



A Guide to Detective Bear and Miss Kitty Watson's - **Helping Community Cats** Bookmark by the Tortorella Family Foundation and Bear's Angels

Helping Community Cats is a bookmark created for children by the Tortorella Family Foundation that introduces them to community and feral cats.

Who is Detective Bear? Who is Miss Kitty Watson?

Even with his cap and trench coat, it's easy to recognize that Detective Bear is a dog... a very special one at that! Bear was the Tortorella Family's pet and they loved him very much. After he passed away, the family decided to help animals in his name. They created **Bear's Angels**, a program for shelters and rescues who do great things for animals in need. With this bookmark, we meet Detective Bear's new friend, Miss Kitty Watson.

Through the **Helping Community Cats** bookmark, Detective Bear and Miss Kitty Watson talk about community or feral cats. Several words in their description are highlighted. They then ask readers to find those highlighted words in a puzzle. Please note that the words in the puzzle can be up or down or diagonal. They can be backwards, too. Detective Bear and Miss Kitty Watson also explain how children can help the cats.

What is a community cat or feral cat?

A community or feral cat is a cat that lives outdoors. Feral or "wild" cats are born outdoors and are usually afraid of human contact. Community cats include feral cats and stray cats that no longer have a home. Colonies or families of community cats, can be found everywhere - in cities and in the country. Community cats have a hard life. They must find their own food and shelter. Unlike our pets, community cats do not have a way to visit a veterinarian when they are ill.

How can we help?

There are kind people who help community cats. They provide them with food, water and shelters. We can help those people by donating cat food and building small, weather-proof shelters for the cats in their care. To find these people in your town or city, contact your local animal shelter or an animal rescue organization.

*****This section of our guide talks about spay and neuter surgeries and should be discussed with children if it is age-appropriate.**

One feral mother cat can have as many as 100 kittens in her lifetime! That is a lot of kittens! Because they are born outside, these kittens may never have a human friend to feed and care for them. Many of them die from disease or are hunted by animals who prey on them. However, there is a way to control the number of kittens that are born without homes.

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It is called **Trap, Neuter and Return** or **TNR**. Community cats are gently captured in special traps by people who want to help them. They are taken to a veterinarian who does a simple and painless surgery. The surgery for a female cat is called *spaying* and for a male cat it is called *neutering*. A spayed or neutered cat cannot create kittens. After the community cats' surgery, they are returned to the area where they were found.

TNR helps to prevent the suffering that can happen when too many feral kittens are born - kittens that may never find a home. We can help community cats by sharing what we know about TNR with friends, family and our classmates.



Helping Those Who Protect Children, Animals and Our Environment From Harm.

To learn more about our programs, please visit our website at www.tortorellafoundation.org and our facebook page www.facebook.com/tortorellafoundation