



♥ **ALMOST HOME** ♥
cat rescue

KITTEN DEVELOPMENT

and the importance of social learning

Almost Home Cat Rescue is committed to helping kittens develop into happy healthy adult cats! We require that kittens be adopted in pairs if they are under 16 weeks of age. If a single kitten is approved for adoption, they must remain with their littermates until they reach the 16 week mark.

Feline Behavior Guidelines from the American Association of Feline Practitioners is a great resource to familiarize yourself with the stages of kitten development.

LATE SOCIALIZATION occurs between 9–16 weeks

Kittens that have not had adequate social experience during early socialization may have poor social skills and require extra effort to acquire good social skills.



Kittens should stay with their littermates (or other “role-model” cats) to solidify their social learning.

Kittens orphaned or separated from their mother and/or littermates too early often fail to develop appropriate social skills. During this crucial development time up until 16 weeks of age, they learn how to send and receive signals like what is acceptable mouthing pressure, how far to go in play wrestling, and general social boundaries.

Play with littermates is important for kittens because it increases their physical coordination, social skills, and learning limits.

By interacting with mom and littermates, kittens explore the ranking process and how to build confidence, and also learn the basics of how to be a cat.

Separation from littermates before kittens complete this crucial learning cycle can manifest into unwanted behaviors such as uninhibited biting and aggression