

Bayfields Forgotten Felines Foster Care Program

Bayfields Forgotten Felines is an amazing service in the Bayfield area. In the years it has been running, BFF has arranged homes for hundreds of feral, abandoned and forgotten area felines. BFF takes in over 100 kittens every year, with and without mothers. To ensure the best outcome for these tiny felines, we need to keep them out of the shelter environment until they are vaccinated. We believe there are many people in the community that can offer a temporary home to some of the felines waiting for their forever homes, easing the load of BFF and ensuring that these babies have the best start to their life. We also have a number of teenage/adult cats that are learning that people can be good, not cruel. They would benefit from a loving temporary home with a patient, caring person to learn these lessons

Foster care offers an amazing opportunity to people who love cats but already have their own or, perhaps, cannot have a cat living with them due to a family member with allergies but could have a cat sequestered in a spare room. It is a unique opportunity to have the temporary fun of kittens without the lifelong commitment of another cat. It is also extremely rewarding to see these frightened, abandoned cats/kittens learn that humans are kind and caring.

Foster Care Categories (subject to availability):

1. Feral adult cat (special needs)
2. Tame weaned kittens (minimum of 2)
3. Feral weaned kittens (minimum of 2, special needs)
4. Mother cat with nursing kittens

Foster Parents Requirements:

1. Separate room for foster cats (unless there are no other pets in the home)
 - a. Room (or home) must be safe for the age of the cat/kittens
 - b. Must understand that accidents and mishaps can happen – we will advise on how to avoid any of these problems
2. Allow the BFF Foster Care Coordinator to do an initial site check of your home.
3. Agree that the cat/kittens will be **indoor only** during their stay.
4. Time to spend with the cat/kittens for socialization (NOTE: ferals will take more time and patience but are extremely rewarding. BFF will provide training on how to socialize))
5. Commitment to foster for the recommended time period (this will vary by case and you will be informed before accepting the fostering responsibility)
6. Availability to show the cat/kittens to **prospective** adopters. This will be based on your schedule and will be arranged between you and **prospective** adopters.

7. Foster parents are required to send an e-update with pictures once a week. The update will include weights (for kittens) any observations which may be a sign of an illness, general behavioural update for people to read and **glamor** pictures/video to show **prospective** adopters and post on our website, Facebook and Instagram pages.

What Bayfield Forgotten Felines Provides:

1. 24/7 contact in case of emergency.
2. All food/ litter/litter pans/medical needs/formula/feeding supplies/scale for weighing/carrier. We may also be able to offer some bedding and toys based on our availability. Foster parents are welcome to purchase any of these items as a donation to BFF.
3. Weekly contact to provide supplies, support, etc.
4. Initial health check on the cat/kittens including worming and flea control.

Estimated Time Commitment

The time commitment will depend on the foster care category you choose.

- 1. Feral adult cat:** Time required for twice daily feeding, once daily litter box clean and as much time and patience as possible to socialize. Socialization is often paired with feeding, and we will provide guidance on the habituation process. It will probably be smaller amounts of time to begin and then increase as the cat adjusts to you.
- 2. Tame weaned kittens:** Time required for three/four-time daily feeding, twice daily litter box clean, daily weight checks and as much time as you can spare for playing/cuddling.
- 3. Feral weaned kittens:** Time required for three/four-time daily feeding, twice daily litter box clean and daily weight checks. At the beginning, there will be considerable time just being in the room with the kittens, especially during feedings to acclimate them to your presence. You will then introduce some play time and finally, give them as much time as you can spare for playing/cuddling. We will provide guidance on the habituation process.
- 4. Mother cat and kittens:** Time required for three-time daily feeding for the mother, twice daily litter box clean, daily weight checks on the kittens and as much time as you can give and the mother will tolerate to acclimate the kittens. Time with the kittens will increase as they get older, as well as time with the mother. Time spent with them will largely depend on the mother's tolerance

How long are the cat/kittens with me?

Again, this will largely depend on the category you are fostering.

Some adult cats may take months to find their forever home. We understand you may not be able to commit to that long. We especially need some help during the kitten season (Spring into Fall) as BFF becomes extremely busy. The adult cat can be returned at any time although we do ask that foster parents that take on the commitment of a feral adult cat continue through until the cat is tame. This is also true for feral kittens though all kittens get spayed/neutered at approximately 2.5 lbs or 3 months. (based on availability of the vet clinic).

Once your kittens are spayed/neutered they will move off to their forever homes (if pre-arranged) or may return to BFF.

We like to keep kittens with their mothers as long as possible. Once totally weaned (around 12 weeks) the mother cat can return to BFF and the kittens will await spay/neutering. Afterwards, they will continue onto their forever homes (if pre-arranged) or can return to BFF.

Health Considerations

The vast majority of kittens and cats at BFF come in from the wild and do not have their immunizations. We do start vaccinations on intake but it takes at least three weeks for full vaccination. Therefore, for the safety of your pets, we do require them to be kept separate from other pets in the home.

Standard hygiene protocols should be implemented such as hand washing after handling, feeding, playing or cleaning litter boxes of foster cats/kittens.

Towels, dishes and toys should also not be cross-contaminated, being sure to wash thoroughly before using with your own pets. It is best to use the same items throughout the foster cat/kitten's stay.

Cats/kittens will be checked and treated for fleas before they come to you. Since they will not be going outside, this should be sufficient however, please let us know if you suspect fleas are still a problem.

BFF will strive to only send healthy animals into foster care, maintaining medical and intensive care cases on site. If you do have any questions or concerns regarding disease issues, please do not hesitate to talk to the Foster Care Coordinator.

Foster Care Coordinator:

Mary Pounder
519 565-2717 (home)
415 302-5997 (US # - cell)
bfkittenry@gmail.com