

# Foster to Surrender

The Cleveland Animal Protective League  
Cleveland, Ohio



# Presenters

**Sharon Harvey**  
CEO & President



**Ayse Dunlap**  
Director of Operations



# Agenda

- What is Foster to Surrender?
- Set-up: staff concerns, cost, and logistics
- Statistics
- Impact: healthy kittens, adoptions, euthanasia rate
- What's next? Trouble-shooting and goals





## The Story of Lynx

In 2010, a large majority of kittens entering the shelter with URI were at high-risk for euthanasia: we did not want to risk the health of our current population of animals by exposing them to new illness.

# Foster to Surrender was Born

- Foster to Surrender (FtS) was created to target kittens like Lynx: kittens who were either too sick to expose to our existing population OR kittens who were too young to move through our system to adoption.
- A program that works in tandem with the community
- Targets a new demographic of people—not our existing foster volunteers



## Goal

The purpose of this program is to enlist community support and keep high-risk animals out of the shelter until they are ready to enter a path toward adoption

# Retrain Your Staff

- The community is your ally
- Ask for help and you may be surprised
- A little education goes a long way

# More From Lynx

Lynx was brought in by a Good Samaritan who found her on the corner of a busy intersection

Lynx was only 6-weeks-old and had yellow ocular discharge

Good Samaritan was asked to foster Lynx for 2 weeks, until her symptoms cleared and she was big enough for adoption

All supplies, including medication would be provided

The Good Samaritan agreed!





# Did you say “All Supplies Provided?!”

- We offer the foster everything they’ll need to care for the animal until it’s time to come back to the shelter.
- The program was initially funded by a generous grant from the ASPCA but once implemented, we found there was little cost to maintain it.
- No additional staff time: animals would have been taken into the system anyway
- Previously, time & resources would have been spent euthanizing these animals, instead we are now vaccinating, testing, deworming, and dispensing medication.

# Cost

- Incremental costs per animal include vaccines, testing, medication, food, litter, and disposable litter boxes
- BUT, we're helping more animals. And we're doing it by expanding our shelter to include new homes in the community.



# More on Cost

- Only about 20% of participants take us up on the offer of food, litter, etc. Most participants are willing to provide that on their own.
- Most of the food and litter that we give to those who request supplies is donated to us as part of a broken bag program with one of our vendors.

# Nuts and Bolts

Who qualifies for the program?

- Person
- Animal



Who does the animal belong to while in foster?

Liability and contract



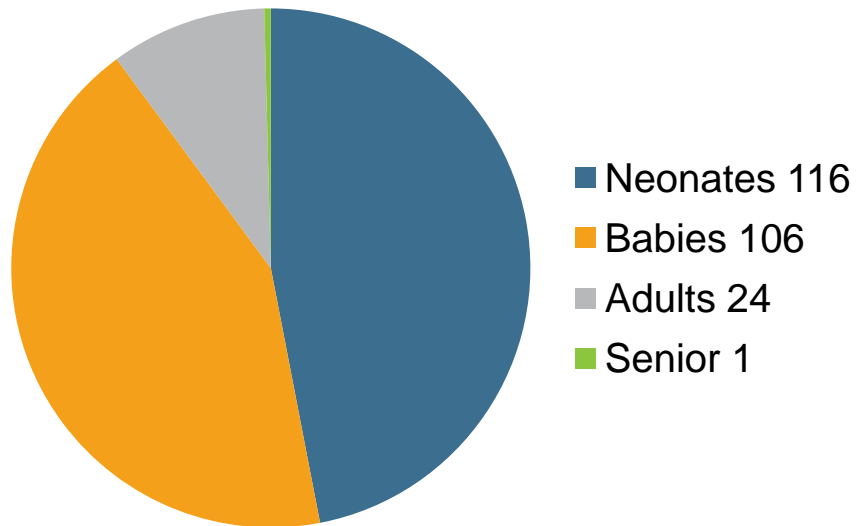
# More Nuts and Bolts

Administering vaccines, dispensing medication

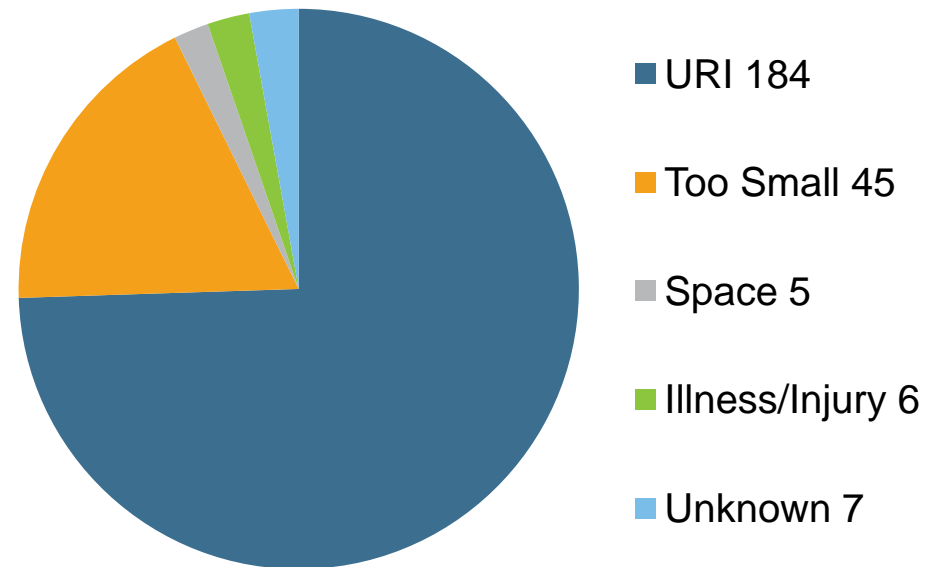
- FVRCP, deworm, Revolution, FeLV/FIV
- Intake staff uses URI flow chart
- Clinic staff fills medication & consults with foster
- Program must be overseen by a veterinarian

# 2010 Intake Statistics: 247 Animals

## Age Breakdown

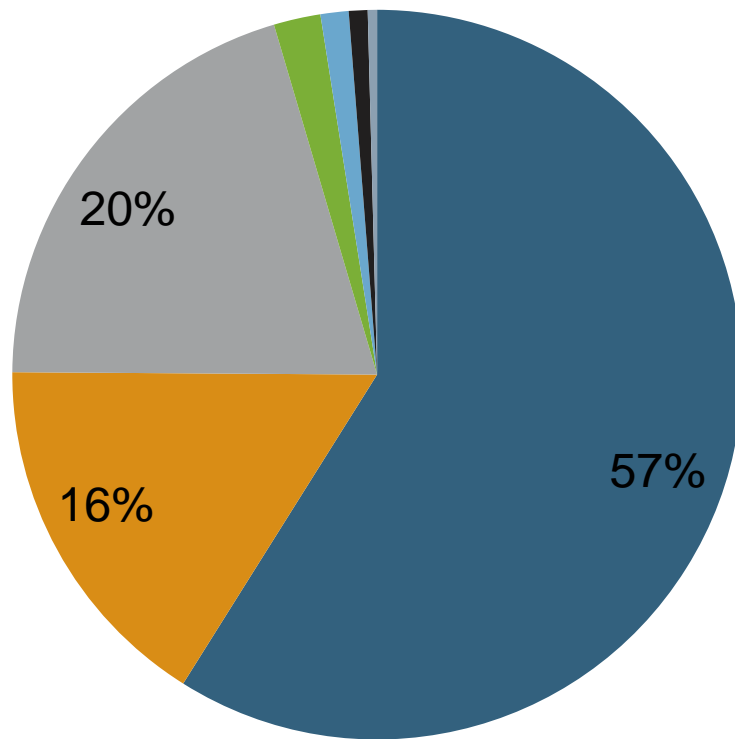


## Reasons for Participation



# 2010 Foster to Surrender Statistics

## Outcomes



- Adopted 142
- Euthanized 39
- Never Returned 49
- Died 5
- Lost 3
- Returned to Foster (Unadoptable) 2
- TNR 1

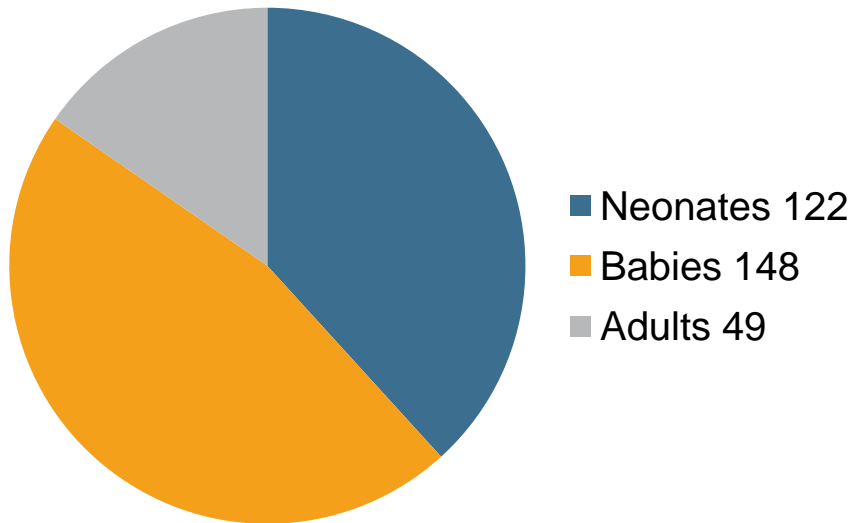
# What Happened to Lynx?

- Lynx returned from the FtS program and needed a second round of antibiotics for her upper respiratory infection
- The foster parent agreed to continue foster care
- When Lynx was healthy and ready to be adopted, the foster parent was unable to part with her and adopted her as her own!

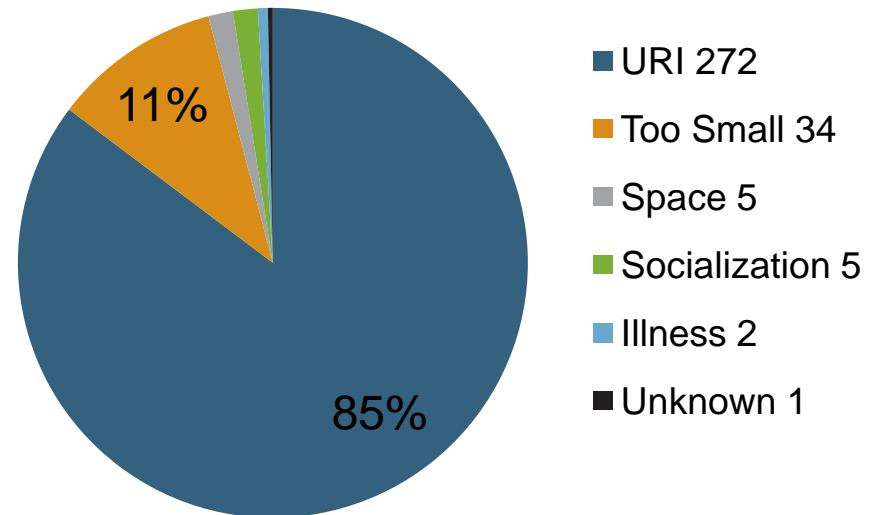


# 2011 Intake Statistics: 319 Animals

## Age Breakdown



## Reasons for Participation



# More Success

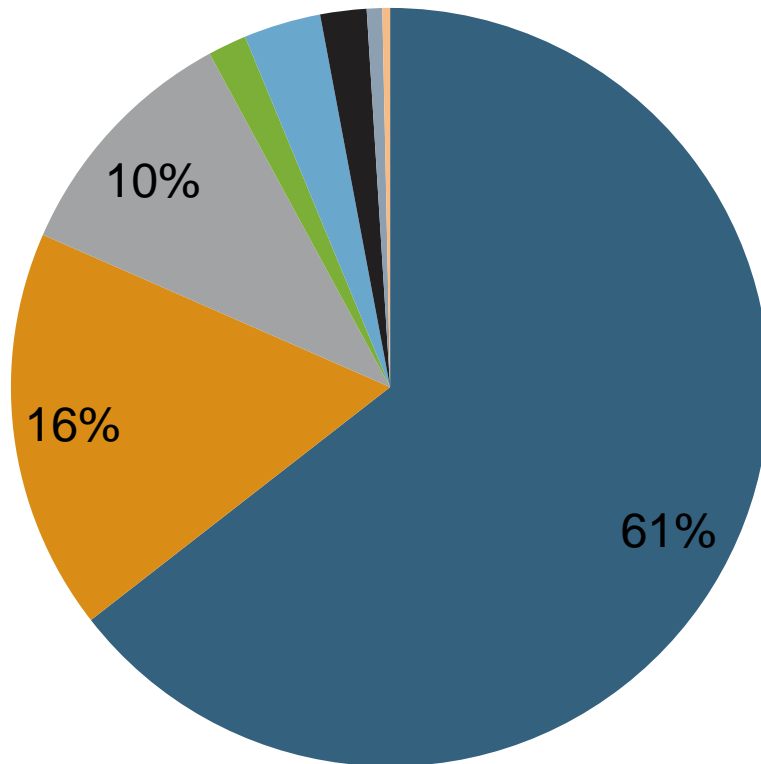


In April, 2011 a mom and daughter brought in 5 kittens with mild URI. We learned they were from a stray cat they were taking care of in their back yard. They agreed to take the kittens back until they were healthy enough to be placed for adoption. They also agreed to have mom spayed through our TNR clinic! All of the kittens were returned to the shelter and adopted.



# 2011 Foster to Surrender Statistics

## Outcomes



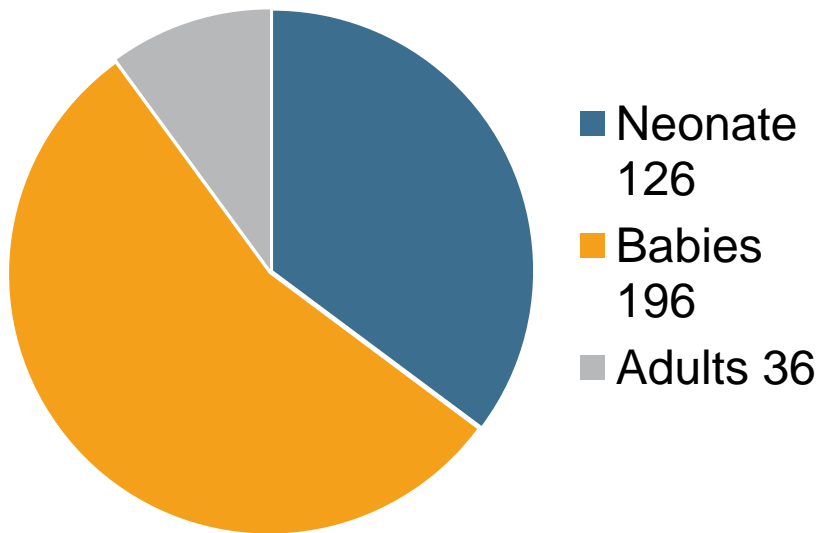
- Adopted 196
- Never Returned 52
- Euthanized 32
- Died 5
- TNR 10
- Returned to Foster (Unadoptable) 6
- Lost 2
- Transfer Out 1

# Added Bonus

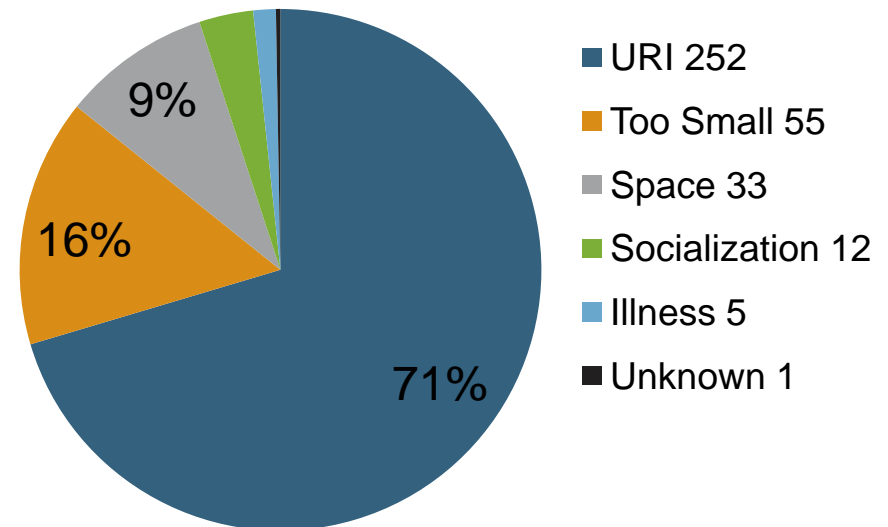
The mom and daughter duo has since brought in over 20 neighborhood cats for sterilization through our Trap-Neuter-Return program.

# 2012 Intake Statistics: 358 Animals

## Age Breakdown



## Reasons for Participation



# More Success

Abby



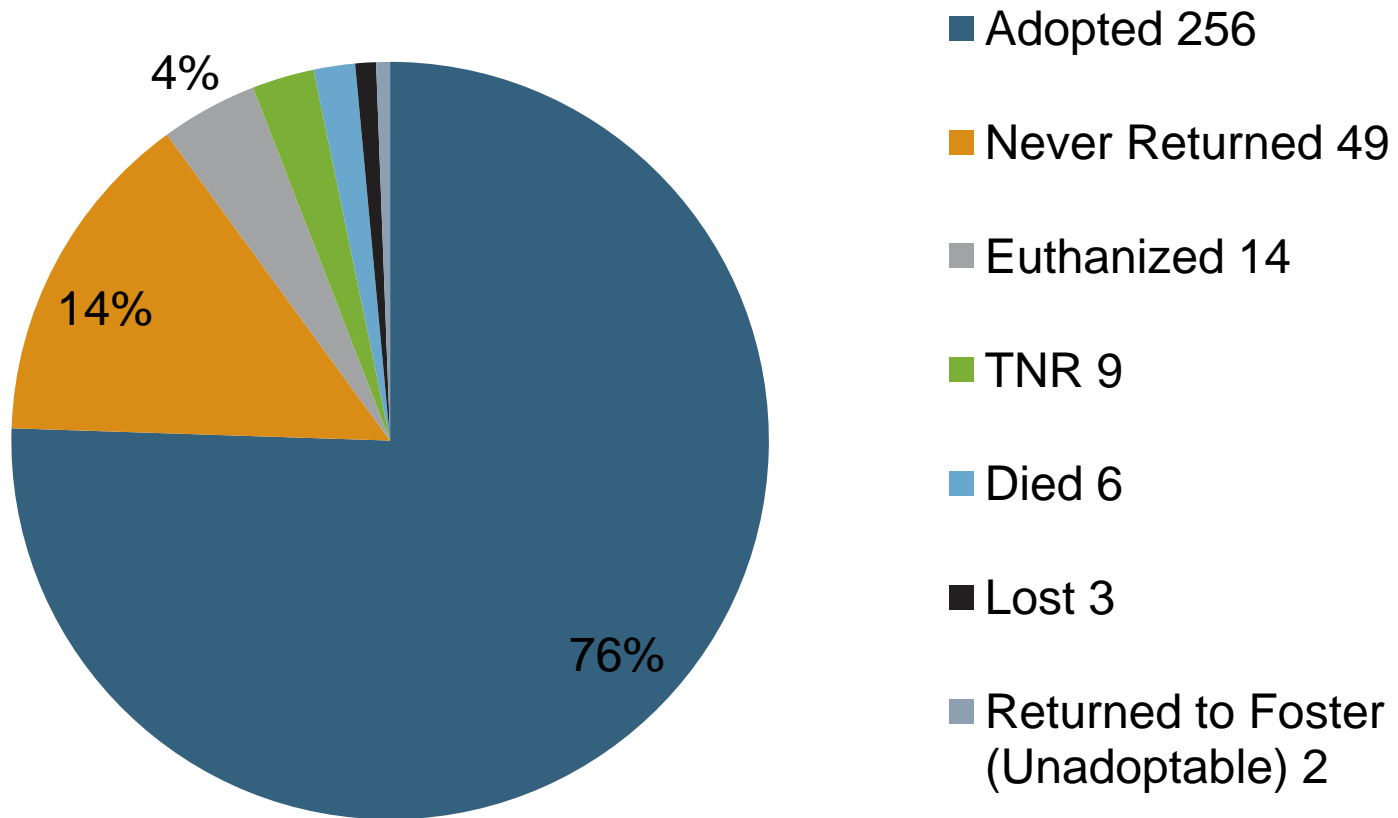
In October 2012, a one-month-old kitten was brought to the shelter suffering from severe flea-bite anemia.

Good Samaritan agreed to foster until healthy and was not deterred by the challenge.

Abby received care in a home rather than in a cage in a shelter

# 2012 Foster to Surrender Statistics

## Outcomes



# What happened to Abby?

Abby's Good Samaritan nursed her back to health: after recovering from the flea bite anemia, and a bout of URI, Abby was healthy enough for adoption.

Abby's foster parent adopted her.



# Healthy Kittens. Now What?!



# Adoption Promotion!

**The Kittens are Coming, the Kittens are Coming!!!  
\$10 for kittens and \$5 for adult cats at the Cleveland APL!**

There's a kitten revolution starting this weekend at the Cleveland APL. We currently have close to two hundred healthy, friendly cats available for adoption with nearly half of them being kittens – and they're all fighting for good homes and an end to the restrictions of shelter life. They want freedom and love and they want it now! So to help them, for the first time in the history of the Cleveland APL, kittens will have a drastically reduced adoption fee of only \$10.00. And while we're at it, cats over 1 year old will have an adoption fee of only \$5.00!

# Two Day Results!!!



135 Kittens adopted

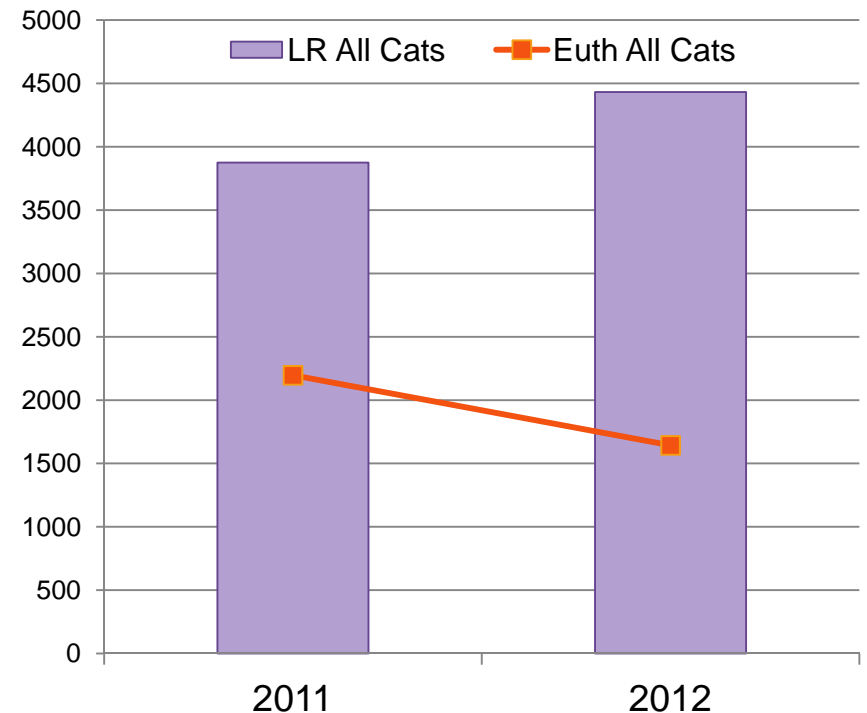
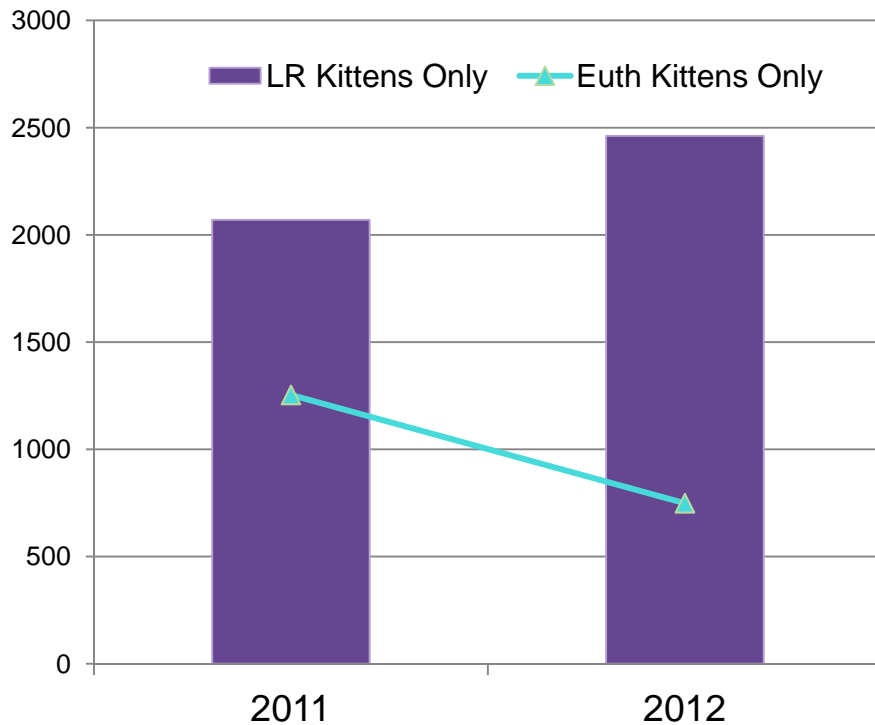
35 Adult cats adopted

# Overall Impact on Shelter Statistics

- In 2012, in large part due to the success of our foster to surrender program, we euthanized 505 fewer kittens than the previous year and 553 total fewer felines
- We saw an adoption increase of 376 kittens and 541 total felines



# Impact on LR and Euthanasia



# What's Next?

- Attrition rate — how can we get more animals back in the building?
- Foster-find-adopter — how can we enlist even more help from the fosters and encourage them to find homes for their foster animals?
- The sky's the limit — what other animal populations can be helped with this program?

# Why We Love This Program

- We're not in this alone! FtS enlists the support of the community: this program lets them share the challenge with us and be a part of the solution.
- Gives kittens immunity before they enter the shelter and they're ready for the adoption floor as soon they return to us.



# More Reasons to Love it

- We're saving more lives without tapping into our existing pool of volunteers.
- According to our front line staff who use this program, "It's phenomenal — we're helping animals that we weren't able to help before."





# Questions?



# Contact Us

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Visit our website at [www.ClevelandAPL.org](http://www.ClevelandAPL.org)

# Upcoming ASPCApro Webinars

[aspcapro.org/webinars](http://aspcapro.org/webinars)

A Magical Social Media Journey 4/03

How to Increase Lives Saved

– Advice from a Big Government Agency 4/10

Kicking Off a Big Campaign 5/01

The True Cost and Value of Pet Adoptions 5/02