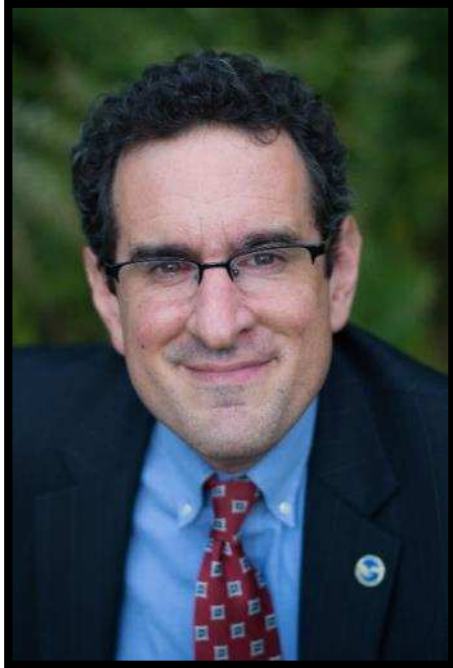




Animal Enrichment Best Practices



Presenters



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Best Practices Defined

*SAWA's Approach
to Best Practices*

*Best Practice vs
Minimum Standards*

Enrichment Defined

A process for improving the environment and behavioral care of confined animals within the context of their behavioral needs

Poll

Purpose of Enrichment

- Reduce stress
- Increase behavioral health
- Decrease illness
- Reduce length of stay



Importance of Enrichment

Mitigate the development and expression of abnormal and/or problematic behavior and contribute to the overall wellbeing of the animals



History of Enrichment: Five Freedoms



1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease
4. Freedom to express normal behavior
5. Freedom from fear and distress

Limitations of Enrichment

- The shelter is not home.
- Long-term or lifetime housing is not recommended.



Enrichment vs. Behavior Modification

Enrichment = Prevention



- Mitigate stress
- Prevent behavioral deterioration
- Increase emotional wellbeing
- Strengthen resilience and adaptation to the shelter environment
- Foundation for psychological health during shelter stay

Behavior Modification = Treatment

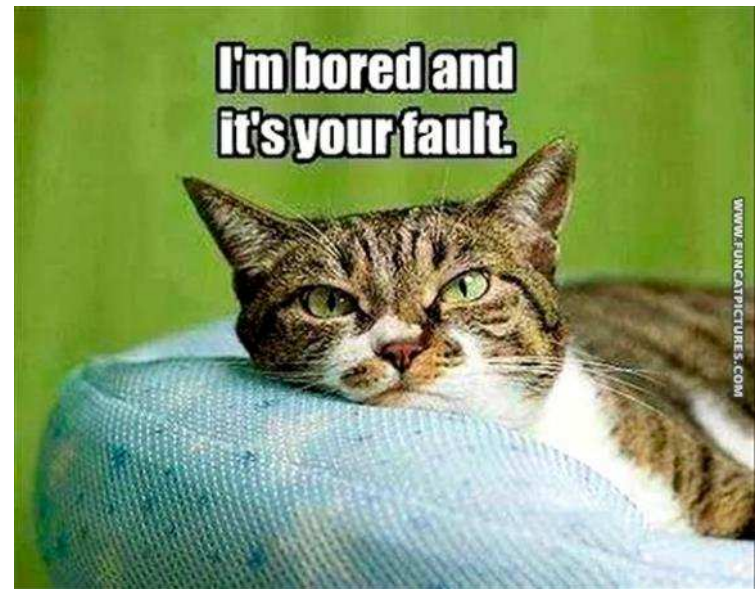
- The process of changing an animal's behavior
- Works toward altering an animal's problematic behavior
- Often resource intensive and requires staff with a specialized skill-set



Key Considerations

General Tips for Success

- Beware of overstimulation
- Consider individual preferences
- Provide variety
- Keep it positive



Special Considerations for Individuals

- Stress and fear
- Reducing stimulation can be as important as increasing stimulation
- Safety for staff and other animals
- High energy dogs

Sanitation and Safety

- Disinfection of items and areas
- Monitor individuals
- Safe animal handling skills
- Protective equipment
- Follow restricted diets
- Follow medical protocols



Goals and Outcomes

What should you expect to invest?

1. Staff training
2. Financial investment
3. Staff time for implementation and oversight



What are the potential benefits?

1. Reduction of stress
2. Reduction of behavioral deterioration
3. Reduction of illness
4. Reduction of length of stay
5. Present better for adoption
6. More engaged and observant workforce
7. Improvement of overall QOL



What are the measures we may be able to observe?

1. Reduction of behaviors that indicate stress, fear or boredom
2. More animals exhibiting relaxed body postures, calm demeanor, normal sleep patterns and interest in social interaction
3. More animals coping well with their environment



Monitoring the Effectiveness of Enrichment

Observe and Record

- Item use?
- Good behavior and body language
- Signs of stress: up or down?



Good Signs

- Good appetite
- Body language indicating lack of stress
- Healthy species-specific behavior
- Normal grooming behavior
- Normal activity level
- Sociability
- Sleep/rest
- Play



Bad Signs

- Poor appetite
- Fearful/anxious body language
- Retreat or hiding
- New aggressive behavior or reactivity
- Inactivity
- Hyperarousal
- Compulsive behavior
- Social withdrawal
- Physical ailments (e.g., diarrhea)

When and How

Schedule regular assessments

- ✓ Individual level
 - ✓ Programmatic level
-
- Include all 4 steps
 1. OBSERVE
 2. RECORD
 3. REVIEW
 4. ADJUST



General Components and Requirements

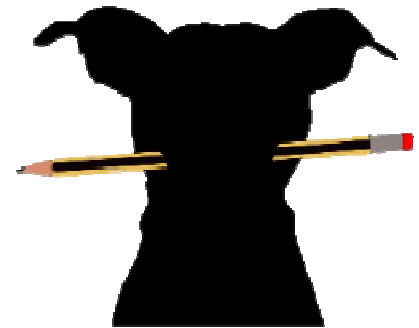
Enrichment Basics

- Starts at intake
- Provided daily
- Structured but with room for flexibility and individuality



Our Requirements

- ✓ Comfortable resting area
- ✓ Hiding spot (especially cats)
- ✓ Things to chew (dogs)
- ✓ Scratching surfaces (cats)
- ✓ At least one toy, rotated daily
- ✓ Daily social interaction
- ✓ Daily sensory enrichment
- ✓ Daily mental stimulation
- ✓ Regular physical exercise
- ✓ Exposure to enjoyable novelty



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Resources

[www.sawanetwork.org/page/
Resources](http://www.sawanetwork.org/page/Resources)

Select
Animal Enrichment Best Practices



SAWA Best Practices Webinar Series: Animal Enrichment

aspcapro.org/animal-enrichment-webinar-series

- [How to Plan & Track the Best Enrichment Program Ever](#)
Wednesday, January 24, 3-4 pm ET
- [The 8 Components Every Animal Enrichment Program Should Have](#)
Wednesday, February 7, 3-4 pm ET
- [Do Try This At Home: Cheap & Fun Enrichment Ideas for Shelters](#)
Wednesday, February 21, 3-4:30 ET