



CAT SOCIALIZATION

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CAT SOCIALIZATION

Why We Need Cat Volunteers



Provide positive interactions

Cats are companion animals that benefit from regular, friendly, and predictable social interaction with humans.



Socialization

Socialization is the measure of a cat's comfort around humans.



Keep stress levels down

Stress can equal sickness in cats, so it's a volunteer's job to help reduce their stress. Playing, brushing and spending time with them helps reduce stress in shelter cats.



Increase adoptability

An increase in a cat's well-being and comfort helps lead them to being happy and healthy which increases their adoptability.



*“Life is better
with a cat”*

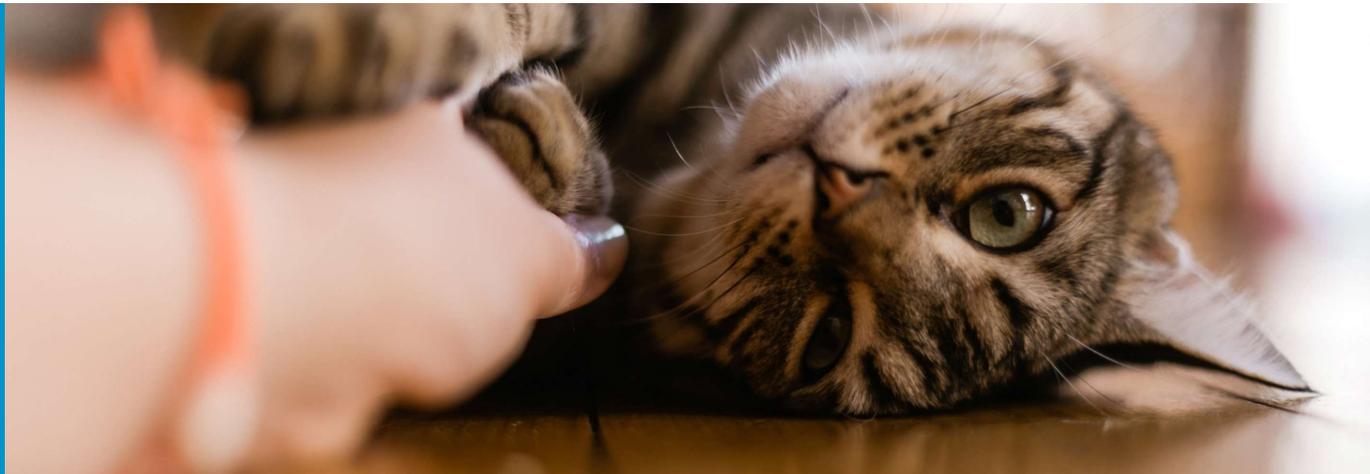
UNDERSTANDING CATS

Cat behavior can sometimes be difficult to interpret. Cat body language cues can be a lot harder to read than that of a dog, which means you must be alert and know what to watch for. Cats are also more sensitive to environmental change: 5x better hearing and 10x better sense of smell.

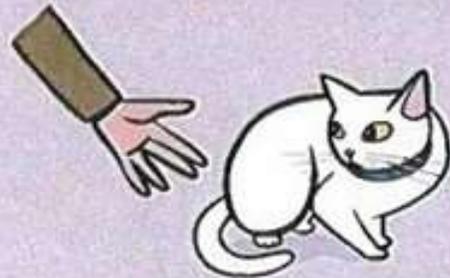
Understanding cats can be challenging for most humans, but understanding cat behavior is important for many reasons. A cat's behavior, including the way they shake their tail or their facial expressions, can provide clues to how they're feeling.

[Why do cats act so weird?](#)

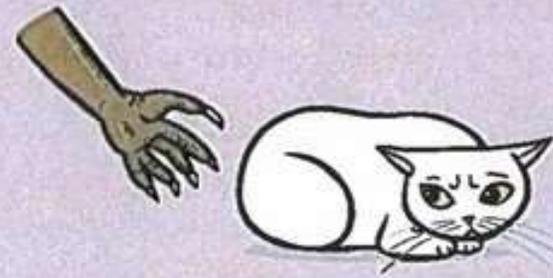
[Body language in cats](#)



Body Language of Feline Anxiety

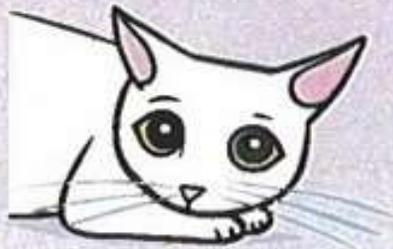


Slight crouching



Major crouching

More Subtle Signs of Fear & Anxiety



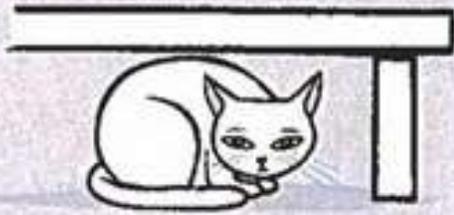
Dilated Eyes



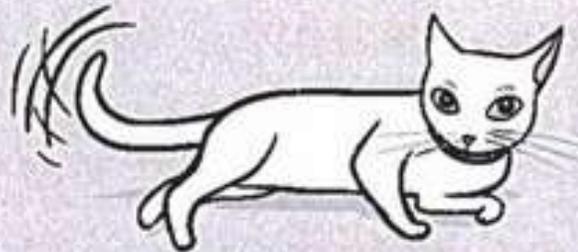
Ears Turned Back,
Furrowed Brow



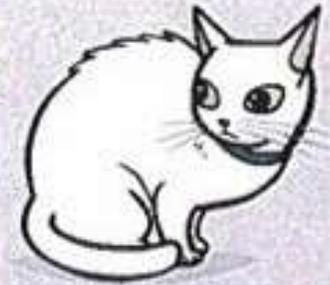
Staring,
Focused on Object



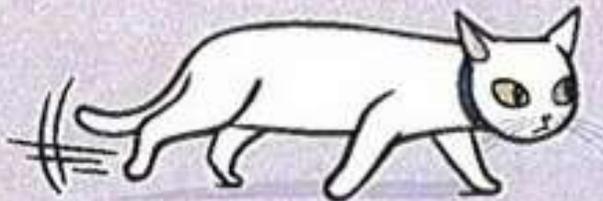
**Hiding,
Looks Half Asleep**



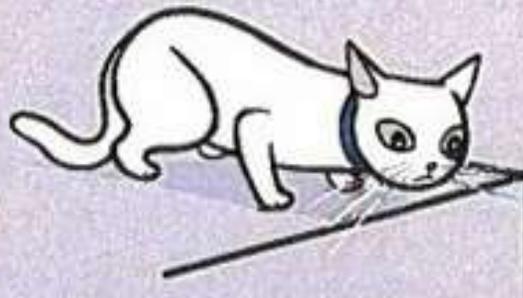
**Laying on Side,
Tail Flicking**



**Hair Raised, Staring,
Ears Turned Back**



**Walking with Flat Back,
Tail Down, Head Down**



Ready to Jump Off Perch



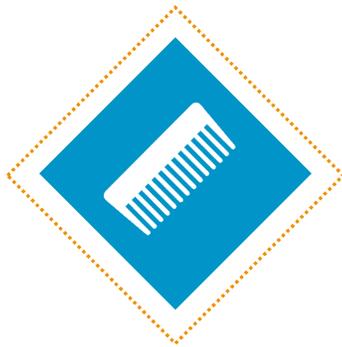
**Suddenly Grooming,
Excessive Grooming**

Safety and Sanitation



Caution

Use caution and common sense in all your cat interactions.



Toys and Brushes

To prevent the spread of illness, cats are not to share toys or brushes with cats in other cages or rooms. Dirty items are to be placed in the “dirty toys/brushes” laundry bin.



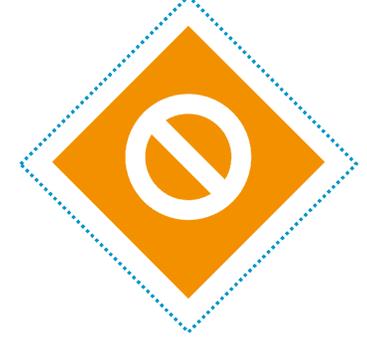
Hand Washing

Always use hand sanitizer and/or wash your hands when going between cat rooms and/or cages.



Clothing

There is inherit risk in working with shelter cats. Volunteers are advised to change out of clothing that’s been worn to the shelter (when you get home) as a precautionary measure.



Litter Boxes

Do not empty litter boxes or clean them.

Fights, Bites and Scratches

Fights

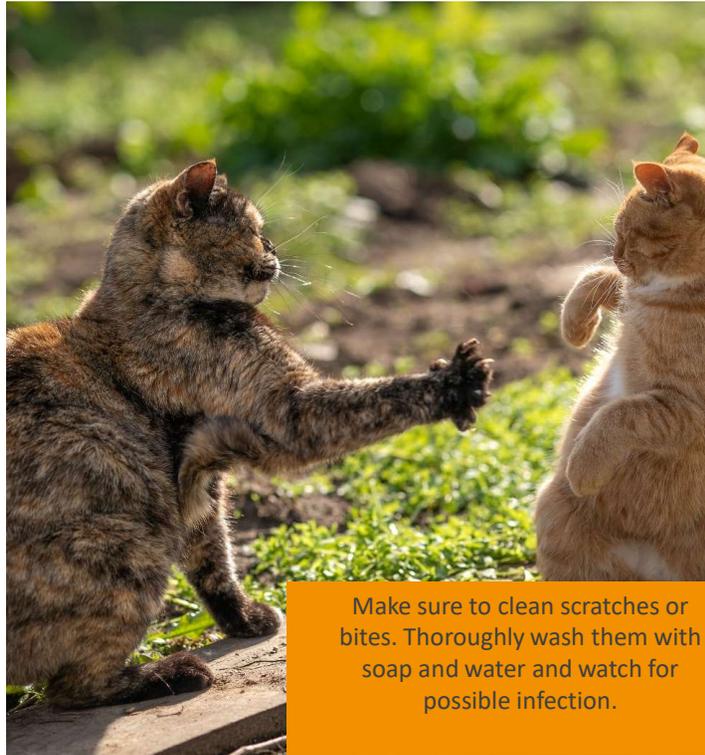
If a cat fight breaks out, leave the room and get help. If you see a fight about to happen, make a loud noise to distract the cats. Never try to break up a cat fight.

Bites

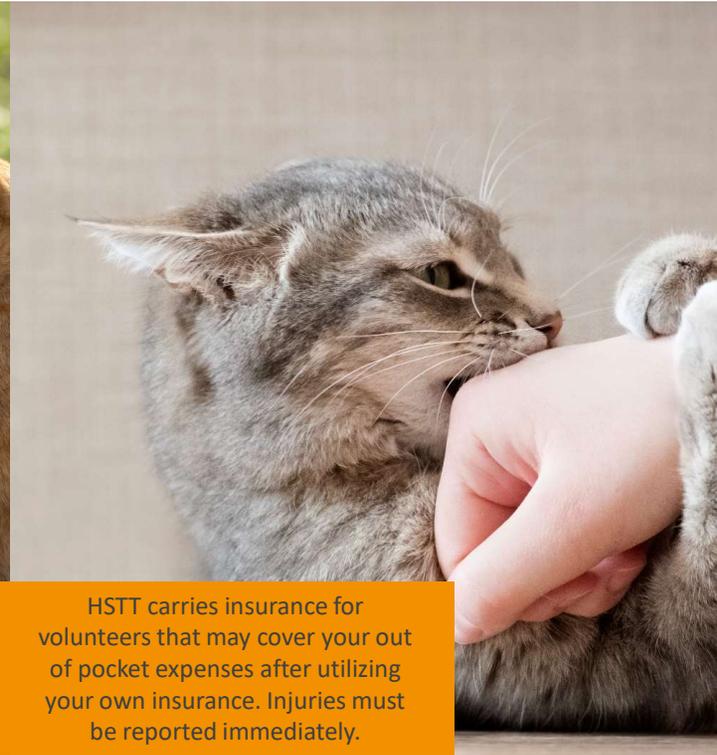
It is the law to report a bite where the skin has been broken. Not reporting a bite can be grounds for dismissal. Modifications may need to take place if you have two or more bites on record.

Scratches

Wearing long clothing can help prevent scratches. Scratches do not need to be reported.



Make sure to clean scratches or bites. Thoroughly wash them with soap and water and watch for possible infection.



HSTT carries insurance for volunteers that may cover your out of pocket expenses after utilizing your own insurance. Injuries must be reported immediately.

SHELTER CAT PROTOCOL

Always be sure to close doors behind you when you go into a colony room or the room with cages. You can visit with a cat that is housed in the caged room, but can only have one cage open at a time. Cats should never be let out of their rooms and cannot mix with cats from other rooms. If a cat somehow gets away from you, or if you notice a cat is “missing”, immediately notify a staff member.

If you feel uncomfortable navigating the shelter when you start volunteering, or at any point thereafter, please arrange to have the volunteer programs manager accompany you on your first or subsequent visits.



Required Attire for Volunteering

Closed-toed, closed heel shoes must be worn at all times.



Nametag – this will be given out after your first walk and needs to be brought in with you each time you come to volunteer.



HSTT Volunteer Aprons – These stay at the shelter and are washed and disinfected after they are worn.



HSTT advises all volunteers to change out of their shelter clothing after leaving the shelter as a precautionary measure. There is inherit risk in working with shelter cats and it is possible that cats in the care of HSTT may be shedding a virus or illness unknown to us.



Working With Shelter Cats

When you first arrive at the shelter you will park in the back, enter in through the volunteer door and make your way to the room behind the front desk.

Check the cat boards in the volunteer room to see what cats are in need of attention and those who may not have had much interactions for the day.

Spread the LOVE!

Give treats in moderation and do not add any to their food bowls.

Please report to a staff member your observations about any progress, regression, concerns, health issues, aggression, etc. with any of our cats.

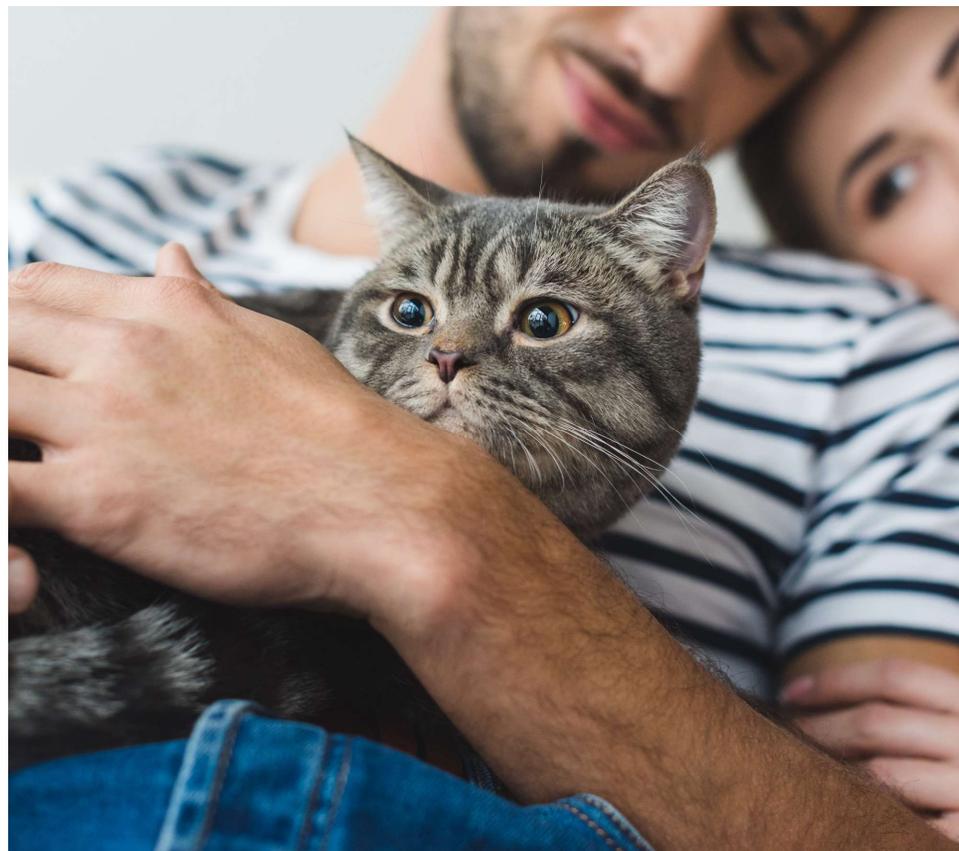
Hours: Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday and holidays 10am-5pm. Sign out before you leave and document interactions with each pet during your visit.

If you have friends/family that would like to volunteer, please have them contact HSTT. If they are interested in adopting, they can meet with our adoption staff.



ADOPTERS

- If you are in a room when a potential adopter comes in, please greet them and offer to answer any questions about the cats if needed. Then, let people do their own thing.
- No more than 4 ppl in a room (different during COVID)
- Please do not interrupt adoptions.
- We do not want to overwhelm or scare off any potential adoptions.



COVID Protocols

Masks

Masks are optional indoors for those that are fully vaccinated. If you are not fully vaccinated volunteers must wear a mask properly at all times indoors.

Schedule

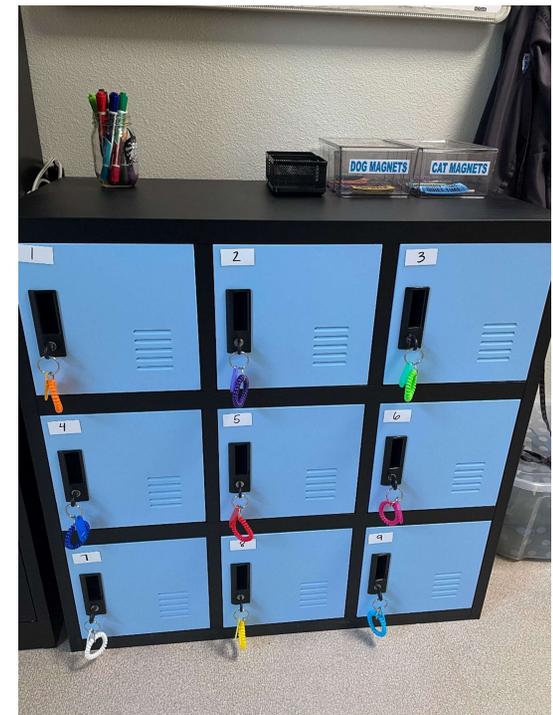
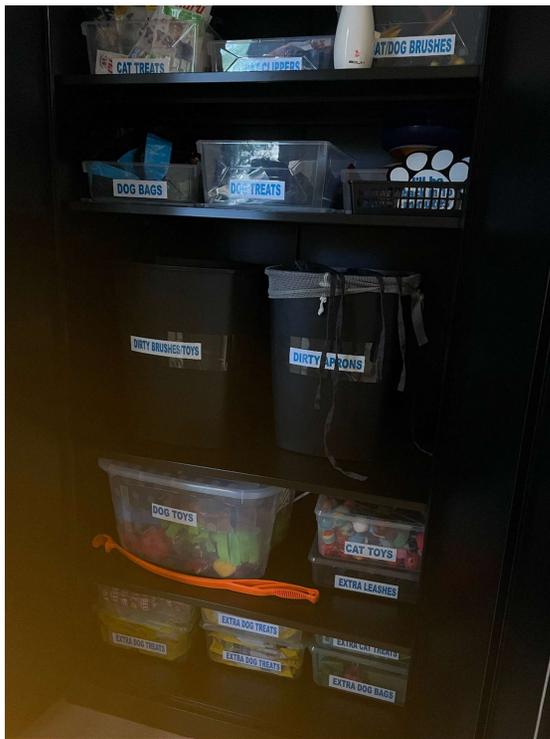
We are back to our pre-COVID flex schedule. We ask for 2hrs a month. Make sure to sign out on the computer so we can keep track of hours.

Handwashing

You must wash hands or use sanitizer before volunteering, in-between all animal interactions.



New Volunteer Room



THANK YOU!



HUMANE SOCIETY
OF TRUCKEE-TAHOE

