Bottle Baby Program

How is this different?
- Based on Wildlife Center strategy to save baby wildlife
- Problem Solving without Euthanizing

You can start a bottle baby program anywhere!
- Trailer on South Congress
Volunteers and Fosters are equally important

- Don’t lose sight of either one

Nursery Coverage

- Feeding shifts - 95% + Volunteers!
- Shift Leaders
- Feeder board/log
- Lock box so it can be accessed 24/7
- Chart for each litter

Communication

- Google Calendar Signup
- Reminder emails to the people who signed up
- BB Yahoo group
  - pros and cons
- White board
- Notes
- Daily Log
**Orphaned Kittens: How Saving the Tiniest Lives has the Biggest Impact**

**BB Organizational Chart**

- Bottle Baby Manager
- Trainers
- Bottle Baby Foster Coordinator
- Bottle Baby Rescue Coordinator
- Volunteer coordinator and mentor

**Important External Positions**

**Cat Adoption Manager**
Oversees adoption processes, adoption centers and where our kittens go when they are old enough to find forever homes

*ALL THESE KITTENS HAVE TO GET ADOPTED!*

**Veterinary Team**
Oversees the care of the kittens, medications, and treatment.

**How do we get and keep volunteers?**

- Positive messaging:
  - Social media
  - Signs
  - Orientation
  - Fun

- Keeping volunteers:
  - Train them well
  - Give them ownership
  - Manage expectations
  - Expect turnover
  - Help them
  - Give them specific roles
Typical Course for a new BB

- Picked up from AAC within 2 hours by volunteer
- Tested for felv
  - If positive, retested with serum
  - If still positive, set up in separate area/foster
  - If negative, proceed in nursery
- Treated for fleas, worms
- Pen G Injection
- Charted - intake
- Fed - charted
- Set up in kennel, added to white board

Protocols

- Intake
- Sanitation
- Prevention
  - Ringworm
  - URI
  - Diarrhea
- Illness protocols
  - Fading Kitten Syndrome
  - URI
  - Ringworm
  - Diarrhea
- Feeding/Recipes
- Outcome
- Vaccinations/Testing/Parasite Control

Charts

- Intake
- Feeding/weight
- Medications
- Comments/vet notes
Equipment
- Fridge
- Microwave
- Snugglesafes
- Blankets
- Hamster cages
- Bowls (spill proof)
- Baby wipe warmer
- SCALE

Nursery Attire
- Smocks for each kennel
- Gloves
- Closed toe shoes
- Hair tied back

Supplies
- KMR
- Bottles
- Cat litter
- Cotton balls
- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfectant (nonirritating)
- Towels (small and paper)
- Canned kitten food
- Dry kitten food: (Royal Canin Baby Cat Kibble preferred)
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Warmth

- One of the most important things you can provide
- Cannot maintain own body temperature
- Mother cat 102°F
- Snuggle Safe disc (or heating pad w/o auto-shut off)
- Never place kittens directly on heating source
  - “Nests” get damp, so always clean bedding for warmth
  - Carrier or crate, covered with a blanket in a non-drafty area
  - Isolated from other animals
  - Kittens must be kept warm when eating

Aspirating

- If a bottle baby accidentally gets formula into their lungs while feeding:
  - Firmly pat kitten's back until you hear a cough
  - If no coughing, turn baby upside down (tail over head) and shake GENTLY, then pat back again

Because any fluids in the lungs can lead to infection, it may be necessary to start the kitten on Amoxicillin but consult Med Techs.
Medical Guide
- URGENT – email or call person on call, start fading kitten protocol first!!!
  - Diarrhea
  - Abnormal twitches
  - Profuse Bleeding
  - Loss or decrease of appetite
  - Lethargic or depressed
  - Breathing heavily, gasping, breath interval is low
  - Head slumped in food/water bowl and can’t wake up
  - Body is completely limp and non-responsive
- WATCH CLOSELY - get medical help same day but not an emergency
  - Coughing
  - Wheezing or Sneezing
  - Tires easily
  - Straining to urinate or defecate – stimulate, consult vet team if not productive
  - Change in attitude or behavior

Typical Diseases and Meds
- URI - doxycycline suspension, zithromax, baytril, or convenia (depends on severity)
- Diarrhea - Pen G, kaolin, amoxi, metro, panacur, marquis, baytril
- Vomit/Diarrhea - parvo protocol (5mg/kg baytril sq NOT 20mg/kg)
- Ringworm - wait on itraconazole, use topicals until >8wks
- Fleas - tiny drop of frontline or capstar
- Constipation - mineral oil PO with each feeding – a few drops per feeding until has bowel movement then stop to prevent diarrhea, sq fluids
- Not eating - tube feed, reglan, sq LRS, antibiotic
- Almost ALL kittens get sick with something!
- Fading Kitten Syndrome - usually has underlying problem, treat even if you don’t see it

Fading Kitten Syndrome
- Sometimes kittens just fade
  - Stop growing
  - Lose weight
  - Stop nursing/eating
  - Can’t stay upright
  - Cry continuously with extreme lethargy
- Chronic Illness can also pose problems (e.g., persistent diarrhea even after treatment)
- If kitten becomes lethargic/gasping for air:
  - Wrap kitten in heating source/pad, protected with a blanket, like a burrito
  - Make a sugar water mixture (or diluted Karo syrup) and carefully force feed with dropper or oral syringe every 2-3 minutes
  - Call On Call vet team person
Instructional Videos - Watch Later

- Youtube Video on how to feed and care for bottle babies:
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lifzi3oOVo4&feature=relmfu
- Youtube video on how to feed and care for gruel babies:
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFNcs3mCCUQ

Lessons Learned

- Trainings - Shadowing is very important
  - Video to help new volunteers understand the nursery before they start (welcome email)
- Weighing kittens before AND after they eat. Messy gruel babies LOOK like they have eaten a lot when actually they are wearing all of it!
- Vaccinate at 1 #

Lessons Learned

- It is easy to get overwhelmed - set capacity based on volunteers/staff that you have to feed
- Fosters are just as important as the ward and need to be ready to take kittens as soon as they can eat gruel
- Sometimes you have to triage - choose between a fading kitten and everyone else who needs to eat
  - Kittens fade fast
  - Set expectations for that
Practical Tips for Orphaned Kitten Care

Heidi Beyer, CVT

Outline

- Examination
- Housing
- Feeding
- Elimination/Grooming
- Cleaning/Disinfection
- Socialization
- Situation Solving
Examination

- Aging
- Sexing
- Birth defects
- Assessing attitude
- Assessing hydration

Examination

- Check skin
- Temperature
  - 0-2 weeks ~96-99 F
  - 2-4 weeks ~98-100 F
  - 4-6 weeks ~100-101 F
- Weigh daily
  - Newborn ~2-3.5 ounces
  - Daily weight gain
    - 0-2 weeks ~0.35 ounce/day
    - 2-4 weeks ~0.5 ounce/day

Umbilical stump
**Male or Female?**

- **Male**
- **Female**

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**Examination**

- Preventative health measures
  - Treating for parasites
  - Vaccination
  - Probiotics
- Keeping good records

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**Housing**

- The basics
  - Temperature control
    - 86-90 F first week
    - 80-85 F second-third week
    - 74-79 F fourth week
  - Space considerations
  - Avoid mixing litters
Housing

- Housing for neonates (0-2 weeks)

- Housing for pre-weaned (2-4 weeks)

- Housing for post-weaned
Litter box tips

Feeding

• The basics
  • Milk replacer
  • Nipple selection
  • Preparing the milk

For the first few feedings
dilute the milk replacer 50:50

• Tips to prevent diarrhea
  • Stomach capacity in neonates
    (4 ml/100 g body weight)
  • 1 week – feed every 3 hrs
  • 2 weeks – feed every 3-4 hrs
  • 3-4 weeks feed every 5 hrs
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### Feeding

- Feeding neonates (0-2 weeks)
  - Body temperature
  - Amount
  - Frequency
  - Bottle feeding tips
  - Burping

### Feeding pre-weaned (2-4 weeks)

- Body temperature
- Amount
- Frequency
Helpful tips for bottle feeding

- Warm milk
- Nipple on center of tongue
- Milk drips from nipple
- Kitten is sternal with neck slightly flexed and stretched out
- Angle the bottle to prevent air consumption
- Nipple 5/8”
- Patience!!!

Elimination and Grooming
Cleaning and Disinfection
- Very important!!!
- Bottle care
- Kitten care
- Housing care
- Wash hands between handling
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect items between use
- Dr. Kate Hurley “Sanitation to Save Lives”

Socialization Basics
- Neonatal (0-2 weeks)
- Pre-weaned (2-4 weeks)
- Post-weaned (4-6 weeks)

Situation Tips
- Kitten not nursing/non-responsive
- URI
- Elimination issues
  - Concentrated urine
  - Diarrhea
  - Constipation
- Kittens suckling on each other
- Sore rear end
References

- Bottle feeding & Care of Orphaned Kittens. NYC Feral Cat Initiative. PDF
- Small Animal Pediatrics, 1st edition. Michael E Peterson and Michelle Anne Kutzler
- Management of Pregnant and Neonatal Dogs, Cat and Exotic Pets, 1st edition. Cheryl Lopate
- Veterinary Pediatrics, Dogs and Cats from Birth to Six Months, 2nd edition. Johnny D. Hoskins
- The Guide to Handraising Kittens. Susan Easterly
Questions?

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