



BEST PRACTICE STRATEGIES BEFORE, DURING & AFTER...

Dr. Sara Pizano

Team Shelter USA, University of Florida, Million Cat Challenge

THANK YOU!

**BOD, staff and everyone who
answered the survey!**







Definition of Success



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OVER 100 COMMUNITY & SHELTER ASSESSMENTS

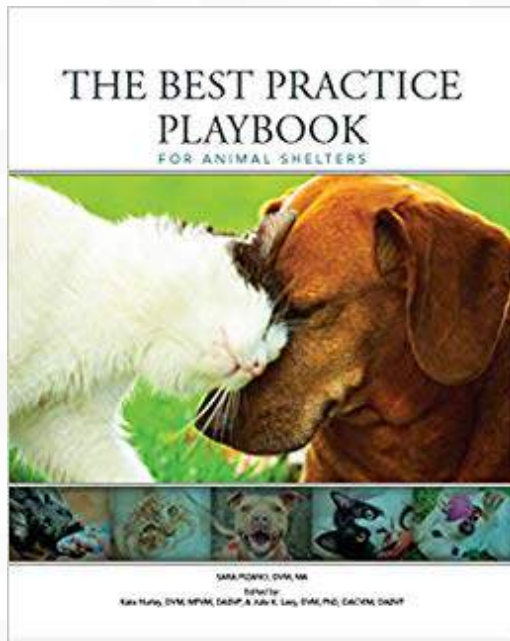
17 states since 2013

Rural, urban, large, small, high/low poverty rates

Only difference: latitude and longitude

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS ARE UNIVERSAL!

RECOMMENDATIONS



GREAT PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES!



2019

5.4 million entered shelters

533,000 euthanized

79% save rate
(bestfriends.org)

GOOD NEWS DURING COVID-19!

Adopt-a-Pet visits increase from 5 m to 12M per mo. ...# 3 breed search is pitbulls

Greater Good gathered 82,000 people who wanted to foster but only 40,000 shelter pets were registered (1/2 had no pets and no kids), 1/2 said would take medium/large dogs including pits

Many shelters were emptied when they asked their communities for help foster and adopt

Maddie's reports 80% of fosters adopted through foster home

DON'T DECIDE FOR PEOPLE-GO FOR THE GUSTO!

Humane Society in Charlotte, FL: **\$150,000** in a couple of days

MCC: **\$260,000+** in a few weeks for Portalmania 2020

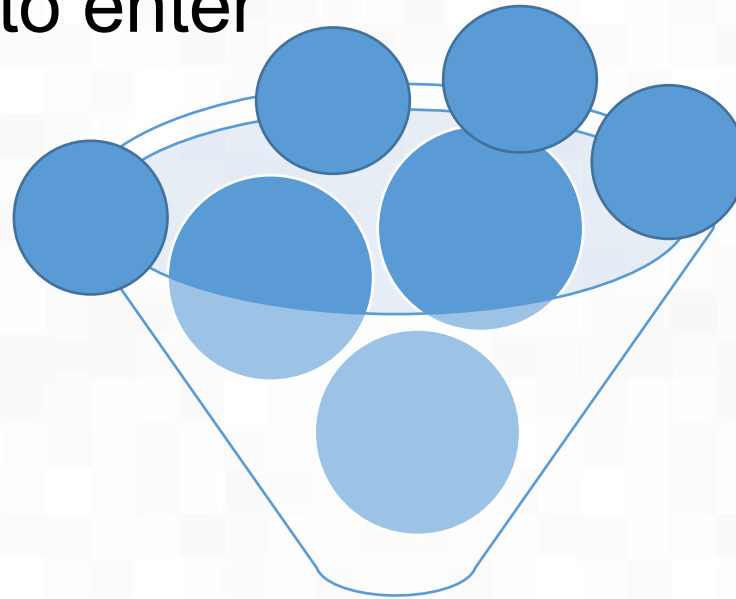
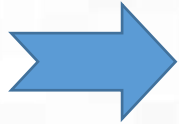
HSUS: **\$300,000** in 3 hours, **>\$2m** for SN catch up

Best Friends: **\$754,000** on Giving Tuesday



TRADITIONAL SHELTER SYSTEM

Minimal barriers to enter



Many self-imposed
barriers to live outcome



LENGTH OF STAY IN ANY SHELTER

Correlates with negative consequences:

FAS and frustration for animals and people

Overcrowding

Inappropriate handling

Exposure to disease

Decreased life saving potential

Reactive use and waste of resources

CAPACITY FOR CARE FORMULA

in

LOS

out

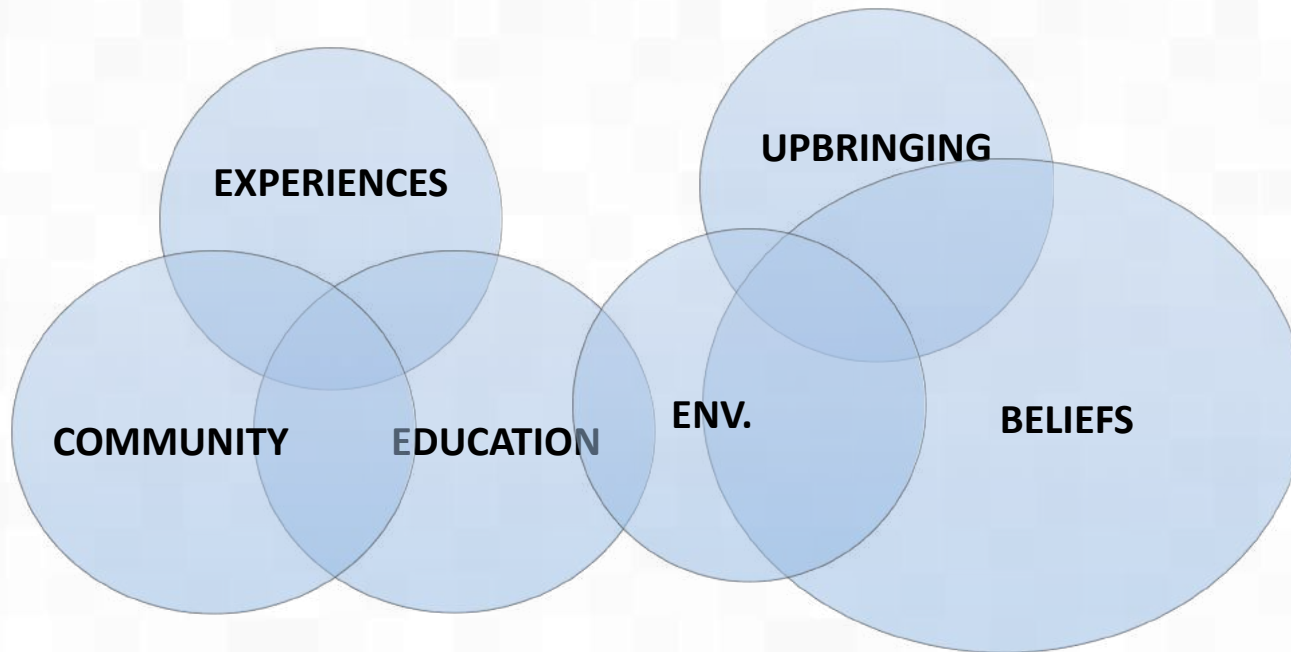
HUMAN ANIMAL SUPPORT SERVICES (HASS)

International coalition of animal services leaders and more than 30 pilot organizations transforming the traditional sheltering system to serve the entire community in supporting the human-animal bond



humananimalsupportservices.org

THE REALITY OF OUR OWN MICROCOSM





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WE ARE A PRODUCT OF OUR OWN MICROCOSM

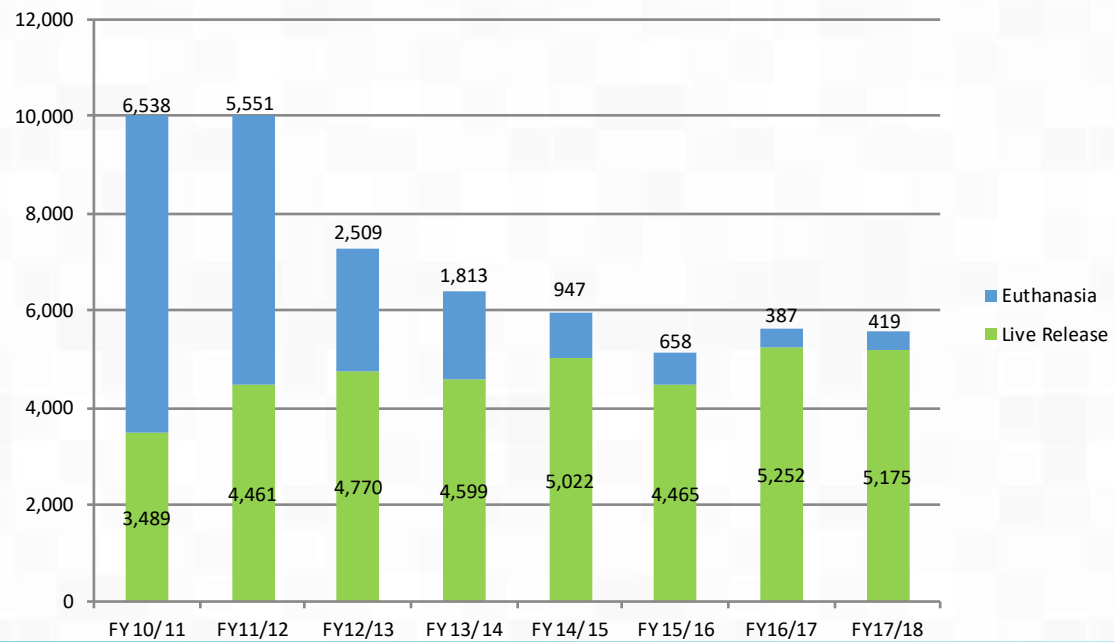


Our human brains
automatically trigger then
amplify the negative, worse
case scenario

Our own fears are a barrier to
lifesaving



WACO, TEXAS (dogs and cats)





WHAT IS IN OUR CONTROL AND WHAT IS NOT?

IN OUR CONTROL

- Public policy esp. local level
- Intake policies
- Shelter policies
- Population Management
- Live outcome programs
- Partnerships/collaboration
- Our beliefs and philosophies

NOT IN OUR CONTROL

- Natural disasters/weather
- Cruelty/hoarding cases
- A pandemic

SYSTEMS CHANGE: WORKING SMARTER NOT HARDER



Reserve shelter space for pets with no other alternatives



Fear Free environment, short LOS



True euthanasia only



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DEFINITION OF TRUE EUTHANASIA

Reserved for large dangerous dogs who cannot safely be rehabilitated and medical cases beyond hope

90% benchmark is arbitrary since may meet that criteria but percent saved is under 90



STRATEGIC USE OF RESOURCES

Money
Shelter space
Staff
Volunteers
Partnerships
Etc.

What do we have?

REBUILDING: THE BEST FOUNDATION

***~MINIMIZES 'DOWNSTREAM'
SYMPTOMATIC ISSUES~***



RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC POLICY



PUBLIC POLICY

Framework of organization-public
and private

Focus on public and animal safety

Make sure ordinances and laws are
in line with Best Practices and not
barriers to lifesaving



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PUBLIC AND ANIMAL SAFETY

Barriers to lifesaving

Stray holds

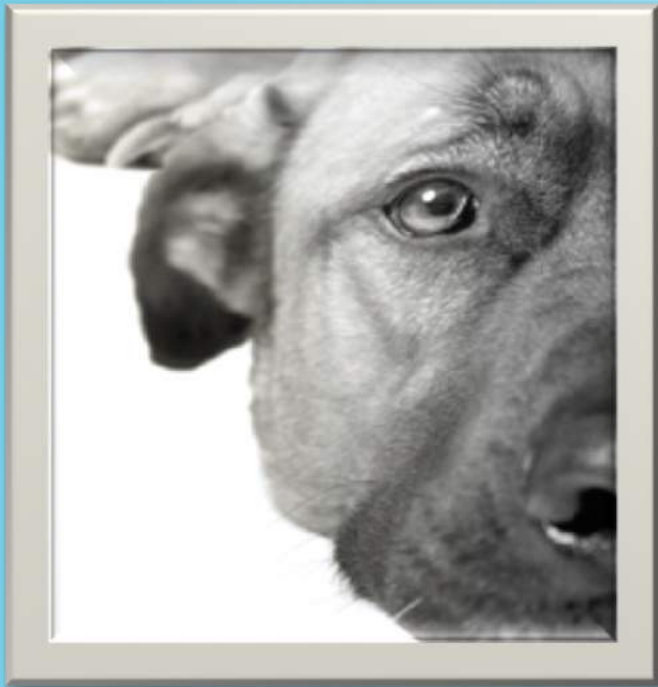
NATIONAL RETURN TO OWNER RATES

22%



2%





COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & THE POWER OF PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS



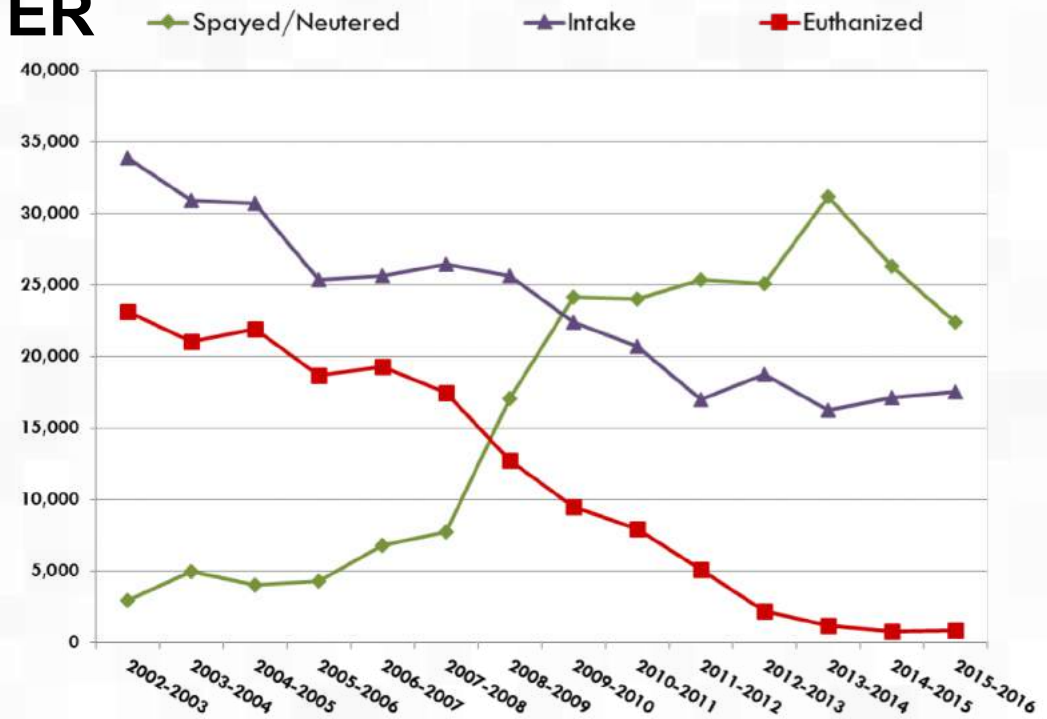
VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

- ❖ Enhances and supplements care
- ❖ Easy, streamlined onboarding
- ❖ Mutual respect, partners
- ❖ Clear SOPs for staff and volunteers

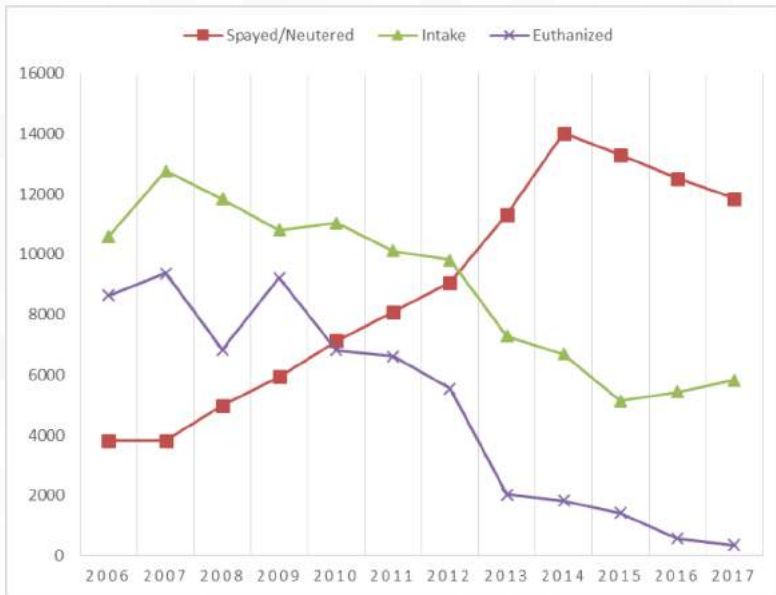


TARGETED SPAY NEUTER

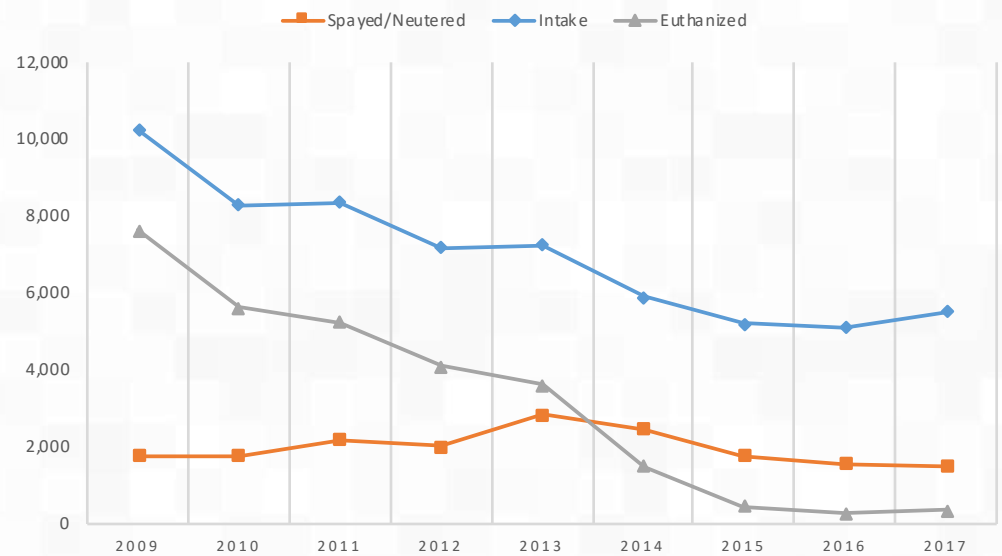
- ❖ Low-income pet owners (5/1000)
- ❖ High intake areas
- ❖ Large breeds
- ❖ TNR



Waco, Texas



Huntsville, Alabama



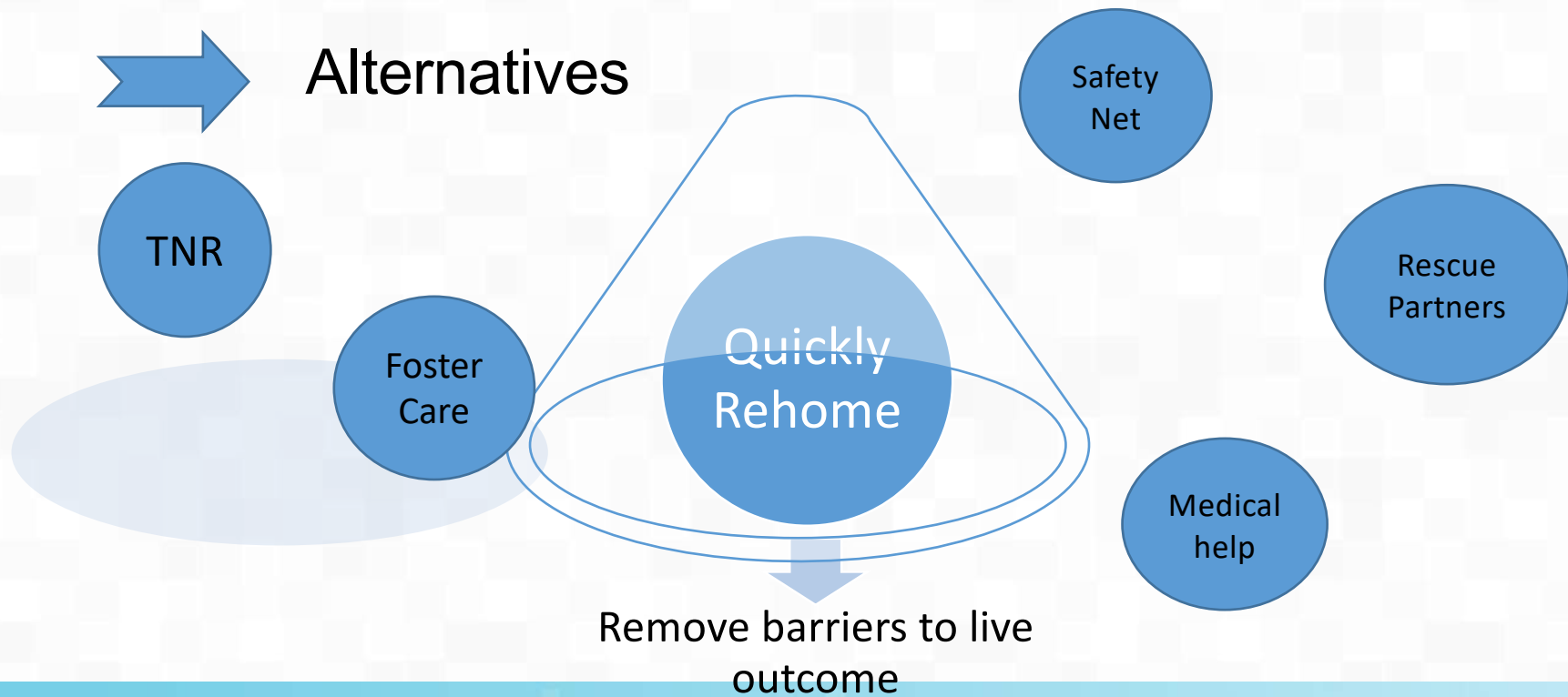


MANAGED ADMISSION



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MANAGED ADMISSION SYSTEM





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MANAGED ADMISSION

Helping people and
pets in a way other
than shelter intake

Productively
decreases shelter
intake of animals who
had other options

MANAGED ADMISSION

ASPCA study found 80%+ pet owners did not want to surrender but did not have **access** to resources they needed

We should ask the question: how can we help you keep your pet or help place your pet directly into another home?

Access to care

ACCESS TO CARE MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN EVER!

Emerging models: Open Door, One Health

Public or private clinics

Keeping pets in their current loving homes
key, providing assistance, best for pets and
people



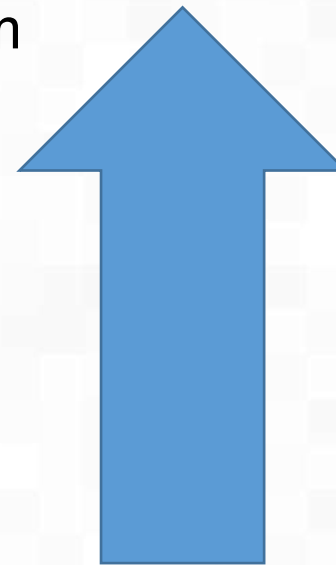
BRIGHT SPOT: BREVARD SHERIFF'S OFFICE, FLORIDA

Year 1 of Managed Intake (Surrender Mitigation) helped 80% of the owners keep or place their pets

*In other words, shelter intake decreased by **80%** in the owner surrender category*

BRIGHT SPOT: JACKSONVILLE, FL

EX: Year 1 of Good Samaritan program



3,774

456



BRIGHT SPOT: HOME-HOME.ORG

Direct adoption so bypass shelter

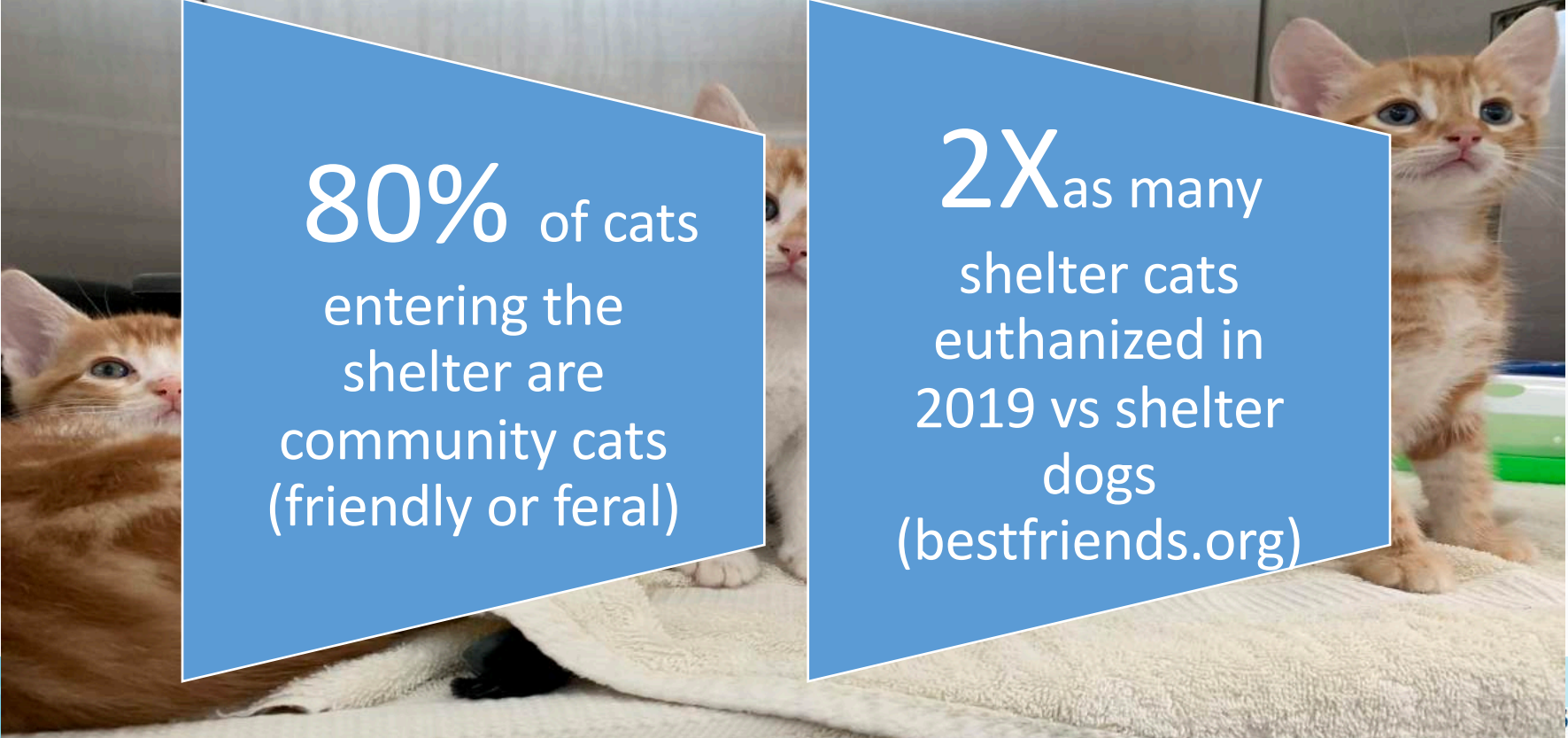
Panhandle Humane Society, ID
decreased intake by 30% first year

Branded for each shelter



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THE PROBLEM



80% of cats entering the shelter are community cats (friendly or feral)

2X as many shelter cats euthanized in 2019 vs shelter dogs (bestfriends.org)

CATS AT HIGHER RISK IN SHELTERS

Overcapacity with cats extremely common

Unproductive stray holds

Inappropriate housing leads to stress/URI

But there is a proven solution!

TRAP NEUTER RETURN SHELTER NEUTER RETURN



COMMUNITY CATS~FRIENDLY OR FERAL

Many owners
allow their cats
outdoor access

2%
RTO

Public trained to
take outdoor cats
to the shelter

SUPERHIGHWAY OPTIONS FOR CATS: TNR/SNR

SN, rabies vaccinate, ear tip, return to original location



Small off-ramp for some when appropriate

1% too sick/ill/injured

DON'T KITNAP THE KITTENS!





SUPERHIGHWAY OPTIONS FOR KITTENS

1% too sick/ill/injured

Small off ramp for healthy feral kittens~may be SNR

Adoptions*

TNR/SNR BENEFITS ALL

- ❖ Fiscally responsible plan for *all* shelter types and communities
- ❖ Provides sustainable resolution, increased community immunity
- ❖ Decreases # community cats, impact on wildlife and shelter intake of cats
- ❖ More resources for dogs, decreased enforcement complaints

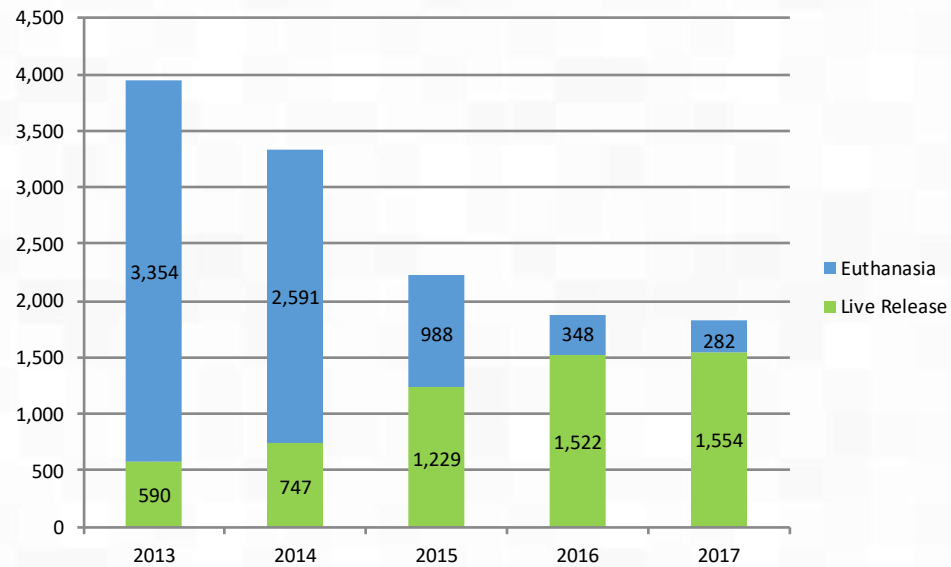
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**But who pays for it and who
does all the work?**

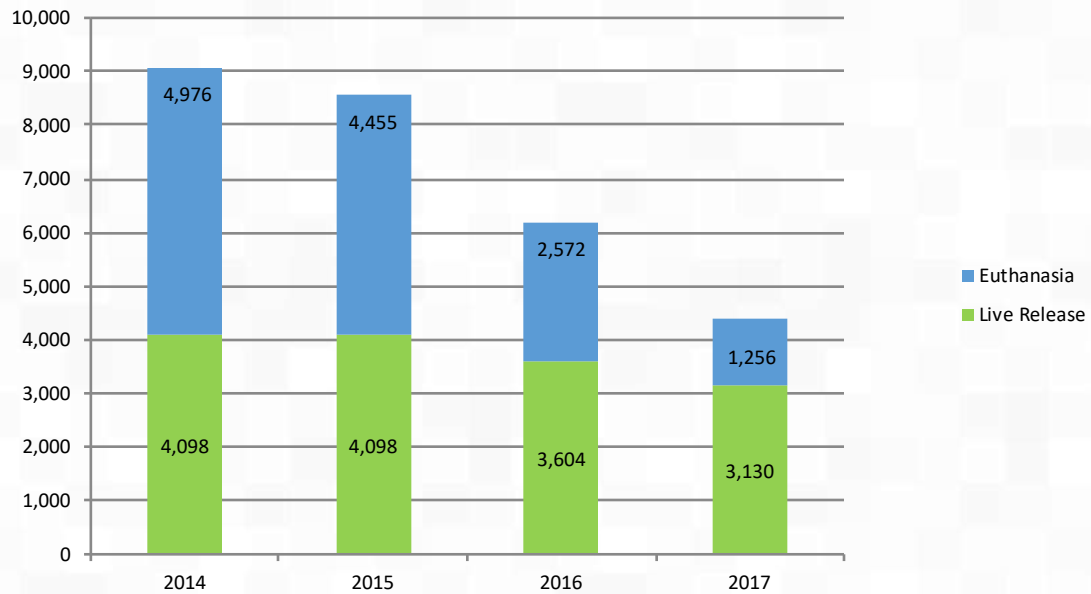
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OUTCOME FOR CATS: NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE



OUTCOME FOR CATS: GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA



MILLION CAT CHALLENGE WEBINAR

Millioncatchallenge.org under
resources,webinars:

*The Cat Superhighway,
Creating a Roadmap for #allthecats*

Studies, research, stats



**But we have room for more
cats!**



CAPACITY FOR CARE

CAPACITY FOR CARE FORMULA

in

LOS

out

FEAR FREE SHELTER POLICIES~C4C

- ❖ Plan of action~Population Management from the point of intake
- ❖ Focus on short LOS, advocacy, streamlined communication with rescues, fosters and adopters on deck
- ❖ Eliminate self-imposed barriers to live outcome
- ❖ Humane housing and enrichment



ADVOCACY~PLAN OF ACTION BEGINS AT INTAKE

Immediately post picture/info on intake

Use of Social Media, community outreach and engagement

Allow public to see/adopt/foster any pets in the shelter

First come/first serve/successful virtual programs

DOUBLE COMPARTMENT AND/OR AMPLE HOUSING



To separate bed/food/water from
elimination area

Equally important for canines and
felines!

WHAT IS STRESSFUL FOR CATS?



1. Staying in a shelter
2. Moving within the shelter
3. Unfamiliar smells, items, etc.
4. Not enough space
5. No options to hide, litter box close to food, etc.

STRESS=URI

NON-NEGOTIABLE: ENRICHMENT



Appropriate housing, sanitation,
options with soft bedding

Kennel/cage enrichment

Exercise, play, human contact, toys



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PLAYGROUP TRAINING~DOGS

Dogs Playing for Life

Shelter Playgroup Alliance

Dogs need natural play!

FOSTERS-ON-DECK

- ❖ Community-centric model
- ❖ Minimal shelter stay better for pets and all people!
- ❖ Pima, Arizona



OPEN CONVERSATIONAL ADOPTIONS

There is no shortage of adopters

One study showed 70%+ of those who purchased from a breeder or pet store had already visited an adoption agency but found it too cumbersome, difficult and invasive or were denied

Best intentions but fear is a serious barrier to lifesaving

OPEN CONVERSATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Trusting and engaging the community as partners-COVID proven

Counsel and educate pre and post adoption most important

Easy, streamlined process





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**THANK YOU FOR
LISTENING!**

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