



Animal Welfare  
League of Alexandria

## ***Youth Program: At-Home Activities Booklet***

*We'd like to take a moment to thank you for partaking in a project for our shelters animals! Below are some ideas you might try, and we welcome your suggestions for new ideas.*

*When you select a project, please inform the Youth Program Coordinator before beginning as we have limited storage space and many of these things can be difficult to keep fresh over a period of time. For edible items, please bag and label with date and ingredients. If you are completing these projects for service hours, please make sure to email our Youth Program Coordinator so that she may schedule a time to sign any necessary forms and log your hours. The Youth Program Coordinator can be reached at [clindsey@alexandriaanimals.org](mailto:clindsey@alexandriaanimals.org)*

### **CHOPPING HOT DOGS:**

- The hot dogs need to be sliced into small pieces (about the size of an M&M).
- Keep the hot dogs refrigerated until they are chopped. After they have been chopped, they should be frozen.
- Use sandwich size Ziploc baggies to freeze. Please push air out of the bag before sealing.
- You can do batches at a time over the course of a few days, but when you drop them off please make it clear that they need to stay frozen.
- Chopping can be done with plastic knives or “real” knives. Hot dogs come already cooked, so don't worry about “raw meat” issues.

### **KITTYWANDS:**

- Our kitties benefit from toys, and toys help to engage adopters! Hence Kittywands were born!
- Purchase a wooden dowel from any craft store (you can also buy pre-cut dowels. I've found them at JoAnns and Walmart). We prefer dowels that are at least 5/16” round (any smaller and they will break too easily). The dowels may be a little larger, but not by much.
- If you bought a 36” long dowel, cut into three even pieces, about 12” long.
- Take 1-3 strips of Polarfleece, about an inch in diameter, and about a foot long once stretched. Please do not use any more than three strips of Polarfleece.
- Take about 6 inches of duct tape or electrical tape and secure the Polarfleece strips to the end of one dowel. Duct and electrical tape now comes in many different colors and patterns, but plain works just fine.
- Be sure to begin the tape on the wood, and tighten as you go to secure the Polarfleece strips.

- *Please do not use ribbon or string in place of Polarfleece, we find that our kitties fill sometimes ingest these products which is not safe.*

### **CRINKLE BOTTLES:**

- Collect multiple empty, clean water bottles without their lids.
- Collect multiple new tube/crew socks or unstained, unholy gently used socks.
- Decorate socks as desired using permanent non-toxic markers.
- Stuff one water bottle into each sock.
- Do not add dog food or treats, as we don't want our dogs accidentally ingesting the socks or bottle bits.

### **CATNIP HAPPY SOCKS and KICKAROO SOCKS:**

- Use new white tube/crew socks (old, un-holely, un-stained socks will also work).
- Use non-toxic, permanent markers to decorate the socks.
- Fill decorated socks with 2 to 3 teaspoons of catnip.
- To transform a catnip happy sock into a Kickaroo sock, add poly-fil or similar stuffing or a toilet paper tube filled with crumpled newspaper before knotting.
- Tie the sock in a knot to close.

*Please do not attach ribbon, string, or jingle bells.*

### **BABY CATNIP HAPPY SOCKS:**

- Use new white baby socks (old, un-holely, un-stained baby socks will also work).
- Use non-toxic, permanent markers to decorate the socks, if they are not already patterned.
- Fill with poly-fil stuffing.
- Add 2 to 3 teaspoons of catnip.
- Sew or hot glue gun shut

### **TENNIS BALL DUMBELLS:**

- Collect multiple new tube/crew socks or unstained, unholy gently used socks.
- Collect multiple tennis balls.
- Stuff a ball into a sock, tie a knot as close as to the ball as possible. Stuff another ball into same sock, and tie another knot.
- Decorate socks as desired using permanent non-toxic markers.

### **PUPCICLES:**

- Using chicken broth or beef broth, fill each section of an ice cube tray half way.
- Add a piece of hot dog, a cube of cheese, a bit of beef/chicken/pork/etc.
- Finish filling the rest of the way with water.
- Freeze.
- After they have frozen, lump them in gallon Ziploc bags.
- Label gallon Ziploc bags with exact ingredients (e.g.: 1/2 chicken broth, 1/2 water, hot dog piece) and the date the pupcicles were made.
- When you drop them off please make it clear that they go in the freezer

### **SM'AM SNACKS:**

- Open canned pumpkin puree (**not** canned pumpkin pie filling) into a large mixing bowl.
- In separate bowl, shred or hand-tear any of the following: carrot, apple, kale, or parsley. Lettuce is not a good choice because it tends to freeze poorly.
- Mix pumpkin and veggies together. The consistency should be similar to chocolate chips in chocolate chip cookies—veggies mixed evenly throughout, but not overwhelming the pumpkin puree.
- Prep paper cupcake liners by lining up rows. Many snacks can be made at once, but you need to account for what you are able to fit into your own freezer. If a cookie sheet will fit, that makes it easy to transport from table to freezer.
- Spoon approximately 3 tablespoons of the mixture into paper cupcake liners.
- Freeze.
- After freezing, lump together in gallon Ziploc bags.
- Label gallon Ziploc bags “Sm’am Snacks.” Add the date the snacks were made, and list exact ingredients (e.g. pumpkin puree and shredded apple).
- Be sure to refrigerate pumpkin mixture if you have time between batches being made.
- When you drop them off please make it clear that they go in the freezer.

### **TINKER TUBES:**

- Collect toilet paper tubes/paper towel tubes.
- Use non-toxic, permanent markers to decorate the tubes.
- Shred newspaper into long rows. Holding a section of newspaper with the fold face-up/open edge face-down and tearing straight down works for a clean shred. Shreds should be about ¼ inch wide or so. You may also shred phone books.
- Stuff tubes with shredded newspapers or shredded phonebook until the tube is full. Paper should dangle from both ends.
- For our birds or for our hamsters/gerbils/rats/ mice add Cheerios, millet sprays, fresh herbs or greens, hay, apple or carrot bits, or other treats.
- For our rabbits/guinea pigs add fresh herbs or greens, hay, apple or carrot bits, or other treats.
- *Remember to keep the ones with fresh greens separate (we may need to refrigerate). Remember to keep the ones with Cheerios and millet separate (rabbits and guinea pigs shouldn't eat these). Label each bag of tubes with their ingredients.*
- Hay can also be used for all of these animals and they all enjoy eating or playing with it, but we don't recommend adding hay if you have grass/hay allergies.

### **GRAB BAGS:**

- Shred newspaper into long rows. Holding a section of newspaper with the fold face-up/open edge face-down and tearing straight down works for a clean shred. Shreds should be about ¼ inch wide or so.

- Fill paper lunch sacks with shredded newspapers or phonebooks.
- Tie tops with untreated sisal twine/raffia ribbon.
- For our birds add Cheerios, millet sprays, fresh herbs or greens, hay, apple or carrot bits, or other treats.
- For our rabbits/guinea pigs add fresh herbs or greens, hay, apple or carrot bits, or other treats.
- For hamsters/gerbils/rats/ mice add a few Cheerios, a quarter of a sprig of millet, a tiny bit of apple or carrot bits, or other treat.
- *Remember to keep the ones with fresh greens separate (we may need to refrigerate). Remember to keep the ones with Cheerios and millet separate (rabbits and guinea pigs shouldn't eat these). Label each separate bag/ box carrying the bags with ingredients.*
- Hay can also be used for all of these animals and they all enjoy eating or playing with it, but we don't recommend adding hay if you have grass/hay allergies.
- To further tempt our rabbits and guinea pigs, rub the bag with fresh basil!

### **EXTREME MAKEOVER, HOME EDITION:**

- Collect clean corrugated cardboard boxes approximately 18" long x12" high x 12" deep. A few inches smaller or larger will be fine as we have many different sized rabbits.
- Cut windows and doors to make the hiding houses more elaborate.
- Use non-toxic permanent marker to decorate the outside of the box. You can also use non-toxic glue and attach paper cut outs to the sides.
- ***Do not use packing tape to attach paper decorations.***
- ***Do not use stapled boxes.***
- If you have other ideas on how to make the bunny houses more elaborate or creative, please contact Lindsay for approval.

### **AD-LIB:**

- Consider creating a variety of toys for the small animals using ideas from the small animal aisle at pet supply stores or search online for "rabbit toys," "bird toys" etc. Many of the birds, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, mice, gerbils, hamsters, and chinchillas will chew on or play with the same things.
- One example: Shredders (the brand name of a braided palm strip) for birds can be good when tied in bows or around other wooden or cardboard items.
- Shish kebab-type toys, made using bits of corrugated cardboard on bamboo skewers, are super.

### **PING PONG BALL DECORATING:**

- Our cats and kittens love ping pong balls to play with, and they are so easy for us to disinfect!
- Collect ping pong balls.
- Decorate! Our kitties don't mind if you go to extremes and decorate every inch with illustrations, patterns, words, or whatever, or if you simply sign your name on each one. Please use permanent, non-toxic markers (Sharpie markers are non-toxic and come in many colors).

### **TUGBRAIDS:**

- Collect polarfleece. You can buy yards at any fabric store, use old polarfleece blankets, or even Snuggies!
- For larger dogs, cut three 1-2" x 36" strips.
- For small dogs, cut 1" x 12" strips.
- For cats or bunnies, cut three ½" x 8" strips.
- Knot top end, braid, then knot bottom end. *Keep tightening the braid as you go!*
- You can make them specifically for cats by "charging" them with catnip. Once braided, tuck them into any bag or container with catnip. You can also push strips of newspaper into the braid for our cats and rabbits to play with.
- You can make various sizes for dogs. The dimensions above are general, but since we will need toys for all breeds of dogs, Chihuahua to Great Dane, you can make "minis" or "jumbos" or "extra thin" or "super thick."

### **CAT BED COVERS:**

- Our new Kuranda cat beds are great but they are in need of a soft covering.
- To make cat bed covers, use a new or gently used white/plain colored t-shirt (Men's size medium or large).
- Decorate the shirt(s) with Sharpies (make sure to put a piece of cardboard in between the shirt as to not get sharpie on your table).
- Once you have finished decorating the shirt, you are done!

### **CAT OR DOG BEDS:**

We wash our bedding so often it quickly wears out. Our cats and dogs appreciate comfy beds, and Polarfleece is a soft, washable, easy to sew fabric that they love. Directions for making pet beds can be found at:

- <http://shelterbeds.blogspot.com/>
- <http://sewing.about.com/od/freeprojects/tp/petsewinglist.htm>
- <http://www.berminausablog.com/read/troop-321-makes-dog--cat-beds-for-local-shelter>

### **SPECIAL KITTY FOOD DRIVE:**

- We often have cats that have sensitivities to grains in their diets, and getting grain-free, canned cat food can be a big expense when we have such a cat in our care. We are always thankful for any donations drive, but especially appreciate a grain-free, canned cat food drive. Even a few cans matter! If you need directions as to how to find such foods, please ask.
- We also have a need for deli meats for clicker training our cats. For those shy or frustrated kitties, clicker training can really make a difference! Turkey, ham, chicken, and roast beef are best.

### **CRINKLE CAVES:**

- Collect reusable grocery bags and newspaper.
- Line the inside of a bag on all sides with a few sheets of newspaper.

- Insert second bag to nest on top of the paper in the first bag.
- Cut all handles in half.
- Tie handle of outer bag to corresponding handle of inner bag to keep bags together.
- Bags should still open, as one, so kitty can climb in and play.

#### **SUBMARINES:**

- Collect multiple toilet paper tubes and paper towel tubes.
- Fold just one end closed on toilet paper tubes. Fold both ends of paper towel tubes and slice diamonds or holes into it (like a flute, but holes do not need to be evenly spaced or same sided).
- Add dehydrated meat or fish treats. If you opt to add deli meat they must be dropped off at the shelter same-day, or frozen. When you drop off, please make it clear that they must be immediately refrigerated or given out due to deli meat.
- Package carefully so treats stay inside.

#### **You may also collect donations to earn volunteer hours!**

These are items we are currently in need of:

1. Cat treats and toys
2. Dog treats and toys
3. Small animal treats
4. Hotdogs (any kind will do)
5. Shoe boxes/ smaller boxes
6. Empty, clean plastic bottles
7. Disposable paper cups
8. Ziploc bags (sandwich size)
9. Clean, white tube socks
10. Rice (uncooked, any kind)
11. Washable markers
12. Sharpies
13. Paper towels
14. Catnip
15. Pipe cleaners (all colors)
16. Blankets and towels (new or gently used)
17. Hand soap
18. White, men's t-shirts (size M or L)
19. Tape (scotch tape, duct tape, masking tape)
20. Hand sanitizer

If you have any other arts and crafts supplies you'd like to donate, let me know! You may also find a more detailed wish-list on our website.

***Note: Make sure to keep track of your at-home volunteer hours!***