



what's inside



Could you save lives and foster a dog or cat from Burke County Animal Services?

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Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter

# REASON for Burke

**voice of REASON:**  
saving dogs and cats in our county

Summer 2025



**state of REASON:**  
homeless animals?  
crowded shelters?

**Don't complain.  
DO something!**

- If you can't TNR: Adopt
- If you can't Adopt: Foster
- If you can't Foster: Sponsor
- If you can't Sponsor: Volunteer
- If you can't Volunteer: Donate
- If you can't Donate: Educate

**Be part of the solution!**



REASON stands for "Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter." We promote low-cost spay and neuters to prevent unwanted litters. But the truth is that our county still struggles with pet overpopulation and overcrowded shelters and rescues. It truly takes a village of concerned citizens to make a difference.

The following is a great need at Burke County Animal Services.



### Fostering with Burke County Animal Services

Burke County Animal Services (BCAS) is facing a problem that is common in animal shelters across the country. Simply put, there is not enough room for all of the animals that need help. One facility can only hold so many cats and dogs, and an overcrowded shelter is bad for the animals as well as the staff. While finding them all permanent homes is the goal, many of these prospective pets rely on fosters to house them temporarily while they await adoption.

Fostering is not the same long-term commitment as adopting a pet, but it is a big responsibility. Not

everyone is equipped to provide for a furry guest in their home. If you are interested in taking on this role, however, you are welcome to become part of the excellent foster network at BCAS. We reached out to Director Kaitlin Settlemlyre who was happy to provide us with everything that prospective fosters might need to know.

**Qualifications:** First, you'll need to complete an application in person at the BCAS facility. You must be at least 18 years old and be able to provide a safe environment for a foster animal. You must also be willing to follow care instructions and stay in communication with the shelter staff. If you have questions or need advice, they're the ones you should contact. BCAS works

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closely with their network of fosters to ensure that no one is overwhelmed and every animal is getting the care it needs.

**Choosing a foster animal:** BCAS will work with you on finding a dog or cat that will do well in your home and is within your ability to care for. For example, if you have children in the home, they will match you with an animal that's family-friendly, whereas a quiet home might be suitable for a shy and skittish rescue. Different animals have different needs and some are more challenging than others. Feeding bottle kittens several times a day or looking after an animal that needs medicine daily is not a task for the faint-hearted. If you're up for that, great! Just be honest and don't bite off more than you can chew.

[Open Volunteer Application](#)

Click above or type in browser:  
[reason-burkenc.org/volunteer/](http://reason-burkenc.org/volunteer/)

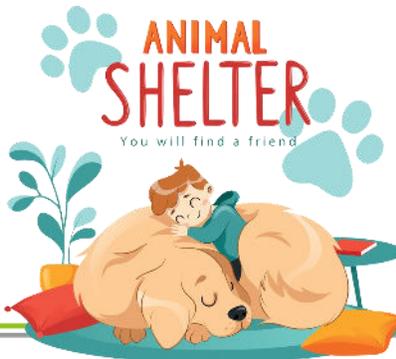


Total Spays/Neuters Supported by REASON (as of June 1, 2025)

**6,233**

**Cost:** Since you are doing your part by offering your home and your time, BCAS takes care of the rest. Pet food and supplies will be provided at no cost to you. BCAS will also handle veterinary care free of charge, though you will be the one responsible for getting the animal to appointments on time.

**Other concerns:** Sometimes foster arrangements don't work out. If yours doesn't, for one reason or another, let BCAS know as soon as possible so the animal can be placed in a more suitable environment. This is not a failure: it's making the best decision for you and the animal.



While there are many ways to help the dogs and cats of Burke County who are in need of homes, fostering is one of the most vital since it allows BCAS to care for more animals by providing them with more safe places to stay until they are matched with owners. If you have the time, ability, and willingness to personally look after an animal in need, please contact Animal Services and tell them you're interested in joining their foster network. They (and the animals) will be immensely grateful for your help.



Follow  
**Burke County  
Animal Services**  
on Facebook



## points to ponder:

“ To foster an animal is a great **GIFT** and act of **KINDNESS**.

The animals hold a special place in your **HEART** and you make a world of **DIFFERENCE** in their **LIVES!** ”

**Fostering Saves Lives!**



**PETLOVERS**



To find out if you qualify for pet neuter or spay surgery assistance, contact REASON at 828.403.3675.



Follow us on Facebook

Reason - Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter

Visit us on the web at:  
[reason-burkenc.org](http://reason-burkenc.org)

# moving and grooving with cats

In the Spring 2025 newsletter, you learned that exercise is very important for a cat's physical and mental health. Toys are one of the best ways to get your cat moving!

## Tips for Using Toys as Exercise

### Play when cats are most active.

Dawn and dusk are when cats are most active. Scheduling play around mealtimes is also a good choice.

### Let your cat choose the toy.

Know what your cat enjoys. Some cats enjoy playing independently while others are more likely to play when you initiate play.

### Keep play short and supervised.

Schedule several 10 – 15 minute sessions for adult cats. Kittens may need up to 10 short play sessions per day. Because cats are very good at chewing and dismantling toys, always supervise your cat to make sure he doesn't get tangled in string or choke on small parts.

### Don't force your cat to play.

Playtime should be fun for your cat. If he sometimes walks away and shows no interest, respect his choice and leave him alone.

### Don't get your hands between your cat and his toys.

If a cat is excited, he may bite or scratch your hands when trying to grab a toy. Make sure that the cat focuses on the toy, not your hands!

### Use interactive toys that invite your cat to participate.

The best cat toys allow your cat to practice natural behaviors such as stalking, hunting, and catching their "prey." But be sure that your cat actually gets their paws on their target from time to time; a cat that always misses the "prey" will become frustrated and give up.

### Change toys regularly.

To avoid boredom and keep your cat mentally alert, change toys and games regularly to keep things interesting.



# 5 reasons to adopt two kittens

Would you consider adopting **TWO** kittens instead of just one? There are some great benefits to adopting bonded kittens.

## Two kittens will entertain each other physically, mentally, and socially.

Bored and lonely cats can "act out," especially when left alone. Two bonded cats are 24/7 buddies for life who will play and exercise together.

## Training is easier with two kittens.

Having a pal helps the kittens settle into a new home. If one kitten is a fast learner (using the litter box, trying new food), the other kitten will learn faster by watching and imitating.

## Two kittens will groom each other.

How to get a clean kitten? Another kitten! A buddy can help groom hard-to-reach areas. Vet studies also show that cats living together are healthier and live longer.

## You'll save two lives instead of just one.

Adopting two kittens rather than one creates an extra space for another animal to be rescued. And it gives two kittens a loving home.

## If two kittens are adopted, older cats in the shelter have a better chance of new homes.

Older cats in a shelter are often overlooked because they aren't cute and playful furballs. If kittens aren't readily available, loving older cats have a better chance of being adopted.

Ask your animal shelter or rescue if you get a discount for adopting two kittens!

# creating toys from trash...

Cats enjoy any toy that lets them chase, jump, or pounce, just like they would stalk prey in nature. Whether it's a chase toy, a teaser/wand toy, or a fetch toy, your cat can become the "hunter." He will exercise, use his brain, and bond with the person who makes the toys move along the floor or dangle in the air.

So do you need to spend a lot of money to buy toys? Actually, you can make toys from common items in your house.

We're starting a new feature with this issue. We'll post do-it-yourself toys on our Facebook page and include simple instructions.

And don't worry. We won't forget about toys for dogs.

**Check Reason-Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter on Facebook to learn how to create your own cat and dog toys.**

## Check DIY Toys on REASON's Facebook Page

**For Cats:**  
Flying Bird  
Sock Teaser  
Toy

**For Dogs:**  
Water Bottle  
Sock Chew  
Toy



Yellow Cat thinks he could crush the Flying Bird Sock Teaser Toy!

# helping the helpless dogs and cats

You're driving home or out for a walk when you spot a dog trotting along the road or a skittish cat hiding under bushes. You want to help but what should you do?

Here are a few tips for helping out a stray dog or cat:

## Stay safe and observe.

Is the animal injured? Aggressive? Afraid? Your safety matters—don't risk a bite or a chase into an even more dangerous situation. Fear aggression is a natural reaction for animals who are frightened or injured. If the animal seems calm and approachable, you can try to help directly. If not, call for backup, such as the local animal shelter or rescue groups.

## Look for ID.

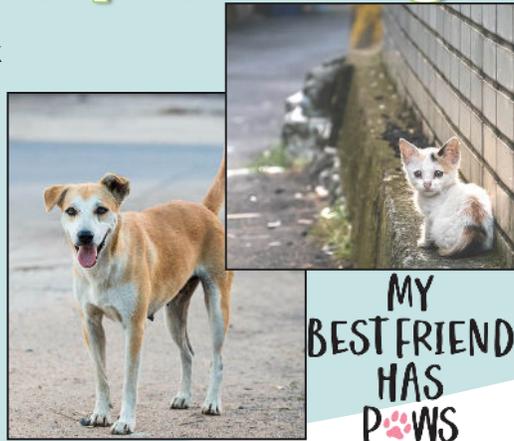
If it's safe to approach, check for a collar or ID tag. Many pets are reunited quickly just by calling the phone number on their tag. No tag? Move on to the next step.

## Contain the animal if you can.

If you can get them to a yard, in your car, or in a pet carrier, it can prevent them from running into traffic or away from help. Avoid using ropes or makeshift leashes unless you're confident, calm, and experienced.

## Report the stray.

Reach out to your local animal shelter. They can check lost pet reports and scan for microchips. You can also post a photo and description to online lost-and-found platforms or social media.



## Feed gently and consistently.

Many strays have eaten very little and may have poor nutrition. Offer small portions of plain, high-quality pet food at first and always provide clean water. If they are really hungry, they may tend to overeat and then proceed to vomit it all back up which does no one any good. Avoid people food especially toxic ones like onions, grapes, or chocolate.

## Go slow with other pets.

If you already have pets and you want to introduce them, keep them separated at first. Use a spare room or a crate in a quiet area and let them sniff each other under a door or through a gate before allowing face-to-face introductions. Supervise closely and don't rush it—this can take days or weeks.

## Build trust through routine.

Don't force affection. Many pets are skittish of humans, and you may never know what they lived through before finding you. Let the animal come to you. Offer treats, speak softly, and stick to a predictable routine. Avoid loud noises or fast movements. Sitting quietly nearby with a book or talking gently can go a long way toward building comfort and confidence. Be PATIENT.

When the shelter is full, people like you make all the difference. If you can't keep a stray, spread the word, donate supplies, or simply share this article to help others take the first step. You don't need to be a hero to make a difference. A little compassion and know-how brings a stray pet much comfort and security.

“Now I'm betting many of you suckers (takes one to know one, right?) may have already decided to take this animal in as part of your household. If that's the case, THANK YOU. That is a beautiful act of compassion. Be sure you have the resources to truly help this pet. Here are tips to help you care for them.”

## Adopting a Stray Dog or Cat?

### Start with a vet visit or phone call.

Even if the animal seems healthy, a checkup is important. They may have parasites, injuries, or illnesses that aren't visible but need attention. Vets can also check for spay/neuter surgery scars and help you get a surgery scheduled if they are intact! If a vet visit isn't immediately possible, at least call and ask about over-the-counter dewormers or flea treatments that are safe to start. And plan to get to the vet ASAP.

## REASON's mission:

To eliminate the killing of healthy and unwanted cats, dogs, puppies, and kittens.

We accomplish this by:

- ◆ providing low-cost spay/neuter surgical fee assistance through partnerships with private practice veterinarians and low-cost clinics,
- ◆ collaborating with other animal welfare groups,
- ◆ promoting education on the humane treatment of animals.



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