Animal Behavior Protocol

1. Habituation
    a. Begin handling as early as possible (2 weeks of age preferred)
    b. Habituation takes 1-2 weeks
        i. Depends on animal
    c. Introduce hands into cage
        i. Animal will approach and smell you
        ii. Nibbling at globe and gown is expected
        iii. Stroke animal
            1. Behind ears or behind front legs
    d. Carrying animal
        i. Scoop
            1. Shape dominant hand into scoop
            2. Place hand underneath animals belly
            3. Non dominant hand goes on animals rear to support animal while picking up
        ii. Tail pick up
            1. Place dominant hand on tail as close to the base of the tail as possible
                a. Tail will deglove if not held at base
            2. Pick animal up by tail
            3. Non dominant hand is placed at belly as soon as animal is picked up
                a. This will stabilize the animal
            4. Animal jumping out of cage
                a. Animal will jump out of cage into hands
                b. Will jump back into cage
                c. Animal will stay in hands once it is habituated to you
        iii. Holding animal
            1. After picking up animal place on body
            2. Hold for 5 seconds
            3. Animal will roam around
                a. Allow to happen as long as animal is secure
                b. Animal will roam more as it is more comfortable
    e. Putting down animal
        i. Hands need to be on maze/cage bottom and animal needs to walk off hands
    f. Habituated behavior
        i. Grooming
        ii. Rearing
        iii. Roaming
        iv. Staying in handlers hands for 10 seconds or more
    g. Stressful behavior

    i. Excessive grooming (longer than 2 minutes)

    ii. Grabbing tail

    iii. Hunching over

    iv. Rubbing body on maze walls

2. Trial training

 a. Phase 1: Reward-Reward

    i. Sucrose solution was introduced to maze feeders

      1. Each feeder has a designated solution

    ii. Animal is introduced and allowed to roam around

    iii. After ~60 trials the animal will begin to form a preference

      1. Animal will go to that corner the moment it is introduced into the maze

      2. Will go to that solution percentage over 5/10 times (if it is it's preferred solution)

 b. Phase 2: Reward-Reward Automatic

    i. Sucrose solution was introduced to maze feeders

      1. Each feeder has a designated solution

    ii. Animal is introduced and allowed to roam around

    iii.