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New resource helps veterinary professionals and cat caregivers strengthen bonds and encourage positive feline behavior



The [Feline Veterinary Medical Association](#) (FelineVMA) has released a new [Positive Reinforcement Training Educational Toolkit](#) to help veterinary professionals and cat caregivers better understand how cats learn and how to encourage positive behaviors. The Toolkit offers practical, easy-to-use resources designed to create supportive environments that reduce stress and strengthen the bond between cats and their caregivers.

"This Educational Toolkit is a practical resource for veterinary professionals, providing quick access to essential information," said Ilona Rodan, DVM, DABVP (Feline), AdvCertFB, Co-chair of the Toolkit Task Force. "The Toolkit is designed to help educate cat caregivers on ways to positively reinforce good behavior while minimizing disciplinary techniques that could have adverse effects."

The Toolkit outlines the following:

- **How Cats Learn:** An overview is provided about non-associative and associative learning, why emotional state and physical health affect training, and why punishment is not recommended.
- **Feline Behavior:** Feline behaviors often reflect instincts such as hunting, climbing, and marking. Understanding normal feline behaviors allows caregivers to guide behavior effectively and meet a cat's emotional and environmental needs.
- **Reinforcement Techniques:** Positive reinforcement encourages behavior through timely and consistent rewards. Training Tools outlined include conditioned reinforcers, shaping, luring, targeting, capturing, cooperative care, carrier training, and multi-cat household training.
- **Addressing Undesirable Behavior:** There are many frequently observed undesirable behaviors

in the home, and the Toolkit provides reasons for the behavior and solutions.

- Caregiver Support: Education empowers caregivers to create positive, enriching environments for their cats. With the right tools and veterinary guidance, caregivers can prevent unwanted behaviors, create enriching environments, and promote lifelong feline wellbeing.

“Positive reinforcement training not only improves feline behavior, but it also enhances the relationship between cats and their caregivers,” said Katrina Breitreiter, DVM, DABVP (Feline), Co-chair of the Toolkit Task Force. “When we focus on understanding how cats learn, we can create more trust, less stress, and happier homes for everyone involved.”

Download the Positive Reinforcement Training Educational Toolkit at catvets.com/positive-reinforcement.

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About the Feline Veterinary Medical Association

The Feline Veterinary Medical Association (FelineVMA) supports its members in improving the health and wellbeing of cats through high standards of practice, continuing education, and evidence-based medicine. Comprised of all veterinary professionals who work with cats, the FelineVMA has a rich history and a proven track record of increasing the standard of care for cats. This is achieved through the development of practice guidelines, feline-specific education and resources, and caregiver support (catfriendly.com). Home to the Cat Friendly Practice® and Cat Friendly Certificate Programs, the FelineVMA encourages veterinary professionals to re-evaluate practice strategies in an effort to advance the quality of feline medicine. Learn more at catvets.com.

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