

5 Population Management Tools to Save More Lives

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Do you feel like this?



What are we even talking about?

- Population management describes an active process of planning, on-going daily evaluation, and response to changing conditions as an organization cares for multiple animals.
- Active population management is one of the foundations of shelter animal health and well-being, and must be based on an appreciation that capacity to provide humane care has limits for every organization, just as it does in private homes.
- When a population is not managed within an organization's capacity for care, other standards of care become difficult or impossible to maintain.

Population Management



**Goal = Minimize
Length of Stay**

ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters



Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians • 2010

Authors:

Sandra Newbury, Mary K. Blinn, Philip A. Bushby, Cynthia Barker Cox, Julie D. Dinnage, Brenda Griffin, Kate F. Hurley, Natalie Isaza, Wes Jones, Lila Miller, Jeanette O'Quin, Gary J. Patronek, Martha Smith-Blackmore, Miranda Spindel



Shelter Care Checklists: Putting ASV Guidelines Into Action



This resource is based on the **ASV Shelter Guidelines**, a comprehensive set of recommendations created by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Shelter Standards Task Force.

ASPCapro.org/asv

Five Freedoms



1. FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST

By ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.

2. FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT

By providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.

3. FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY OR DISEASE

By prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.

4. FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOR

By providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.

5. FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS

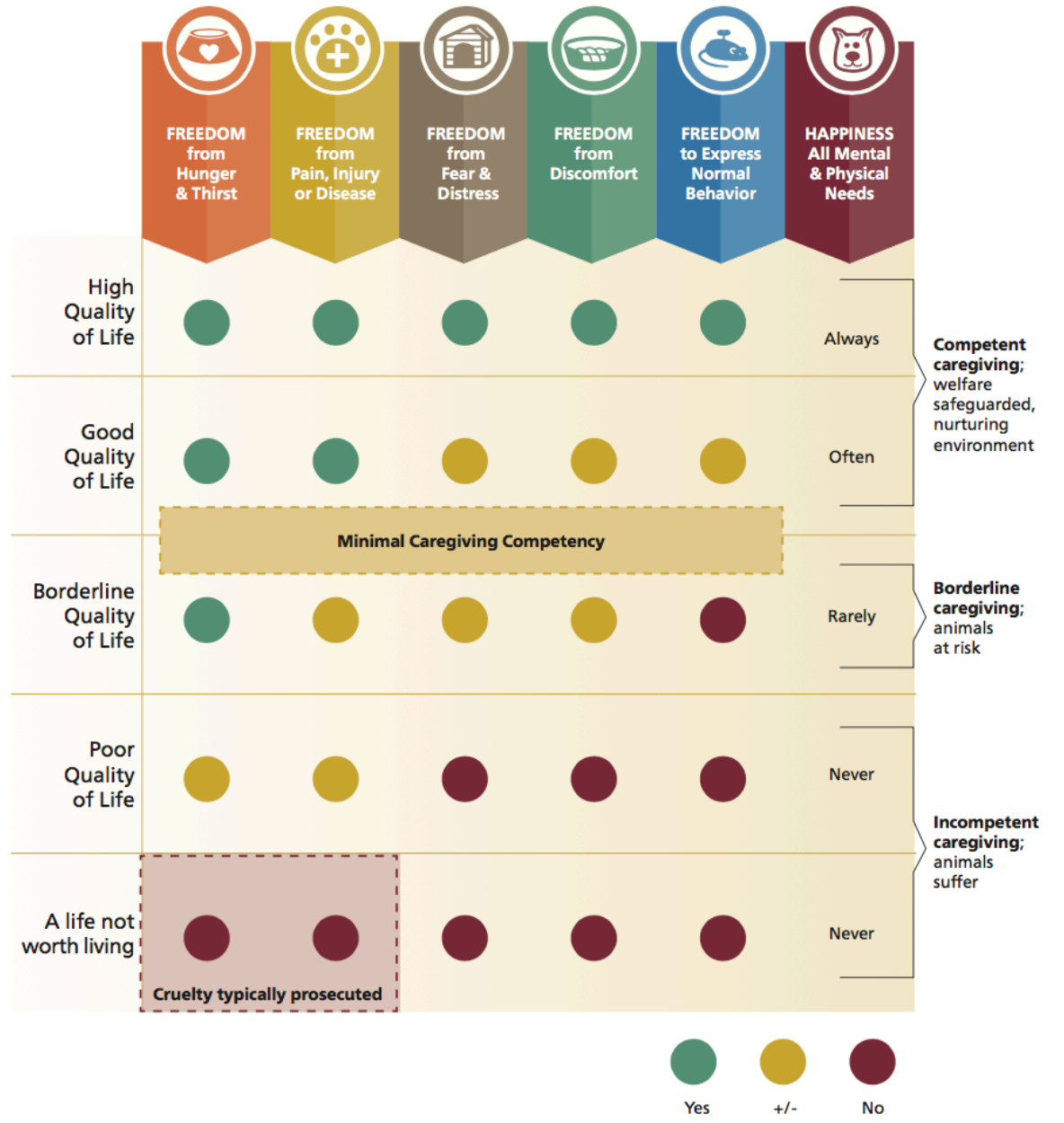
By ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

PETSMART Charities

Rescue Group Best Practices Guide

BY ABBY VOLIN



Patronek G. 2010. Adapted from FAWC, 2009

Increased
Crowding

Lack of enrichment,
Lack of comfort,
Excessive noise and
stimulation

STRESS

Unwanted Behaviors,
Increased Disease

Reduced
Adoptions

5 population management tools

- Open Selection/Fast-Track
- Daily Rounds
- Remove Barriers to RTO/Adoption
- Managed Admission
- Define Your Capacity for Care

Open Selection AKA Pre-Selection

- ❑ To reduce the length of stay in the shelter: Instead of animals waiting in holding for surgery or to complete their stray hold, they are placed in adoption for viewing and can be pre-selected for adoption.
- ❑ Pre-selected animals are identified with an orange cage card and put on holds to prevent them from accidentally going home.



Open Selection / Fast-Track

- Allow the public to pre-select animals during stray hold period – place “adoption hold”
- Highly adoptable animals may only stay a few hours
- Have adopters/transfer groups lined up to take the animal the moment legal stray hold is complete
- Receive surgery and go home when stray hold ends
- REDUCES LENGTH OF STAY

Open Selection

- Why keep your highly desirable inventory out of public view?
- Consider the percentage of strays likely to be returned to owner = typically <20%
- If owner comes to reclaim after adoption holds have been placed, great! Potential adopters are aware.
- Still designate a restricted area for animals considered dangerous, confiscate/cruelty cases, etc

Open Selection

- Especially helpful if:
 - Long stray hold
 - Delays in processing animals
 - Limited housing #s
- Offer visibility to most pre-adoption animals
 - House directly in adoption OR...
 - Allow adopters to go into some hold areas
 - Allow and document holds
- Designate restricted area for dangerous, legal holds, infectious

Fast-track / Slow-track

- Prioritize *movement* of “highly adoptable”
 - E.g. juveniles, super friendly, special look (or use scoring system)
 - “Skip to the head of the line” to move up to adoption and/or...
 - Keep fast trackers in view during stray hold
- Prioritize *promotion* and *enrichment* for slow trackers

Daily Rounds

- Rounds must be conducted at least once every 24 hours by a trained individual in order to visually observe and monitor the health and well-being of every animal.
 - Medical/Monitoring Rounds
 - Population Management Rounds



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Medical Rounds

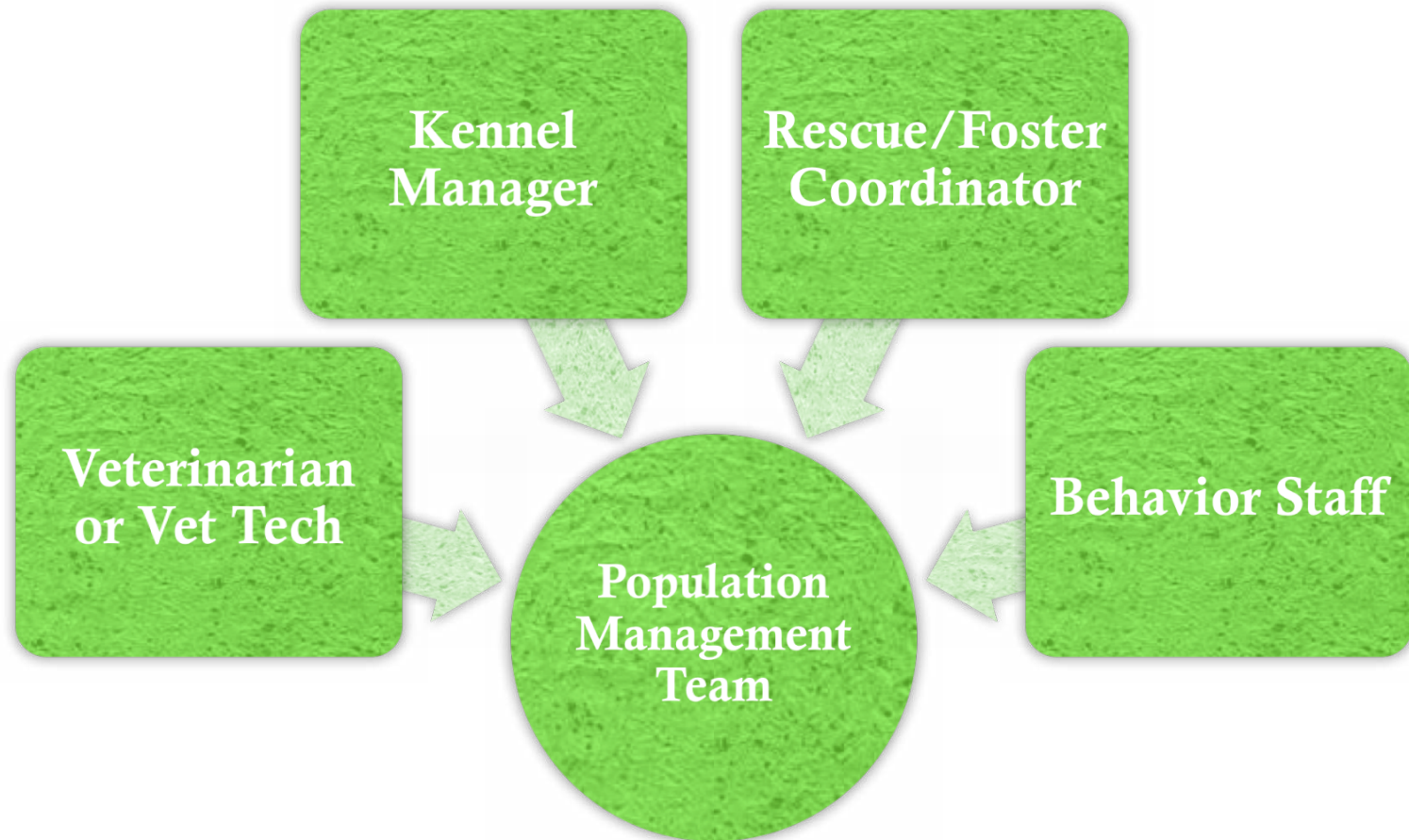
- Veterinary staff performs to:
 - Respond to problems identified
 - During daily population management rounds
 - By staff/volunteers and communicated on dry erase board, clipboard
 - Examine animals and develop diagnostic/treatment plan
 - Evaluate animals receiving treatment to determine if treatment can be discontinued

Population Management



**Goal = Minimize Length
of Stay**

Population Management Team



Daily Rounds: The Five Questions

Who are you?

How are you doing?

Are you where you should be?

Do you need something today?

Do you need something scheduled?

Tools for Daily Rounds

- Printed Shelter Census (or tablet for database access)
 - Kennel location
 - ID number
 - Photo or description
 - Intake and Disposition dates
 - Status
- Clipboard for Daily Action Item list
 - Each team member may have their own action list
- Identification on the animal
- Cage cards (ideally with photo)

Who are you?

- Look at animal identification neck band, kennel number, cage card, and animal census print out.
 - Do all match?
 - Is animal missing from kennel?
 - Is animal in a kennel that is not reflected on census?
- Is anything missing or inaccurate on the cage card?
 - Correct dates based on status?
 - Is the photo clear?
 - Is the description accurate?

How are you?

- Review Daily Monitoring log sheet to determine if any abnormalities are noted with appetite, urination, defecation, behavior, general health, etc.
- Look at animal to see if any abnormalities are apparent
 - Clinical signs of disease
 - Signs of stress or behavioral deterioration
- Look at housing area
 - Is the animal able to hide/retreat?
 - Is animal able to stretch to full body length?
 - Is housing appropriate for length of time spent in shelter?

Are you where you should be?

- Is stray hold over and you need to be made available/transfer to rescue?
- Is animal still in intake area although intake services have been performed?
- Is animal showing signs of infectious disease and needs to move to isolation?
- Is medication completed and animal cleared to move out of isolation?
- Is animal a safety risk that needs to move from general population?

Do you need something today?

- To be moved to different location?
- To have enrichment items for your housing unit or be scheduled for playgroup?
- To be re-examined by medical or behavior staff?
- To try making contact with owner again, contact finder since not reclaimed, or contact rescue for transfer?
- Is your previously determined shelter pathway still reasonable?
- Why are you still here & what can be done to facilitate progress?

Do you need something scheduled?

- Pick up by rescue organization or foster placement
- Behavioral assessment
- Medical examination by veterinarian
- Spay/neuter
- Return to Field
- Medical procedure
- Euthanasia

Action Items

- For stray animals, complete items that can be performed during stray hold time
 - Vaccination
 - Behavior evaluation
 - Enrichment
- Schedule other items to occur immediately following completion of stray hold
 - Spay/neuter for adopted animal
 - Medical procedure
 - Pick up by foster provider or transfer partner
- Daily Rounds also includes assessment of each ward for cleanliness/presentation

Daily Rounds

- Evaluate every animal and take action to ensure all animals are moving appropriately.
- All animals should have a pathway and a plan!
- Performing daily rounds can have a profound impact on length of stay, which in turn can decrease shelter crowding, lower disease, and improve animal care and wellness.



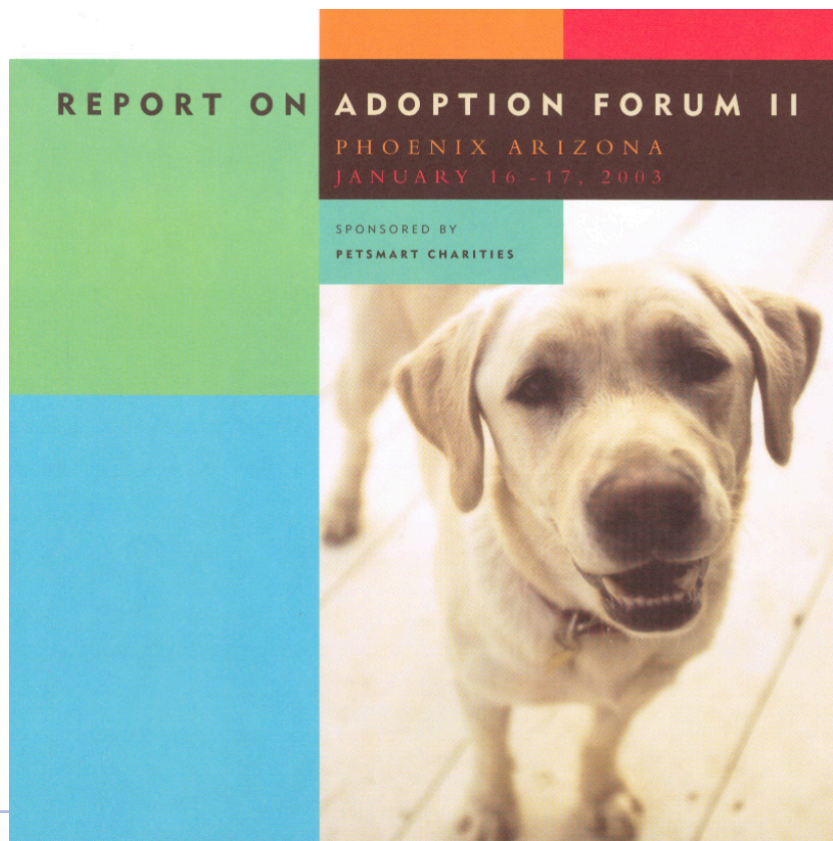
Remove barriers to live outcomes (RTO, adoption)

- Adopters Welcome!
 - Conversation based
- Fee waived events
- Adoption Ambassadors
 - Take the animals to the adopters
- Rethinking RTO process
 - Do not hold pets hostage
 - Offer spay/neuter in exchange for waived reclaim fees
 - RTO in the field – empower your ACOs



Adopters Welcome!

- Open adoptions
- “The illusion of control”



Fee-Waived Events

A Comparison of Attachment Levels of Adopters of Cats: Fee-Based Adoptions Versus Free Adoptions

Emily Weiss¹ and Shannon Gramann²

¹ASPCA® Shelter Research and Development, Benton, Kansas
²ASPCA® Shelter Research and Development, Hales Corners, Wisconsin

Nonhuman animal welfare professionals have been critical of adoption programs that do not charge a fee for adult cats, despite the high euthanasia rate for cats due to a reported lack of homes. The argument against the free cat adoption states a devaluation of the cat, which may affect the adopter's perceived value of the cat and subsequent care. It may also attract low-income adopters who are perceived as unable to fulfill the financial responsibility of acting as caregiver (owner) of a companion animal (pet). This study examined adopters' attachment to their cats in relation to the payment or waiver of an adoption fee using the Lexington Attachment to Pets Scale and perception of the shelter. No significant



Free to Good Home

It's a phrase that used to scare shelters, but now many are waiving adoption fees to help cats

BY JIM BAKER

Joe Elmore remembers the first time the Charleston Animal Society (CAS) teamed up with the ASPCA to organize the Feline Frenzy, a fee-waived adoption promotion

Just a long line filled with many senior citizens, some relying on canes and walkers. "It was just kind of like an older population that came out, almost like they were

promotion. CAS staff headed out to these locations to pick up 73 additional cats. One hundred and eight cats were adopted during the promotion, compared to

**Attachment doesn't decrease when adoption fees are waived!
Reality check – people can get cats anywhere...for free!**

What are our goals as an animal shelter?

Do our policies support our goals?

- ✓ Abide by and enforce all relevant laws
- ✓ Resolve citizen complaints and concerns
- ✓ Reunite lost pets with owners
- ✓ Maintain health and welfare in the shelter
- ✓ Find new homes for pets
- ✓ Euthanize suffering or dangerous animals
- ✓ Mitigate harm associated with free-roaming animals
- ✓ Reduce pet overpopulation

Managed Admission

- Managed vs. Limited vs. Open Admission
- You CAN control your intake!
 - May already limit service area, limit intake hours/days
 - Can manage who comes in AND when they come in
 - Next – explain to your community that you can best provide care for the animal when intake is scheduled
 - Provide resources! (refer to other organizations, behavior counseling, veterinary vouchers, rehoming advice)
- AKA (also known as):
 - Intake by appointment
 - Intake diversion
 - Pet Safety Net

Manage WHEN

- Scheduled intake – Not “No,” just “Not now”
- Balance needs of animals in the shelter with needs of animals out of the shelter
- Hear the problem
- Allows opportunity for alternatives to be found
 - Rehoming advice
 - Access to medical care
 - Behavior counseling
 - Safety Net Services (food bank, domestic violence, medical emergency, short-term boarding, etc)



Feline Intake By Appointment

A quick guide to assist you in creating a feline
waiting list for your organization

205 Ensminger Road, Tonawanda, New York 14150
Phone: (716) 875-7360 Fax: (716) 875-8100



Manage WHO

- Intake Diversion
 - Help who needs to be helped
 - Are we really providing a service?
 - Owner retention is a success to celebrate!
- Tough questions:
 - Are there more animals “seeking admission” than released alive from your shelter?
 - What are the options?
 - Allow the community to understand the consequences of admission - TRANSPARENCY

“Wait until 8” and Finder Fosters

- The Power of “The Ask” – provide supplies
- Community may surprise you
- Allow some length of stay to take place outside the shelter
- Foster parents may find homes for you!



WAIT UNTIL 8 PROTOCOL AND FAQ

Cat Intake Flowchart

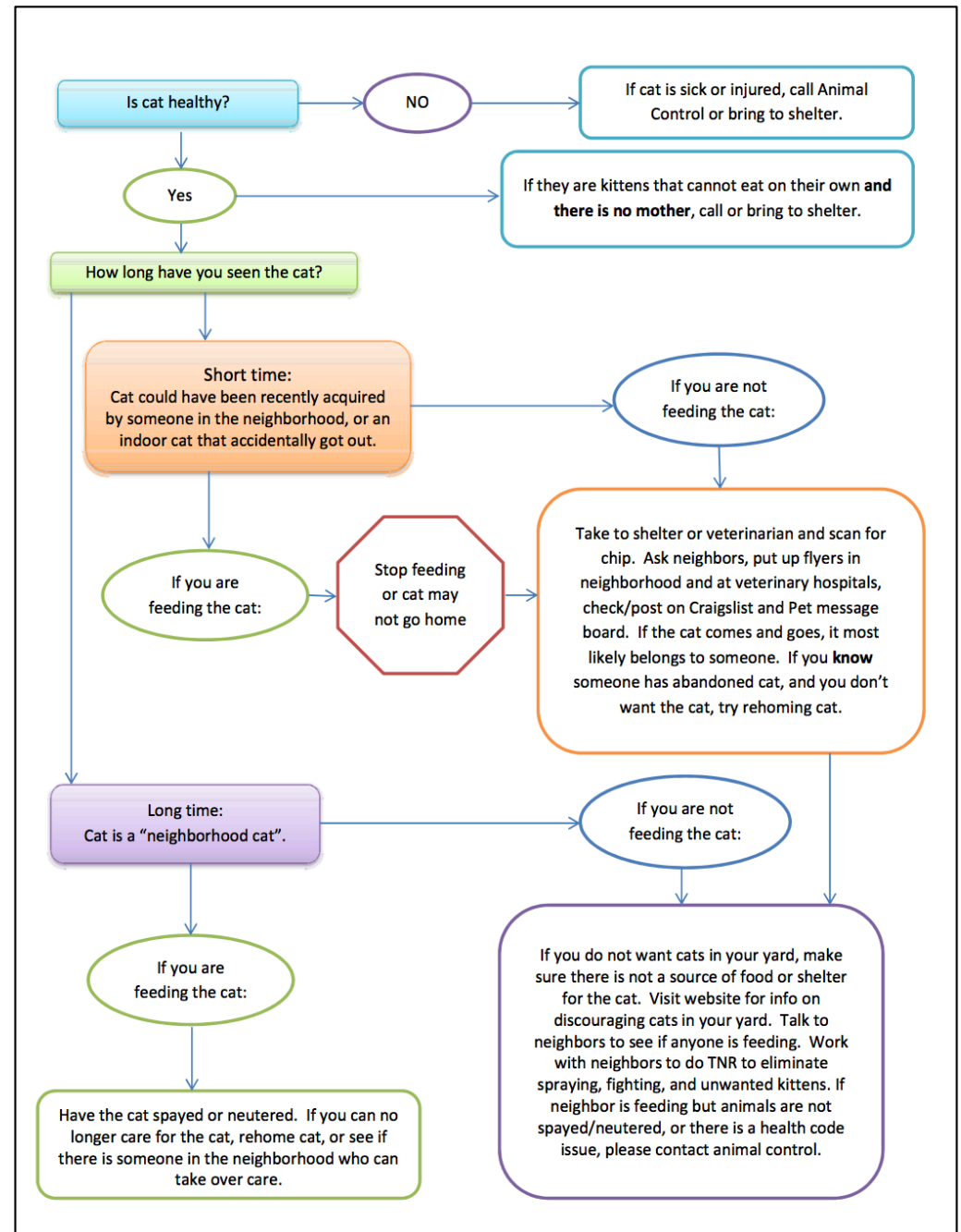
Learn More!

Million Cat Challenge

www.millioncatchallenge.org

5 Key initiatives:

- Alternatives to intake
- Managed Admission
- Capacity for Care
- Removing Barriers to adoption
- Return to Field



Capacity for Care

- Meeting the needs of each animal in your custody
- The 5 Freedoms help assess operations and guide decisions
- Every sheltering organization has a maximum capacity for care, and the population in their care must not exceed that level
- Humane sheltering is not about holding capacity (you don't need more cages!) but about optimizing flow-through capacity

“We can't solve overpopulation by sheltering beyond capacity.” – Dr. Kate Hurley

Factors that determine Capacity for Care

- Number of appropriate housing units (size and quality)
- Staffing for programs or services (paid and unpaid staff)
- Staff training
- Average length of stay
- Total number of reclaims, adoptions, transfers, release, or other outcomes

Operating beyond an organization's capacity for care is an unacceptable practice.

Possible signs of overcrowding

- Shelter spaces are not used as intended (i.e. guillotine doors are down, kittens in the bathroom)
 - Multiple unrelated animals housed in individual kennels
- Animal processing is delayed or not complete (intake processing, movement to adoption areas)
- Disease spreads repeatedly or see severe clinical signs (parvo, feline URI, kennel cough)
 - Died in care should be less than 1% of all outcomes

Staffing Levels

Formula for Determining Kennel Staffing Needs

Indicator	Value	Formula	Value	Indicator
Incoming Animals per Year	A	÷ by 365 days =	AA	Incoming Animals per Day
Incoming Animals per Day	AA	x B Day Average Hold Period =	BB	Animals in Shelter per Day
Animals in Shelter Per Day	BB	x 10 Minutes per Animal =	CC	Number of Minutes Needed
Minutes Needed	CC	÷ 60 minutes =	DD	Number of Hours Needed
Number of Hours Needed	DD	÷ 3 hours =	EE	Staff Needed per Day

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NACA and HSUS recommend 15 minutes of care time per day for cleaning and feeding each animal housed in the shelter.

Capacity for Care

- Example: 4 staff members, clean and feed from 7am-10am
 - $4 \text{ staff} \times 15 \text{ minutes per animal} \times 3 \text{ hours} = 48 \text{ animals (capacity)}$
- If average daily population is higher than 48 animals = the shelter is operating beyond their capacity for care
 - Overcrowded
 - Animal needs not met
 - Stress \rightarrow Infectious Disease \rightarrow Increased LOS or poor outcomes
- Try this at home!
http://www.sheltermedicine.com/calculating_shelter_capacity

Failure in Population Management

- Crowding at the shelter leads to:
 - Increased infectious disease
 - Increased staff and animal stress
 - Reduced air quality, increased noise
 - Safety risk for staff and volunteers during animal handling
 - Negative perception by the community and volunteers
 - Failure to provide necessary care
 - Compromised animal welfare and suffering
 - Compassion fatigue, burnout, decreased morale, staff turnover
- Vicious cycle → wasted resources → poor outcomes

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Questions?



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