Increasing Capacity for Spay/Neuter Before Big Events

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Where Will We Go?

- Importance of spay/neuter for shelter animals
- How to determine shelter's capacity to perform spay/neuter?
- How many surgeries necessary per day?
- Increasing efficiency and capacity
- Importance of pediatric spay/neuter

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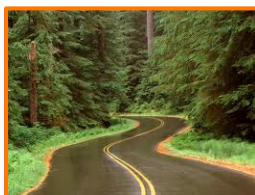
Where Will We Go?

Case Studies:

Increasing Spay/Neuter Prior to Adoption Events

- Dr. Carolyn Brown
  - Large, limited admission shelter

- Dr. Lesli Groshong
  - Large, open admission shelter

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Importance of Spay/Neuter for Shelter Animals

> **Owner Compliance
> with mandatory sterilization
> AFTER adoption estimated <60%**

Reference:

Long-term outcome of gonadectomy performed at an
early age or traditional age in dogs
JAVMA vol 218, No. 2, January 15, 2001

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Importance of Spay/Neuter for Shelter Animals

Motivators, Barriers for
Pet Adoption and Spay/Neuter

(PetSmart Charities, 2010)

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Survey Shows...
Reasons Not to Spay/Neuter

Pet is too young
34%

Too expensive
31%

Haven't gotten around to it
24%

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Importance of Spay/Neuter for Shelter Animals

Companion animal knowledge, attachment and pet care and their associations with household demographics for residents of rural Texas town

(Ramon, M., Slater, M., Ward, M., Preventive Veterinary Medicine, 2010)

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Study Shows …

74 % of companion cats were spayed/neutered

Of 126 female cats, 30 had a litter

20 of the 30 cats had a litter prior to being spayed

Of all litters produced, 85% were accidental

Many do not have basic knowledge to prevent accidental litters
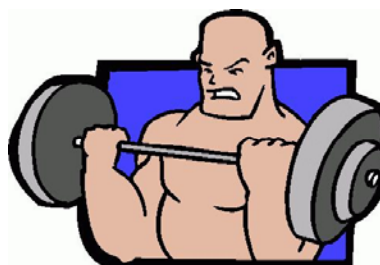
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Importance of Spay/Neuter for Shelter Animals

Importance of Spay/Neuter for Shelter Animals

Even when all goes well …

How to Determine Shelter's Spay/Neuter Capacity?

Staffing + Time + Facility/Equipment

Reference:

UC Davis, Koret Shelter Medicine Program

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How to Determine Shelter's Spay/Neuter Capacity?

Staffing

- Veterinarian
- Veterinary technician
- Veterinary assistants
- Shelter staff
- +/- Volunteers

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How to Determine Shelter's Spay/Neuter Capacity?

Determine time

- Identify/transport surgical candidates
- Perform
  - Pre-surgical examinations
  - Surgical preparation
  - Surgery
  - Recovery
  - Record keeping (patient, drug logs)
  - Recheck examinations
  - Prepare for next day of surgery
- Communicate with staff/adopters

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How to Determine Shelter's Spay/Neuter Capacity?

Facility/Equipment

- Number of
  - Anesthetic machines
  - Surgery tables
  - Recovery cages

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Staffing + Time + Facility/Equipment
=
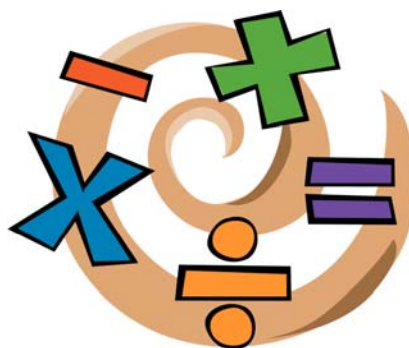*Number of Spays/Neuters*
Shelter can Safely Perform

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How Many Animals to Spay/Neuter If All to Leave as Sterilized?

Average adoptions, for each month, can be used to estimate need for spay/neuter surgery

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Oh NO!
Not More MATH!

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Example: Adoption Driven Spay/Neuter

In June 2011, adopted

- 150 cats
- 175 kittens
- 180 dogs
- 50 puppies

= 325 Felines   - 10% = 293 Felines

= 230 Canines   - 20% = 184 Canines

Some animals are
already spayed/neutered!

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Example: Adoption Driven Spay/Neuter

June 2011

293 Felines Adopted

Divided by 16 = 18
Felines per surgery day

184 Canines Adopted

Divided by 16 = 12
Canines per surgery day

**Shelter does surgery 4 days per week,
for a total of 16 days per month**

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Does ...

Required number of spays/neuters

=

Shelter's capacity to perform spays/neuters?

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If …

| Required number of spays/neuters | $\neq$ | Shelter's capacity to perform spays/neuters |

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…We Need to Increase Capacity to Perform Spay/Neuter

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How to Increase Spays/Neuters Performed Within Shelter's Current Capacity
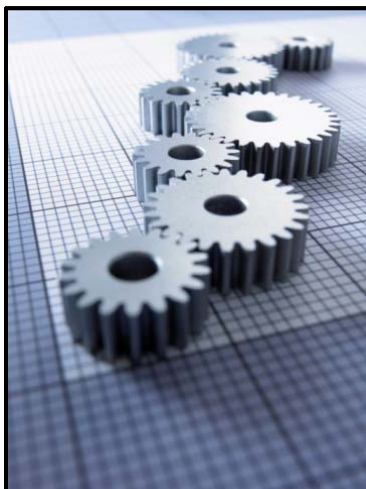

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## How to Increase Spays/Neuters Performed Within Shelter's Current Capacity

- Are preventive health strategies practiced in an effort to keep animals healthy and prepared for anesthesia and surgery?

- Are daily rounds performed to determine which animals are in next in need of spay/neuter?

- Are medical SOPs in place so medical staff can focus on doing surgery and not be frequently interrupted for other matters?

- Who is responsible for transporting animals to/from surgery?

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How to Increase Spays/Neuters Performed Within Shelter's Current Capacity

How is spay/neuter surgery schedule designed?

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Spay/Neuter

Adoptable Animals Here!

HOME

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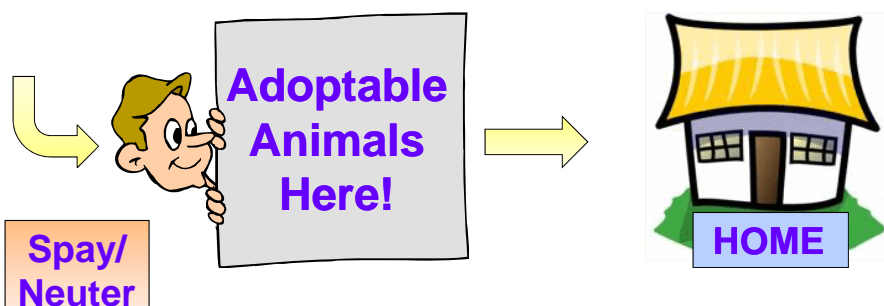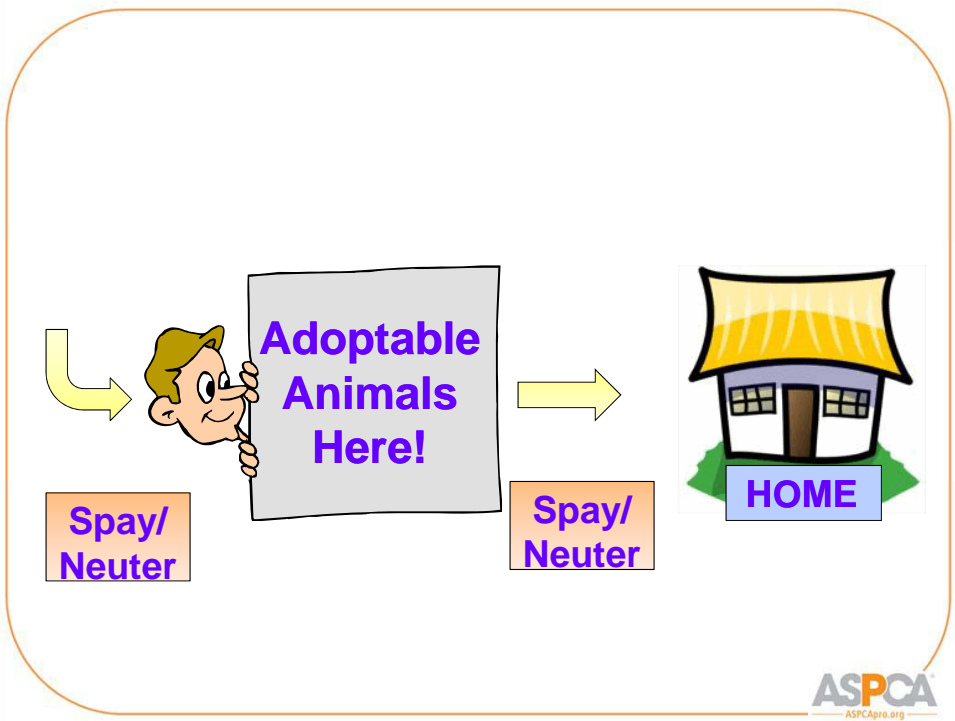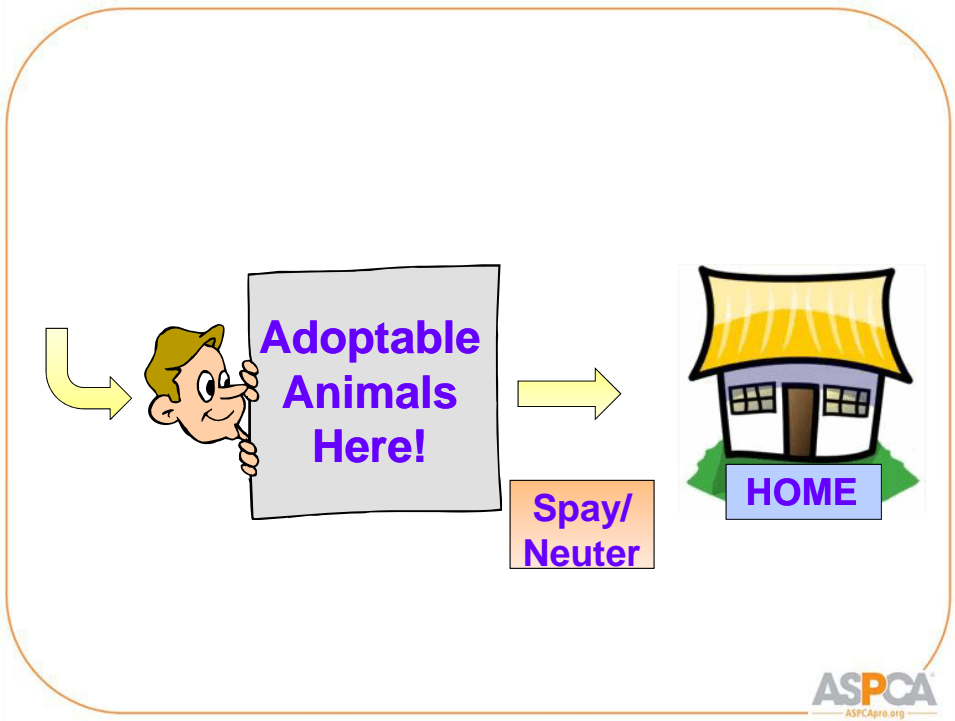
Poll Question – *answer in the Chat Box*

If your shelter spays/neuters all cats and dogs prior to leaving facility as adopted animals, when is spay/neuter performed?

A)   Before animal is placed in adoptions area

B)   After animal has been selected for adoptions

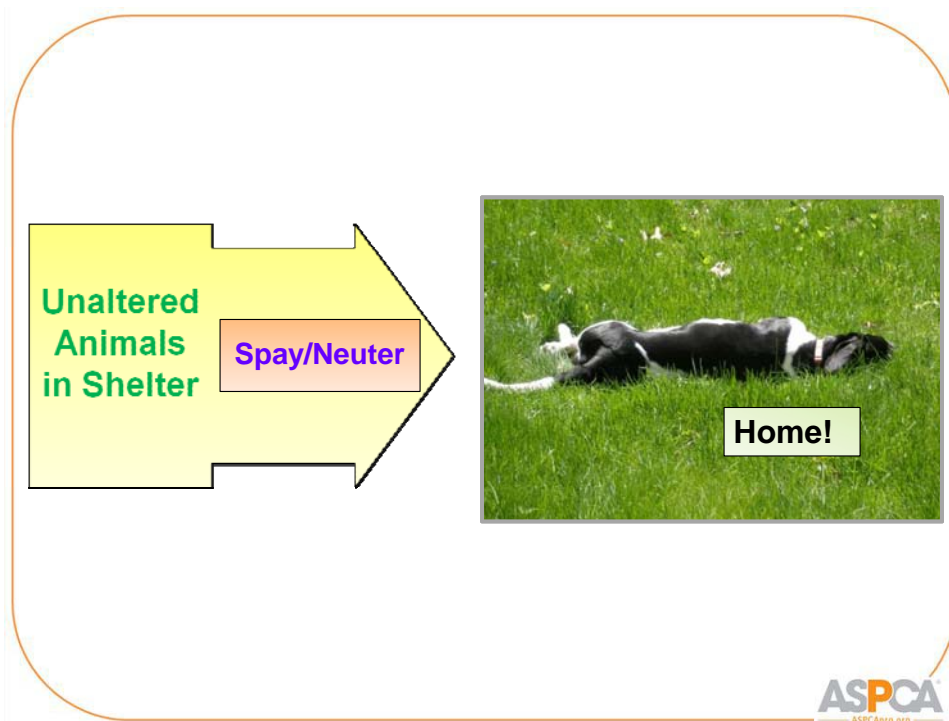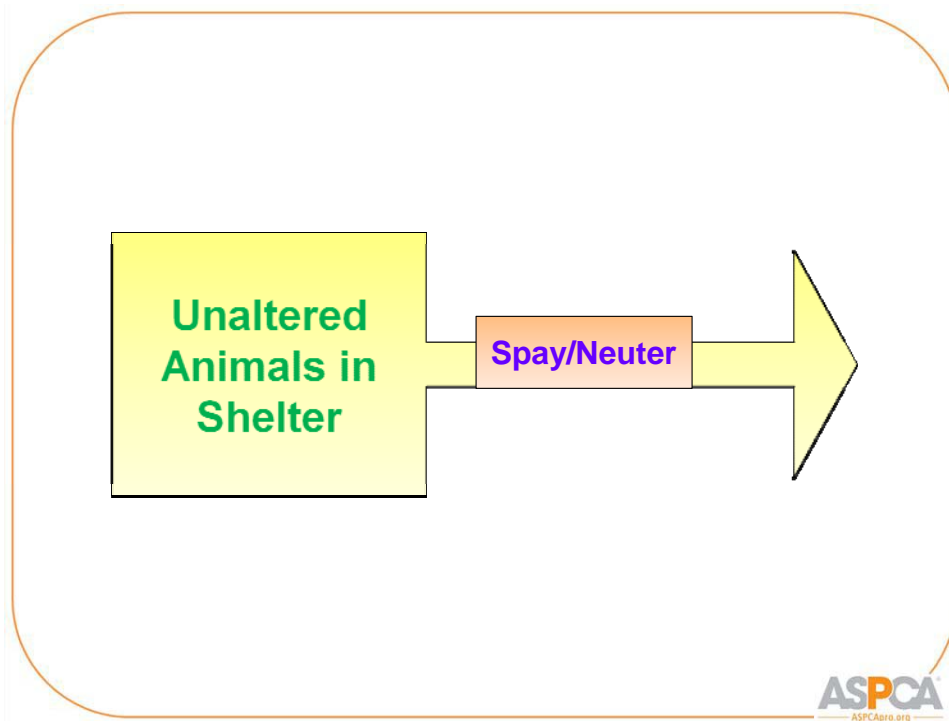**C)**   A combination of both A) and B)

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How to Increase Spays/Neuters Performed Within Shelter's Current Capacity?

How is spay/neuter surgery schedule designed?

Determine which staff members create surgery schedule and utilize consistent protocol to prioritize animals for placement on schedule

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**Increasing Capacity to
Perform Spay/Neuter**

**Increasing Shelter Capacity to
Perform Spay/Neuter**

Do what you do but do it more FREQUENTLY

- Add extra surgery days or time
  - During week, on weekends, on evenings

Considerations

- Are surgical suite, recovery cages available at this time
- Staff overtime
- Contract veterinarians, other medical staff

Increasing Shelter Capacity to Perform Spay/Neuter

Ask for HELP

- High quality, high volume spay/neuter clinic, mobile clinic, MASH program
- Veterinarians in private practice

Considerations

- Transport animals off-site, vehicle, staff, insurance
- Care of post-operative concerns
- Variable cost of spay/neuter
- Will local veterinarians perform pediatric spay/neuter?

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Increasing Shelter Capacity to Perform Spay/Neuter

Ask for HELP

- Volunteers for animal transport, cleaning, monitoring of recovering animals

Considerations

- TRAINING
- Consistent schedule
- Liability

Increasing Shelter Capacity to Perform Spay/Neuter

MASH program within shelter

- Temporary surgical suite within meeting space/ auditorium

Considerations

- Cost and storage of equipment
- Staffing

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Increasing Shelter Capacity to Perform Spay/Neuter

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Increasing Shelter Capacity to Perform Spay/Neuter

Expansion of current on-site clinic to accommodate more animals

- May also allow shelter to spay/neuter free-roaming cats or publicly owned animals

Considerations

- Space, cost, staffing, zoning issues

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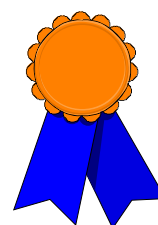## Pediatric Spay/Neuter

Defined as sterilization between 6 and 16 weeks of age

Endorse Pediatric Spay/Neuter

- American Veterinary Medical Association
- American Animal Hospital Association
- Cat Fanciers Association

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Spay/Neuter Prior to Puberty → **Allows shelters to spay/neuter before adoption**
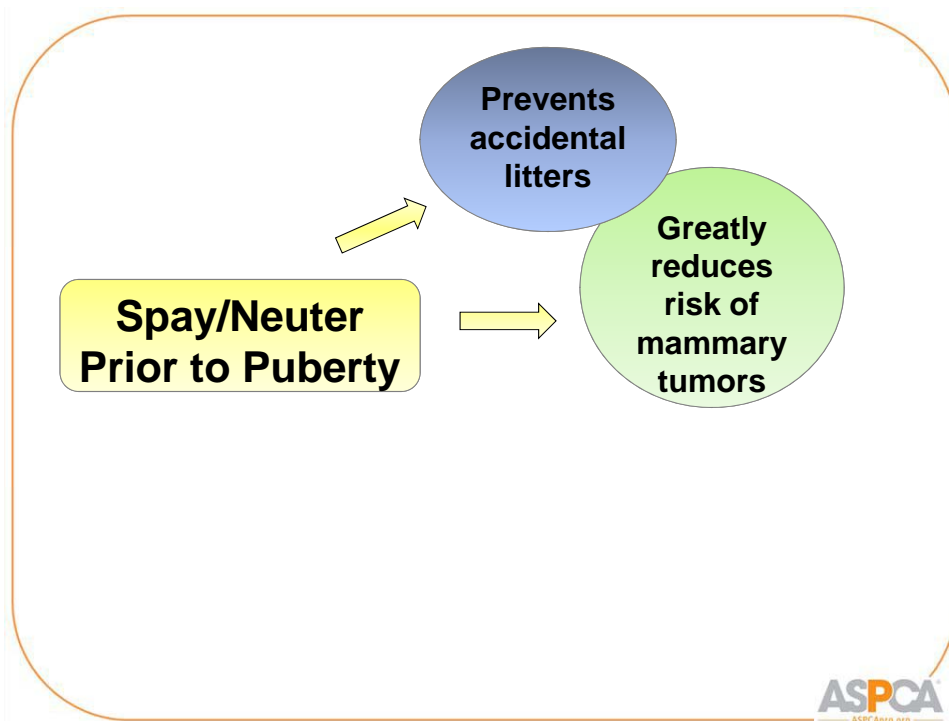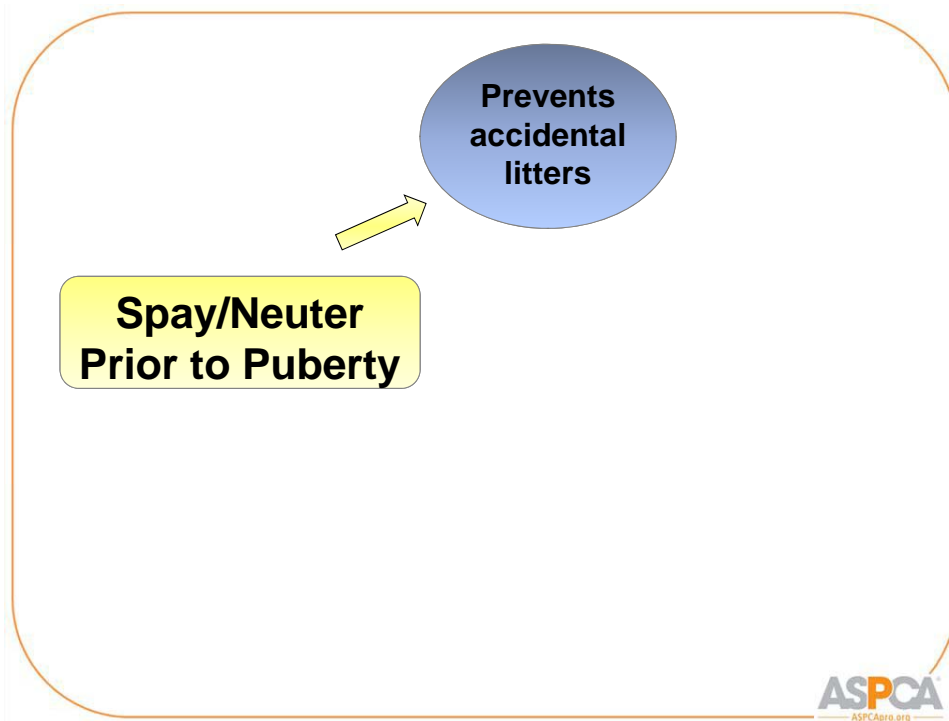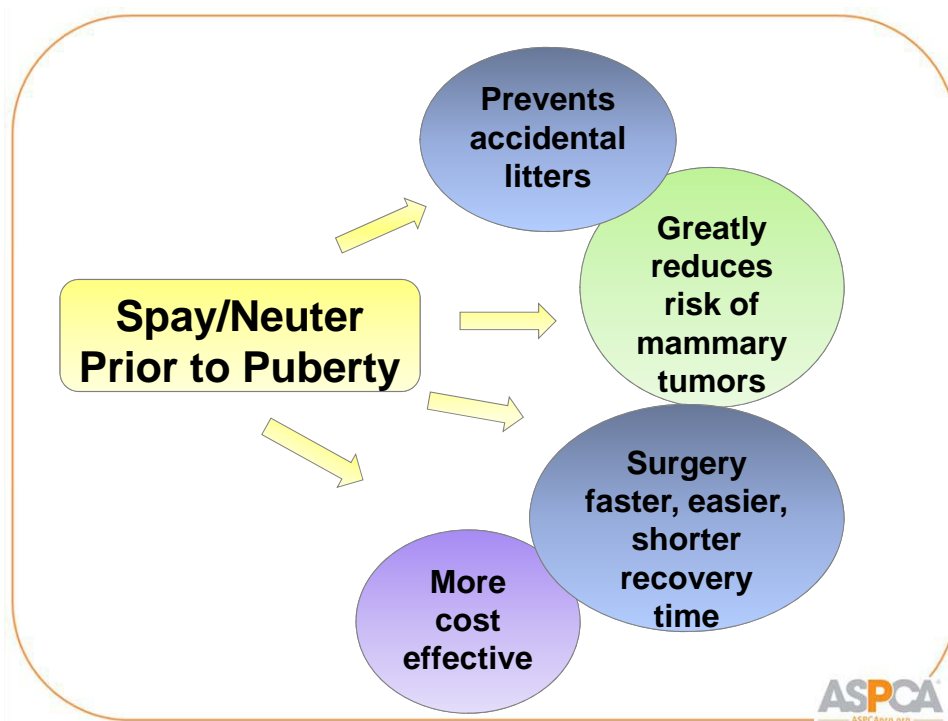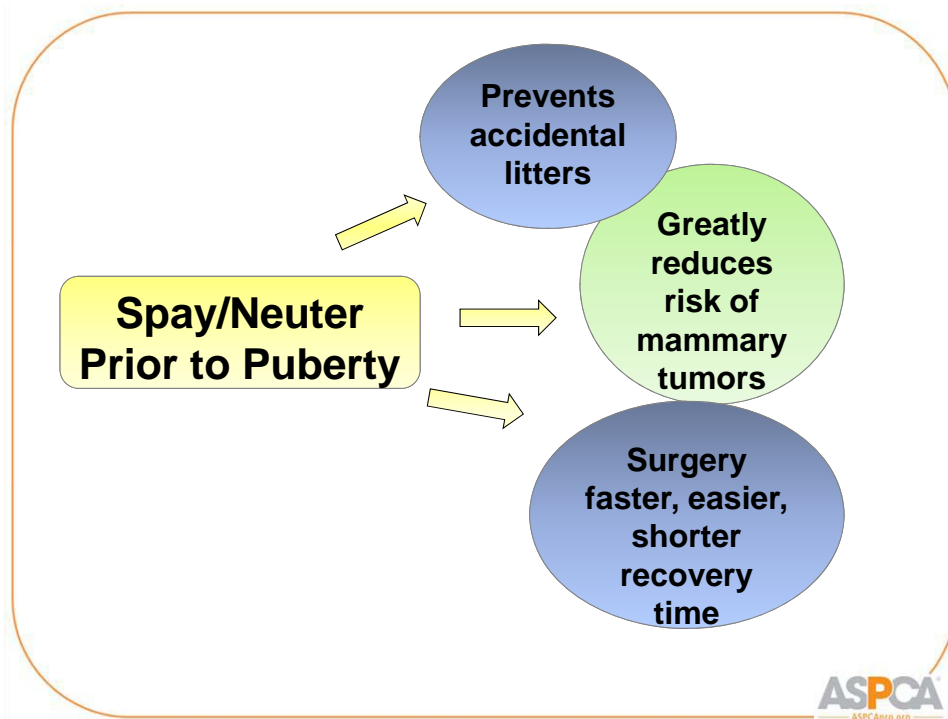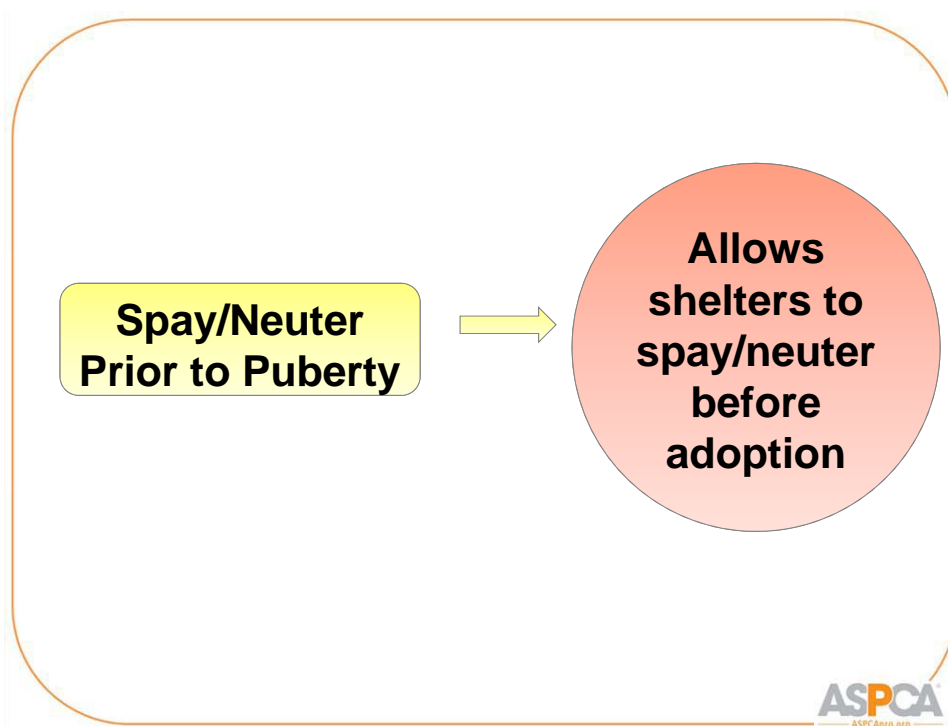
Pediatric Spay/Neuter

How to increase veterinarian's comfort level

- Mentorship
- Experience

5 months → 4 months → 3 months → 2 months
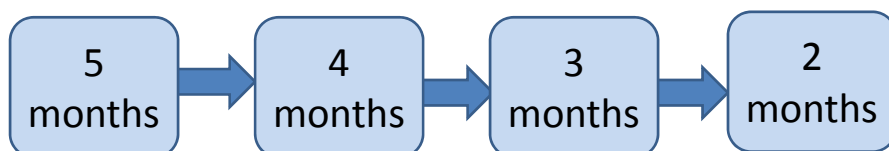
Pediatric Spay/Neuter

How to increase veterinarian's comfort level

- Resources

> **Determining the optimal age
> of gonadectomy of dogs and cats**
> *Margaret Root Kustritz*
> **www.avma.org/avmacollections/spay_neuter/**

> **Pediatric Spay/Neuter: Facts about this safe and
> effective procedure**
> *Lila Miller*
> **www.aspcapro.org/pediatric-spayneuter.php**

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Pediatric Spay/Neuter

How to increase veterinarian's comfort level

- Resources

> **An overview of pediatric spay/neuter
> benefits and techniques**
> *Philip Bushby and Brenda Griffin*
> **Veterinary Medicine, 1 February 2011**

> **Pediatric Spay/Neuter Laboratory**
> North American Veterinary Conference

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Communication

Intake/ Adoption Staff

Administration

Medical Staff
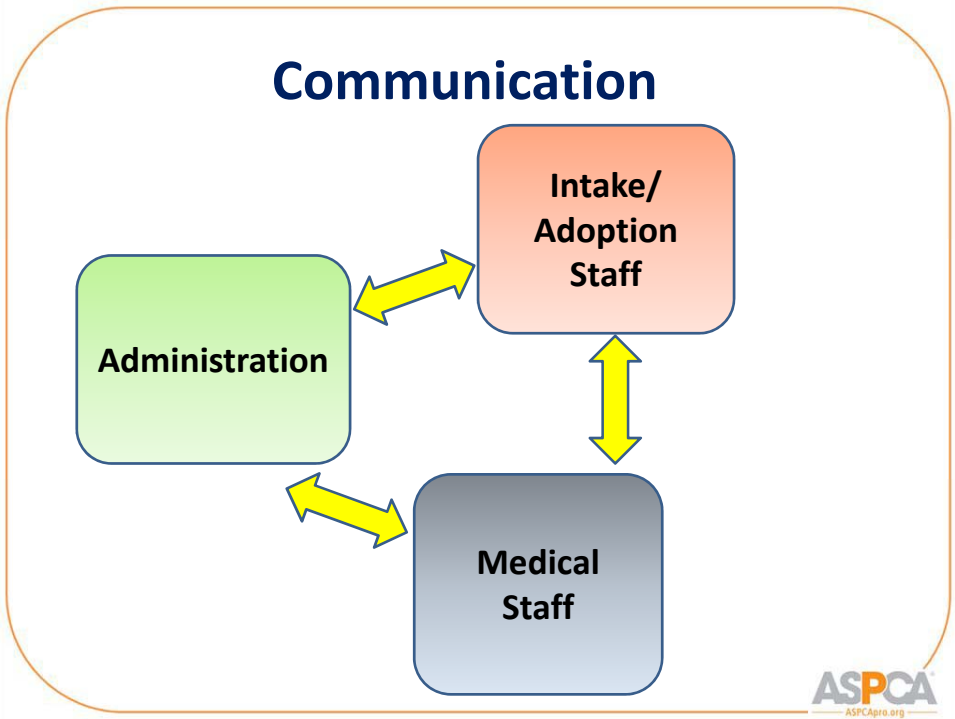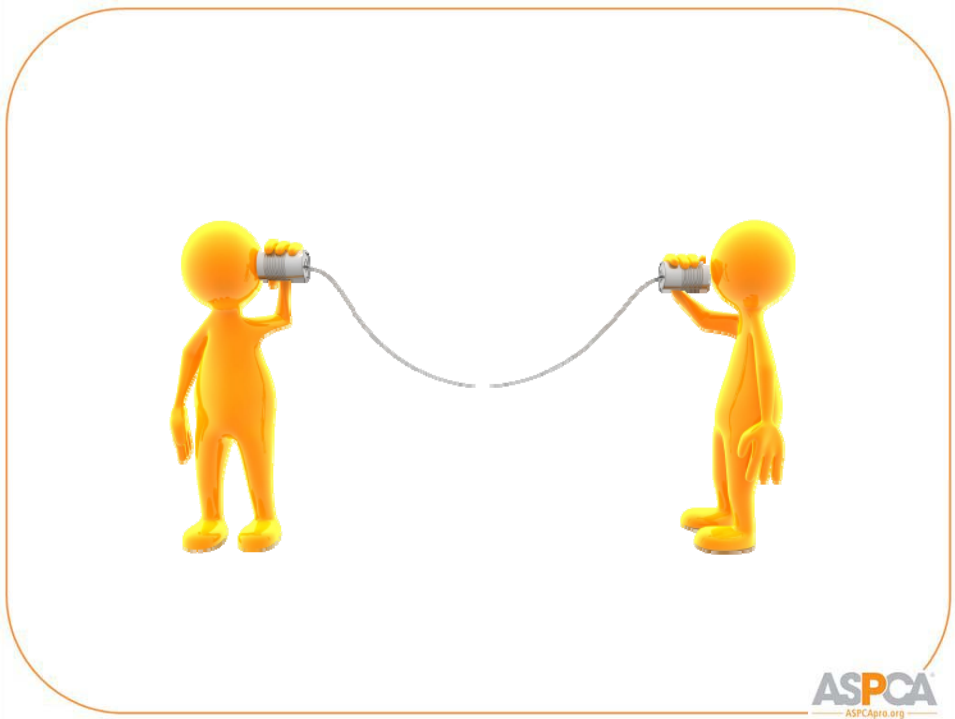
Planning for a Large Adoption Event:

Limited Intake Shelter
Provide Pre-Adoption Spay/Neuter

Start Planning Early!

Admission

Whether the event is an afternoon, a day or an entire weekend, first you must decide:

How many pets should be available for adoption?

- How many puppies, kittens, cats and dogs?
- Based on history and trends of previous events?
- Availability of highly adoptable animals for intake?
  - Locally:
    - Private Homes, Municipal Shelters, Other Humane Organizations or Rescue Groups
  - Relocation:
    - Transport animals to your facility from more distant locations
- Ability to provide pre-adoption spay/neuter?

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HIGHLY ADOPTABLE is KEY
For a Large Event

- Increase number of adoptions at event
- Quick Turn Around, Short Term Stay
- Return to sustainable shelter capacity immediately following event

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Timetable for Admission

When will you begin to increase the intake of highly adoptable pets?

- Several days before event?
- One week before event ?
- Two weeks before event?
- A month before the event?

Goals of admission schedule:

- Minimize holding time
- Coordinate admission with availability of spay/neuter services

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Recommendation:

Admit healthy highly adoptable pets for the event only in the numbers that you will be able to provide spay/neuter surgery the next day and can provide appropriate housing

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Increasing Spay/Neuter Capacity

Ways to push the envelop to temporarily*
   increase spay/neuter capacity:

- Add a few surgeries to each existing clinic
- Add a spay/neuter clinic day
- Add a spay/neuter clinic in the afternoon if you usually do surgery only in the morning
- Add an additional surgical team to an existing clinic if surgery facility allows

*These do not have be measures that are sustainable for a prolonged time

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Housing Adoptable Pets

How/Where will you house the additional animals?
- Within the shelter?
- In Foster homes?

  - Decrease stress and crowding
  - Decrease transmission of infectious disease
  - Adequate disinfection protocols

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Avoid Overcrowding

Foster Homes

- Inspect potential foster homes to determine fitness and capacity
- Provide necessary supplies
- Train foster families in proper hygiene and disinfection techniques
- Train foster families to observe for any signs of illness that may require treatment

Successful Event!

Prepare for Post-Adoption

Do you provide any health services to animals post-adoption?

- Specifically—Do you treat post-op complications associated with spay/neuter surgery?

Can you provide those services to increased number of animals following the event?

- Will you need to adjust staffing?
- Increase hours of operation?

My Little Adoptees!

The Challenge Took Us to New Heights!

Reflections of the HSBV
ASPCA Challenge
Summer 2010

SAVE MORE LIVES
$100K CHALLENGE
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WE TOOK THE
ASPCA® $100K
CHALLENGE

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$100K CHALLENGE **ASPCA**

WE TOOK THE ASPCA®
$100K CHALLENGE

ASPCA Challenge: Adopt out at least 300 more dogs and cats between August 1 and October 31 than we did in the previous year.

We set our goal: adopt out 1000 more !!

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Our Shelter

Open Admission Shelter

ACO contracts
- sheltering for 6 municipalities

Animals Served 9300 annually

Length of Stay
- Dogs 6.2 days, Cats 15.7 days

Live Release Rate 92.2%

Our Animal Population

Transfers make up 60% of all adoptions
- 2011 stray/surrender: 5,181
- 2011 Transfers: 3,927
- 2011 Adoptions: 6,997
- 85% dogs reclaimed
- 20% cats reclaimed

88% of all local strays and surrenders are adopted

Our Veterinary Clinic

Full Service Public Clinic

10,000 public appointments per year

Support all shelter medical cases/ACO emergency

4,800 spay/neuter surgeries annually

Spay/Neuter Staff (a typical day)

1DVM, 3 vet techs, 2 pack/prep volunteers doing
2-hour shifts, 3 surgery recovery volunteers staggered
over 4 hours.

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The Challenge Changed Our Stats

2010 – Our Challenge Year

	Intake	Adoption	Spay/Neuter	Live Release Rate Asilomar Calculation
2009	8075	5325	4409	88.80
2010	**9205**	**6530**	**4809**	**90.30**
2011	9334	6977	4808	92.25

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Efficiencies We Developed

Surgical exams the day before: weight, PE, write up drug log

Morning volunteer position developed to bring animals from shelter to the clinic the morning of surgery which freed up vet techs for patient care and surgery prep

Requested transfer agencies spay/neuter animals before sending

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Free Cat Fridays

Initially novel events for the community.

Clients lined up outside the adoption area before opening and adopted EVERY kitten and young cat.

Kickoff was a record 118 adoptions in one day!

Felines were adopted while recovering from surgery.

Several cats returned MONTHS after adoption to be spayed or neutered…

ADOPTION FRENZY!

We continue with this program today when cat populations in the shelter warrant.

START A LIFETIME OF FRIENDSHIP TODAY!
SAVE A LIFE - FREE CAT AND KITTEN ADOPTIONS TODAY ONLY!

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BOULDER VALLEY

2323 95TH STREET, BOULDER
ADOPTION CENTER HOURS
TODAY 10 AM - 4:30 PM
BOULDERHUMANE.ORG

adopt a
Pet project

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Public-Shelter Practice Intersect

New Adoption Exams

Allows us to follow cases through

Post-adoption Perspective

High Community Expectations

Healthy adoptions

Medical conditions disclosed

Post adoption medical issues treated in our clinic

Additional appointments for clinic staff

ShelterCare insurance

Challenge taxed staff resources

Emergency responses

Four Mile Canyon Fire

40 dogs/cats and 1 bird sheltered
- 6000 acres burned,
- 3000 residents evacuated,
- 169 homes destroyed

Dome Fire

1 dog and 14 cats sheltered
- 1700 residents evacuated

15 dogs from HSUS response
to a hoarding case in Montana

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996 More Lives Saved!
WE WON!!

WINNER $100K CHALLENGE ASPCA

LIVES SAVED SINCE AUGUST

2284

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