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# ASPCA Feline Spectrum Assessment<sup>sm</sup> Behavior Checklist

# Behaviors to Observe

Play	Reach
Touch	Show Underside
Rub	Sniff
Chirp	Approach
Knead	Yawn
At front of cage	Groom/Shake Body
Tail Up	Standing <b>or</b> Still Moving

p. 15 in  
guide

Behavior Checklist	Definition
Affiliative behavior	Literally defined, it means to <i>connect oneself to</i> . Behaviors such as blinking are called affiliative because the cat uses them to make a positive social connection with the evaluator or other human. Examples include Play, Touch, Rub, Chirp, Knead, At front of cage, Tail up, Reach, Show underside, Sniff.
Distance-reducing	These behaviors are those meant to close the distance between the cat and another subject to encourage social contact. Head butting and rubbing facilitates social interaction. Example would be for a cat to approach.
Distance-enhancing	These behaviors are displayed in order to increase space between the cat and a perceived threat. Pilo-erection, hissing, growling, swatting, charging and light warning bites that <b>do not break skin</b> are meant to scare away or stop a particular interaction.
Aggression escalation	Aggression (biting, fighting, using claws to protect oneself) is risky behavior. When a cat engages in aggression, he risks serious physical injury. To avoid injury, the cat employs warning signals to prevent an aggressive interaction. Aggression escalation refers to those warning behaviors a cat will utilize when trying to increase the distance between himself and a threat. These behaviors might include pilo-erection (hair standing on end, giving the appearance of being a much larger foe) hissing, swatting, and charging.

**“One and Done”**

# Chirp

An affiliative vocal behavior that sounds like brrrt. Mouth is usually closed for this behavior.



# Rub

A distance-reducing behavior, in which the cat presses head, cheek, chin and/or neck against the cage, bedding, wand or any other part of the cat's own body.



# Knead

One or more paws alternatively flexing in a push-pull motion.





# Touch

The cat's paw makes contact with the assessor, toy or wand inside the cage or through the bars of the cage in a distance-reducing behavior.

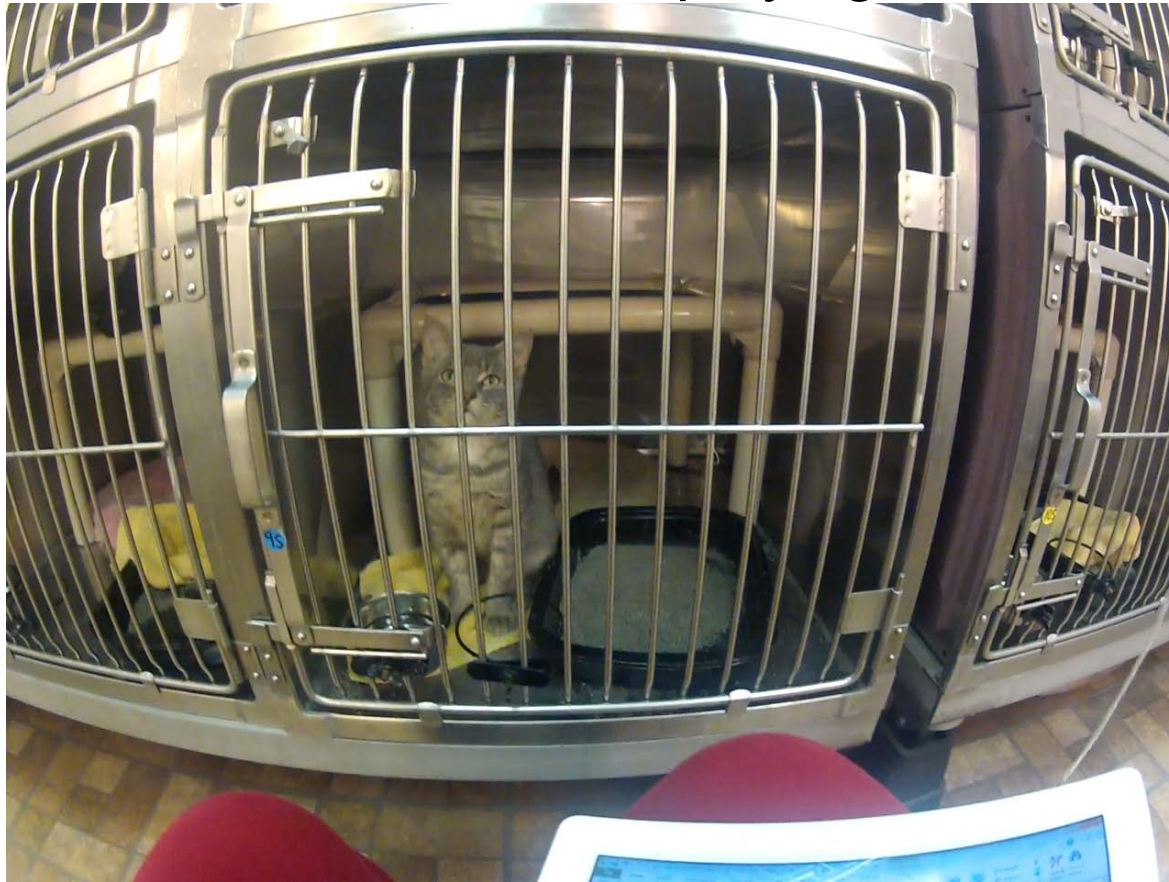


# Touch #2



# Play

The cat approaches and then interacts with the string with any body part. Three or more touches of the string are considered playing.





# At Front

The cat is at the front of the cage and cannot approach any closer due to the cage bars.



# Tail up (at end of assessment)

Tail is erect or upright.



**“Four or More”**

# Sniff

The cat takes air into the nose in a set of short, quick inhales and exhales very near the toy, or wand or while facing the assessor, toy, or wand.





# Showing Underside

The cat turns the body to show the belly and/or underside of the chin in a distance-reducing behavior.





# Reaching

The cat extends a paw purposefully in an attempt to touch but *does not make contact*. This is often through the bars of the cage, or toward the assessor, toy, or wand.



# Approach

The cat reduces the distance between him/herself and the front of the cage. The cat may do this by leaning most of his/her body forward or by stepping closer.



# Yawn

Cat opens the mouth widely with a prolonged inhalation or exhalation.





# Groom/Shake Body

Cat uses tongue to clean him/herself and/or cat “shakes off” or shimmies entire body.



# Body position (at the end of assessment)

Cat is upright, standing or moving on all four legs



# Still Moving (at the end of assessment)

Cat is walking around the cage at the end of the assessment.





# Point Behaviors

- Point behaviors are collected because a cat may not show you a *Checklist Behavior* that can deem him or her to be socialized

- There are *Point Behaviors* that should be identified during **Day 2 Morning** and **Day 3 Morning** Sessions

- Each morning includes seven behaviors from the list on p. 15 in the guide



# Day 2 AM Point Behaviors



# Eat During The Night

The Evaluator to determine if the cat did not eat or it is impossible to determine.



# Eat During The Night



# Lick lips/nose

The cat touches his/her mouth, lips or nose with his/her tongue.





# Head facing (at the end of assessment)

The cat's head is oriented directly toward the front of the cage. OR the cat's head isn't visible.



# Attention to string toy (throughout)

The cat is interested, focused and looking directly at the string (or reflection of the string) for at least half of the assessment.



# Day 3 AM Point Behaviors

# Limited eye contact (throughout)

The cat makes eye contact with the observer for less than half the duration of the assessment. OR the cat is not able to be seen clearly enough to tell.

# Lack of alertness (at end of assessment)

The cat does NOT appear to be fully awake and aware of his/her surroundings and does not have eyes fully open.  
OR the cat is not able to be seen clearly enough to tell.





# Lack of alertness (at end of assessment)



# Moving away

The cat walks away from the observer or toy once or repeatedly. OR the cat is already at the back of the cage.



# Moving Away





# Sniff wand at first presentation

Cat orients his/her nose and sniffs towards the wand the first time the wand is offered (five-second period) before cat is petted with the wand for the first time. Definition of “Sniff” is the same as before.





# Head position in the cage (at end of assessment)

The top of the cat's head is located in the front 2/3s of the cage.



# Head position in the cage (at end of assessment)



# Head position in the cage (at end of assessment)



Module 1: Introduction (Complete!)

Module 2: Getting Ready for the FSA(Complete!)

Module 3: Behavior Checklist (Complete!)

Module 4: Assessment Items

Module 5: Scoring

Module 6: When to Begin the Assessment





**Professional**