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## Mia's Story. WWYD?

Tue, 2014-06-24 20:14 — Robin Olson

The weeks have flown by since we first accepted Mia, a rough and tumble pregnant stray cat, into the **Kitten Associates** [1] rescue program. We didn't know much about her other than she was living off scraps at an apartment complex where cats were not welcome-not welcome to the point where the management was about to put down poison to rid the complex of them. We couldn't allow that to happen, so our foster mom Moe opened up her home to this deserving cat. A few days later Mia gave birth to five healthy kittens.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. From left to right Mia's kittens: Ivy, Greta, Fernando, Snickers, Woody (front).

Ivy, Greta, Woody Jackson, Lil' Snickers and Fernando have done well and grown into perfectly adoptable kittens. They've had their vaccinations and been spayed/neutered. The next step of their journey is to come to my home in Connecticut where we'll find them their forever homes. **Although you might assume that every mom cat travels with their kittens on some rare occasions that's not the case. We have to assess each mom as to whether or not they will come to Connecticut. That process starts from before we accept them into our program and during the time they are in foster care in Georgia.**



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Almost full family portrait, but who is missing?

Our goal is to keep the families together until they begin getting adopted. We don't "cherry pick" kittens, then not really care what becomes of the mom. Sadly though, in some cases we've had to place a cat into a sanctuary because she was not adoptable (*too fractious*) and in one case we even had to place the cat with a Vet who needed a barn cat (*the cat was feral*). **Finding the perfect home for EVERY cat is my ultimate goal and passion, but with Mia, knowing what to do for her has stumped me for weeks.**

**You see Mia isn't all that friendly with humans, but she's not so unfriendly that she can't be adopted. She just can't be adopted right now. She's not ready.**

So what should I do?

**Unlike my other posts where you go on a journey with me, I'm asking you to help me choose the direction I take. What do YOU think I should do about Mia?**



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Ivy is too mature to bother with nursing on her poor mama.

Here's what I know:

- **Mia has been a great mom** and even after she's been spayed she is still very close to her kittens. They nurse on her for comfort and she doesn't seem to mind (*even though she has no more milk*). They still cuddle with her and play alongside her. As the kittens get adopted we know she will be separated from them, but doing it slowly instead of all at once seems kinder to her.
- **Mia bit Moe. Badly.** In all fairness Moe felt that she possibly "asked for it" by scratching the base of Mia's tail on her back too roughly. That said, Moe KNOWS cats so was it her fault or does Mia react on a hair trigger? Does that mean Mia can't be adopted into a home with young kids? Any kids? I can find a home for her without kids but it does make it harder.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Like mother like son.

- **In the few months Mia's been with Moe, she hasn't really "blossomed" or become more friendly.** She is not aggressive. I'm told she's fearful. She seems to like one of Moe's other cats and we think perhaps Mia likes cats more than she likes humans (*which again is OK, but not great for getting her adopted*).
- **It's possible that if we separate Mia from her kittens and transport the kittens without her that being alone in Moe's foster space will force her to trust and love Moe.** I call it "*tough love*." Because Moe will be the only contact Mia will have, the hope is that Mia will soften in her attitude about humans. We can transport Mia up here in another month or two if she's doing better, but if there are any kittens here, she may have forgotten them and might not be friendly to them any more (*as we saw years ago when we had [Bobette](#) <sup>[2]</sup> here and she went nuts on her kittens after arriving on transport with them*).



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Mia and Ivy.

• **Or...being alone all day without any contact until Moe gets home from work would make Mia worse** and maybe she would be happier here since Sam and I are home all day and can spend time with her.

• **Mia could come off transport and hate her kittens.** I have no place to put her away from them, but I could get a BIG 3-tiered cage for her and could cage her unless I'm in the room if the kittens are in danger. Of course that's a shitty option for Mia, one I am not a big fan of.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Mama Mia.

• **If I can't turn Mia into an adoptable cat, then what do I do?** I can't have her jam up my ability to take on more cats and I CANNOT just add her to my cat family (even if she's fluffy and pretty-prerequisites for living here). If Moe had the same difficulty, at least I know of a sanctuary in Georgia that might be able to help us. I suppose if push comes to shove I could find something around here, but I've never heard of a place that takes cats like Mia. There is a place that takes unadoptable cats that have terminal illness or disability, but Mia is not like that.

• **MIA IS ADORABLE!** Who cares if she's friendly?

### The transport leaves on Friday. What should I do?

Want to know more? Mia's backstory is [here](#). [3]

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[Kitten Associates](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

## Comments

Tue, 2014-06-24 20:46 — [Catnynouse](#) (not verified)

### **[Mia](#)** <sup>[13]</sup>

I vote for keeping Mia in her foster home. She might be totally different once her kittens are gone. Girl needs a break! Give it two months and if she still hasn't been adopted, investigate other options for her in GA.

Tue, 2014-06-24 21:02 — [Bette Cox](#) (not verified)

### **[Mia](#)** <sup>[14]</sup>

I think you should keep Mia and her kitten together, whichever home they are in, for a while longer.

Tue, 2014-06-24 23:00 — [Leslie \(not verified\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

### **[Mia](#)** <sup>[16]</sup>

I can see pros and cons for every option here! Have you thought about possibly leaving one kitten with Mia at Moe's? I don't think I would do that, but it's sort of a compromise. I think that in your shoes I would bring Mia to CT with the kittens. I'm trying to think what situation gives her the greatest chance to blossom and get more comfortable with people. Being alone all day at Moe's doesn't seem to be that greatest chance, whereas if she's at your house she has people and also other cats for company. Also, that way she gets to know more than one person, which might increase the chances of her accepting even more new folks, i.e., potential adopters. And even if you had one cat turn on her kittens after transport, I assume you've had other moms and kits who weathered the change just fine?

A last thought: There's no completely horrible answer. It's not like if you make the wrong choice she's going to be killed. She'll have a good foster home and a good chance at a forever home no matter what!

Wed, 2014-06-25 10:45 — [Random Felines \(not verified\)](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

### **[I say try to leave her in her](#)** <sup>[18]</sup>

I say try to leave her in her foster home. Maybe getting the hormones out of her system and being away from her kittens will tone her down a bit. That momma-cat instinct can be pretty strong but some completely turn around when they don't feel like they have to be protective.

Wed, 2014-06-25 13:39 — [Deb'n Cats \(not verified\)](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

### **[If Mia doesn't come on the](#)** <sup>[20]</sup>

If Mia doesn't come on the transport and still has problems with loneliness and depression, can you take her then? I'm worried that her sociability is because of her kittens. Left alone without them as a buffer between her and Moe, she may become depressed and lash out more.

I guess my vote is to keep the family together. As the kittens get adopted out, Mia will gradually have to learn to be without other cats. Perhaps the "pride" that you have in your foster rooms will allow her to feel better. I can see why she's fearful and still relatively feral. I just worry about the separation of her and her kittens. I don't feel forcing her to be alone is a good thing.

Thu, 2014-06-26 08:53 — [Treasure \(not verified\)](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

### **[Sometimes, the mom has to be worked with separately...](#)** <sup>[22]</sup>

If you really want to get her socialized, it will help immensely to remove the trigger of the kittens. As I mentioned in a Facebook comment, oftentimes the added stress of worrying about kittens will make the process of socializing (or even just assessing) a scared, feral, or semi-feral mom much harder, and allowing her to be her own cat will go a long way towards helping the process. I work specifically with scared, traumatized, and feral cats all the time, and from lots of experience, I've seen that this is usually the case. If the kittens are old enough to have their social "cat" manners in place (usually by about 10 weeks), they should be just fine. And a program of working with her should be started right away. It's all about engaging her the right way to ensure that she has the absolute best chance at being adoptable. I've taken some really hard cases and turned them around (with lots of patience and the support of my wonderful family too), and we are talking cats that everyone else had completely written off and never thought would be "normal". Happy to offer any advice your foster might need to really get a good program in place to help mama :)

Thu, 2014-06-26 09:12 — Catnynouse (not verified)

**Mia** [23]

keep Mia in GA. you have more options there if she doesn't improve.

Thu, 2014-06-26 15:51 — jmuwj (not verified)

**RE: MIA** [24]

Could Mia and "one of Moe's other cats" stay with Moe temporarily, while Mia's little family go on the transport? And could Mia and her friend seek a loving, forever home as a bonded pair?

Thu, 2014-06-26 15:56 — jmuwj (not verified)

**KITTENS** [25]

Oh, and btw, the people threatening these cats need to be reported. It is a crime to harm ANY cat, in all 50 States. Even if they have not done so, their intent needs to be shared with law enforcement.

Fri, 2014-06-27 14:30 — Catnynouse (not verified)

**I say transport her with her** [26]

I say transport her with her kittens and have her stay with you as you are home all day. A constant human presence will develop her trust for humans.

Fri, 2014-06-27 16:10 — jmuwj (not verified)

**RE: MIA** [27]

The comment I posted yesterday vanished. Could Mia stay at Moe's with the other cat she likes there, and the kittens go on the transport? I really strongly believe families should be kept and adopted together whenever possible, but in an imperfect world, maybe the above would be a workable option?

CICH @ [Google+](#)  
Robin @ [Google+](#)

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**Links**

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- [2] <http://coveredincathair.com/content/harvest-time-bobs-pumkin-patch>
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