

FOSTERING 101

Feline Edition

HARMONY & HOPE
Animal Trust



YOUR FOSTER FELINE

How do you match us?

We will use all the information given in your application to match a foster to your current situation, if anything changes or you have a specific age in mind, please let us know.

How long do I foster for?

We prefer not to have to move our fosters during their stay if possible, so if you will only be available short term or will be going away in the near future please let us know. Kittens?cats can be in care from a couple of weeks to a few months.

Arrange with the HHAR team if you have a specific time frame in mind.

Introductions

- 🐾 Slow and supervised
- 🐾 Start in a calm part of the house
- 🐾 Wait a minimum of 1 week
- 🐾 Tailor to the temperament of your foster and existing animals

We always advise slow and supervised introductions to other animals in the house. We recommend waiting a minimum of 1 week before introductions if health history is not known.

Best practice is always allowing the new foster to decompress and become comfortable in their new surroundings in a calm quiet part of the house before starting any initial introductions. You know your pets best however we don't always know the background of the rescued feline.

My own cat is aggressive or won't come inside, what do I do? Cats can be territorial (and jealous) creatures. Its important to let them know that they still have a place in your home.

- 🐾 Create a separate space for them
- 🐾 Introduce animals slowly
Respect boundaries
- 🐾 Feed your own animals first
- 🐾 Separate food bowls, litter boxes and bedding

If you need any advice around introductions please message us and we will always do our best to guide you through.

SUPPLIES

If you need, HHAR can provide enclosed fabric pens, crates, food/water bowls, litter trays, bedding and toys.

Please let us know if you will require any of this when agreeing to foster a kitten/cat.

We rely heavily on donations, so we would really appreciate it if you are able/willing to provide your own equipment.





Food

WATER

Please provide fresh clean drinking water 24/7.

BISCUITS

We recommend biscuits are given freely for the kitten/cat to graze on during the day.

WET FOOD

We recommend that wet food is given 2-3 times a day according to their life stage.

Wet food is important as some cats take up a significant amount of their fluid intake via wet food. Some cats prefer only wet food while others eat only biscuits. Either is fine if the food is complete (containing all nutrients needed for their particular stage of life) and water is always available.

Malnourished/illness

If your foster is malnourished- i.e they are underweight, or haven't eaten in a while, they will need a slow introduction to food. This also applies to recovering from an illness.

1-5 DAYS Feed small but frequent meals, every 3 hours throughout the day and night, and only a fraction of the portion size.

6-10 DAYS If responding well, increase portion sizes and decrease to 4 meals a day

10+ DAYS If responding well, drop down to normal portion sizes and frequencies.

Healthy weight gain is approx 70-100gm per week or 10gm per day.

Weaning Kittens

Kittens are generally solely fed in their mothers milk until they start weaning at 4-5 weeks old. At this stage they are introduced to wet food and then biscuits. With smaller bodies and then therefore small stomachs they need to be fed little and often.

HHAR will provide any food you require for your foster, you will have food given to you with your cat or shortly after their arrival. It's up to you to let us know when you will require more food by messaging the foster communications page.

If you would like to provide your own food to your foster at your cost this is appreciated, but please check with us first so we can make sure it's a suitable diet. Treats, and extras are fine but please double check with us first.

MOTHERS & NEWBORNS

Gestation is between 58-67 days or 8-10 weeks.

Nutritionally adequate food and fresh water: pregnant and lactating mothers have higher caloric needs because of the demand on feeding extra bodies. Their food intake varies and will gradually increase from day one of her pregnancy until her kittens are weaned. The amount of food needed will depend on the condition of the mother and the size of her litter. She will need to be on kitten food until she has weaned her kittens.

STAGE 1 1-12 days eggs are fertilised and the first term begins. Mother shows little signs of pregnancy.

STAGE 2 12-24 days kittens are in their most critical period of development. Mothers nipples become enlarged and red- this is know as 'pinking up'.

STAGE 3 24+ days this is a period of rapid growth for the kittens, the mother gains 1-2 kgs over this period depending on her food intake and the size of her litter. Final weeks the later signs of pregnancy are a pear shaped abdomen, visible foetal movements, enlarged breasts with a milky discharge.

Labour

- 🐾 Decreased appetite, unsettled behaviour, excessive cleaning, becoming extra vocal and seeking a nest/ secluded place to settle down are signals labour is due to start very soon.
- 🐾 Within 24 hours before birth her body temperature will drop to around 37.8C.
- 🐾 Delivery starts with strong abdominal contractions, followed by discharge from her vagina. After this discharge, the kittens should follow very quickly! NOTE: if the discharge is heavy, black, or blood-coloured, or the mother is straining without producing kittens, contact us!
- 🐾 Birthing mothers will know what to do naturally but you may need to assist her if she or her kittens are struggling. If all goes well. Shell feed, toilet and maintain a safe body temp for her kittens until they begin to do these things for themselves at 4-5 weeks of age.

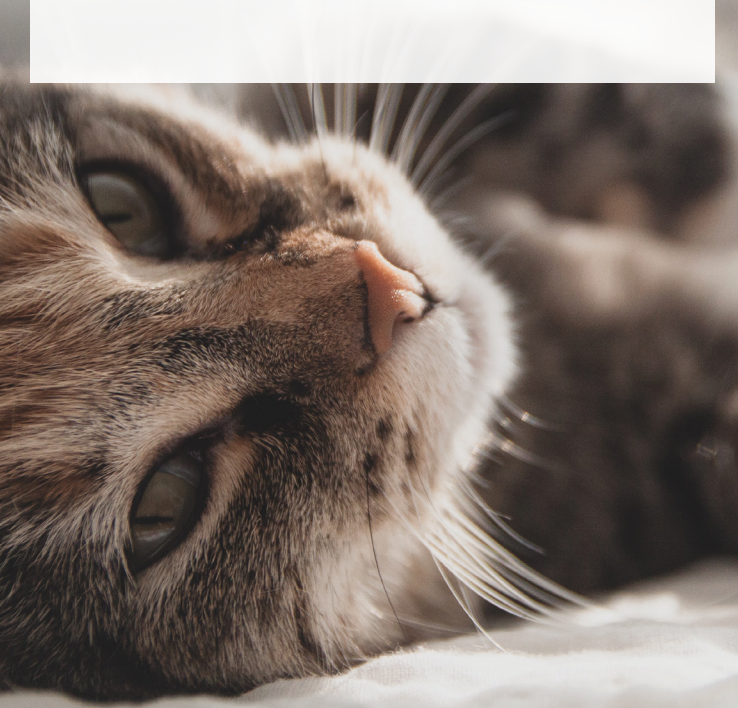


As her caregiver we ask you to provide:

- 🐾 The option of different birthing beds: these can be as simple as a covered laundry basket or cardboard box lined with blankets.
- 🐾 Warm, quiet and clean place for her to birth and raise her kittens: Mothers can be quite protective of their kittens so its important they have a space separate from other animals.

When to intervene

- 🐾 If the mother is leaving her kittens frequently and for longer than 10 minute intervals or not adequately caring for her litter: kittens younger than 3 weeks can't control their body temp so its essential they are kept warm. Make sure the mother has everything she needs and take steps to encourage her to stay with her kittens.
- 🐾 If one or more kittens aren't getting enough milk and are obviously smaller: check to see if the kitten has any physical disability stopping them from feeding. Try to get the kitten to suckle by clearing a nipple for her. If needed, the kitten will need to be bottle fed with special formula. Never use cows milk as the lactose is hard for cats to digest.



HEALTH

Some of our felines experience illness before and or during their foster care due to the quality of life they experienced before being taken in. Common illnesses are:

Cat Flu

Cat flu varies in severity from cat to cat with very young, malnourished or elderly animals being the most vulnerable. Minor cases can be treated by keeping the animals warm and dry, wiping their eyes with warm saline water (1tsp salt per cup of water) and an adequate supply of food and water. More severe cases may require medication. Let us know if there is any of the following:

- 🐾 Weeping from eyes and or nose
- 🐾 Sneezing
- 🐾 Raspy or laboured breathing
- 🐾 Shivering
- 🐾 Limping

Ringworm

Contrary to the name, it is a fungus and has an average life cycle of four weeks. It presents first by itchy, balding patches of fur followed by scaly skin and complete baldness until the fungus has completed its life cycle and the fur grows back. The most common places it settles are the brows, top/back of the ears, paws and tail. Although highly contagious, thoroughly washing hands, contacted surfaces and treating with an antifungal drastically lowers the risk of passing it on. Oral and topical medication will fast track recovery and hosts usually develop an immunity once the ringworm cycle has passed.

Diarrhoea

Please notify us immediately if your feline develops diarrhoea. PLEASE NOTE: You will often find a new foster will have diarrhoea when it first arrives due to the stress, and also transitioning onto a new food. This is very common and not usually cause to worry. Cause for concern is the presence of significant blood or mucus in the stool. You can change their food to something that has fewer ingredients, a lower fat content and minimal preservatives.

Plain boiled chicken breast, chicken mince and bone broth are good places to start. Please consult with us before doing this so we can make sure it's not serious.

Vomiting

Please notify us immediately if your feline starts to vomit. Vomiting can be a normal sign when related to stress or overeating, however it needs to be monitored especially if accompanied by diarrhoea or lethargy.

UTI

Please notify us immediately if you noticed your kitten/cat having frequent urination resulting in only small amounts of urine excreted. Straining and blood in urine may occur.

Dehydration

If your feline is acting lethargic it's a good idea to check how hydrated they are. You can do this by pinching the skin folds between the shoulder blades, if the skin springs back quickly they are well hydrated, if it takes a while or doesn't spring back, then they are dehydrated. Notify us immediately, and offer water. It's vital to keep your kitten/cat hydrated, home remedies include: syringing small amounts of water into their mouth every 1-2 hours, or a home electrolyte solution (1 cup of water, 2 tsp sugar, 1/2 tsp salt, 1/2 tsp baking soda store in a cool area and discard after 24 hours). We also have vytrate solution and fluids on hand, or we will organise a vet visit.

VACCINATIONS

Kittens/cats will all need to be vaccinated routinely as per their age requirements. All of our animals are vaccinated with the Felocell Core Vaccine. Once they weigh at least 1150gms they will be booked in for their first vaccination. They may also need booster shots dependent on if they are still in your care a month after their initial vaccination.

This is organised by our appointment coordinator, and they will be in touch with you when it is time to book, please don't make these appointments yourselves unless pre-approved. We will book and pay for these at the closest of our approved vets to your location.

NOTE: cats that have NOT had two vaccinations, been desexed and microchipped CAN NOT go outside or leave your property except to go in the car, to vet appointments or somewhere arranged by our team.

They also can't interact with any animals coming on to your property, and any humans interacting with them will need to have clean washed hands first. It's also worth noting that diseases can be carried in on shoes from the outside world, so it's worth taking footwear off while inside the house if you have fosters.

Behaviour

Litter box training

Until 4-5 weeks of age kittens are encouraged to toilet by their mothers. Beyond this age they venture away from her and should be given a specific place to do their business. Some cats naturally train themselves to toilet on litter while others explore their options. A few tricks to get them toileting in the right place are:

- 🐾 Placing a litter box close to the area that they toilet
- 🐾 Placing the kitten in the box when they look like they need to toilet
- 🐾 Placing items soiled with urine/poo in the litter box
- 🐾 Leaving a bit of soiled litter in the box until they are familiar with the scent.
- 🐾 Trying different litters
- 🐾 Try a covered or lipped litter box

Ensure there are enough litter boxes for the number of animals you have and also the size of the space. Sometimes increasing the number of litter boxes or reduce the size of the space they can access until they are toileting in the appropriate place.

Toileting inside (post litter box training)

Toileting outside of the litter box is not necessarily a house training problem as cats toilet inside for a variety of reasons such as to mark their territory, if they are stressed or anxious, they don't feel comfortable using the litter box in its current location or are trying to comfort themselves with a familiar scent. Lifestyle factors that may contribute to this are:

- 🐾 A change in routine
- 🐾 Changes in the environment
- 🐾 New cats/people in the house
- 🐾 Competition for resources
- 🐾 A dominating personality

Identify what's bothering your cat, settle them down and place the litter box in a place they feel comfortable using it.

Accidents

Prevention

Use puppy training pads, tarpaulin or newspaper to line the area your foster animal is toileting in, Use a lipped litter box or one with a lid if your foster is moving the litter out of the box.

Clean up

Remove what you can then saturate the area with a mild detergent or a weak white/water solution. Soak up the excess moisture with a towel. Odarid is also a great pet stain and odour remover. Do not use any ammonia based products to clean up toileting accidents.

Semi Feral/Timid

Some of the cats we rescue have never known human kindness or have had negative experiences. They will need gentle and persistent encouragement, compassion and above all, patience. The first step to taming a timid cat is by gaining their trust. As a general rule you should let them come to you.

Starting them off in a quiet, separate space where they have room to move but it's not so large as their options are overwhelming. Once the cat has settled in we recommend frequent visits that follow a routine. **The aim is to get them used to people sharing their space and to associate the interaction as a positive.**

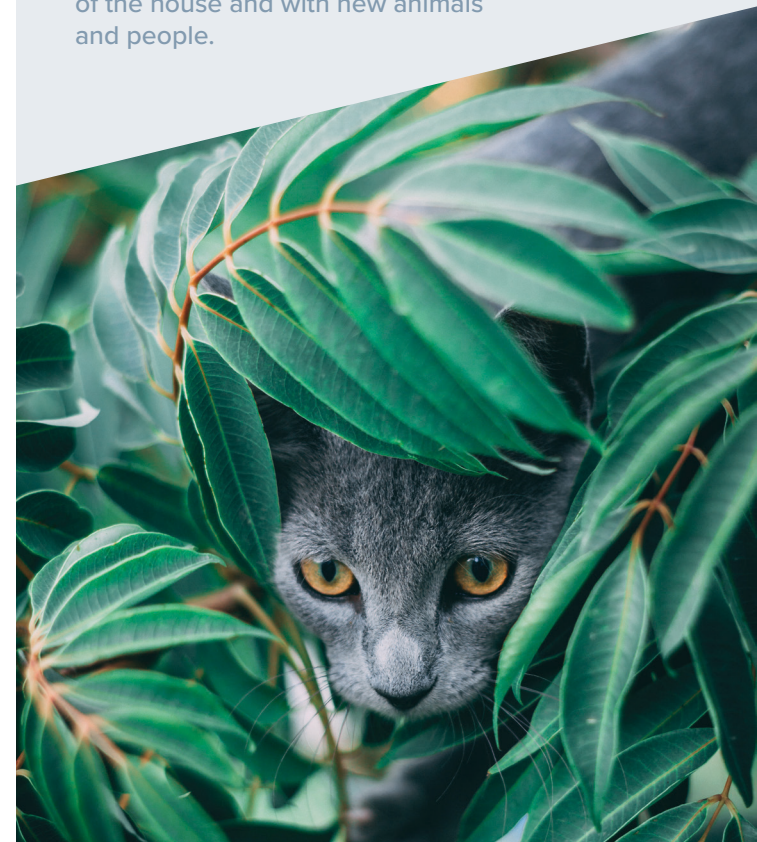
Build trust by:

- 🐾 Play and food are the most effective ways to gain the trust of a timid cat.
- 🐾 Get them accustomed to you. Place items with your scent in the room and amongst their bedding. If you can, just be present in the room for long stretches of time.
- 🐾 If no progress is made after a couple of weeks you can try Burrito cuddles (wrap them in a towel to cuddle them gently while maintaining the safety of you and your foster)
- 🐾 Progress may come in baby steps or leaps and bounds so take the small wins. What may seem like little progress to you may be a big step for your foster.

Hiding

Cats are both prey and predatory animals so they naturally seek out places to hide when they feel insecure or threatened. Its common for cats to stay hidden while they adjust to their new surroundings. The goal is to make their environment feel safe so they dont feel the need to hide. Many of our timid rescued cats have had good reason to feel unsafe in the past so they may take considerable time to trust.

- 🐾 It's important they have places to be 'unseen' to feel secure in their environment
- 🐾 Food and play are great ways to earn their trust
- 🐾 As a general rule, always let the cat come to you. Their curiosity will eventually get the better of them.
- 🐾 They may also hide initially when someone enters their space. This is an instinctual habit and a behaviour that can be rehabilitated with time and positive reinforcement,
- 🐾 Once they recognise they have nothing to fear you can begin to familiarise them with other parts of the house and with new animals and people.



Vet Appt.

We do ask that you transport your foster to and from vet appointments as necessary. We will always consult with you first before making an appointment to ensure it works around your schedule. Our vet coordinator will make appointments for you at one of our approved vet clinics, on our account.

PLEASE remember to bring your vet books with your kitten's to desexing/vaccination appointments!

DESEXING

We are unable to desexed kittens until they weigh at least 1150gms. Cats who have recently had kittens can be desexed two weeks after they have weaned their kittens. If you are fostering a kitten/cat that we have booked for a desexing appointment:

- 🐾 Please ensure your feline is healthy the day before the surgery
- 🐾 Do not provide any food from 8pm the night before the surgery, no breakfast. Water is allowed and should be available.
- 🐾 Your feline will need to be at the vet clinic by 8.30am. We will tell you where and when to be there, and when to pick up.

POST-OPERATIVE CARE:

The vet may give you a handout, and they should discuss expectations with you. If not please contact us with any queries or concerns you may have.

- 🐾 Males bounce back quickly but will still need to rest for 1-2 days post op.
- 🐾 Females need a minimum 2 days of strict rest with no jumping or running.
- 🐾 Keep a close eye on the wound site for any puss, swelling or visible redness.
- 🐾 If external stitches have been used you will need to arrange to get them out in 10 days time.

AFFILIATED VETS

WHAKATANE

Veterinary Health Centre
23 Landing Road,
Whakatane.
073087479

Bay Vets Whakatane
100 Commerce Street,
Whakatane.
073070759

EDGE CUMBE

Bay Vets Edgecumbe
40 Bridge Street,
Edgecumbe.
073049184

OPOTIKI

Opotiki Veterinary Centre
91 Waioeka Road, Opotiki.
073158474

KAWERAU

Bay Vets Kawerau
37 Liverpool Street,
Kawerau.
073231052

ROTORUA

Central City Vets Rotorua
1380 Pukuatua Street,
Rotorua
(07 0347 7448

BARROWMAN GOODMAN VETS

110 Lake Road, Koutu,
Rotorua. 073439090

PALMERSTON NORTH

Valley Vets
141 Cambridge Avenue,
Ashhurst, Palmerston North.
063269257

URGENT

If for any reason you urgently need to get a hold of someone from HHAR please call our phone: 0223803065

You are given permission to take your foster straight to the vet if they are displaying any life-threatening symptoms and you can't get hold of us in the first instance. For any non-urgent enquiries just send through a message to the foster communications page and one of our amazing team will get back to you, usually within a day.

FLEA/WORM TREATMENTS

All felines are flead and wormed on arrival to HHAR then either fortnightly/monthly or 3 monthly depending on their age, our coordinators will remind you when it needs to be done.

You will either receive the treatments or you can go into one of our regular vets and put it on HHAR's account. See below for the preferred brand, if you choose to, you can pay for the flea/worm treatment but please stick to the guide.

NOTE: Please write a record of your feline's flea/worm treatment in the vet book you will be provided with at their vaccine appointment.

LESS THAN 8 WEEKS

Flea treatment
Frontline spray
On intake then every 2 weeks if necessary

Wormer / Wormaway
(1 tablet per 2kg). Every 2 weeks under 8 weeks old

These are broken up into pieces for smaller cats.

OVER 8 WEEKS

Flea treatment
Advantage
Topical treatment monthly

Wormer / Drontal
(1 tablet per 4kg).
Fortnightly until 3 months
Monthly until 6 months
3 monthly after that

Cats / 2 + 4 weeks after birth



YOUR KITTENS ADOPTION PROFILE

When your kitten or cat is ready for adoption (i.e they are healthy, desexed (if applicable), vaccinated and are behaviourally sociable) we will ask you for some information to help with finding their forever home. The more detail you can give us the better!

A good guideline is:

- 🐾 Basic summary on what you love about them
- 🐾 Estimated size when fully grown/breed (if known)
- 🐾 Name/any nicknames
- 🐾 Quirks

Experience with:

- 🐾 **Kids:** i.e what ages would they suit?
- 🐾 **Small animals such as rabbits and mice:** Have they been fostered/trained with any?
- 🐾 **Cats:** Have they been fostered with cats and how did they interact?
- 🐾 **Training:** Are they litterbox trained?
- 🐾 **Dogs:** Have they been fostered with dogs and how old. How were their interactions?

You can send all of this information via our Facebook page, or email. **NOTE** – If you are a less experienced foster we can send one of our team members over to do this assessment in person before the dog goes up for adoption. Please let us know if you'd be more comfortable with us doing this.

If you have any issues please let us know straight away. We also suggest doing Social media posts about your fosters, we can then share these for a greater reach. You are also welcome to hang physical poster advertisements etc.

THE ADOPTION PROCESS

Your feline will be ready for adoption when they are healthy, settled, desexed, have had their first vaccination and are microchipped.

Adoption fees are \$120 for cats over 6 months old and \$200 for kittens. Or \$350 for two kittens.

We offer a special foster adoption fee of \$100 for cats and \$180 for kittens.

When we get adoption applications we pre-screen them for suitability. This means that when we pass your number onto them they have passed the preliminary steps and are able to adopt a cat from us.

THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN!

We will use the information you have provided about your kitten along with the information the potential adopter has given us to ensure they would be a good fit. Once this has happened we will pass your number on to the adopter (we will send you a message to let you know). Please have a good chat with these applicants. Please have a good chat with these applicants. We want you to grill them! We need to make sure their home is going to be right for your foster feline, and after all who knows them better than you do?

Some things to consider are:

- 🐾 Compatibility with kids
 - 🐾 Dogs
 - 🐾 Other cats
 - 🐾 Behaviour issues,
 - 🐾 Energy levels
- It's also worth discussing how often the cat will be left at home and if they have plans in place for this.

After you have spoken with them, please get in touch with us and provide us with some feedback about what you think.

ADOPTION TIMELINE

A Meet
& Greet

A meet and greet will be organised directly between you and the potential adopter. If at the meet and greet they decide they want to take the feline home, AND you are happy and satisfied that they are the right family for your precious feline!

ITS A
MATCH!

If you think it's a good match and the potential adopter agrees and wants to proceed, HHAR will send them through all of the steps they must complete electronically before taking their family member home.

Sign contract
& pay
adoption
fee

If not done beforehand, they must show proof that the contract has been signed and the adoption fee has been paid.

Send them
off with
what they
need

Then that's that! They can take their new feline home. Let them know we will send a follow up email with all the relevant information and an adoption certificate. Please make sure you give the new adopter their vet book and a couple of days worth of food as well as their favourite toy. This will help to ease their transition to their new home.



6 Reasons to Spread the Word!

01. FOSTERING SAVES LIVES

Many times rescues who have no central facility, rely solely on foster homes to determine how many Animals they can save whether it be from owner surrender, found animals or from Pounds. Rescues also rely on fosters to provide a change of environment for long term residents or those Animals who may be having a hard time adjusting to a kennel atmosphere. Fosters are crucial to shelters and rescues ability to help expectant female Animals, by affording them a quiet and comfortable atmosphere to deliver puppies and care for them in those first weeks of crucial development.

02. YOU HELP MAKE THE ANIMAL MORE “ADOPTABLE”

Often times, certain Animals may not “present” well in a kennel environment due to excess energy, or excitement for some attention. While fostering an Animal, you are able to provide exercise and stimulation, which in turn creates a calmer Animal which in many cases may be closer to what their behaviour will look like in a home environment. In addition, you can work with the Animal on leash training, house training, or other basic command training, that potential adopters will find attractive when looking for the perfect Animal for their family.

03. YOU CAN CHANGE A ANIMAL’S FUTURE

Shelters and rescues often look to fosters for those Animals who may have endured a difficult past such as abuse, cruelty, neglect, under socialization, etc. As a foster, you have the chance and opportunity to gain an animals trust, show them human touch and love perhaps for the first time, provide an environment for them to feel safe, and watch them transform before your eyes.

04. FOSTERING CAN BE GREAT FOR YOUR FAMILY

If you have existing pets, introducing a Animal can be a great experience for them as an additional companion, additional socialization, and an additional playmate! Children can benefit from fostering as a way to introduce responsibility, selflessness, a way to educate about animals, and is also a great way to “test” the idea of a permanent Animal into the home in the future.

05. BECOME PART OF A WONDERFUL “COMMUNITY”

Fellow fosters from the same shelter or rescue will help guide you through the experience, give ideas, answer any questions, and may even become your friends! We even have a Facebook Community. There is nothing quite like sharing experiences with those who do the same and being part of a community of people who have like passions.

06. YOU WILL MAKE SOMEONE’S FAMILY COMPLETE

When the day comes, that your foster finds that perfect home, the rewarding feeling you will experience is something very special. You will feel a sense of pride, in knowing what you helped that Animal accomplish in his time with you. You will feel overjoyed, that he has found his forever family and his happy ending that all homeless Animals so desire. And while certainly, some goodbyes can be tough, knowing that an Animal has found his happy ending and that another precious life awaits to be afforded your gifts, is as good of a feeling as there is!

Contact

When you become a foster we ask you to join our foster community here where you can share questions and experiences with other foster families:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/678103232986966>

We also ask you to send a message (just a ‘hello’ will do!) to our Foster communications group here as this is where our coordinators will chat to you:

<https://www.facebook.com/hhanimalrescuefosters>



022.380.3065

Calls outside of 9am-3pm will not be taken - please leave a voice message.



info@hhar.org.nz



www.facebook.com/hhanimalrescuenz

WWW. hhar.org.nz

