

# Kitten Socialization Solutions

## BEHAVIOR SERIES



The first few months of your kitten's life are critical for its health and development. A well socialized cat is one that gets along well with all different types of people and animals. This takes deliberate effort on your part, ideally this exposure needs to start between 2 and 7 weeks of age and maintained throughout its life. Kittens without socialization can still be wonderful pets, but may be less outgoing in new situations.

### Things to Do:

- Read your kitten's body language and make each introduction comfortable for your kitten
  - Comfortable: body relaxed, ears up, tail up, purring
  - Fearful: backing away, ears back, cowering, tail fluffed or flicking; hissing
- Identify a favored reward:
  - Special toy
  - Treat
  - Petting
- Invite friends and family to:
  - Visit frequently
    - Upon introduction with your kitten, have a new person give a favored reward
    - Make sure to include all different groups of classes of people in this process including people of different ages (children to senior citizens) and genders
- Gradually introduce new cats and/or dogs living outside the home to the kitten using segregation and other safety measures

### Things to Avoid

- Overwhelming your kitten
  - If your kitten shows fearful behavior, you have gone to far, too fast; adjust the circumstances so that your kitten is comfortable
- Physically disciplining your kitten by hitting, flicking its nose or rubbing its face in a mess
  - These techniques may negatively impact its future relationship with people
- Jeopardizing your kitten's safety by exposing it to other animals without safety measures in place



For additional information, please contact your Banfield medical team.

