

## No Kill Equation - Foster Programs (a "get them out" element)

Even the best of shelters can be a stressful environment for any animal. Many are very empathic. Most can see, smell and hear things we do not. This means that for them, a shelter is a very strange and scary place and is nothing like home. Even the most balanced of animals will not behave in a shelter the way he or she behaves outside of a shelter. This makes it very difficult to identify behavioral issues and to even determine which animals are social and well-adjusted. So. How to we help them? We get them out.

Shelter animals in foster care are animals who are being prepared for a new life. Some are perfectly healthy. Some may have some special needs. When we put animals in homes, even for short periods of time, we learn about how they function and we help them get ready to be someone's pet. Their past will never be known but their present becomes very much known. Can he walk on a leash? Is she house trained? Does riding in a car upset her? Does he love to play with toys? How about getting along with children or other pets? All of these questions can be answered more accurately once animals are outside of a shelter environment.

The great news is that most communities have an incredible number of resources which could become foster homes. Retirees. Soldiers. Students. There are people who may not want the long-term commitment of a pet but who are great with pets. All of these people are excellent candidates to provide foster care. Do you not have a pet because you think you are too old? Foster. Do you not have a pet because you want the freedom to travel a lot? You can foster. Do you want to help a deployed troop so he does not have to surrender his beloved dog to the shelter? Fostering that dog means he can stay local and be returned to his owner when the deployment ends. Do you want to help neonatal puppies or kittens who need regular bottle feeding for a few weeks until they can eat solid food? Yep. You can foster.