



About The Native America Humane Society

The Native America Humane Society (NAHS) is composed of tribal members and their allies assisting tribal communities to resolve their challenges with animals. NAHS acts as the bridge between tribal communities and animal welfare service providers, NGOs, foundations, and other agencies. Our mission is to empower Native communities to become healthier, happier and safer by providing information, support and resources for animal care programs in Indian country.



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Serving Tribal Communities

Our Responsibility

Though dogs have been part of our communities for thousands of years, cats came with the Europeans. These furry newcomers soon joined us with their funny antics and sweet purr. They have the capacity to help us heal as recent research shows that having a pet improves our emotional wellbeing. For their love, it is our responsibility as pet owners to ensure our cats receive the care they deserve.

BASIC CAT CARE

- Access to fresh water on a regular basis
- Daily feeding to develop and maintain health and temperament
- Comfortable and safe shelter - inside or out

WHEN KEPT INDOORS:

- Hiding and resting places at varying levels
- Vertical or angled scratch pad
- Toys
- Daily play with their people
- Water access away from feeding bowl
- Group cats need several litter boxes

Caring For Your Cats



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Keeping Our Families and Pets Safe

Though letting cats run free as Nature intended sounds idyllic, changing times and population growth resulting in larger towns and villages compel us to allow our cats inside to improve both cat and community health and safety. Since cats by nature are solitary hunters, free roaming cats will instinctually fight each other over territory. People are often terribly bitten and clawed, even by their own cat when trying to break up a cat fight. Cats naturally have bacteria in their mouths and their bites may cause severe infections risking prolonged suffering for our children, elders, and family pets, according to 2020 CDC data on cat diseases that are transferable to humans.

Keep Them Home

To protect your loved ones including your pets, the best bet is keeping your cats indoors. If your cat roams outside, it is at risk of attack by other cats, dogs, wild animals, and being hit by a vehicle. If you allow your cat outside, provide access to shade and shelter that stays cool in the summer, and warm in the winter, and protects from predators. Outdoor shelter should be cleaned out regularly and lined with bedding material.



More Cats More Love

Though cats are solitary hunters, they do form social groups. Some cats do fine, even prefer being the only cat, but others benefit from having other cats around. Even within a group of well adapted cats, the shadow of the solitary hunter is often seen in guarding or fighting over food, refusing to use a litterbox where another cat has been, and fighting over preferred perches and hiding spaces.

To have a happy group of feline friends consider the following:

- Have several feeding stations, some on different levels if practical.
- Water stations should be separate from feeding stations
- Have perches and hiding spaces at various levels
- Have scratching posts of a variety of materials at various levels and angles from vertical to horizontal
- Have one more litter box than the number of cats, placed in different areas

IMPORTANT: TOXOPLASMOSIS is a parasite that is passed in the feces of cats infected by eating small animals and birds carrying the parasite. People can be infected by contacting contaminated feces or holding a cat that uses a litter box with contaminated feces. Immune compromised people and pregnant women should not clean litter boxes. Hand washing after handling a carrier cat prevents transmission.

Providing Veterinary Health Care for Your Cat

Veterinary medical professionals recommend that cats have yearly veterinary exams to monitor their health and to provide care as needed including preventative vaccines, fecal exams, and other tests if indicated.

A current rabies vaccination is important to protect your cat and for public safety. Many communities also require cats to be licensed yearly. Check with animal control or law enforcement on local laws.

- Consider getting your cat microchipped so he/she can be identified and returned to you if lost.
- Another common belief in some of our communities is that it is unfair to animals to have them altered so they cannot reproduce. However, research shows that having your cat spayed or neutered improves their lives and keeps them healthier. Cats that are spayed or neutered are also safer as it may reduce the instinct to fight and to roam from their yards.



Signs of Illness, Neglect or Intentional Abuse

Research shows that if an animal is being abused, there is likely child abuse, domestic violence, or other forms of violence occurring within the family. 36.8% of boys and 29.4% of girls who were victims of physical and sexual abuse and domestic violence have been reported to abuse their family pet.

Possible signs include:

Neglected Appearance of Animal

- Dull hair coat; thin (ribs showing, sunken in flanks); hair loss, coat coated in feces or urine; mange.
- Medical symptoms include diarrhea; chronic cough; heavy flea or tick infestation, hot spots and scabs; bare ear tips and other body areas; untreated open sores or wounds; large tumors; collar imbedded in skin; ingrown nails.
- Listless, depressed behavior

Poor or Negligent Housing Conditions

- No food or water or food spoiled
- No shelter from elements

Any suspected animal abuse, neglect, or intentional acts of cruelty should be reported to local animal control or law enforcement immediately. When animal abuse is taken seriously, communities are safer for every member of the family.

See our website for more information on the link between human violence and animal abuse:

www.nativeamericanhumane.org/endviolence

