



LARIMER HUMANESOCIETY

Guide to Mouthy Cats

Cats that are not otherwise aggressive sometimes become easily over stimulated and mouthy during play. These cats typically need a way to burn off excess energy. By burning off this energy, these cats will most often become calmer and play more appropriately.

Follow these steps to prevent your cat from being mouthy in the home:

1. Keep your cat physically active.
 - a. Make sure to play with your cat 20-30 minutes every day. Wand toys are a great for this!
 - b. Take your cat on a walk! Use a cat harness and leash.
 - i. Start off indoors.
 - ii. Desensitize your cat to the harness. Put the harness on your cat and allow them to become acclimated to the feeling.
 - iii. Once your cat is walking comfortably, attach the leash. Don't try to guide the cat, simply allow the cat to walk on the leash and harness.
 - iv. Now you can move outdoors! The sights, sounds, and smells are great mental stimulation for your cat.
2. Keep your cat mentally stimulated.
 - a. Puzzle toys are a great way to keep your cat thinking. These can be purchased at a pet store or made at home. Here are some examples of homemade toys:
 - i. Clean pizza box with squares cut out of the top. Fill the box with toys and treats.
 - ii. Clean cardboard egg carton with treats. Place treats in the compartments.
 - iii. Crumple some treats in a piece of newspaper.
 - b. Positive reinforcement training is another great way to keep your cat mentally stimulated. Clicker training is the most effective way to train cats.
3. Avoid "rough housing" with your cat.
 - a. Avoid using your hands to play with your cat. Use a toy instead.
 - b. Only cuddle with your cat when they are calm and unlikely to be mouthy.
 - c. If your cat becomes mouthy during petting, remove your hands and ignore your cat. Give them a puzzle toy or play with them using a wand toy.

If you have tried what is provided here and still have questions, contact behaviorhelp@larimerhumane.org or call 970-226-3647 ext. 513