic Mange	33
Supplement J: OTC Medications	34
Kennel Cough/Congestion.....	34
Wounds/Cuts/Scrapes	34
Diarrhea.....	35
Constipation	35
Skin Issues	36
Nausea and/or Vomiting.....	36
Dehydration.....	36
Supplement K: Crate Training	37
Crate Training DO's	38
Crate Training DON'Ts.....	38
Supplement L: House Training Tips	39



Establish a Routine	39
Confinement	40
Oops!	40
Other Types of House-Soiling Problems	40
Supplement M: Nothing in Life is Free	42
How to Practice “Nothing in Life is Free”	42
Benefits of NILIF	42
Why This Technique Works	42
Supplement N: Creating a Foster Dog’s Profile	43
Supplement O: Dogs and Children	46
Frequently Asked Questions	49
Supplement P: Mast Cells	52



Introduction to Fostering

Fostering a boxer is very much like raising a child in that it can be exhausting, heartbreaking, and frustrating, yet joyful, fun, and extremely rewarding all at the same time. Fostering is not an easy job and it will likely require far more effort on your part than you realize, but the rewards are immense. Knowing that you have not only saved a life, but that you have helped rehabilitate a dog and then united him or her with a well deserved forever home to live out a happy, healthy life, is quite a wonderful feeling!

Our foster homes are our most important resource; without them we could not continue!

Fostering a dog means taking a dog into your home with unknown training history, background, socialization, house manners, temperament, etc. While we do our best to only take in dogs that we ultimately feel are safe for placement, it is nearly impossible to fully determine a dog's temperament in a shelter environment. You **MUST** understand that these dogs are rescue dogs and their behavior can be unpredictable. You should be prepared for some adjustment issues in the beginning, as it can be stressful for both you and the dog to be in a new situation. Try to be patient and understanding. Your foster dog's world has been turned upside down – image how you would feel if placed in a similar situation.

There are numerous variables involved in fostering, and if you stick with it long enough, you will likely encounter each and every one of them. But don't stress! We are here to help you. NCBR is a team in every sense of the word, and we have a wealth of knowledge and experience in our group. If you have questions, ask them. If you need help, reach out to your mentor and other experienced volunteers. There isn't much that we haven't seen during our 15+ years of rescue, and we are happy to share our experiences with you so that your fostering experience is the best it can be.



Foster Home Requirements

Commitment! Commitment! Commitment! The reason we are able to pull and save dogs from area shelters is because of an open foster home. If that means you, YOU are the only available space for that dog. Because of this reason, you are asked to manage the dog's needs through until adoption day. **This is something you must understand fully and completely.**

- Foster homes must meet the same requirements as our adoptive homes.
- A Foster Home Application needs to be completed, followed by a vet check and home visit.
- All current pets in the household must be spayed/neutered and up-to-date on vaccinations.
- Foster homes need to have the ability to keep any resident cats safe during a foster dog's time in the home.
- Foster homes must be willing to crate foster dogs (a crate can be provided by NCBR).
- All foster homes are required to sign a Foster Home Agreement.

Who to Contact

By now, you should have been assigned a mentor. This person will be your main point of contact for all of your fostering needs, and is a tremendous resource for you. It is very important that you communicate any and all problems, questions, etc., to your mentor. In doing so, your mentor will grow to understand your particular needs and can help make your experience as a foster home more enjoyable and successful.

If you're having problems communicating with your mentor or have an emergency situation and are unable to reach your mentor, please contact [Karen Heald](#) or [Deb Wood](#).

NCBR Emergency Contact Info as of January 2016:

Medical Coordinator
Karen Heald – 530 219 6756
rescueboxerspointers@yahoo.com

Foster Home Coordinator
Deb Wood – 719 660 5268
dwoodncbr@gmail.com



Volunteer Resource Website

For a complete list of all current NCBR contacts please visit our Volunteer Resources website at volunteers.ncbr.org.

This site is intended as a tool for our volunteers to help you successfully interact with NCBR. It includes useful information such as NCBR documents and forms, lists of contacts, information about the organization, and more.

Preparing for Your Foster Dog

Please review any medical documents you are given that pertain to your new foster dog.

- Discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your mentor.
- Set up a crate. If you do not have a crate, let your mentor know and she/he will request one be transported to you. *NOTE: NCBR prefers the use of wire crates, as they are less confining than the airline type crates and are less stressful for the foster dog.*
- Set up separate feeding area and dishes for your foster dog from any resident pets. We have found that it's easier to feed at the same time to avoid other dogs getting stressed if they are not also being fed.
- Have a safe leash and collar for your foster dog. Using a 4' or 6' leash with a flat collar is recommended. A well fitted harness or gentle leader are also acceptable. Under no circumstance is a foster home permitted to use a prong or choke collar on their foster dog. Retractable leashes are not suggested.

Bringing Your Foster Dog Home

Your foster dog has been through quite a lot even before you meet him. If the dog was an owner surrender, his quality of life has most likely been suffering for quite some time as people tend to become more and more detached from their dogs as they decide to give them up. Many are turned into shelters starved and neglected. Dogs that have been picked up as strays maybe have been on the streets for a long time, fending for themselves, not interacting with humans or receiving regular meals and/or veterinary care. In either situation, your role as foster parent will still be the same. You will help your dog to gently re-enter the world of caring humans. The protocol shown below was created to help you do just that. It has been designed, tested, and refined for over a decade. It works, so please take it seriously.

The First 48 Hours

- **Place your new foster dog in his crate in a quiet part of your home.**
 - Make sure you have a properly sized crate. Place a water bowl and soft bedding or towels in the crate to create a safe, cozy place for the dog. Have some treats on hand to help coax him into the crate if he is reluctant to go, but do not force him in. "Good things" need to happen when the dog is in the crate, so positive reinforcement is critical to helping dogs who might be afraid of the crate learn not to be.



- If your foster dog is coming from a shelter or the vet, it is extremely important that he has the opportunity to decompress from the high levels of stress they likely experienced there. Even with humane care in a shelter, the barking, smells and constant unknowns can and does take its toll on ANY dog.
 - Allowing your foster dog to slowly re-adjust to living in a family household will also allow him to show his best side when he does meet everyone.
 - Do not crowd or hug your foster dog. Give him his personal space. If you have children in your home, they should never have unsupervised access to your foster dog...and **especially** not during this transition time.
 - If you cannot crate in an area separate from the activity of your house, AT LEAST CRATE. DO NOT allow the foster dog to interface with your dogs. Just let the activity of your home move around the foster dog. When you need to take the foster dog outside, move your dogs out of the area so there is no direct contact. While the foster dog is outside, leave your dogs inside. THIS IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL.
- **Do not introduce your foster dog to any other animals in your home.**
Though it can be tempting to do this, it can cause an aggressive response from either dog, but mostly likely from the foster dog. He has likely been living in survival mode and does not want to share “resources” with another animal. A normally sweet-tempered dog can be pushed into aggressive behavior if confronted by another dog during this stage. Allowing this to happen can also lead to premature “labeling” that is very detrimental to the foster dog in the long run.
 - **Do not have outside people come and meet your new foster dog.**
As discussed above, your foster dog needs some peace and quiet for at least 48 hours. Having the neighborhood kids and your in-laws over to see your new foster dog is stressful – don’t be tempted. Again, let him get used to the quiet sounds and smells of your home before exposing him to excitement and stress.
 - **Go outside with your foster dog when he potties.**
By saying “go potty” and praising/rewarding him with a treat when he does, you will reinforce good housetraining. Additionally, you can monitor his urine and feces to see if there are any health issues that need to be addressed. If you notice your foster dog straining to urinate or having loose stools, you will need to share that information with your mentor or the Medical Coordinator if you cannot reach your mentor in a timely fashion.
 - **Feed and give gentle attention to your foster dog.**
Making feeding time a happy but quiet experience will help transition your foster dog into a better family member.



After Week One

- **Move your foster dog's crate into a more public, busy area of your home.**

This is the next step in transitioning your dog into a normal family experience. You will NOT be introducing your family pets to the foster dog yet. Find creative ways to allow your foster dog to see and hear and smell the other pets (baby gates are helpful with this), but no introductions to other animals, PLEASE!

- **You can start trying to engage your foster dog in playtime.**

This is also a great time to see if your foster dog knows how to "sit." Don't engage in any serious training for the first week, but you might say "sit" and see if you get a response.

After Week Two

You may introduce your foster dog to your resident animals ONE AT A TIME during their 3rd week of foster care, provided they are medically ready. The following information sets the stage for a more successful introduction and aids the foster dog in decompressing (relaxing), which sets him up for success rather than failure.

- Remember, foster dogs are incredibly stressed. They have been in a shelter environment, which causes both physiological and psychological stress.
- Consider this: even if the dog you are fostering was a well-adjusted and well-socialized dog (and most are not) or came from a loving home in his previous life, being in a shelter wreaks havoc on a dog's well being. In addition to that, the foster dog has been picked up by one or more of our volunteers and transported to a vet clinic, evaluated, poked, prodded, spayed/neutered, and otherwise manipulated, then picked up by another volunteer and deposited into your home, another unknown place filled with unknown people. How would you feel?
- Prematurely introducing a stressed foster dog to resident dogs is likely to end in failure 95% of the time. This is not because he is a bad or aggressive dog, or any other combination of fault, but simply because he is stressed and cannot cope with the pack at your home.

Everything we do to set these fosters up to be successful matters!

- **Introductions: Dog to Dog**

Please follow the step by-step instructions on how to properly introduce your foster dog to resident dogs in [Supplement A: Introducing a Foster Dog to Resident Dogs](#).

- **Introductions: Dog to Cat**

Please follow the step by-step instructions on how to properly introduce your foster dog to resident cats in [Supplement B: Introducing a Foster Dog to Resident Cats](#).



Medical Information

The Basics

- The Medical Coordinator will notify you about the veterinarian assessment and you can discuss this medical information with your mentor.
- The foster home should have a thermometer and the ability to take the dog's temperature.
- The foster home is responsible for administering all medications as prescribed and as directed.
- All communication about medical issues (vetting, appointments, etc.) is to go through your assigned mentor. Please do not contact the NCBR veterinarian directly without the approval of your mentor or the Medical Coordinator. NCBR-approved vets provide us with discounted services. To maintain these costs, we must limit, as best we can, the time they spend on NCBR issues. Mentors are informed about vetting by these vets; any additional calls by foster homes/volunteers only increases that time.

Common Ailments

Most dogs entering our program are coming out of a shelter environment; as a result, many of them suffer from common ailments that can be treated at home. Below are just a few examples:

- **Kennel Cough**

Kennel cough is bronchitis characterized by a harsh, hacking cough, which most people describe as sounding like "something stuck in the dog's throat." It is analogous to a chest cold for humans and, in general, will resolve on its own in time. Kennel cough can be quite frightening if you have never experienced it. Don't panic, review the documentation on kennel cough ([link](#) below) and, if you are still concerned, contact your mentor.

Be advised that the incubation period for kennel cough can be as long as 14 days, so it is possible that your foster dog will not show signs of it until after he has been in your home for 1-2 weeks.

Additional info in [Supplement D: Kennel Cough](#)

- **Diarrhea**

It is highly common for your foster dog to experience diarrhea in the first few days. He can have a nervous stomach just like we can. He may also be adjusting to a new diet, or to simply being given any food at all. He could also have been given a dewormer while at the vet (if this is the case, PICK UP HIS POOP PROMPTLY! It is a good idea to immediately pick up ALL foster dog poop since fecal tests are not 100% accurate.). Please give your foster dog a few days to adjust; if the diarrhea does not resolve on its own, review the documentation on diarrhea and discuss with your mentor.

Additional info in [Supplement G: Diarrhea](#)



- **Heartworm Treatment**

The 4 week post-treatment period is critical and activity level **MUST** be kept to a minimum. Any exercise or burst of energy can put the dog at risk of forming a thrombus (clot) in the lungs. This is a potentially fatal condition. Activity should be limited to leash walking (not for exercise but for potty breaks) **ONLY** for the first 4 weeks. Please review the documentation on heartworm after care for more detailed information. If you observe any significant lethargy, severe coughing, difficulty breathing, or vomiting, please contact your mentor immediately!

Additional info in [Supplement C: Heartworm Treatment](#)

- **Mange**

Demodectic Mange

See [Supplement H: Demodectic Mange](#)

Sarcoptic Mange

See [Supplement I: Sarcoptic Mange](#)

- **Mast Cells**

See [Supplement P: Mast Cells](#)

- **After Care for Spay Surgery**

See [Supplement E: Spay After Care](#)

- **After Care for Neuter Surgery**

See [Supplement F: Neuter After Care](#)

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is a sad reality in rescue. The decision to euthanize a dog in our care is never an easy one, nor is it a decision we take lightly. As a foster home, you must understand that not all dogs entering our program are ultimately adoptable. This may be due to a medical or behavioral issue. The decision to euthanize a dog is **SOLELY** the responsibility of the NCBR Board of Directors.

Medical Treatment Protocol

NCBR does its best to provide quality medical care for all of its boxers. Basic medical care involves a vet exam, spay or neuter surgery, a heartworm test (and treatment, if necessary), a fecal exam (and treatment, if necessary), a microchip, and 3 vaccinations. Most of the dogs we pull from shelters require all of these interventions. Even at our discounted prices, these interventions cost between \$300 and \$400 per dog. Since we adopt our dogs for less than this, we rely heavily on donations to make up the difference. Further, many of our boxers, require extensive medical treatment for issues such as heartworms, lumps requiring excision and pathology, murmurs requiring cardiac ultrasound, orthopedic injuries requiring reconstruction/repair, and many other medical problems. The cost of these interventions can reach into the thousands of dollars. Again, this deficit is addressed with donations.



Although our supporters donate generously, we struggle each month to pay our vet bills. Our veterinarians understand our constraints and work with us to keep costs down. One way to do that is by not doing a lot of diagnostic testing before we at least try symptomatic relief. Although this is not the way vets usually do business, they do this to help us keep costs down.

Examples of Symptomatic Treatments

- A dog has diarrhea over a number of days. If this were your personal boxer, you would take the dog to the vet and the vet would recommend a fecal exam, blood work and, depending on the physical condition of the dog, perhaps an ultrasound. That diagnostic testing would cost about \$450.00. As a nonprofit rescue organization, we cannot afford that type of testing. Hence, we would treat the dog symptomatically first by putting him on a bland diet, administering metronidazole, running a fecal (if one was not already done), and waiting a few days to a week to see if the condition improves. This type of intervention requires close monitoring of the dog during the process to be sure that he stays hydrated and alert.
- Another example is a dog that limps on a rear leg. If this were your personal dog, you would take the dog to the vet and the vet would perform a clinical exam and take x-rays, at a minimum. This would cost about \$250.00. For a rescue dog, we would limit the dog's activity and place him on a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory for a week to 10 days. If there were no improvement after the designated time period, then we would get a good clinical examination.

The bottom line is that we treat the symptom(s) without diagnostic testing to see if they will go away. Is this the best way to treat a dog? No. Is this the best way NCBR can treat a dog? Yes. If we performed diagnostic testing on every dog with a symptom, we would be out of business in a month. (On average, CBR spends between \$100,000 and \$125,000 on veterinary care each year.)

If a dog does not improve with symptomatic treatment, we must then move to diagnostic testing. On occasion, the dog has gotten worse before we got to diagnostic testing and the worsening was often a function of the delay in getting the definitive diagnosis from that testing. We feel very badly when this happens, but we must keep our sights on the fact that we stay solvent because we make these hard decisions.

List of Approved Over the Counter (OTC) Medications

See [Supplement OTC Medications](#)



Training Information

Teaching your foster dog a few basic behaviors will not only make your life with him easier, it will also make him more attractive to potential adopters.

The Basics

All foster homes should practice some basic training with their foster dogs. This training, at minimum, should include:

- **Crate Training**
See [Supplement : Crate Training](#)
- **Housebreaking**
See [Supplement L: House Training Tips](#)
- **Leash Walking**
- **No Jumping on People**
 - Please do not encourage your foster dog to jump up on you. This is one of the top complaints we get from adopters.
 - To avoid jumping, do not reward this behavior in any way. That means not even saying “no” and pushing the dog down. Even though it’s negative attention, it is still attention.
 - Instead, step back so that the dog cannot successfully jump on you and then give him extensive attention when he is on the floor (“4 on the floor” makes good things happen) **or** ask him for a sit. Dogs can’t sit and jump at the same time.

Teaching Sit

With a yummy treat in hand and no other distractions in the room (like other dogs), lure your foster dog into a sit position by holding your hand a little over the dog’s head and slowly moving it toward his butt. If you hold it too high, he will jump for it. As you move the treat, say the word “sit.” Do not push on his rear end to get him into a sit – it will go faster and he will learn it better if he does it himself. If your dog is backing up, try working close to a corner in the room so that he can’t back up too far before hitting the wall.

Work in very short sessions, always being calm. When your dog sits, say “good boy” in a happy voice and immediately give him the treat. When he is sitting fairly easily with the lure, add a hand cue (such as raising your hand in a cupped position) and say “sit” at the same time.



Nothing in Life is Free (NILF) Program

- Now that your foster dog can sit, you will ask him to sit for each and every privilege he gets. Opportunities for implementing this can be: before he receives his meals, before he gets let outside or inside, before you rub his tummy, etc.
- This is a vital exercise in helping your foster dog because it does 2 things:
 - It helps shy/fearful dogs learn that their behavior can make great things happen.
 - It helps pushy dogs learn that they must “say please” before they will get what they want and that humans control all of the good things in their lives.
- EACH AND EVERY NCBR FOSTER DOG SHOULD BE ON THE NILF PROGRAM.
- Additional info in [Supplement M: Nothing in Life is Free](#)

Dogs and Children

- See [Supplement O: Dogs and Children](#)

General Rules

- **Foster dogs cannot be taken to dog parks or to any area outside the home where they are allowed off---leash.**
- Foster dogs should not be allowed on furniture.
- Foster dogs should not be fed from or be allowed to beg from the table.
- Foster homes should not practice any form of rough play with their foster dogs (i.e. rope tugging, “wrestling,” etc.).
- Any other tricks or behaviors that you want to teach your foster dog will help him adjust to living with a loving family more quickly, and again, will make him more appealing to a potential adopter. Would you love to list a lot of tricks on your foster dog’s bio?
- Children should not be allowed to hug the foster dog or be left unattended with the foster dog.
- Please DO NOT estimate a foster dog’s age. Unless a dog is over about 8, it is impossible to accurately determine age. Veterinarians can look at the same dog and differ greatly in the guess as to the dog’s age. Hence, NCBR categorizes its dogs as puppy, young adult, adult, and senior in order to stay away from the quagmire of age guessing and that is how you should refer to your foster dog’s age as well. If you’re unsure of your dog’s age category, just look on his profile page.



Emergencies

- Foster homes should have the location and contact information of the nearest emergency hospital readily available
- In the event of an emergency, please contact your mentor by phone. If you are not able to reach your mentor, please contact the Medical Coordinator or Foster Home Coordinator.
- If the emergency is not the result of a traumatic injury, be prepared to have the following basic information:
 - What is the dog's temperature?
 - Are the dog's gums pale (if unsure, compare the coloring to a healthy dog in the home)?
 - Does the dog have labored breathing?
 - Is the dog eating and drinking?
- If an emergency occurs during business hours, the dog must be taken to one of NCBR's approved veterinarians.

Marketing Your Foster Dog

As a foster home, you have many responsibilities regarding your foster dog's care, not the least of which is "marketing" him appropriately. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including attending adoption events regularly, taking him on home visits, and keeping his profile on the website current, accurate and interesting. While all of these things require some effort on your part, the latter is often the easiest and least time consuming to do. And when done well, the dog's profile page will absolutely make a difference in the level of interest your foster dog receives from potential adopters.

Future boxer parents spend quite a bit of time on our website reading through bios, looking at pictures, watching videos, and trying to decide which of our boxers would be a good fit for them. In a majority of cases, this type of "interaction" is the first that your dog will have with his forever family. Thus, it is essential to make the most of the opportunity! In addition to that, the information contained in the dog's profile is also very helpful to other members of the organization who are working to help place your dog. The application and home visit teams can do a much better job of matching your foster to the right family if they are equipped with a complete and accurate picture of what he needs in a forever home.

Foster Dog Profile Page

Each of our dogs has his/her own profile page on our website (ncbr.org) that contains their basic info, a bio, pictures and videos (when provided). We also post each dog in our Facebook album of Available Dogs.

Once you've had your foster dog long enough that you feel comfortable describing his personality and behavior (typically 10 days to 3 weeks), we ask that you complete the [Foster Dog Profile form](#). In addition to us using this form for your foster dog's profile page, the application processors and home visit teams use it to get to know your dog and help match him to potential adopters. The top of the form contains a variety of questions about your dog's behaviors and personality. At the bottom of the form is a space where you can enter the written bio of your dog. If, however, you prefer, we can have



a volunteer craft the dog's bio based on the information you provide in the form. Pictures can be attached directly to the form.

Writing Your Foster Dog's Bio

If you choose to write the bio yourself, please refer to [Supplement N: Creating a Foster Dog's Profile](#) for more information on what should be included in your foster dog's bio.

Pet Fairs/Events

In order to have stress-free pet events for volunteers and our dogs, please follow the guidelines below. These rules have been put in place for the safety of our dogs, volunteers and the general public. Any incident of biting, fighting with other dogs at the location, etc. may result in bad PR for the organization/breed and create a liability for NCBR. Dogs who are too stressed or displaying negative behaviors will be asked to leave – please don't take it personally. This is for the dog's benefit.

Event Guidelines

- All NCBR dogs are to be kept in their crates at all times, with the exception of potty breaks or meeting with a potential adopter.
- Foster parents are responsible for bringing a crate, water, proper bedding, and a blanket/sheet to cover the crate if necessary.
- No person(s) under the age of 18 will be allowed to walk or otherwise be in control of the dog(s).
- An NCBR volunteer must accompany NCBR dog(s) at all times.
- Unaltered and unvaccinated dogs are not allowed to attend events.
- Dogs that have undergone heartworm treatment may not attend events until they are 3 weeks post treatment.
- Dogs with kennel cough, or who are in the early stages of recovery, may not attend events.
- Under no circumstances are dogs (other than puppies under 4 months) to be crated together.
- Foster parents attending events with their foster dogs cannot bring personal pets without prior approval from the event committee.
- Foster dogs must have a secure collar and leash.
- Foster dogs must have their NCBR red tag on their collar; IF they have a rabies tag, that should be on the collar as well.
- Never allow children to invade a dog's space while out of the crate (i.e. hugging, getting in the dog's face, etc.).
- Never allow anyone, especially children, to stick their fingers into the crate.

Preparing Your Dog for Events

Pet fairs can be a fun event for many dogs, yet very stressful for others. Below are guidelines for preparing your dog for events:

- Exercise, exercise, exercise. Providing a vigorous, long walk/run along with some playtime prior to attending a pet fair will help to decrease stress for your dog.
- Give your foster dog a bath, make sure his nails are trimmed properly, and make sure his ears are clean.
- Make sure the dog has been fed and watered prior to attending an event.



Adoption Process

Adoption is the LAST step in the application process. Prior to being approved to adopt, an applicant will go through a screening process that includes various background checks, an initial meeting with the prospective dog, and a home visit. Based on the information gathered during that process, we will try to identify possible matches for both dog and applicant. If the applications team feels that your dog might be a good match for a particular home, they will send you the application to review and ask you to set up a meet and greet with the family. If the meet and greet goes well and the applicant wants to proceed with adoption, you will contact the application processor to request a home visit.

Please keep in mind that we focus our efforts on making the best possible placement for both the family and the dog based on the needs and desires of each. As such, we do not operate on a first come first, served basis when it comes to placing a dog. Our foster families know their dog(s) better than anyone and are very well equipped to know in what type of situation and/or environment in which their dog(s) would do best. We will rely very heavily on your input and give you final approval regarding permanent placement of your foster dog(s). If you do not feel a particular applicant is the best fit for your dog, please don't hesitate to say so. You are the advocate for your foster dog, and making the right type of placement is a critical component of that responsibility.

That being said, **it is absolutely vital that you do not let your communications between an applicant and/or the applications team lapse. Failure in this area hinders the entire adoption process and often results in very dissatisfied "customers."** The following steps should be taken to ensure good, open communication:

- When an application is received and reviewed, the following must happen within 24 hours:
 - If the foster parent feels the dog would be a potential match, the applicant must be contacted within 24 hours to set up a meeting and/or answer additional questions.
 - If the foster parent feels the dog is not a potential match, the foster parent can either notify the applicant directly or the foster parent can notify the applications team so that they can notify the applicant. Either of these must take place within 24 hours of the foster home receiving the application, and the reasons the applicant is not a good match for the dog must be provided.
- If you receive and are working with multiple applicants for one dog, inform each of them of this fact so they are aware.

Once both the foster family and the applicant are in agreement that a particular dog is the best fit for that applicant, inform the applications team so that they can request a home visit.

The following steps should be completed prior to the final adoption:

- Ensure tags are on-hand and available.
- All dogs should have trimmed nails and be clean/bathed prior to adoption.
- The contract must be signed and adoption fee must be collected before the dog can be taken to his new home.



The contract and adoption fee must be mailed to NCBR within 48 hours. Adopters will not receive the veterinary paperwork on their dog until both items have been received. The mailing address is:

NCBR Headquarters
1520 E. covell Blvd. B5
PMB #262
Davis, CA 95616



Supplement A: Introducing a Foster Dog to Resident Dog(s)

- Two people are required for a dog-to-dog introduction.
- It's also best to do this on a very quiet street, preferably without other dogs around.
- Give each handler some high reward treats (whatever treat the dog likes very much) to carry.
- Leash your resident dog and have one handler take him/her outside and down the street about a block. (The idea is for the dogs to see each other on **neutral** ground to avoid territorial behavior.)
- Leash the foster dog and have the second handler take him outside to the same area as the resident dog but on the **OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE STREET**.
- While still on opposite sides of the street, have each handler position his/her dog facing up or down the street in the same direction (**NOT FACING EACH OTHER**) as the other dog.
- Each handler will then begin walking their dog in the same direction so the dogs remain parallel to each other.
- Walk for about a block, then reverse direction and, again walking parallel to each other, walk back to the starting point.
- The dogs should notice each other, which is fine. Feel free to speak sweetly to both dogs and feed them the treats that you have. The goal is for each dog to associate "good things" (i.e. the treats) with the presence of the other dog.
- As the handlers continue to walk up and down the street parallel to each other, they can begin to walk in closer proximity to each other but staying parallel to each other.
- When the dogs are close enough, if they seem to be well tolerant of each other, you can let them sniff each other in this neutral territory. Sniffing faces, groins and butts is normal and should be evenly approached by both dogs.
- If the sniffing interaction has gone very well, you can walk back toward the house.
- Take the foster dog into your fenced in yard first to avoid the resident dog being territorial about his yard. **Keep him on leash.**
- Take the resident dog into your yard, **still on leash.**
- If the dogs seem interested in meeting each other but **NOT** in an aggressive manner, let them sniff each other. Do not assume that because they were fine in neutral territory that they will be fine in the yard. Keep a close eye on both dogs' body language.
- Look for any signs of aggression, such as:
 - Hard stare
 - Stiff body posture
 - Back hair raised (i.e. raised hackles)
 - Lip lifting/teeth baring



- If there are any signs of aggression, do not let the dogs meet. Take the resident dog out of the yard and into the house. Then return the foster dog to his crate inside the house.
- If the introduction isn't successful the first time, you can try this exercise again (at least one day later) and see if the dogs are ready then.
- Be patient and do NOT rush the exercise. A bad meeting is very hard to un-do and will result in you needing to continue keeping your foster dog and resident dog separated for the duration of your foster.
- If you have more than one resident dog, perform this exercise with **each** resident dog and the foster dog individually.

Please remember, everything we do to set our fosters up for success matters. Assimilating them into our family too soon and/or improperly does the opposite in 99% of all cases.



Supplement B: Introducing a Foster Dog to Resident Cat(s)

Most cats are well aware when a new dog enters the household. Please make sure that your cat has an escape route at all times. Baby gates are great tools to allow your cat to separate itself from the foster dog. Some gates even have mini doors that cats can use.

- Place your foster dog in his crate with a blanket that has your cat's smell on it. While your dog is investigating this new smell, praise him and give him some treats. Do the same with a blanket the dog has used for your cat. Pet and give your cat lots of attention when he is sniffing the blanket.
- Begin the introduction process with your foster dog in his crate. Bring your cat into the room after your dog has already been exercised and is more likely to be tired and relaxed. Calmly praise your foster dog and drop treats into the crate while your cat is in the room. Praise your cat for being calm and curious about your foster dog.
- If this interaction goes well (meaning no lunging/barking by the dog), you may introduce the cat with your foster dog on leash.
 - Have your treats ready and encourage your foster dog to lie down. Sitting on the floor with your foster dog will help this, but keep a tight hold on the leash and keep it short. Some cats want nothing to do with dogs, which is fine. The main goal here is to teach your foster dog to be calm around your cat. Your cat can always choose to avoid the dog, but it is best if the dog is either friendly or neutral toward your cat. By praising and treating the dog in the presence of your cat, the dog will soon make the connection that treats happen when the cat is around and thus will enjoy seeing your cat.
 - Repeat this process with your foster dog on leash until you are confident that your dog is not overly excited by the presence of your cat.

Regardless of your comfort level, NEVER leave your foster dog unattended with any cats.

As a side note, it's a good idea to place cat boxes and cat food out of reach of your foster dog. Cat food is rich and most dogs are very anxious to eat it. Due to its richness though, it can cause upset stomach in dogs. Many dogs also like to eat cat feces, so please make sure your foster dog does not have access to the litter box.



Supplement C: Heartworm Treatment

Heartworm is a preventable but serious and potentially fatal parasite that primarily infects dogs, cats and ferrets. It can also infect a variety of wild animals.

Heartworms can only be transmitted from animal to animal via mosquitoes. When a mosquito bites an infected animal, young heartworms, called microfilariae, enter into that mosquito's system. Within two weeks, the microfilariae develop into infective larvae inside the mosquito. The infected larvae can then be transmitted to another animal when the mosquito takes its next blood meal. Unlike dogs, infected cats do not often have microfilariae circulating in their blood, and an infected cat is not likely to transfer the heartworm infection to another mosquito.

The infective larvae mature into adult heartworms in approximately six months. During the first three months, the larvae migrate through the animal's body, eventually reaching the blood vessels of the lungs. During the last three months, the immature worms continue to develop and grow to adults, with females growing to lengths of up to fourteen inches. The worms damage the blood vessels, and reduce the heart's pumping ability, resulting in severe lung and heart disease. When the animal shows signs of illness due to adult heartworm infection, it is called heartworm disease.

If adult worms (5 to 7 months post-infection) of both sexes are present, they will mate and produce new microfilariae. The microfilariae can cause the animal's immune system to mount a reaction; this immune reaction can actually cause damage to other organs. This life cycle continues when a mosquito bites the infected animal and becomes infected by the microfilariae. After development of the microfilariae to infective larvae within the mosquito (10 days to 12 weeks), the infective heartworm larvae are capable of infecting another animal. Adult heartworms can survive for 5 to 7 years in dogs and several months to years in cats.

Heartworm Treatment Procedure

Heartworm treatment involves killing the adult heartworms through the use of a drug called Immiticide. Immiticide works over a two-week period by gradually killing and breaking up the heartworms. Once the worms are broken, the body must continue to absorb them.

Stage 1 of Treatment

Two injections are given 24 hours apart in the large muscle group in the back. As a result, there may be some swelling or tenderness in the back area as well as some stiffness when walking. Applying a warm compress over the area may help. Typically, we send home a pain medication for a few days to help with the back soreness.



Stage 2 of Treatment

Stage 2 of heartworm treatment is to give a Heartgard Plus pill one month after the 2nd injection was given (some vets recommend 2 weeks). While we know it is critical for all dogs to remain on heartworm preventative to prevent this disease, it is especially important for dogs who have undergone treatment. Heartgard Plus kills off the microfilariae (baby worms) and prevents them from becoming adults, which would require another treatment.

Alternative Treatment

If the boxer is critically ill or if the worm load is high, the vet may opt to treat as follows:

Stage 1

One injection is given instead of two injections in order to kill some, but not all, of the adult worms, lessening the likelihood of thrombus (clot) complications.

Stage 2

Thirty (30) days after first injection, two injections are given 24 hours apart as described in Stage 1 of standard treatment above. This will kill the remaining adult worms.

After Care Instructions

The four (4) week period post-treatment is critical; activity level must be kept to a minimum, and the dog must be kept cool to avoid panting. Any exercise or burst of energy or excessive panting can put the dog at risk of forming a thrombus (clot) in the lungs or heart. This is a potentially fatal risk. Activity should therefore be limited to leash walking only for 4 weeks after injection, and leash walking only for elimination. At all other times, the boxer must be crated. If standard treatment is administered, the activity level will be kept to a minimum for 4 weeks. If alternative treatment is administered, the activity level will be kept to a minimum for 8 weeks.

Retest

The final re-check is 6 months after heartworm treatment to check for adult heartworms. This is the responsibility of the adoptive family if the dog has been placed.

When to Contact Your Mentor

In the week post-treatment, you may notice coughing, decreased appetite, vomiting, lethargy, or difficulty breathing. Should any of these signs occur, contact your mentor, the foster coordinator (Deb Wood) or medical coordinator (Karen Heald) immediately.



Supplement D: Kennel Cough

Kennel cough can be frightening to those who have yet to experience it. PLEASE read the following before you panic, contact your mentor and rush off to the emergency room.

Kennel cough is bronchitis characterized by a harsh, hacking cough, which most people describe as sounding like “something stuck in the dog’s through.” The cough is very frightening and can be so severe that it causes the dog to vomit. It is analogous to a bad chest cold for humans and, in general, will resolve on its own in time.

Classically, dogs get infected when they are kept in a crowded situation with poor air circulation, with lots of warm air (i.e. a boarding kennel, animal shelter, vaccination clinic, obedience class, local park, animal hospital waiting room, or grooming parlor).

About half of kennel cough is caused by the bordetella organism, which can be vaccinated against. The remaining kennel cough is viral or caused by another bacterium, and the bordetella vaccine will not protect against these forms of kennel cough. This is one reason why it is very important to keep your personal dogs separate from the foster dog for the first 10 to 14 days. Even if your personal dog has been vaccinated with the bordetella vaccine, he/she can still contract kennel cough from the foster dog.

How Contagious Is It?

Kennel cough infection can be picked up by rabbits, guinea pigs, pigs, cats (if they are very young and housed in groups), and other dogs. It is not contagious to humans. Among dogs, it is fairly contagious depending on stress level, vaccination status, and exposure to minor viruses.

How Is It Treated?

Although most cases will go away on their own, we do often hasten recovery with antibiotics. Antibiotics kill some forms of kennel cough (the bacterial form, but not the viral form) and help to prevent some complications such as pneumonia. Additionally, kennel cough may be treated with prescription cough suppressants and over-the-counter (OTC) cough aids to provide comfort during recovery.

Approved OTC Medications

The medications below are approved for the treatment of kennel cough. Please consult with your mentor for more information.

Products must contain the ingredient dextromethorphan (found in Vicks 44D or Robitussin DM)

Dosage: for adult dogs over 40 pounds, use adult human dosage shown on bottle



IMPORTANT: Do NOT use products that contain acetaminophen (such as Tylenol); this can be very dangerous to dogs.

What You Can Do to Help

Basic home treatment for kennel cough includes:

- Keeping the dog warm, quiet and free from drafts
- No long walks or excessive exercise
- Encouraging the dog to drink plenty of fresh water
- A small piece of bread or honey given at bedtime and morning
- Vicks VapoRub placed on the top of the nose and throat

You can provide additional relief by giving him/her a vaporizing treatment three times a day. Run a hot shower in your bathroom and let the steam build up with the door closed. Take the dog into the bathroom and let him breathe in the steam for 20 minutes. The vapor will help his/her bronchial tubes, which in turn make his cough more productive and clears the airways.

When to Contact Your Mentor

If the dog becomes lethargic, has pale gums, or has a fever, contact your mentor immediately. Please take the dog's temperature rectally and contact your mentor if his/her temperature is over 102.0 degrees. There are occasions when another illness may be the cause or the kennel cough has progressed into pneumonia.

As previously noted, this infection is generally self-limiting. It should be at least partially improved after one week of treatment. If no improvement has been observed in this time or symptoms worsen, a re-check exam (possibly including radiographs of the chest) may be indicated. If you are concerned, please contact your mentor.



Supplement E: Spay After Care

Your foster dog has just undergone a major abdominal surgery. Remember, a spay is an ovariectomy. Both ovaries and the uterus have been removed. An abdominal midline incision was used and the dog will have a faint scar along her tummy. Every effort has been made to make sure she looks good for bikini season!

Keeping your dog's activity restricted and preventing self-trauma from licking are key factors in ensuring a successful surgery. Some pets will be given pain medication to ensure a comfortable recovery.

Food & Water

- Feed ½ the normal diet after 8:00 pm on the evening of surgery and offer water.
- Resume normal diet by the next morning.
- Limit excessive water intake.
- Do not worry if she does not eat for 24 to 48 hours so long as she's willing to drink.

Exercise & Activity

- Limit exercise and activity for 7 days following surgery.
- Confine her to indoors for 7 days except to go outside on a leash for eliminations.
- Gradually return her to normal activity.

Eliminations

Your foster dog may not have a normal bowel movement for 24 to 48 hours after surgery. This is normal and not cause for alarm. Remember that she has been fasting and has been under anesthesia.

When to Contact Your Mentor

If you observe any of the following, please consult with your mentor:

- Loss of appetite for over 2 days
- Refusal to drink water for 24 hours
- Weakness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Depression



Supplement F: Neuter After Care

Neutering involves the removal of the testicles from the scrotum via an incision made just in front of the scrotum. Sutures are placed and will need to be removed in 7 to 10 days.

Keeping your dog's activity restricted and preventing self-trauma from licking are key factors in ensuring a successful surgery. Some dogs will be given pain medication to ensure a comfortable recovery.

Food & Water

- Feed ½ the normal diet after 8:00 pm on the evening of surgery and offer water.
- Resume normal diet by the next morning.
- Limit excessive water intake.

Exercise & Activity

- Limit exercise and activity for 7 days following surgery.
- Confine him to indoors for 7 days except to go outside on a leash for eliminations.
- Gradually return him to normal activity.

Eliminations

Your foster dog may not have a normal bowel movement for 24 to 48 hours after surgery. This is normal and not cause for alarm. Remember that he has been fasting and has been under anesthesia.

When to Contact Your Mentor

If you observe any of the following, please consult with your mentor:

- Loss of appetite for over 2 days
- Refusal to drink water for 24 hours
- Weakness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea



Supplement G: Diarrhea

At one time or another, every dog has a bout of vomiting or diarrhea (this is especially the case with shelter dogs coming out of a stressful environment). Usually they have eaten something disagreeable, eaten too much, too fast, exercised too soon after eating, are overly excited or nervous, or their body is reacting to any of a number of other non-serious conditions.

If your foster is having problems with diarrhea, consider the following:

- Was there a medical reason noted at the time of the vet visit? Dogs testing positive for various parasites, even when treated, can have diarrhea for several days after treatment.
- How long has the dog been in your care? If the foster dog has just arrived, give the diarrhea a week to resolve on its own with the suggested feeding below. Receiving a plentiful, healthy diet will often resolve the issue.
- Did the dog have soft stools initially and is now having problems with diarrhea? Consider what you are feeding – dog food, treats, table scraps, etc. Remove all junk food from the diet and feed as suggested below.
- Give some thought to what the dog has been eating. Has he/she gotten into anything such as garbage, harsh treats (i.e. pig ears), etc.?

Suggested Feeding for Dogs with Diarrhea

- Cooked chicken and rice and, for variety, add a meal of nonfat cottage cheese and rice
- Add canned, raw pumpkin to high quality kibble
- Purina SL is a prescription bland kibble and canned food

Approved OTC Medications

- **Kaopectate*** – for diarrhea
Dosage: 10 ml or 2 teaspoons every 6-8 hours
- **Imodium*** – for diarrhea
Dosage: 0.1 mg per 1 kg three times per day (1 tablet 3x per day for a dog that weighs 50 pounds)
- **Pepto-Bismol*** – for diarrhea, nausea, indigestion, vomiting
Dosage: 10 ml or 2 teaspoons every 6-8 hours OR if tablet, one tablet for every 30 pounds every 6-8 hours.
- Although **Pepcid AC*** is not specifically for diarrhea, it should be used in conjunction with the diarrhea medications.
Dosage: 5 mg per 20 pounds every 12 hours

*Generic substitution is acceptable.



If all other attempts to resolve the issue have been unsuccessful, try the following:

Take away all food and water for 24 hours, so that the irritated intestinal tract can settle down. You may allow the dog to drink very small amounts; in this small time, if your foster is otherwise healthy, you don't have to worry about dehydration. If the diarrhea resolves, after 24 hours, give your foster very small amounts of a bland food, such as drained, cooked hamburger/chicken mixed with an equal amount of cooked rice.

When to Contact Your Mentor

If you observe any of the following, please consult with your mentor:

- Bloody diarrhea
- Diarrhea accompanied by vomiting
- Multiple bouts of vomiting over a short period of time
- If ingestion of poison is suspected
- If fever and other sign of toxicity are present – please take temperature rectally and report to mentor if over 102.0
- Diarrhea persists for more than 4 days
- Poor skin turgor – tenting when you pinch up a fold of skin instead of returning to normal position quickly
- Pale gums
- Dog also appears listless
- There is weight loss
- Dog is showing other signs of illness, such as labored breathing or pain



Supplement H: Demodectic Mange

TBD



Supplement I: Sarcoptic Mange

TBD



Supplement J: OTC Medications

The following is a list of NCBR-approved over-the-counter (OTC) medications, their uses, and dosage information.

Please note that the use of any of these medications still requires mentor, veterinarian, or BoD approval prior to use.

Kennel Cough/Congestion

Medication	Use	Dosage
Robitussin DM*	Cough suppressant	There are many different concentrations of the generic Robitussin so look at the concentration. Dose is 20 mg Dextromethorphan (active ingredient) for 50 pound dog every 6-8 hours. Name brand Robitussin is 2 teaspoons every 6-8 hours.
Vicks VapoRub*	Congestion/kennel cough	Smear a small amount on your dog's chin, throat, and neck for easier breathing. CAN BE TOXIC if ingested.
<i>DO NOT use products that contain acetaminophen.</i>		

Wounds/Cuts/Scrapes

Medication	Use	Dosage
A&D Ointment*	Not an antibacterial, but rather, soothing cream that should only be used on non-infected wounds or rashes.	Apply thin coating 3 to 4 times per day for 7 to 10 days
Betadine Skin Cleanser	Antiseptic liquid soap for cleansing on or around wounds	Use full strength to wash affected area
Betadine Solution	Antiseptic solution for flushing or soaking injured area	Dilute with distilled water to the color of weak tea, then apply
Neosporin*	For preventing wound infection	Apply 3 to 5 times daily as needed



Diarrhea

Medication	Use	Dosage
Kaopectate*	Diarrhea	10 ml or 2 teaspoons every 6-8 hours
Imodium*	Diarrhea	0.1 mg per 1 kg three times per day (1 tablet 3x per day for a dog that weighs 50 pounds)
Pepto-Bismol*	Diarrhea, nausea, indigestion, vomiting	10 ml or 2 teaspoons every 6-8 hours OR if tablet, one tablet for every 30 pounds every 6-8 hours.
Pepcid AC*	Although not specifically for diarrhea, it should be used in conjunction with diarrhea medications	5 mg per 20 pounds every 12 hours

Constipation

Medication	Use	Dosage
Dulcolax*	Constipation	5 mg tablets - 1-2 tablets once a day (DO NOT CUT TABLETS)
Phillip's Milk of Magnesia*	Constipation	2 to 4 tsp per 5 lbs. every 6 hours
Metamucil*	Constipation	1 tsp per 10 to 25 lbs., mixed in food



Skin Issues

Medication	Use	Dosage
Aveeno Oatmeal Medicated Bath*	Sooths itchy skin	Dogs & cats: use as a bath rinse as often as 3 times per week
Benadryl*	Antihistamine	Dogs & cats: 1 mg per lb. every 6 to 8 hours
Cortaid*	Anti-itch cream	Dogs & cats: apply once or twice daily as needed
Epsom salts	Soothing soak for irritated, itchy skin	Dogs: 1 cup per gallon of water, then soak affected area Cats: 1 cup per 2 gallons of water, then soak affected area

Nausea and/or Vomiting

Medication	Use	Dosage
Pepto-Bismol*	Diarrhea, nausea, indigestion, vomiting	10 ml or 2 teaspoons every 6-8 hours OR if tablet, one tablet for every 30 pounds every 6-8 hours
Mylanta Liquid*	Digestive upset, gas	Dogs: 3 Tbsp for 15 lbs. or less, 4 Tbsp for 15 to 50 lbs., 6 Tbsp for 51 lbs. or more Cats: DO NOT USE
Pepcid AC*	Vomiting	5 mg per 20 pounds every 12 hours

Dehydration

Medication	Use	Dosage
Pedialyte*	Dehydration	Dogs & cats: mix 50/50 with water, allow as much as the dog or cat wants

* Generic substitution is acceptable.



Supplement K: Crate Training

NCBR highly recommends crating your foster dog. This is especially important if you need to leave your foster dog home alone. This also helps during introductions to other animals in the home and with housebreaking.

To YOU it's a cage; to YOUR DOG it's his den, his home, his haven.

One of the best training aids for a puppy or a dog is a crate. It will become your dog's own private and safe haven where he can get away from the world. For you, it's a place where your dog can be confined so he won't be able to chew on unacceptable objects (i.e. furniture, electric cords, etc.) or eliminate on your rug when he cannot be supervised.

The crate serves as a place to confine your dog when you must be out of the house for short periods of time. It is also a wonderful housebreaking tool. It allows you to regulate your dog's schedule so that it can be taken outside when it is most likely to eliminate.

When buying a crate, you should plan for the size the dog as an adult. For foster dogs, NCBR can provide a crate if you do not have one.

Introduce the puppy or dog to the crate by putting a small treat inside and encouraging him to enter. Close the door and confine the pup for short periods of time, 5 to 10 minutes. Don't worry if the pup or dog does not take to the crate immediately.

You should confine your puppy for **no more than 3 to 4 hours** at a time during the day. A dog's natural instincts keep it from soiling the den, but remember that a young pup cannot "hold it" as long as an adult. If a pup is forced to soil its den, it will become difficult to housetrain him. Always be sure your pet has eliminated before confining him. Remove your dog's collar(s) before putting him in the crate and leave him with a safe chew toy (i.e. a Kong – NO RAWHIDE bones or chews). Because strangulation accidents do happen, removing his collar(s) is a good preventive measure.

At night put the crate in your bedroom so the dog won't feel separated from its new family. Let him out in the yard just before you go to bed and immediately when you get up in the morning. Take your new dog outside and cue him to go potty and then praise him when he does so. You may need to get up during the night the first few nights to let your new dog eliminate, however most dogs quickly learn to sleep through the night. From 8 weeks to 4 months of age, a puppy may cry or whimper and may need to be taken out for elimination during the night. Try to remain as quiet as possible during a night-time elimination so you don't get the puppy



stimulated and he will be more likely to go back to sleep when you put him back in the crate (but still quietly praise him after elimination).

Crate Training DO's

- DO buy a crate large enough for your dog when he is full grown. It should be 1.5 times the dog's body length as an adult. This gives him adequate room to walk in, turn around, and lie down. If the crate is too big when your dog is a puppy, he may eliminate in one corner of the kennel and sleep at the other end. Divider panels can be used to decrease the available space in a crate thus solving the problem of him eliminating inside it.
- DO get the dog used to the crate as soon as you bring him home. Place the crate in a room where family members spend most of their time. Remember, dogs are social creatures; your leaving represents stress to your pet. A crate will foster the security a dog has when in his den, but he still needs you to interact and socialize with.
- DO provide soft, washable bedding in the crate so he is comfortable and warm. Make the inside of his home as cozy as you can, and keep it clean and free of fleas.
- DO supervise your pup anytime he is in your home. His chewing, elimination, barking, activity and all behaviors are dependent on your direction. If allowed to go unsupervised, your pup will begin to direct his own schedule and behaviors, which is setting the pup up to fail.

Crate Training DON'Ts

- DON'T force your new dog into the crate for the first time. Plan on taking plenty of quality time the first few days to get the pup accustomed to his new surroundings. Using a food treat, coax him into the crate slowly but surely. At the beginning you may need to gently place the pup into the crate. For larger dogs you may need to back them in.
- DON'T leave a very young pup in his kennel for more than 4 hours. By 5 to 6 months of age, a young dog should be able to remain crated for a 6-hour day. Do not confine your dog in the crate for 6 to 8 hours on a daily basis.
- DON'T put house-training/puppy pads inside the kennel. You are trying to take advantage of his natural instinct not to eliminate in his home.
- DON'T put (or force) your dog in the crate as punishment. Your dog's home should be a place where he feels safe and secure; it should not be associated with punishment, fear, or anything else negative.



Supplement L: House Training Tips

Chances are your foster dog will require some work in the housetraining department. Do not expect him to be housetrained. If you require a housetrained dog, then fostering is not for you. Even housetrained dogs will have accidents until they learn your routine.

Many adult dogs adopted from animal shelters were housetrained in their previous homes. While at the shelter, however, they may not have gotten enough opportunities to eliminate outside, and consequently, they may have soiled their kennel areas. This tends to weaken their housetraining habits. Additionally, scents and odors from other pets in the new home may stimulate some initial urine marking. Remember that you and your new foster dog need some time to learn each other's signals and routines. Even if he was housetrained in his previous home, if you don't recognize his "bathroom" signal, you might miss his request to go out, causing him to eliminate indoors.

Therefore, for the first few weeks after you bring your foster dog home, you should assume your new dog isn't housetrained and start from scratch. If he was housetrained in his previous home, the re-training process should progress quickly. The process will be much smoother if you take steps to prevent accidents and remind him where he's supposed to eliminate.

Establish a Routine

- Take your dog out at the same times every day. For example, first thing in the morning when he wakes up, when you arrive home from work, and before you go to bed.
- Praise your dog lavishly every time he eliminates outdoors. You can even give him a treat. You must praise him and give him a treat immediately after he's finished and not wait until after he comes back inside. This step is vital, because rewarding your dog for eliminating outdoors is the only way he'll know that's what you want him to do.
- Choose a location not too far from the door to be the bathroom spot. Always take your dog, on leash, directly to the bathroom spot. Take him for a walk or play with him only after he's eliminated. If you clean up an accident in the house, leave the soiled rags or paper towels in the outdoor bathroom spot. The smell will help your dog recognize the area as the place where he's supposed eliminate.
- While your dog is eliminating, use a word or phrase like "go potty" that you can eventually use before he goes to remind him of what he's supposed to be doing.
- Feeding your dog on a set schedule, once or twice daily, will help make his elimination more regular.
- Supervise, supervise, supervise.
- Most dogs need to eliminate: upon waking, within 1 hour of eating or drinking a lot of water, or after chewing on a toy for some time (this stimulates the need to eliminate).



- Don't give your dog an opportunity to soil in the house. He should be watched at all times when he's indoors. You can tether him to you with a 6-foot leash, or use baby gates to keep him in the same room as you. Watch for signs that he needs to eliminate, such as sniffing around or circling. If you see these signs, immediately take him out, on leash, to his bathroom spot. If he eliminates outside, praise him lavishly and reward him with a treat.

Confinement

When you're unable to watch your dog at all times, he should be confined to an area small enough that he won't want to eliminate there. It should be just big enough for him to comfortably stand, lie down and turn around in. This could be a portion of a bathroom or laundry room blocked off with boxes or baby gates or a crate (see [Supplement K: Crate Training](#)). If he has spent several hours in confinement, when you let him out take him directly to his bathroom spot and praise him when he eliminates.

Oops!

- Most dogs, at some point, will have an accident in the house. You should expect this, as it's a normal part of your dog's adjustment to his new home.
- If you catch your dog in the act of eliminating in the house, do something to interrupt him like making a startling noise (but don't scare him), then immediately take him to his bathroom spot. If he finishes eliminating there, praise him and give him a treat.
- Do not punish your dog for eliminating in the house. If you find a soiled area it's too late to administer a correction. Do nothing but clean it up. Rubbing your dog's nose in it, taking him to the spot and scolding him or any other type of punishment will only make him afraid of you or afraid to eliminate in your presence. Animals don't understand punishment after the fact, even if it's only seconds later. Punishment will do more harm than good.
- Cleaning the soiled area is very important because dogs are highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like ine ces.
- If you've consistently followed the housetraining procedures and your dog continues to eliminate in the house, there may be another reason for his behavior.

Other Types of House-Soiling Problems

- House soiling can often be caused by physical problems such as a urinary tract infection or parasite infection. If you suspect disease or illness as a cause, contact your mentor to discuss options.
- Submissive/excitement urination: Some dogs, especially young ones, temporarily lose control of their bladder when they become excited or feel threatened. This usually occurs during greetings, intense play or when they're about to be punished.
- Territorial Urine Marking: Dogs sometimes deposit urine or feces, usually in small amounts, to scent-mark their territory. Both male and female dogs do this and it most often occurs when they believe their territory has been invaded.



- Separation anxiety: Dogs that become anxious when left alone may house soil as a result. Usually there are other symptoms such as destructive behavior or vocalization.
- Fears and phobias: When animals become frightened they may lose control of their bladder and/or bowels. If your dog is afraid of loud noises (i.e. thunderstorms, fireworks, etc.), he may house soil when he's exposed to these elements.



Supplement M: Nothing in Life is Free

Does your dog: Get on the furniture and refuse to get off? Nudge your hand, insisting on being petted or played with? Refuse to come when called? “Nothing in life is free” can help!

“Nothing in life is free” (NILIF) is not a magic pill to solve a specific behavioral problem, rather it’s a way of living with your dog that will help him behave better because he trusts and accepts you as his leader and he is confident in knowing his place in your family.

How to Practice “Nothing in Life is Free”

Using positive reinforcement methods, teach your dog a few learned cues and/or tricks. “Sit,” “down” and “stay” are useful cues; and “shake,” “speak” and “roll over” are fun tricks to teach your dog. Once your dog knows a few cues you can begin to practice “nothing in life is free.” Before you give your dog anything (food, treat, a walk, a pat on the head, etc.), he must first perform one of the cues he has learned.

Once you’ve given the cue, don’t give your dog what he wants until he does what you want. If he ignores the cue, walk away and come back a few minutes later to start again. If your dog does ignore your cues, be patient and remember that eventually he will have to cooperate in order to get what he wants.

Make sure your dog knows the learned cues well and understands what you want before you begin practicing “nothing in life is free.”

Benefits of NILIF

Dogs who may never display aggressive behavior such as growling, snarling or snapping, may still manage to manipulate you. These dogs may display affectionate though pushy behavior, such as nudging your hand to be petted or worming his way on to the furniture in order to be close to you. The NILIF technique gently reminds a “pushy” dog that he must abide by your rules.

Obedying learned cues can also help build a fearful dog’s confidence. Having a strong leader and knowing his place in the hierarchy helps the shy or fearful dog feel more secure.

Why This Technique Works

Being your dog’s benign leader helps him understand that you control all of the good things in his life: his food, his play opportunities and even your affection. These are resources to your dog. “Nothing in life is free” also helps teach your dog that his behavior always has consequences – the same behavior always has the same consequence. He sits and the door to the yard opens! This kind of consistency in your dog’s life will help him be more confident of his life in your home and allow him to relax and not feel the need to be in charge of anything.



Supplement N: Creating a Foster Dog's Profile

On the NCBR [website](#), each available boxer gets his or her own profile page. A dog's profile consists of basic stats (i.e. adoption status, color, age category, etc.), a written bio, photos, and videos. As the foster parent you play a critical role in populating each part of the profile.

When a new dog enters NCBR's care, his profile page will be posted to the website, often before he arrives at your home. We will already know his adoption status, breed, gender, adoption fee, age category and color. The other pieces of your dog's basic stats may or may not be included with the information we got from the shelter. Before you submit the [Foster Dog Profile](#) form, please review this section of your dog's profile page so that you can provide any missing stats or correct any erroneous info.

Below are some guidelines and suggestions for helping put your foster dog's best paw forward in his profile:

- Get several quality pictures that show off the dog's personality, best features, etc. Not having a photo is almost as bad as not being on the website at all. Relying on the poor quality shelter photo or using another bad photo is just one step above not having a photo. If you are having trouble getting a few good pictures, ask for help. We have volunteers who do this type of thing for a living and are willing to help.
- Create a video. All things being equal, a dog with a video on his profile page will almost always get adopted before one without. Being able to see the dog interact with other dogs, people, children, etc. gives potential adopters a better feel for the dog's personality and energy level, and it gives them a glimpse of what their life might be like with that dog in their family. Videos are very powerful marketing tools – and they don't need to be long to be effective: even a 30-second clip can help convey a dog's character to the viewer. In fact, videos should be kept to 2 minutes or less. Multiple videos are encouraged – if 1 is good, more are better! If you would like to do a video of your foster dog but need help, don't hesitate to ask – we've got you covered!



- Write a bio that people want to read, or better yet, write a bio that YOU would want to read if you were looking to adopt a new family member.
 - At minimum, you should provide if the foster dog is child friendly, dog friendly, cat friendly. Provide specific details like age limits for children (i.e. only children over 8, etc.) or size information on dogs (i.e only compatible with large dogs, etc.), as applicable.
 - Please refrain from including any type of age estimation of your foster dog. His profile will already include his designated category (determined at intake).
 - Beyond the basics, you should provide information that will help potential adopters (as well as NCBR personnel) determine if a dog is a good fit. For example:
 - Does he do well on a leash? In a car? In a crate?
 - Does he know commands/tricks?
 - Does he have any endearing or quirky traits or habits?
 - Describe his personality. Is he mellow, spastic, loving, independent, etc.?
 - Does he need to be with another dog? Does he need to be an only dog? Does he need stay-at-home parents?
 - Does he have any special requirements? How much exercise does he need? Does he have any training needs?
 - What are his best qualities? What areas need work?
 - Take care to present the foster dog's information in the most positive way possible. Be honest, but choose your words carefully so as to portray the dog in a positive light.
 - For example, let's say the foster dog doesn't care for other dogs. You could say "Fido is dog aggressive and can't be placed with other dogs" or you could present it more positively by saying "Fido loves his people but can be picky about other dogs in the home. He would do best as an only dog." Both provide the same information, but the former would likely send potential adopters running to the next profile, while the latter indicates he's not really dog-friendly without labeling him as aggressive and giving a negative impression.



- Make sure photos and bio information are kept current. Dogs are constantly evolving, especially as they settle into their new environments. A foster dog that's been in your home for a week to 10 days is likely very different after having been with you for a month or more. Sharing his improvements and victories can go a long way in helping him find his fur ever home. (Contacts are listed on our [Volunteer Resources website](#).)
- Last but not least, try to tell his story. Most people come to rescue because they want to give a dog the home he deserves. They want to know as much as they can about his past, what adversity he has overcome, how he behaves in a home environment, etc. (Please be sure all information is factual; do not embellish or add personal assumptions about the dog's history.) When they understand where he came from, they can appreciate how far he's come and where he's going.



Supplement O: Dogs and Children

Dogs and children are often thought to be natural companions. We see dogs in Disney movies being loving and loyal to their young charges, oftentimes saving them from disaster. Movie dogs are highly trained actors who have been trained for months or years. In truth, the most bitten members of American society are children under the age of twelve. More often than not, children are bitten by the family pet or a familiar dog (such as grandma's or their friend's). Dogs can certainly be wonderful family pets, but you need to understand that the success of your dog with children depends on several factors:

Supervise children at all times when they are around a dog!

- Never leave any child under 13 unattended with any dog or puppy. Strict supervision is a must. Every animal, even the so-called "fool proof" ones, have their limits. EVERY DOG BITES under the right circumstances, so keep supervision a strict rule in your household.
- Children, just like puppies, need to learn the rules. Children should be taught to pet softly, to stay away from food dishes, toys and bones, and to not startle a dog when it is sleeping. All of these things can and should be done with the dog, but only after you have trained your dog to tolerate and enjoy these things (using positive methods) and only when you are there to supervise the interactions.
- Babies and toddlers should always be kept higher than the dog. Dogs see the world in hierarchy. You are either a leader or a littermate. The smaller you are, the more likely you are to be a littermate. Littermates get bossed around by being jumped on, pushed over, growled at, snapped at and even bitten. Keep your small children up off the floor when the dog is in the same room.
- Avoid tug of-war, wrestling, ear pulling, pony riding, toy hitting, fur grabbing, chasing and any other rough play. All of these activities teach a dog or puppy to be rough with humans and to grab and bite, which is exactly what you're trying to avoid. Do not allow ANY family member, including adults, to engage in rough play with your dog, as he will then attempt to play those rough games with children and the results will not be harmonious. The basic rule of thumb is to never train your puppy or dog to do anything with you that you would not want him to do with a toddler.
- Instead of roughhousing, play supervised games that foster cooperation and control, such as fetch, blowing bubbles, hide a toy and have your dog find it, hide and seek, kicking a soccer ball around or learning tricks. Avoid any game that gets your dog or puppy overly excited. If your dog is very high energy, have an adult exercise him before he interacts with children by jogging, biking or a hard game of fetch. If your dog



becomes too excited during play, end the game immediately and try again later when he is calmer.

- Teach children the possum stance. Children are small, move erratically, yell and generally act crazy, inciting most dogs to either chase them or become fearful of them. To a dog, a child running away is a great invitation to give chase, perhaps nipping and biting them. Teach children that if the dog is chasing them, perhaps barking, growling or nipping, to immediately stand still with arms folded across their chest or over their face. Voices should become soft or completely quiet. In possum mode, children quickly become much less interesting to the dog, and he will soon likely calm down and/or wander off to find something else to do.
- Give your dog or puppy a place to retreat to when he has had enough or you cannot provide supervision. Just like you, your dog will need some daily time away from the children. Use an indoor crate that is off limits to children, or baby-gate your dog in a safe room.
- Give your dog his own bed, on the floor and out of children's rooms. Letting your dog or puppy sleep with your child is not only unsanitary but relays a message to your dog that your child is a littermate (because littermates sleep together). If your child insists on having the dog in their room, crate train your dog and put the crate in the child's room for sleeping.
- Try to have only positive experiences between the dog and children. If your dog or puppy is constantly being yelled at, spanked or isolated outdoors whenever children are present, this builds a negative association. Your dog should be doing "fun" stuff with children, even if it is limited to feeding a few treats at first.
- Involve children in the dog's care. Have children help you feed, brush (as you hold the collar and give treats), and walk the dog (attach two leashes so the child has one but you have the main leash for control and safety). Even just the presence of children in the room while your dog is receiving his favorite things or activities can help build positive association toward children.
- Take a formal training class with your dog or puppy. These classes teach you how to communicate with and understand your dog. Must-teach commands are come, off, sit, down, drop it, stay and wait. Adults should initially teach all commands then have the children practice them under supervision.
- The CBR website has a full page on [Training Resources](#), including trainers in your area.



- Watch for signs of trouble, including the dog guarding food, toys, bones or resting places. Guarding starts with a simple freezing up of the dog's body whenever the child comes too close and can quickly progress to growling, snapping or biting if not addressed immediately.
- Teach children to report to you whenever they hear the dog growling and it is clearly not during play. The growl is a warning that your dog is not OK with the immediate situation. Unless your child understands to back away immediately, he or she could be bitten. The only time you should not worry about the dog growling is when he is clearly playing. If you hear growling at any time other than during play, consult a professional immediately. Aggression problems tend to get worse over time.
- Do no hit, slap, yell, choke, shake or use a shock collar on your dog for misbehaving or for aggression. These methods are unsuitable, can be dangerous, and can show children how you solve problems, which they then may mimic, putting themselves in danger. Consult a professional at once if your dog displays aggressive behavior and keep him separated from children until the problem has been dealt with in a humane, safe way.
- Notice and reward good behavior. This cannot be emphasized enough. When your dog is being calm, playing with his own toys, or is being very gentle with children, recognize this behavior and reward your dog with praise and food treats.
- Don't give your dog toys that resemble your children's toys or clothing, such as fabric stuffed dog toys that resemble children's stuffed animals. Don't give your dog an old shoe or towel to chew on; he won't know the difference between old things that are OK to play with and new ones that are not. Give your dog Nylabones, Kongs or Buster Cubes.
- Avoid giving your dog items that he may protect, such as rawhide, pig's ears, smoked bones or real bones. Your dog may feel these things are valuable enough to protect them from children.
- Make your dog part of the family. Bad behavior is never improved by isolating a dog outdoors. Dogs are pack animals and need to be with their pack, which is you. In most cases, isolation will actually increase a dog's behavioral problems. Consult your mentor or the Behavioral Coordinator for specific behavioral problems, such as chewing, housetraining, digging, barking, or thievery. NCBR is happy to provide professional evaluations and interventions for foster dogs with behavioral issues once the issue has been identified and the appropriate NCBR person notified.



Frequently Asked Questions

How old should my child be before we get a dog?

Although many experts recommend a child be at least 6 years old before a dog is brought into the family, you are the best judge of your child's maturity. At the very least, your child should exhibit self-control and understand (and obey) the word "no." If you think your child is ready for a dog, first introduce him to friends' or family members' well-behaved dogs so you can observe your child's behavior around them.

Should we get a young dog or an older one?

Many families with young children choose a kitten or puppy, believing these pets are safer, easier to train, and more adaptable than older, larger pets. This isn't always true. Puppies and kittens are fragile, require extra time and care, and are prone to play-related scratching and biting, therefore they may not be appropriate for a household with young children. Adopting a friendly, calm, adult animal that has a known history of getting along with young children may be a better choice for your family. Before making a decision, talk with animal experts such as veterinarians, animal trainers, and animal shelter adoption counselors who can help you select the right animal for your family.

What kind of dog is best with children?

As a parent, you want your child to be safe around your dog. You want to know which breeds are good with children and which aren't. The truth is, all dogs have the potential to bite, and a dog's breed is only one of many factors that can affect temperament and behavior. The best dogs for children are those who receive proper socialization, humane training, exercise, and attention, and who are given adequate food, water, shelter, and veterinary care, and who are sterilized, and safely confined.

How should my child interact with pets?

To protect both your child and your pet, it is critical that an adult supervise all pet child interactions. It's also important to help your child see the world through the pet's eyes. Ask your child how he would feel if someone poked his eye or pulled his ears. Explain that even the most docile pet has limits, and that all animals must be treated with caution and respect. Help your child understand that:

- Pets need space and may not always welcome human attention, especially when eating, play with their toys or resting.
- Pets may become upset by too much petting or stimulation. Teach your child to heed warning signs, such as hissing, lip curling, retreating, and growling, which indicate that his animal friend wants to be left alone.
- Other people's pets may feel and display discomfort if your child touches or even approaches them. Tell your child to get permission from an adult before touching



another pet, and explain how some pets may feel threatened when stared at, cornered or hugged.

- Animals in pain may lash out at or bite anyone who tries to touch them. Teach your child to leave an injured pet alone and to immediately notify an adult.
- Some dogs get excited by and may even become more dangerous when children scream or run. Teach your child appropriate behavior around dogs.
- Dogs contained in yards or cars may try to protect their territory if approached. Teach your child not to tease or get close to them.
- Dogs may become overly excited and dominant during games such as tug-of-war or wrestling, possibly injuring a child in the process. Teach your child not to play rough games with dogs, and instead play fetch with a ball or Frisbee.

How can I help my dog feel safe?

Pets, like children, need time to adjust to new surroundings and circumstances, and need opportunities for “down time.” Provide pets with a place of their own where they can retreat from children. Don’t put your pet in situations where they feel threatened. For example, neighborhood children can accidentally or intentionally tease dogs left alone in the yard. Keep your dog indoors to avoid this unnecessary stress. What’s more, dogs live longer, healthier, and safer lives when kept indoors with the family.

How can my child help care for a pet?

Allowing children to help you care for a pet teaches responsibility and instills a feeling of competency and accomplishment. Choose tasks appropriate for your child’s age. Even young children can be involved in some aspect of caring for a pet, such as selecting a new toy or collar, assisting with grooming, or carrying a food can.

How can I teach my children to take good care of a pet?

The best way to teach your children how to be responsible pet caregivers is to be one yourself. This should start before you even get a pet by making sure you have realistic expectations about pet ownership, and taking steps to select the right pet for your family at the right time.

As soon as you bring a pet into your family, set up and enforce rules regarding proper pet interactions. For example, do not pull the animal’s tail, ears, or other body parts, and no teasing, hitting or chasing the pet. Teach children how to properly pick up, hold, and pet the animal. These simple lessons are essential to helping children become responsible caretakers.

While adults must handle certain t-care activities, you can still include children by explaining what you’re doing and why. For example, when you take your pet to the veterinarian to be spayed or neutered, explain how the operation can make your pet healthier, calmer and more affectionate, and it also helps reduce pet overpopulation.



Include your children in pet-training activities. This will teach your children humane treatment and effective communication while making your pet a more well-mannered family member.

Ultimately, your children will learn how to treat animals (and people) by watching how you treat the family pet. They'll study how you feed, pet, and exercise your companion animal. And they'll pay close attention to how you react when a pet misbehaves (i.e. scratches the furniture, barks excessively, or soils in the house). Frustrating as these problems are, "getting rid of" the pet isn't just unfair to the pet and your children; it also sends the wrong message about commitment, trust, and responsibility. When faced with pet problems, get to the root of the problem so you can keep the whole family together. Consult a veterinarian, animal shelter professional, or trainer if you need help resolving the issue.



Supplement P: Mast Cells

While mast cell tumors can occur anywhere in the body, they are a very common type of skin tumor in dogs, and boxers are more prone to them than are many other breeds. Fortunately, boxers also tend to have less aggressive mast cell tumors, which, if caught early, can often be treated successfully with surgery alone. However, mast cell cancer varies widely in its appearance and its outcome, so all lumps and bumps should be examined by a veterinarian as soon as they are noticed.

You can read more about mast cell tumors at the [National Canine Cancer Foundation](#).