



BASIC MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR DOG AND CAT SHELTERS



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MESSAGE FROM JILL

Dear friend,

While the title of this booklet shows that it is predominantly a tool for the dedicated people who own, manage and work in shelters, it has also been devised as an aid for all of us who work in the field of companion animal welfare. Whether we are working “hands-on” with companion animals, or as educators and fundraisers in this field, it is important that we all understand just what makes a safe and comfortable home for dogs and cats in temporary care – as well as how to create a successful mouthpiece to educate the government and community regarding their plight.

For those of us not working directly in shelters, we still have to understand the needs of stray and street animals and those abandoned by the community, and be certain that the facilities we pass these dogs and cats on to are doing the very best for the animals themselves.



This booklet it is dedicated to the stray dogs and cats so desperate for love and friendship and to the world we know this *can be* for the animals if we all continue joining together to help set them free from their sad and tragic lives.

When I see groups of determined people in China liberate – and heal – caged cats destined for the markets and see too the authorities turning a blind and sympathetic eye to their brave and compassionate act, I know there is hope. When I see crowds in the street begging for the lives of animals as another cull is announced and then hear officials pledging to work with animal welfare groups on programmes of change, I am filled with optimism that such abusive killing will become a shame of the past. When I look at a sea of people at this conference in China – leaders of over 40 animal welfare groups across the country representing hundreds of thousands of members – I know that our dream for change is finally winning through. The tide continues to turn because of ambassadors like you, and it is our ongoing pledge to empower and work with the governments and people in Asia, where a groundswell of change is occurring.

So we hope that this shelter management booklet will not only offer the very best hands-on advice for the fortunate animals liberated by the work and education of tireless animal lovers in China, but will see a future for our “best friends” – a future that truly embraces them, bringing them into the community at large.

Together, we can show why protecting dogs and cats not only helps society as a whole, but makes *us* better people.

Warmest wishes,

Jill Robinson MBE

Founder & CEO

Animals Asia Foundation

MESSAGE FROM HSI

Humane Society International (HSI) has focused on companion animal issues for over 10 years. We work with and through local organisations in countries around the world to assist in the development and implementation of animal welfare programmes.

Some of these organisations have shelters that care for many homeless animals; this can be an expensive and daunting responsibility. Other organisations do not have shelters and instead find other ways to deal with animal welfare concerns and the cruelty to animals that occurs daily. Something almost all of these groups must contend with is the overpopulation of stray/street animals. HSI has programmes that address all of these concerns in animal welfare, including shelter management and care, humane alternatives to effectively controlling overpopulation of street animals, and training in veterinary surgery.

But we couldn't do our work without local organisations such as yours. Your work on the ground is the primary means to improving the lives of animals in your country. Education, training and raising awareness of issues affecting animals are all necessary for global communities to understand why they should care about animals and how they can go about doing so humanely and effectively. International organisations like HSI can offer guidance, but the animals need you to be their voices and to work on their behalf to improve animal welfare around the world.

We hope this shelter management booklet provides the basic information you need in your work to protect and enhance the lives of animals. Whether an animal is a pet or a stray, he or she is a sentient creature deserving compassion and kindness – we can spread this message worldwide as partners in animal welfare.

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SHELTERS ARE NOT THE SOLUTION

It is important to note that shelters are not THE solution to companion animal overpopulation – they are only a part of the solution. Building a shelter will not, on its own, solve a stray animal problem in the long term. In fact it may make it worse, as it provides an easy route for pet owners to dispose of their animals rather than think about providing for them.

A humane animal control programme must involve much more than providing a shelter for homeless animals. It should include a widespread rabies vaccination campaign, comprehensive and compulsory registration, microchip identification, spay/neuter requirements for all owned dogs and cats, adoption programmes, animal cruelty legislation, increased regulations for both pet shops and private breeders, and comprehensive public education initiatives to promote responsible pet ownership. Efforts to decrease companion animal overpopulation and animal cruelty need to be developed and supported by the community as a whole in order to address the causes and not just the effects of animal problems. Where possible, shelters should try to work in tandem with the authorities to educate the public about the issues affecting animals in their province or country.

BASIC ANIMAL SHELTER POLICIES

Purpose

An animal shelter's tasks should include the following:

- Providing a safe, clean, comfortable and species-appropriate environment for animals in need.
- Preventing animal cruelty and suffering.
- Teaching humane principles to the community.
- Lobbying for the enactment and enforcement of adequate animal protection laws.

Take the time to set clear policies for your shelter – this will help provide direction and shape decisions. The policies your shelter chooses will allow your shelter to set, maintain and monitor animal care standards and will ensure the continuity of your mission. Clear shelter policies can also help to prevent misunderstandings and/or conflict with staff, supporters and the general public.

The policies below set out the minimum standards that all animal shelters should adhere to. Whilst funding and manpower are limiting factors, shelters should aim to follow these policies as closely as possible in order to be an asset to the animals and the community they serve:

- Only accept animals that your facility/manpower/funding can handle. If you cannot provide an adequate environment for an animal, do not accept it. (It may be questionable to spend resources on aggressive animals or those with complicated health problems, therefore your shelter may choose to accept and immediately euthanise animals that require extensive veterinary treatment, or are unsuitable for rehoming due to age/temperament.)
- Accept surrendered animals without charging a fee.
- Maintain a clean, comfortable, safe and healthy environment for each animal.
- Hold stray animals for a minimum of five operating days, including Saturdays, UNLESS the animal's welfare is compromised then immediate euthanasia should be considered – e.g. an animal that has been involved in a serious road accident should be euthanised to prevent further suffering.
- Screen prospective adopters using established adoption standards.
- Use sodium pentobarbital administered by well-trained, compassionate individuals when euthanasia is necessary. If this is not available, please raise this issue with the authorities and let them know that it is the most widely recognised humane method of euthanasia in the world.
- Spay or neuter ALL animals before adoption, or require all adopters to get their animals de-sexed within a certain time after placement.
- Vaccinate and de-parasite all animals on arrival. (Without this, diseases such as parvovirus or cat flu can wipe out entire shelter populations or affected animals may pass on disease to healthy animals at the shelter thus compromising welfare.)
- Separate new-intake animals from healthy resident animals for a quarantine period to enable them to be assessed for disease. (Staff should wash hands and foot-dip when moving between quarantine and non-quarantine animals.)
- Provide information to all adopters on exercise requirements, obedience training, toilet training and nutrition. (Basic pet care leaflets can be requested from Animals Asia free of charge. Comprehensive pet care booklets for dogs and cats can also be downloaded from Animals Asia's website free of charge – www.animalsasia.org).
- Should an animal be returned following an unsuccessful adoption, your shelter should accept the animal, try to ascertain the reasons why they were returned, assess the animal again and try to find a more suitable home.

ANIMALS' NEEDS

Like humans, all animals have basic needs that must be met to ensure an appropriate quality of life. Animals in captivity, such as animals in a shelter, are entirely dependent upon humans to provide the conditions that will satisfy their basic needs. It is therefore important that anyone looking after animals is aware of their different needs, which can be grouped into five areas:

1. Physiological needs – e.g. food and water, appropriate temperature/humidity, air and light conditions, shelter from environmental conditions, etc.
2. Social needs – preference for living in solitude, in pairs or in a group.
3. Psychological needs – appropriate stimulation and activity to prevent boredom/frustration.
4. Environmental needs – suitable home, space and territory.
5. Behavioural needs – e.g. climbing, digging and scratching. Interactions with carers/owners.

THE FIVE FREEDOMS OF ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal shelters have a moral responsibility to meet the needs of the animals in their care. The “Five Freedoms” are used to describe both the needs of domesticated animals and the duties of care owed to them. These principles were originally developed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council in Britain and are now used around the world as a benchmark for the treatment of all animals.

Freedom from hunger and thirst – by providing ready access to fresh water and a balanced diet that maintains health and vigour.

Freedom from pain, injury and disease – by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.

Freedom from fear and distress – by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

Freedom from discomfort – by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting and sleeping area.

Freedom to express normal behaviour – by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and appropriate company of the animals' own kind.

EVERY SHELTER DOG NEEDS

- A name.
- To be clean and dry. No dog should have to endure being wet, dirty or uncomfortable.
- A bed – even if they chew it, use it as toilet, or never use it, every dog should have the choice of something soft, comfortable and dry to lie on.
- Toys – shelters can be a highly stressful environment for dogs and toys help to stimulate them, release tension and encourage natural play behaviour. Dogs need SAFE things to chew! (Do not use bones, wood or other materials that splinter or break easily.)
- To have positive human contact every day, which will help to socialise them, therefore increasing their chances of a successful adoption.
- If they live outside, they need to come inside each day (which will help significantly when the dog is rehomed).
- If they live inside only, they need to go outside each day.
- Exercise – even just a short walk each day makes a big difference to a dog's mental health.
- To sleep deeply each night, without being disturbed by bright lighting or noise.
- To have their physical and emotional needs addressed on a daily basis.



EVERY SHELTER CAT NEEDS

- A name.
- To be clean and dry. No cat should have to endure being wet, dirty or uncomfortable.
- A bed – even if they scratch it, use it as toilet, or never use it, every cat should have the choice of something soft, comfortable and dry to lie on.
- A safe place to hide, preferably up high.
- Something to scratch.
- Toys – shelters can be a highly stressful environment for cats and toys help to stimulate them, release tension and encourage natural play behaviour. Cats need things to chase!
- Constant access to a litter box – cats are naturally very clean.
- To have positive human contact every day, which will help to socialise them, therefore increasing their chances of a successful adoption.
- If they live outside, they need to come inside each day (which will help significantly when the cat is rehomed.)
- To sleep deeply each night, without being disturbed by bright lighting or noise.
- To have their physical and emotional needs addressed on a daily basis.



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ANIMAL CARE AND HOUSING

Shelters should be maintained and operated so that they are attractive and welcoming to the community. Most importantly, they should be a place of safety and comfort for the animals.

Stress reduction and disease control should be your goals when determining how to house animals. Separate animals as follows at all times:

- Dogs from cats
- Sick or injured animals from healthy animals
- Puppies and kittens from adult animals (unless the puppies and kittens are nursing)
- Males from females
- Aggressive animals from all others
- Nursing mothers and their young from all others
- Newly arrived animals from healthy residents

Animals that are stressed or recuperating from injuries or illness must have a quiet place to rest during their recovery period. If kept awake, stressed, or forced to be on guard because of close proximity to barking dogs/noisy road etc, their recovery period may be lengthened or otherwise compromised.

FLOORS

- Floors should slope (1 in 60) toward drains to prevent the accumulation of water in the runs.
- To guard against infection, floors should be made of concrete that has been sealed (making it nonporous) or some other nonporous material, such as sealed tiles that can be easily disinfected.
- Consideration should be given to the “slipperiness” of the floor – as dogs can be easily stressed if constantly sliding about on the floor.
- In outside areas, concrete flooring is preferable to grass or earth, but must be thoroughly washed frequently. Wood is not advised as it deteriorates rapidly and paving is difficult to keep clean.
- Curve the floor up the side of the wall to a height of at least four inches to prevent dirt from accumulating in the join between the floor and the wall.

WALLS

- Walls should be sealed e.g. with chlorinated rubber paint, so that they can be properly cleaned. There should be no gaps or cracks that can harbour disease.
- Walls between kennels should be solid from the floor to at least 1 metre (or more for larger dogs) to prevent nose-to-nose contact through the mesh and the spread of diseases such as kennel cough.
- Walls should prevent water and waste material from flowing from kennel to kennel.
- Fencing should be at least 2m high and be made of weld mesh. Ideally the fence should slope inwards at the top to stop dogs climbing out.

DRAINAGE

- The shelter must have drainage and plumbing adequate to handle the heavy load of daily cleaning.
- Drainage for each run should prevent cross-contamination of other runs by urine or faeces.
- Drains should be outside the animal living areas.
- A drain opening of not less than 20cm diameter is recommended and should be covered by a strainer grid.
- The quarantine area should have a separate drain from other areas to ensure there is no risk of cross contamination.

HEATING, COOLING AND VENTILATION

- The temperature at floor level for infant, sick, or injured animals should be at least 75°F/24°C
- The temperature for healthy adult animals should be between 65-70°F/18-21°C
- Ideally, heating, cooling and humidity-control systems should be used for the comfort of the animals, the staff and the visiting public.
- A means of circulating the air must be in operation in all kennel areas, even if this is just through using simple electric fans. Ideally, the air in the building should be exchanged with outside air eight to twelve times per hour.
- Ensure that all animal living areas are draft-free.

LIGHTING

- Ensure all animals have as much natural light as possible.
- It is important for animals to experience day and night for their sense of well being and routine.
- All animals should be able to sleep peacefully at night without harsh lighting.

NOISE

- Reducing noise can help to significantly reduce the stress of life in the shelter, which can also limit susceptibility to disease, especially for cats and shy dogs.
- Cat areas should be as free of the sounds of barking dogs as possible.
- Insulation between the walls of stainless steel cages greatly reduces noise within the cages.
- Consider sound proofing the ceilings as this makes a considerable difference to noise levels.

VISUAL STIMULATION

- Animals like to be able to see what's happening! Being able to see outside their own environment is essential to the mental health of any animal and can help prevent abnormal behaviours forming. It is interesting and stimulating to watch events outside their living space and keeps them from feeling bored or lonely.

SECURITY

- Install a security system to protect the building. Some examples are perimeter fencing, an alarm system, or at a minimum, deadbolt locks for all outside runs in combination with outside lighting.
- Secure all controlled drugs in a locked steel cabinet bolted to a permanent wall within a building.
- Install a fire-alarm system and place fire extinguishers/sand buckets in easily accessible locations around the shelter.
- Institute an emergency plan to prepare your staff for a potential evacuation of animals from the shelter.

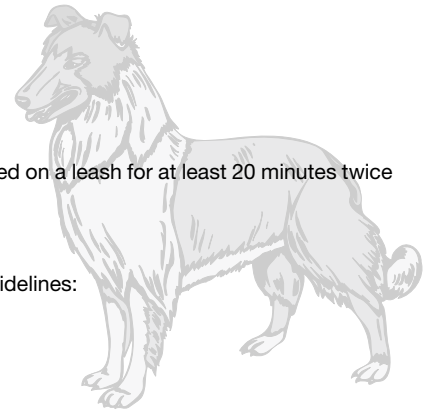
SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOGS

Dogs confined in either cages or kennels should have room to move about normally. Individual kennels should follow these minimum size guidelines:

- Large dogs (more than 50 pounds/22kg): at least 4 feet by 6 feet, or 24 square feet
- Medium-sized dogs (36-50 pounds/16-22kg): at least 4 feet by 5 feet, or 20 square feet
- Small dogs (10-35 pounds/4-15kg): at least 3 feet by 4 feet, or 12 square feet
- Dogs confined in cages should be exercised in runs at least 4 feet by 10 feet twice daily or walked on a leash for at least 20 minutes twice daily.

Kennels with runs, whether fully enclosed or indoor/outdoor, should follow these minimum size guidelines:

- Kennels – 4 feet by 6 feet
- Runs – 4 feet by 8 feet
- Ideally, each dog should have his or her own kennel.
- Dogs that share kennels must be evaluated for compatibility and monitored closely. Shared housing is not suitable for sick, injured or nursing dogs, or in shelters with a high turnover.
- Each dog should have ample room to stand, lie down, turn around and sit normally. This requires a minimum area of 4 feet by 4 feet for each dog.
- A shared 5-foot by 10-foot kennel should hold no more than two large, two medium, or three small dogs.
- Always separate unsterilised males from females.



SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR CATS

Individual cages should be made of stainless steel, fibreglass, or other impervious material and should follow these guidelines:

- Provide an area of at least 9 square feet (usually 3 feet by 3 feet) for each cat.
- Supply each cage with a cat litter tray.
- Ensure that each cat has constant access to water and dry food.
- House no more than one cat in a cage, except for nursing mothers, young litters of kittens, or pairs of adult cats that have been admitted to the shelter from the same household.

If colony cages are used to house cats, follow the guidelines listed below:

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- Always separate unsterilised males from females. (If in doubt separate!)
- Separate nursing mothers from all others.
- Separate young kittens from adult cats (except for their mothers).
- House no more than fifteen adult cats or twenty kittens in a 10-by-15-foot room.
- Include one 12-inch by 18-inch cat litter pan for every three cats or five kittens.
- Have water and dry food available at all times (when giving fresh food, use one dish per cat).
- Equip colony rooms with shelves or resting boxes; provide cages with open doors for cats that prefer to be isolated. Cardboard boxes and other enclosures or platforms that can be disposed of, changed, or easily disinfected may be used. Blankets or towels that can be disinfected can be used for bedding.
- If the colony cage has an outdoor run, ensure there is adequate shade at all times.
- Shared housing is not suitable for sick, injured or nursing cats, or in shelters with a high turnover.



Both dog and cat enclosures should be equipped as follows:

- Potable water must be available at all times.
- Adequate shade should be available at all times.
- Water containers should be cleaned and disinfected daily (and always before a new animal is put into the cage or run).
- Water containers should be ideally mounted or very heavy so that dogs cannot tip them over or urinate in them.
- Feed bowls should be cleaned daily and disinfected after every feed and old food should be thrown away.
- All kennels, bowls, toys, bedding etc MUST be disinfected between occupants.
- Provide raised resting boards or beds. Cardboard boxes and other enclosures or platforms that can be disposed of, changed, or easily disinfected may be used. Blankets or towels that can be disinfected can be used for bedding.
- Provide an easily accessible staff rota of duties and check lists, with sign off for end of work period.
- Provide foot dips and hand washing facilities in all areas, plus latex gloves and plastic aprons in quarantine areas.

GENERAL SHELTER LAYOUT

Reception area

- The reception area should be large enough for the public to bring, reclaim or adopt animals comfortably and to keep the animals separated from one another. It should be light, clean and orderly, and give a good first impression to the observer's senses of sight, sound and smell.
- Ideally, incoming animals should be received in an area separate from the adoption area.
- To maintain high standards of safety for the staff and public and to decrease the possibility of the spread of disease, newly arrived animals should be routed to the quarantine area as soon as possible.
- The traffic flow pattern should be designed so that animals can be moved quickly, safely and easily from one place to another.

Administration office

- This is the control centre for the shelter and it should have direct access both to the reception area and the animal quarters.
- Provide adequate space for staff to work comfortably and for equipment and records to be stored properly.

Euthanasia room/cold storage

- The euthanasia room and dead-animal storage area should be easily accessible from the kennel area; however, this area should be away from public view.
- A refrigerator or freezer will be required to store animal carcasses.
- Before deciding on the method that you will use to dispose of carcasses, you must check with the local authorities for any health regulations that may affect your choice.

Food preparation area

- This area will require a sink with hot and cold running water and a refrigerator.
- You should ensure that there is an area to disinfect feeding bowls and that you have sufficient space to place the bowls when filling them.
- Food should be stored sealed in rodent-proof containers and food preparation areas should be kept as clean as if they were being used for humans

DAILY OPERATIONS

In addition to basic shelter policies, it is important to put together written operational policies and standards to ensure that daily operations run as smoothly as possible.

INCOMING ANIMALS

1. All dogs and cats must be quarantined immediately on arrival.
Dogs should be kept in quarantine and closely monitored for seven to 10 days.
Cats should be kept in quarantine and closely monitored for 14 days.
Any coughing, sneezing, vomiting, diarrhoea, ocular or nasal discharge should be noted. Appetite, water consumption and urine and faecal output should be monitored. Temperament assessment should begin.
2. All shelters must have a dedicated quarantine area with footdips, hand-washing facilities, latex gloves and aprons available. No contact between animals in quarantine or between quarantined animals and other animals at the shelter should be allowed during the quarantine period. Staff/volunteers working in the quarantine area should ideally be separate to staff/volunteers for other animals. If separate staff/volunteers are not available then healthy animals should be fed/cleaned first before moving to the quarantine area, to reduce the risk of disease transmission from sick to healthy animals.
3. All animals should be examined by a vet or an experienced member of staff within 24 hours of their arrival at the shelter, or sooner if there is any sign of injury or disease. (See page 15 for a check list to evaluate an animal's health.)
4. Animals should also be vaccinated and de-wormed and, if necessary, treated for fleas and/or ticks using age-appropriate products for both dogs and cats.
5. If an animal is sick, medical treatment should be administered in the quarantine area and vaccinations/de-worming performed only when the animal is healthy.
6. During their time in quarantine, animals should be assessed for any clinical or behavioural problems and observed closely during their stay. This will help when rehoming and/or mixing appropriate animals together, particularly in shared kennels or catteries.
7. Information gathered on arrival and during the quarantine period should be recorded in paper or electronic form (see Record Keeping on page 16).

DAILY ROUTINES

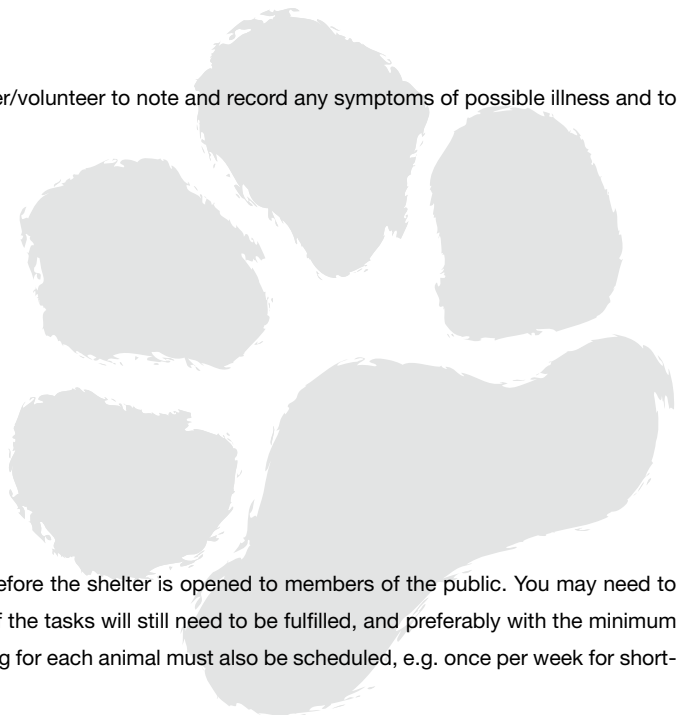
It is important that routines are established and adhered to for feeding, cleaning and record keeping. This will ensure that fewer mistakes are made and that all essential tasks are completed properly, as well as maintaining a sense of structure and continuity for the animals in your shelter. As part of the daily work routine, each shelter should detail the times by which these duties/tasks must be completed and the names of the staff/volunteers responsible, who should then sign off that their tasks and observations are complete when leaving.

Ensure that all staff/volunteers understand their responsibilities and that there is a clear chain-of-command so that if problems arise they are dealt with appropriately.

A basic daily routine would be as follows:

1. Check all cages and inspect animals. (Instruct every staff member/volunteer to note and record any symptoms of possible illness and to bring them to a supervisor's attention.)
2. Adjust ventilation and heating/cooling.
3. Clean and disinfect kennels, cattery and service buildings.
4. Clean and disinfect feeding utensils.
5. Prepare food and feed animals.
6. Each dog should be exercised/socialised every day.
7. Each cat should be socialised every day.
8. Attend to members of the public.
9. Allow time for staff breaks.
10. Bed down animals, adjust heating/cooling and ventilation.
11. Write up daily log of records and notes.
12. Secure all buildings.

Ideally, as many cleaning tasks as possible should be completed before the shelter is opened to members of the public. You may need to draw up different routines for the weekends, holidays, etc., but all of the tasks will still need to be fulfilled, and preferably with the minimum of disruption to the normal routines for the animals. Regular grooming for each animal must also be scheduled, e.g. once per week for short-



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haired animals and 2-3 times per week for long-haired animals. Dogs should be bathed on leaving quarantine and before rehoming.

DIET AND FEEDING

All shelter animals, regardless of their term of residence, should receive a good-quality, balanced diet that is appropriate for their life stage. Select a food produced by a company that guarantees complete and balanced nutrition. The type of food should not be changed too frequently since this can cause digestive upsets in some animals. However if you do need to change brands, introduce the new food slowly by mixing a little in with the old food and gradually increasing the ratio of new food each day.

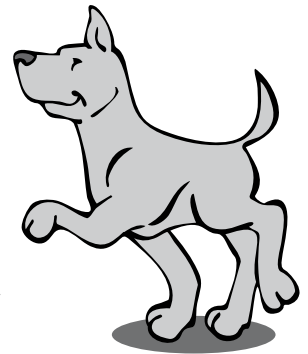
The feeding regime should be set out clearly. Feeding times should be regular and adhered to, and concise written instructions should be available for staff/volunteers. Frequent changes are unsettling for animals and should be avoided. It is a good idea to have a white board in the food preparation area, showing the dietary requirements of each animal, as well as any medication they may require.

The food preparation area must be kept clean and orderly. Utensils should be practical and readily at hand. It is advisable to buy good quality products, as these will last longer and will prove cheaper in the long run. The shelter should have a sufficient number of adequately sized stainless steel food and water bowls to accommodate all animals.

Try to keep the food preparation time to a minimum since the time would be better spent socialising with the animals. Commercially prepared dry food provides a complete balanced meal, and animals produce looser stools with tinned food, which may result in longer kennel cleaning times.

The principles below should be considered when feeding:

- Ensure you provide a balanced diet, in clean, preferably stainless steel food and water bowls
- Fresh clean water should be available at all times for both dogs and cats.
- Do not organise exercise sessions for the animals within one hour of eating.
- Avoid sudden changes in diet.
- Do not overfeed.
- Avoid using leftovers, if possible. The potential for disease is higher and the nutritional value is often low, as well as being unreliable.
- 6-12 week old puppies and kittens should be fed three times a day.
- 3-12 month old puppies and kittens should be fed twice a day.
- Adult dogs at least once a day, preferably twice.
- Cats should have access to dry food at all times.
- Do not feed dog food to cats (or vice versa).
- Dry food (either moistened or dry) provides a complete high protein, balanced meal. Stools will be very firm. Dry food can be made more palatable by mixing in a little wet food and some warm water.
- Dry puppy food must be moistened for young pups.
- Store all food in air-tight plastic containers to prevent spoilage and to avoid attracting rodents and insects.
- If animals are fed between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., their stools can be removed before closing and the dogs will be in clean runs overnight.
- If you must supplement with rice for either dogs or cats, please be aware that rice has no real nutritional value and merely fills them up. Dog or cat food should comprise the greater proportion of their diet. If supplementing is necessary for dogs, a mixture of rice and vegetables is better than just rice. Gravy should be avoided (high salt), liver should never be fed (can cause vitamin A toxicity) and onions and garlic should not be fed (can cause anaemia). Cats are pure carnivores and MUST be provided with a good quality meat diet or heart and eye problems can occur.
- Ideally dogs should be fed separately. When there is more than one animal in an enclosure, separate each animal as far apart as possible (i.e. in different corners) to prevent competition for food. Each animal must have his or her own, individual food bowl. Ideally there should be a staff member/volunteer present to ensure that there is no bullying or stealing of food at meal times.
- Please note, that chocolate is highly toxic to dogs and should never be fed, even in small quantities.



HYGIENE AND CLEANING

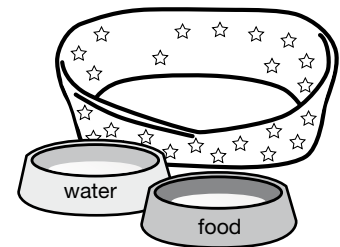
A dirty shelter is not only a disease hazard, it causes behavioural problems in the animals living there and creates a poor public image. Members of the public often avoid visiting shelters because they find them depressing and smelly – so the cleaner, fresher and brighter your shelter is, the more likely the public will come to find a pet!

Systematic cleaning routines are essential to maintaining a pleasant shelter environment and controlling the spread of disease. By establishing a set routine for cleaning, tasks are less likely to be forgotten and the control of disease will therefore be more effective. Cleaning routines for tasks that are to be completed on a daily, weekly and monthly basis should be established and reviewed periodically to check that they are effective.

- All kennels, cages and runs must be cleaned daily with hot water and a broad-spectrum disinfectant proven to be effective against various bacteria and viruses common in a shelter environment (including distemper and parvovirus). The disinfectant must be made up to the appropriate concentration.
- As an alternative, chlorine bleach (mixed with water in a 1:32 dilution) can be used.
- Mix disinfectants according to specific manufacturer instructions. After application, allow the disinfectant to remain in contact with the surface for the length of time recommended by the manufacturer before rinsing.
- Do not expose animals to water or disinfectant. During cleaning, place all animals in separate holding areas or in carriers; animals should never be left in the cage or kennel. Make sure enclosures are completely dry before animals are returned to them.
- Clean the kennels and cages from ceiling to floor (i.e. cleanest to dirtiest area) and scrub cage doors and similar surfaces manually. It is false economy – and a potential source of infection – to clean the walls of a run only to the height of the dog inhabiting the run. If any one section of the shelter is left sanitised, disease can be easily transmitted.
- Each enclosure should be also cleaned, scrubbed, and disinfected BEFORE a new animal enters.

The recommended daily cleaning routine is as follows:

1. Remove the animal from the run or cage and place in a separate holding area or carrier, then remove bedding, toys and all food and water containers.
2. Remove all solid waste such as faeces and hair. Do not hose solid waste into the drainage system; rinse away only urine with water.
3. Wash enclosures using a high-pressure sprayer or long-handled, stiff-bristled scrub brush.
4. Using a scrub brush and a solution of detergent/disinfectant, scrub all surfaces within the enclosure including the floor, sides, resting board, top, and gate, according to specific manufacturer instructions.
5. Allow the solution to stand for at least 20 minutes (or the length of time recommended by the manufacturer).
6. Thoroughly rinse all surfaces with a steady stream of water (preferably hot).
7. Dry the run or cage as completely as possible using a sponge or rag. If possible, ventilate the area prior to returning animals to it.
8. Clean and disinfect beds, toys, food dishes, and water bowls.
9. Clean and disinfect cat litter boxes.
10. Clean and disinfect the holding area or carrier after each animal has been removed.
11. Clean and disinfect the euthanasia room.
12. Clean and disinfect other areas used by animals.
13. Clean all areas used by the staff and public.



Because bacteria can accumulate and lead to disease and odour problems, be sure to regularly clean and disinfect other areas, including the aisles, walls and ceilings.

Cleaning of feeding utensils, litter trays and toys and water bowls

All items in a cage or enclosure can harbour disease and must be thoroughly cleaned each day with a solution of detergent/disinfectant. Stainless steel is the best material because it is strong and easy to keep clean.

Vermin control

It is important to control insects and vermin, and care should be taken to eliminate vermin host sites as far as possible. Food should not be left uncovered and spilt food should be cleaned up. Rat poison is lethal to dogs and cats and therefore should not be used in any areas where animals may be. Humane traps should be used instead of poison.

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DISEASE CONTROL

All reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious or contagious disease among your animals. Any outbreak of infectious disease, such as kennel cough or cat flu, should be immediately treated, the animal isolated and then the outbreak should be investigated to prevent further spread and determine what precautions can be taken to reduce future outbreaks. Early detection, immediate isolation and thorough cleaning are the key elements in disease control.

Designating certain rooms for certain uses and observing health precautions, like putting on a dedicated smock (that is washed each day) when handling sick or very young animals; having a step-through disinfectant tray to prevent tracking disease on your shoes to different parts of the shelter (a cat litter tray with a towel soaked in a mild bleach solution works well); frequent use of disinfectant soap scrub; and the use of disposable gloves will also significantly help to prevent the spread of disease.

Strengthening Immunity Against Infection

Proper nutrition is critical for a healthy immune system. Provide the best quality food your shelter can afford, and be sure individual animals are eating. Use every method at your disposal to decrease the stress your shelter's animals are undergoing. Keep them warm, dry and comfortable; ask your staff and volunteers to give them walks, disposable toys and the human companionship that most of them crave.

Controlling Upper Respiratory Infections in Your Shelter

Upper respiratory infections are the most common enemies for you and the animals at your shelter. The bad news is that you can't and won't win every battle against upper respiratory infections in your shelter. But the good news is that you can win the war. No single pill, vaccine or procedure will eliminate the problem of upper respiratory infection, but many strategies, implemented together, will achieve the goal of disease control.

The two major strategies for controlling upper respiratory infections in the shelter are:

1. Minimising exposure to the disease-causing viruses and bacteria
2. Strengthening each animal's immunity to infection.

Each strategy is essential; success cannot be achieved by addressing one while ignoring the other. Implementing these two strategies also provides the added benefit of decreasing the incidence of other infectious diseases in your shelter population.

Some animals have "acute" infections from which they recover, whilst other animals have "chronic" (long-term) symptoms. However some carriers of chronic infections may never show symptoms, but they are still capable of spreading disease.

Animals have different immunity to disease at different stages of their lives. Separating the animals you shelter not only by species, sex, known characteristics and special needs, but also by "life-stage groups" offers them some protection. Ideally, each group would have its own area in your shelter, but simply being aware of the different groups as you develop your shelter's routines will be beneficial. These life-stage groups include:

- Puppies and kittens separated from their mother before being weaned (at less than 8 to 10 weeks of age).
- Pregnant animals and nursing mothers with puppies or kittens.
- Weaned puppies and kittens (approximately 2 to 4 months of age).
- Juvenile puppies and kittens (approximately 4 to 9 months of age).
- Adult dogs and cats (9 months and older).
- Injured or sick animals.

Plan cleaning, feeding and other activities with life-stage groupings in mind. Care for young animals first, followed by the general shelter population, quarantined animals, and finally, sick or injured animals. Wash hands with a disinfectant soap and change clothing before tending to each new group; full-length, long-sleeved surgical gowns or technicians' smocks are ideal because they can easily be removed after handling each group and later washed.

If possible, use a separate set of cleaning supplies, feeding equipment and other potential disease transferring items to care for each different group. If this is not possible, then thoroughly disinfect the items before use with each new group.

PARASITE CONTROL

All dogs, cats, puppies and kittens entering your shelter should be treated for certain parasites in order to protect the rest of the animals, prevent environmental infestation and minimise health threats to staff, volunteers and the public.

A minimum shelter parasite control protocol should consist at least of a de-wormer effective against roundworms, tapeworms and hookworms, and flea preventive (and tick preventive for dogs). All of these parasites are common in dogs and cats, and can potentially cause health problems in people.

Shelter animals should be de-wormed every 3-4 months. Ensure that you use age-appropriate products and never use products that are intended for dogs on cats and vice versa.

HOW TO TELL IF A CAT OR DOG MAY NEED VETERINARY CARE

The following information lists the most common signs of health and illness in dogs and cats. It is not meant to replace veterinary care or advice, but only to help you decide if a cat or dog may need veterinary assistance.

The best way to evaluate the general health of a cat or dog is to give the animal a thorough nose-to-tail examination. Ask a friendly veterinarian from your community to come to your shelter and train you and other staff. Then establish your own routine and methodically examine each animal using the same series of steps each time. That way, you won't overlook some of the more subtle – yet often serious – health conditions often missed with a quick once-over. Dogs and especially cats can “hide” illnesses or other ailments, so you need to be systematic.

Use the checklist below to evaluate animals when they first arrive at the shelter. Don't forget to observe animals for signs of health problems during their entire stay – such as when you're cleaning or just giving the animals a little tender loving care. To make sure staff observations are recorded systematically, your shelter may wish to develop a health “report card” that accompanies the animal during his or her stay at the facility.



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HEALTH CHECKLIST

EYES	
Good signs	clean, clear and bright, responsive to visual stimuli
Warning signs	watery, red, filmy/cloudy, discoloured, dry, inflamed (swollen), hypersensitive to light pupils are unequal in size, pupils are overly dilated or overly constricted, showing third (or middle) eyelid showing discharge, itchy (animal rubs at eyes, painful (animal squints)
EARS	
Good signs	clean (both outer ear and canal), pink and clean (inner ear), responsive to noise
Warning signs	showing discharge (waxy or other), crusty, red or inflamed (canal is swollen/thickened), hair around ear is matted scabbed, fly-bitten, itchy (animal scratches ear or shakes head), foul odour, painful (animal cries when ear is touched)
NOSE	
Good signs	clean, free of discharge
Warning signs	scabbed, showing discharge (clear, mucous, blood, or pus), crusty, cracked, congested or blocked
MOUTH	
Good signs	free of odour, teeth are clean, gums are pink, animal appears to swallow normally gums have good capillary refill time (pink gum colour returns within 1-2 seconds after being pressed with finger)
Warning signs	animal appears to swallow normally but mucous membranes are unusually red or pale, dry, salivating (animal is drooling)
	foul odour not caused by food, foreign bodies, showing discharge, swollen or inflamed gums are pale, white, purple, or inflamed, teeth are loose, pitted, broken, or tartar-covered animal has trouble swallowing, animal gags (may be a sign of kennel cough)
BREATHING/ RESPIRATION	
Good signs	respiration is regular, respiration sounds clear, respiration rate is normal
Warning signs	breathing is irregular, rapid, shallow, or laboured, animal is sneezing, coughing, wheezing, moist lung sounds breathing is through open mouth, animal is breathless during mild-moderate exercise
SKIN/HAIR	
Good signs	coat is bright, and glossy, coat appears well groomed, skin is clean, free of oil, skin is free of swelling, lumps and lesions
Warning signs	coat is dull, coat is oily, dirty, coat shows areas of hair loss or thinning, hair is matted, skin is dry or flaky skin shows swelling, lumps or lesions, skin is scabbed, skin is red, irritated, animal has fleas, ticks, lice, or other parasites
LEGS/FEET	
Good signs	legs support weight evenly (no limp), pads are clean and smooth, nails look healthy
Warning signs	animal favours one leg (limps), animal has limited motion, animal is weak or uncoordinated, joint feels tender pads are cracked or hard, pads have matted hair between them, nails are long, short, or ingrown legs show swelling, lumps or lesions, Animal is reluctant to exercise
ANAL/GENITAL/URINARY	
Good signs	area is clean and free of discharge q stool is normal
Warning signs	area has discharge, stool is watery or bloody, animal is constipated, area around anus shows swelling or lumps one or both testicles are not descended (not in scrotum), one testicle is harder and/or larger than other Animal urinates small volumes frequently, urine is not straw-yellow and translucent in colour
GENERAL APPEARANCE	
Good signs	animal is bright, alert and responsive, skin is elastic (springs back immediately after being raised) animal is balanced, coordinated, temperature is normal, animal is interested in surroundings, oriented
Warning signs	animal is very thin or obese, animal has wounds or abscesses, animal has swelling, lumps or bumps animal appears to have umbilical hernia, mammary glands are swollen or oozing discharge skin does not spring back when pinched (animal is dehydrated), animal appears uncoordinated animal tilts head, animal repeatedly circles, abdomen is bloated, temperature is abnormal animal appears lethargic, animal appears hyperactive, animal appears disoriented
Normal ranges in healthy dogs and cats (please note that these rates may increase significantly in a stressful situation such as at a shelter).	
Temperature (rectal)	• 100-102.5 Fahrenheit/38-39 degrees Celsius
Heart rate (at rest)	🐾 Large dogs 50-100 beats/minute 🐾 Medium dogs 80-120 beats/minute 🐾 Small dogs and cats 120-200 beats/minute
Respiratory rate (at rest)	• 10-30 breaths/minute for dogs • 24-42 breaths/minute for cats

RECORD KEEPING

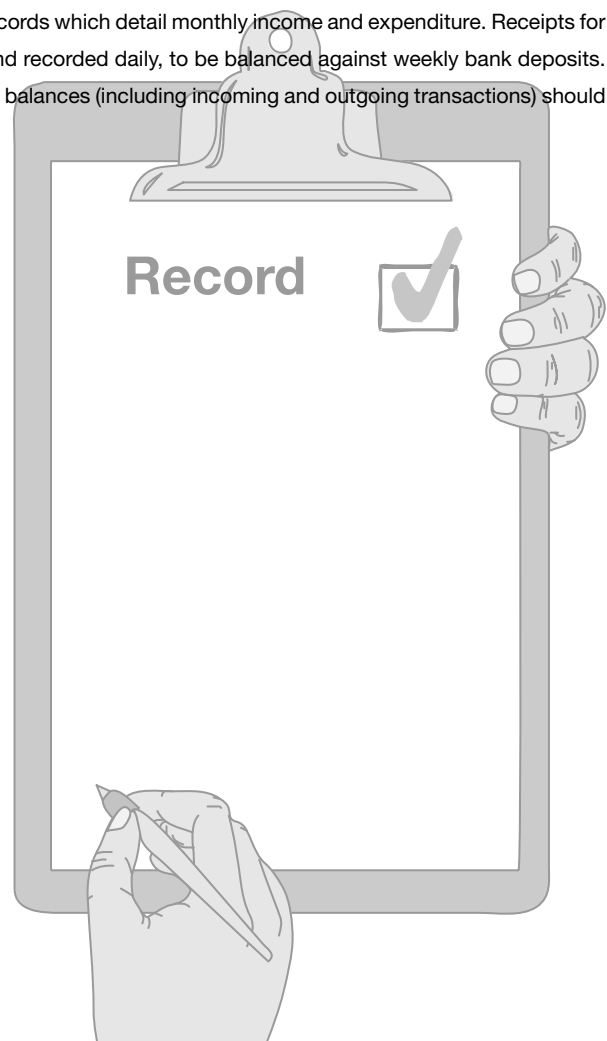
Complete and accurate records are essential for the responsible, efficient and legal operation of your animal shelter. Records will help to monitor the health of shelter animals, as well as demonstrating the efficient and professional management of your shelter, which will help you to gain funding and support.

- A record should be prepared for every animal entering your shelter, giving a full description of the animal and any information about the animal's background that is available. Ideally you should include a photo of the animal for identification purposes.
- Records should also include notes on any veterinary or other special care the animal has received and the animal's character/personality.
- Records should be numbered and filed so that all staff can easily retrieve them and identify animals for adoption, reclamation or euthanasia.
- An animal should have the same record or tag number throughout his or her stay at the shelter and each animal must be clearly identified with a temporary collar and tag.
- A cage card should accompany each animal throughout her stay at the shelter. The cage card should include the animal's record number, description and other relevant information such as behavioural characteristics and observations about health and temperament.
- Each animal should wear a collar or a collar-tag combination, which includes the record number. A great way to prevent males and females being mixed accidentally, is to give all male animals a blue collar and all females a pink collar!
- All animals should be counted at the start and at the end of each day, with the numbers recorded by species in a permanent journal. Each day, these totals should be balanced against the card records.
- A daily log should be kept to record animals received, adopted, euthanised or returned to owner. In the records, animals should be classified according to species.
- Design your forms to include only the information that you need to know. Include the organisation's name and logo on all shelter forms.
- Forms should be reviewed annually and updated to match your changing needs.

Essential forms include the following:

1. Animal acceptance form, completed on an animal's arrival.
2. Animal assessment record, completed during the animal's stay.
3. Adoption forms, including the pre-home check and adoption agreement.

It is also important to note that your shelter should keep accurate financial records which detail monthly income and expenditure. Receipts for all fees (such as donations and adoption fees) should be kept by number and recorded daily, to be balanced against weekly bank deposits. (An inexpensive cash register that can be locked is a good investment.) Daily balances (including incoming and outgoing transactions) should be maintained.



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EUTHANASIA

Definition of Euthanasia

A good death free of pain, suffering and anxiety. To provide as humane, painless and rapid a death as possible for animals for whom euthanasia is the best option given medical, financial or societal constraints.

EUTHANASIA POLICIES

- Option 1: A no-kill policy. This option could prolong the suffering of sick or injured animals and could also result in the spread of disease. The shelter could turn into a long-term sanctuary, and although this may produce good public relations because many of the general public still perceive euthanasia as cruel, you run the risk of over-crowding or needing to turn animals away. If your organisation is committed to animal welfare having a no kill policy is not a viable option. In countries where there is a large stray or street population, the shelter will quickly become over crowded unless the capacity is adhered to and animals will die from fighting or disease, which is far crueller than euthanasia by a vet.
- Option 2: Euthanasia of terminally ill animals only. This option would reduce the suffering of sick animals and also reduce the spread of disease. It would result in a healthier population at the shelter and would also reduce medical expenses.
- Option 3: Euthanasia of animals that cannot be rehomed (e.g. aggressive animals). This could produce poor public relations for your shelter, however it would prevent long-term kennel stress and would also allow space and adoption of animals that can be rehomed. It would also prevent the shelter from getting a reputation for rehoming dangerous or problem animals. Safety of the public should always be considered when rehoming an animal. Old or infirm animals should also be considered in this category e.g. old animals with mobility or long-term conditions such as diabetes.
- Option 4: Euthanasia after animals have been at the shelter for a set time. This would reduce the potential for over-crowding at your shelter and the population would be healthier, as the risk of spread of disease would be lower. However, it could generate bad public relations and also means the cost of worming and vaccinating the euthanised animals has been unnecessary. If your organisation wishes to ensure maximum levels of adoption from your shelter, and there is a large problem with stray and unwanted animals, you may at times have to accept the need for the euthanasia of healthy animals. This decision should be made by assessing the likelihood of an animal being rehomed.

A mixture of options 2, 3 and 4 probably represents the most practical and realistic euthanasia policy for small shelters.

SELECTING ANIMALS FOR EUTHANASIA

The euthanasia of animals has been acknowledged by most animal-protection organisations as an acceptable means for alleviating or preventing suffering. However, the euthanasia of any animal involves a difficult choice, requiring that each case be evaluated on an individual basis.

Selecting animals for euthanasia is considered one of the most stressful tasks animal shelter employees face. However, the constant influx of animals into animal shelters makes euthanasia a necessary reality.

In order to minimise the emotional stress associated with this task, as well as the risk of inconsistencies, shelters should have written guidelines in place to clearly designate the responsibilities of all staff involved.

Staff who are responsible for selecting animals for euthanasia should be compassionate and caring and should have a thorough understanding of euthanasia methods, procedures and rationale. To avoid placing the burden of this task on one individual, you may like to form a committee of 2-3 people to make euthanasia selection decisions.

The following questions should be carefully addressed in seeking to determine the most appropriate course of action for each individual animal:

1. Is the animal in pain or distress, and is there hope of alleviating this pain to allow for a reasonable quality of life?
2. What are the prospects of providing the animal with a quality of life that fulfils his/her basic physical and psychological needs?
3. Does keeping the animal in his/her present condition and circumstances present significant health or safety risks to other animals or people?
Can these risks be minimised or avoided while still affording the animal a reasonable quality of life?
4. Given the financial and practical limitations faced by the organisation or individual charged with the care of the animal, does keeping the animal alive reduce the ability to care humanely for the other animals in need?

CREATING GUIDELINES FOR YOUR SHELTER

When formulating guidelines for your shelter, many variables must be considered, including but not limited to:

- The number and type of animals you receive
- The regional location of your shelter
- The capacity of your facility
- Your staffing level
- The services you provide
- The availability of a responsibly-operated foster programme

Your shelter must be knowledgeable about the parameters that govern the services you can provide, recognise your strengths and weaknesses, and develop guidelines that consider the animals' best interests, as well as the constraints of your resources.

ANIMAL CHARACTERISTIC FACTORS

Choosing which animals will be euthanised should encompass the considerations of all established guidelines relating to the following: the animal's age, behaviour status, breed, health status and species. In addition, in most shelters, space constraints will be a factor.

Age Issues

There are some animal shelters that receive so many animals that an animal's age may be used to determine whether or not he/she is euthanised. There are others whose resources allow them to provide extended care and find homes for the majority of animals, whether they are six-week old kittens or a thirteen-year old dog. The majority of animal shelters fall somewhere in between. Animals that are very young when they arrive at a shelter may not receive much-needed developmental experiences and may not have the ability to fight off diseases that can exist in a multi-animal environment like a shelter. Animals that are very old may have health problems that require ongoing care. When creating euthanasia policies with regard to age, these factors should be considered.

Behaviour Issues

An animal shelter has a responsibility to protect not only the animals in their care but also the human members of their community. For liability, as well as ethical reasons, most animal shelters euthanise any animal that exhibits aggressive or dangerous behaviour. Non-aggressive behaviours, such as fearful actions or demeanour, destructiveness, or house-training difficulties, can be a barrier to an animal staying in a lifelong home. These behaviours should be diagnosed to determine severity and should be discussed with potential adopters if an attempt is made to place the animal. There is no benefit to adopting out an animal that will just be returned to the shelter or resigned to a worse fate (i.e. a cat put outside because he doesn't use the litter box).

Breed Issues

Numerous animal shelters have instituted policies regarding the availability of certain dog breeds, such as pit bulls. Animal shelters should take great care when determining whether to adopt those breeds of dogs commonly associated with, but not necessarily known to have been involved in, dog fighting. Breeds such as pit bulls are known to exhibit incredibly aggressive characteristics and can be highly unpredictable and therefore are not suitable for adoption.

Health Issues

Animal shelters must take every measure possible to offer reasonably healthy animals for adoption to the public. However, understandably many shelters do not employ veterinary staff or have the resources, and/or time to foster injured animals, perform diagnostic tests, or treat animals who fall ill while under the shelter's care. Additionally, while some shelters have separate areas to isolate sick or potentially sick animals, others do not and must euthanise these animals to protect the health of the general population. The health-related euthanasia policies your shelter adopts will depend upon your own staff, resources, time and facility restrictions.

Space Issues

Choosing animals for euthanasia because of space constraints can be the most difficult decision involved in the euthanasia process. When making these decisions, however, other outlined policies based on age, behaviour and health issues should provide some guidance. Staff should also consider the effects of long-term housing on shelter animals and take into account an animal's ability to maintain a condition of physical and emotional well-being while staying at the shelter.

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Species Issues

Many animal shelters accept not only cats, dogs and other companion animals but also any other type of animal which requires haven. Consequently, shelters are often faced with decisions regarding the disposition of these animals that cannot, and usually should not, be adopted as pets. For example, reptiles may pose a serious health risk to humans. Wildlife and hybrid animals (canine or feline hybrids) are not companion animals. These animals should not be placed for adoption to the public.

DEVELOPING ADOPTION/EUTHANASIA DETERMINATION CRITERIA

Animal shelters should develop criteria that will clearly document the reasons for and numbers of animals being euthanised. The following categories should be considered when establishing protocols to determine an animal's potential for adoption/euthanasia.

Category	Status	Euthanasia...
Adoption potential	Animals that, given the space, time, staff, money or availability of an appropriate home could live well in a new home	...is most often due to a lack of resources and/or appropriate homes.
Medical – Treatable	Animals in good physical condition with treatable, non-contagious medical conditions such as skin problems, bad flea or mite infestations, a broken limb, abscess, or problems that could be fixed with treatment and/or time.	...is most often a result of lack of resources, space or time to treat the animal.
Medical – Contagious	Animals in good physical condition with a medical condition such as an upper respiratory infection, kennel cough, ringworm, or a less severe case of mange that may be very treatable but highly contagious in a shelter environment.	...is most often not only because of the symptoms of the illness, but also to prevent contamination of others.
Physical condition	Animals in general poor overall condition and/or health, (for example, old, thin, weak).	...is often the eventual result as these animals are generally poor candidates for adoption placement due to the extensive medical rehabilitation required.
Unweaned/ Too Young	Animals that are too young to survive on their own or in a shelter setting, needing extensive care and socialisation.	...is often the result due to the labour-intensive nature of care and lack of foster homes.
Breed	Animals of breeds that are banned or at an increased risk in a community (such as areas where dog fighting occurs).	...may be performed if no other options (for example, transfer to another community's shelter) are available.
Behaviour Problems	Animals with behaviour problems such as chewing, inappropriate urination, separation anxiety, timidity, destructiveness, lack of socialisation.	...is generally due to a lack of an appropriate placement that will provide a commitment to adequate training, socialisation, and the proper environment.
Kennel-stress	Animals with a marked change in behaviour due to stress as a result of an extended stay in the shelter.	...is generally performed to prevent further suffering.
Space	Animals that would continue to make good adoption candidates but whose cage space is needed for other animals.	...is generally necessary when space in the shelter or adoption areas is unavailable and room is needed for other animals needing housing and care.
Inappropriate for Adoption	Animals with a serious condition (for example, feline leukemia) that is not suitable for rehabilitation.	...is appropriate even if the resources (space, time, money, staff, isolation, and a potential home) are available.
Species	Animals that are not appropriate as companion animals (i.e. canine or feline hybrids, exotics, etc).	...is performed if no other options (for example, placement in a sanctuary) are available or acceptable.
Medical – Untreatable	Animals with a terminal illness or injury, severe chronic illness, or other serious medical conditions.	...is appropriate to eliminate ongoing suffering for the animal.
Temperament	Animals that are extremely shy, timid, high-strung, stressed, or distressed.	...is generally necessary due to an unlikely chance for successful adoption and/or adjustment to a new home.
Aggressive	Animals that are showing signs of aggression, have attacked another animal or person, or have a history of aggression.	...is generally appropriate for humane, safety, ethical and liability reasons.
Feral or Unsocialised	Animals that have not and cannot be handled and do not adjust to the shelter setting.	...is generally appropriate for animals with no hope of socialisation.
Court Order	Animals that have been ordered for euthanasia at the direction of a judge, hearing officer, or other public official with such authority.	...is performed to comply with this ruling.

Whilst euthanasia is an emotive and controversial subject, it's important to remember that it's certainly not a kindness to warehouse animals in a shelter for months and years on end, even with the best of care. Dogs and cats are social animals. They need and deserve loving homes. Not being dead does not necessarily mean having a life.

Euthanasia guidelines

Only those methods of euthanasia that are painless and rapid and – to the fullest extent possible – that minimise fear and apprehension in the animal should be used.

Euthanasia should be performed by the best-qualified and most compassionate staff members, because no method is any better than the people who administer it.

Shelters should:

- Regularly review and evaluate the proficiency and attitude of the staff member who performs euthanasia.
- Demonstrate awareness of the extreme stress of the task on those who perform it and make provisions to decrease this stress by all possible means.
- Check all euthanised animals carefully to ensure that their vital signs (breathing, heartbeat and eye reflex) have stopped or that rigor mortis has set in.
- Ensure that dead animals are disposed of by incineration, burial in a landfill, or another method approved by the community. Animals euthanised by lethal injection may pose a risk to wildlife if their carcasses are available to scavenge.

ACCEPTABLE METHODS

- Sodium pentobarbital – the injection of sodium pentobarbital, prepared specifically for use as a euthanasia product, is the preferred agent for the euthanasia of companion animals. This method, when properly performed, has been found to be the most humane, safest, least stressful and most professional choice by the HSUS, American Humane Association, National Animal Control Association and American Veterinary Medical Association.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) and Carbon dioxide (CO₂) – when in the form of compressed cylinder gas and delivered in a properly manufactured and equipped chamber, is a conditionally acceptable method of euthanasia for some animals. It is unacceptable to use CO and CO₂ for the euthanasia of dogs and cats that are under four months of age, or that are old, sick, or injured. CO₂ is heavier than air and incomplete filling of the chamber allows tall or climbing animals to avoid exposure and survive. Some species have an extraordinary tolerance to CO₂ and rabbits and cats appear more distressed by CO₂ euthanasia.

If these two methods are unavailable in your area, it is vital that you raise the issue with your local authorities and let them know that these methods are the most widely recognised humane methods of euthanasia in the world and should be made available without delay.

UNACCEPTABLE METHODS

For death to be painless and distress free, unconsciousness should precede loss of motor activity (muscle movement). This means that agents that induce muscle paralysis without unconsciousness are absolutely condemned as sole agents for euthanasia and include:

- Curare
- Succinyl choline/succinylcholine chloride (Sucostrin, U-Tha-Sol, Anectine, Quelicin Chloride, Scoline Chloride)
- Gallamine
- Strychnine
- Nicotine
- Caffeine
- Magnesium sulphate
- Potassium chloride
- Nitrogen gas – unconsciousness is preceded by hypoxemia and ventilatory stimulation, which is highly distressing.
- Nitrous oxide
- Chloral Hydrate – causes hypoxemia and severe side effects of gasping, muscle spasms and vocalisation.
- Any combination of pentobarbital with a neuromuscular blocking agent.

Other methods that are considered inhumane and should never be used for dogs and cats are: decompression, drowning, decapitation, cervical dislocation, pithing, exsanguination, electrocution, gunshot (excluding properly performed field euthanasia) and air embolism.

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ANIMALS ASIA PROTOCOL: EUTHANASIA FOR DOGS IN CHINA

Animals Asia recommends the following procedure for the euthanasia of dogs in China:

- 1) Where possible the procedure should be carried out in a calm, quiet environment;
- 2) Euthanasia should be performed by personnel trained in the administration of euthanasia drugs;
- 3) It is recommended that at least two people carry out the procedure, one to handle and calm the animal and one to administer the drugs;
- 4) The handling of the animal should be carried out humanely by competent, compassionate personnel trained in humane animal handling, the owner is not always the best person to restrain an animal appropriately for injection, but if the animal is owned, the owner should be present to stroke and talk to the animal;
- 5) Intravenous (IV) injection (within the vein) is considered to be the most rapid and reliable method of performing euthanasia by injection when it can be administered without causing fear or distress. Animals Asia recommends the use of Sodium Pentobarbital (readily available in China) at a dose rate of 150mg/kg by intravenous injection;
- 6) If IV injections are difficult or impractical to administer to a puppy, sodium pentobarbital may be administered by intraperitoneal (IP) injection (within the peritoneal cavity). (IP) route should only be used if IV use is too distressful or dangerous. The dose for (IP) pentobarbital is 150mg/kg. The animal should be placed in a small cage or confined and kept quiet as it will slowly go through stage 1 & 2 of anaesthesia and can be easily excited.
- 7) If a dog is aggressive or fearful and IV injection is not practically possible, sedation will be necessary;
- 8) Anaesthetise the animal with an appropriate anaesthetic given intramuscularly to ensure animal does not feel any pain. Large volumes of drug should be divided and small amounts injected into several different muscles;
- 9) Animals Asia recommends the use of Zoletil or Su mian xin 846. At a recommended dose of
 - Zoletil = 0.2ml/kg by intramuscular injection
 - Su Mian Xin 846 = 0.1-0.2ml/kg by intramuscular injection.
- 10) After a time period of 10-15 minutes, the person anaesthetising the animal should check the depth of anaesthesia by assessing the dog's response to unpleasant stimuli such as toe-pinching before giving the lethal drug intravenously. If the dog has any response to toe pinching, more sedation should be given before administering the lethal injection.
- 11) If sodium pentobarbital is not available, Animals Asia recommends the use of KCl (potassium hydrochloride) NOTE: THIS DRUG CAUSES A VERY PAINFUL DEATH BY CARDIAC ARREST, KCL CAN ONLY BE USED AS AN IV EUTHANASIA SOLUTION WHEN AN ANIMAL HAS BEEN ANAESTHETISED TO SURGICAL PLANE ANAESTHESIA.
- 12) Surgical plane = loss of consciousness, loss of reflex muscle response and loss of response to noxious stimuli. *Note: there can be rippling of muscle tissue and clonic spasms on or shortly after injection.
Person performing euthanasia MUST be experienced in determining depth of anaesthesia (follow steps 8, 9 and 10).
- 13) Administer KCl (potassium hydrochloride) intravenously at a dose rate of 1-2 mmol (meq)/kg by intravenous injection.

NOTES

- Both Sodium Pentobarbital and Potassium Hydrochloride can be injected directly into the heart. This is very painful and so the dog must be completely anaesthetised first.
- The following injection routes for the injection of euthanasia drugs are not acceptable: subcutaneous (under the skin), intramuscular (within the muscle), intrapulmonary (within the lung), intrathoracic (within thoracic cavity), intrarenal (within the kidney), intrasplenic (within the spleen), intrathecal (within the membranes of the spinal cord), intrathoracic (within the chest cavity), and any other nonvascular injection routes.

Animals Asia appeal to the government to ban the use of tetramine and strychnine for euthanasia

DE-SEXING

Shelters should make it a top priority to ensure that every single animal they rehome does not contribute to companion animal overpopulation by breeding at a later date. Therefore it is vital that your shelter has a mandatory de-sexing programme for all adopted animals – either before they are put up for adoption or within a specified time after being adopted.

Even if funds prevent your shelter from de-sexing every animal you are caring for, they must not be allowed to breed during their stay in your shelter and must be properly segregated at all times.

BENEFITS OF DE-SEXING

Health

- De-sexing reduces the risk in both dogs and cats of developing cancer and other diseases of the reproductive organs, such as testicular cancer and prostate cancer in males, and ovarian cysts and tumours, acute uterine infections and breast cancer in females.
- Female dogs and cats can suffer from physical and nutritional exhaustion if allowed to continually breed.
- De-sexed pets generally live longer and healthier lives.



Behaviour

- De-sexed pets are generally less aggressive and integrate better into a family environment. They are generally more affectionate and make better companions.
- De-sexing significantly reduces or eliminates the urge in both dogs and cats to mark their territory with urine.
- De-sexing eliminates “heat” cycles in females and their efforts to get outside in search of a mate.
- De-sexed dogs are less likely to bite. The majority of dog bites (60 – 80%) are caused by intact males.
- De-sexing eliminates the urge in male dogs to “mount” people’s legs.
- De-sexed dogs and cats wander less, stay closer to home and fight less – therefore they are less likely to be injured, get lost or hit by a car.

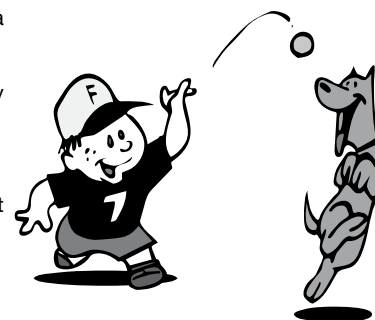
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ENRICHMENT IDEAS FOR SHELTER DOGS AND CATS

Living in a shelter can be highly stressful, particularly for long-term residents. In order to prevent behavioural problems from developing and ensure that the animals in your shelter are happy and mentally healthy (and therefore more likely to get adopted!) try and incorporate some of these simple steps into your daily care routine:

DOGS

- Daily walk on a leash.
- Daily off-leash play with other well socialised dogs in a fenced area. (Remember NEVER mix males and females unless they have been de-sexed.) Please note that the presence of food or other high reward items in a social setting can induce competition and aggression, so consider removing these items.
- Daily in-kennel socialisation including brushing, petting and simply spending time with the dog. Positive interactions such as these help the dog associate good feelings with his or her kennel and also with people. Even something as simple as having a volunteer sit quietly in a kennel and read, can help to socialise dogs.
- Incorporate basic behaviour training, such as sit, stay and come not only keeps dogs active and engaged, it will help greatly when they do find a home.
- Provide food puzzles such as Kongs, filled with treats that the dog must “work” to get. You can even make a paste from dry dog food and water, fill the kongs and freeze. This way it takes longer to eat and keeps the dog occupied.
- In the summer small treats can be frozen into ice-blocks and then placed in paddling pools with a few inches of water to allow dogs to catch them.
- Rotate different toys (that can be easily disinfected) to keep them new and interesting. It is very important to do this, otherwise the enrichment will become boring.
- Provide rawhide chews.
- Smell is one of the most important senses for dogs – sprinkle aromatic oils such as lavender or mint around outdoor enclosures. Use all sorts of scents for variety.



CATS

- In shared cat rooms, add steps to climb, shelves to sit on and window beds for sunbathing. Cats like to climb and different levels are really important. These touches also help visitors to see cats in their best light.
- Daily socialisation including brushing, petting and simply spending time with the cat. You can also provide a comfortable chair in the room for volunteers to socialise the cats in a non-threatening way such as by quietly reading. With time, even the shyest cat may gradually start to trust people and be tempted to come over for a little affection.
- Provide food puzzles, such as dried fish in scrunched up toilet roll tubes which the cat has to “work” to get.
- Provide fun and ever-changing hiding places using cardboard boxes filled with tissue paper or shredded newspaper.
- Smell is one of the most important senses for cats – sprinkle aromatic oils such as lavender or mint around outdoor enclosures, or on scratching posts.
- Provide pots of grass and catnip for cats to sniff and chew.
- Provide toys to stimulate a cat’s natural instinct to chase and catch, such as ping pong balls or wand-type toys with a string attached that volunteers can use to play with the cats. Some cats love playing with laser pointers, chasing the point of light around the enclosure! (Never point the laser in cats or people’s eyes.)

Ask your staff/volunteers to monitor the response to these ideas and to make notes when they spend time with the animals – recording things such as activity level, ability to follow simple commands, favourite games or toys, interaction with other animals and any progress made or problems noticed. This information is not only helpful for the next socialiser, it will help your shelter match each dog or cat with the right adopter.



ADOPTION

The purpose of an animal shelter's rehoming programme is to find responsible, life-long homes for animals. Responsible rehoming policies and procedures will help your organisation make the best decisions for the animals being adopted and can reduce the likelihood of animals being poorly cared for, returned to the shelter or abandoned.

1. It is important to establish a routine for rehoming, so that staff and volunteers know the procedures to follow.
2. The written outline of the routine should state what forms are used, the sequence of the process and what fees, if any, are charged.
3. Use a pre-adoption questionnaire to learn as much as possible about the potential adopter's lifestyle, knowledge and commitment.

GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE ADOPTION PROGRAMMES

Matching animals with the right people requires an understanding of the needs of both the animals to be placed and their prospective adopters. It is not a kindness to place an animal in a home where he or she will fail to receive adequate companionship, food, water, shelter, and veterinary care. Nor is it a benefit to the community to place animals with owners who will allow them to roam the neighborhood, violate animal control laws, or reproduce, adding to the community's burden of unwanted animals.

Adopter Suitability

Use a written application or pre-adoption questionnaire to learn as much as possible about the potential adopter's lifestyle and knowledge of responsible pet ownership. The application should include questions regarding previous animal ownership and ask for the name of the adopter's veterinarian, who can be contacted to verify whether health care had been provided to previously owned or currently owned animals. Verify the adopter's identity (and make sure that the adopter is at least eighteen years old). A home visit may be conducted with all family members present if there is any question about the suitability of the new home.

Young Pets and Children

If there are children younger than six years old in the household, adopt out only dogs and cats that are at least four months old. Public health and animal care authorities agree that young children will not always handle puppies or kittens properly. Mishandling can result in injury to the animals, the children, or both.

Landlord Permission

Before an animal is adopted by a person living in rental housing, the adopter should supply the landlord's oral or written permission.

Temporary Residents

Because of the potential for abandonment, do not adopt out an animal to anyone living only temporarily in the community. Adopters should be permanent residents who are prepared to give lifelong care to an animal.

Reason for the Adoption

Adopt animals only to individuals who intend to keep them as household companions. No dogs should be placed to serve primarily as guard dogs and no cats should be placed to function merely as barn cats or mousers.

Pets as Gifts

Do not allow an individual to adopt an animal who he or she intends to give as a gift. The recipient may not want an animal, the animal may not be suitable for the recipient's lifestyle, or the recipient may not meet the criteria for a responsible owner. An option is to issue gift certificates that cover the cost of an adoption. The certificates should include a statement declaring that your shelter reserves the right to choose not to place an animal with a recipient who fails to meet the criteria for a responsible owner.

Selling the Animal

The adoption contract should clearly state that the adopted animal cannot be sold or given away to another person. If the adopter ceases to be able to keep the animal or care for him or her humanely, the adopter must return the animal to the shelter.

De-sexing

Strive to de-sex all animals before they leave the shelter to ensure they do not contribute to companion animal overpopulation. Purebred animals, in particular, must be de-sexed before adoption to ensure that the animal will not be used for breeding. If de-sexing before adoption is not possible, make sure that your adoption contract requires that all adult animals (regardless of gender, breed, training, or other qualities) be de-sexed within thirty days of adoption. A specific date by which the de-sexing must be performed should be included in a legally binding contract. One way to encourage adopters to follow through with de-sexing is to collect the cost of surgery as a deposit at the time

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of adoption. Upon proof of de-sexing, return the money to the adopter or forward it to the veterinarian who has performed the surgery. The de-sexing requirement should be waived only upon receipt of a written statement from a veterinarian that such surgery would be detrimental to the animal's health, such as a much older dog or cat who may be a high anaesthetic risk.

The Adoption Interview

The interview can be a challenge for shelter staff; while objectively and carefully screening potential adopters, avoid being intimidating. Present these interviews as a service your shelter provides to help an individual or family find a compatible new companion.

Follow Up

Each adoption should include a careful follow-up to ensure compliance with the contract and to assist the new owner in solving any problems that may have arisen. Reminder cards and follow-up letters concerning veterinary care are helpful. A phone call to see how the new pet is doing is usually welcomed by the owner and will give you an opportunity to learn how the animal is adjusting and offer assistance, if necessary. If the adopter is not complying with the contract, shelter staff should conduct a follow-up visit.

Pet Care Resources

Let adopters know about Animals Asia's basic pet care booklets for dogs and cats. These are packed full of information that will help people take good care of their new friend and can be downloaded for free from Animals Asia's website – www.animalsasia.org

Adoptions can be increased by

- Clever, proactive promotions using the media to promote animals available for adoption.
- Clean, fresh-smelling, friendly and welcoming facilities. Visitors should feel comfortable spending time at your shelter when looking for the right pet.
- Courteous, helpful staff and volunteers who are available at all times for queries.
- Don't pressure visitors into choosing an animal – make it clear that they are welcome to return as many times as they want to view the animals.
- Allow visitors to spend time with the animals by creating a special "homing" area that helps both animals and people relax. A cosy, indoor space with a comfortable sofa for people and toys and climbing areas for cats will help visitors get to know their potential new cat much better than if the cat is in a cage. An outdoor play area can help visitors get to know their potential new dog in a more natural and realistic way.



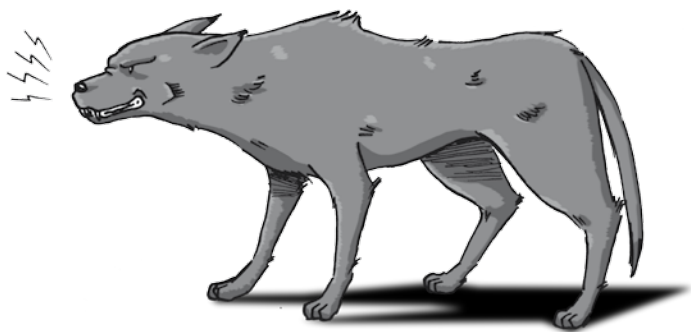
Don't forget to promote mixed breeds! Mixed-breed animals make just as wonderful and loving companions as pure breeds and are likely to live longer and cost less in vet bills than a pure breed. Many purebred dogs are prone to developing health problems ranging from breathing difficulties to hip dysplasia to an enlarged heart, whilst mixed breeds tend to be much stronger and better adapted to your local environment.

A Note on Aggression

If you have a dog that is aggressive or shows aggressive behaviour such as growling at people, he/she must not be allowed to practice this. Move this dog to a quieter part of the shelter and move this dog out of adoptions! You cannot ask the general public to adopt a dog whose behaviour problems are not clearly understood and whose aggression has not been diagnosed, defined, and all its triggers identified. The people who come to your shelter to adopt a dog are often the lowest level dog-experienced people. They are looking for a pet, a companion. They are not looking to adopt a dog that might bite. Just because someone doesn't have children, and he or she has owned a dog before, does NOT make them experienced enough and suitable to bring home a difficult dog. If your shelter doesn't have the expertise, personnel, or time to work with difficult dogs, then do not put them up for adoption.



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Dangerous dogs should never be up for adoption. The general public coming in to adopt a dog is neither capable of handling nor seeking to adopt a biting dog and liability. An unfair, dangerous adoption is not a better option than euthanasia, no matter how anybody feels about euthanasia. The biting dog usually ends up having to be euthanised anyway, by the adopter, after a period of heartbreak, or crisis, and long after they have become emotionally attached to the dog. Shelter staff and volunteers must gather expertise and knowledge about dog behaviour and

behaviour problem-solving, in order to understand first-hand, which dogs can be worked with and treated, and which dogs are dangerous for life.



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HOW TO WRITE AN ADOPTION CARD

The cards clipped to dog kennels and cat cages usually include just a few descriptive words, but they could be the most important words you write. Serving as mini-biographies, cage cards can make or break an animal's chances of getting a second look from an adopter. Follow these top tips to create an effective cage card:

1. Be professional – blank cards containing only handwritten scribbles convey an unprofessional appearance. Use a computer or typewriter to make uniform cards that leave space for specific information, or ask a designer to create one for you. Cards should be simple yet attractive, with lots of room for all the vital statistics.
2. If you fill out the cards by hand, make sure your writing is neat and legible – visitors are unlikely to take a second look if they have to squint. Use a permanent marker, and buy some plastic sheaths to hold the cards so they stay clean and dry. To add a little colour and convey some important information quickly, use blue paper for male animals and pink paper for female animals.
3. Names are important – create a positive identity for animals that arrive at your shelter by choosing names that emphasise their special attributes. Always keep names appealing and non-violent; names such as “Killer” and “Snappy” will obviously send the wrong message. Even if adopters change the names of their pets when they go home, you can ensure that the animals are more than just numbers during their stay in your shelter.
4. Make a list – give adopters complete profiles of the animals they're visiting, including the following information on cage cards (making sure you leave enough space for a good “sales pitch”):
 - Name
 - Identification number that matches the animal with shelter records
 - Type of animal: cat, dog, etc.
 - Breed or breed combination
 - Sex
 - Spay/neuter status
 - Age
 - Colour(s)/Markings
 - Reason for the animal's stay in the shelter (stray or owner-surrendered)
 - Date of arrival
 - Date first made available for adoption
 - Known characteristics or special qualities
5. Special needs – convey an animal's special needs by emphasising the positive aspect. Rather than stating that a cat “hates other animals,” for instance, write that she “would love to be an only pet.” If a dog requires extra attention, don't say he “suffers severe separation anxiety”; instead write that he “needs an at-home mum or dad.” If an animal urinates indoors, that's all the more reason to say he does so – but in a way that shows people his problems are solvable. “Looking for a forgiving teacher to housetrain me” puts a positive spin on the situation. Of course, you shouldn't mislead potential adopters about an animal's true nature or possible behaviour problems, but you can use the adoption consultation time to discuss these issues rather than highlighting them on a cage card. Be honest about shortcomings, but don't imply to potential adopters that the animals they are looking at are lost causes.
6. Do your best to compliment every animal you make available for adoption. Highlight an interesting feature of the animal such as a curly tail, a funny “meow,” or an unusual pattern on a paw. Comments such as “Friendly kitty” or “I can shake hands” might be just the thing that gets an animal noticed – and placed in a new home.

FOSTER CARE

Many animals that arrive at your shelter will be initially unsuitable for adoption. They may be too young, too sick, or traumatised from being abused or abandoned. These animals do not do well in a shelter environment, in fact many are unable to even survive in a shelter. Developing a reliable network of foster carers will increase the number of animals that your shelter is able to help by freeing space and giving animals that require extra special care a chance they may not have had in a shelter environment. Foster carers look after an animal on a temporary basis until the animal can eat solid food, has recovered from an illness, or shows an improvement in behaviour, where upon they then become available for permanent adoption.

Foster carers can help to:

- Provide a more suitable environment for kittens and puppies.
- Provide individual care for new mothers and their litters.
- Train and socialise shy/traumatised animals to improve their chances of adoption.
- Help to eliminate “shelter stress.” Some animals find shelter life incredibly stressful and can actually become sick from the stress.
- Help to prevent disease in very young or medically vulnerable animals.



Before starting a foster care programme, ensure that your organisation has written protocols in place.



- It is vital that you have an agreement with your foster carers, outlining each side's responsibilities.
- Remember to define what your shelter will provide/pay for and what you expect the carer to provide/pay for.
- Potential foster carers should be thoroughly screened and show documentation that any animals they currently own are de-sexed and have up-to-date vaccinations.
- Foster carers should be over 18 years of age.
- Foster carers must be able to provide an adequate home environment.
- Foster animals should be welcomed as a member of the family – fostering should be a positive experience for the animal not a simple prolonging of life.
- Adoption placements of foster animals should be conducted identically to those of animals in the shelter.

It takes a special kind of person to be a foster parent – someone with time, patience, experience with animals and the ability to “let go” of animals they have become attached to when they find a new home. However a team of dedicated, compassionate foster carers can make a huge difference to the lives of individual animals and your overall adoption rates.



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VOLUNTEERS

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1. Define the need. If you are replacing a staff member or volunteer who is leaving, try to find out why they are leaving. If it is a new position, firstly identify exactly what position it is that you are creating.
2. List the responsibilities. Make sure you have a list of tasks (i.e. a job description) that the person will be expected to undertake.
3. Identify skills/personality. Once you have listed the tasks that this person will perform, you can begin to identify the skills or type of personality that he/she needs to possess.
4. Meet the candidates and make your selection. Ask questions that will give them the opportunity to talk about themselves and their motivations, as well as questions that will reveal facts, or which relate directly to the vacancy you are trying to fill.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Whilst most shelters need volunteers to help directly with animal care and cleaning, there are many other jobs that volunteers can help with. Perhaps your organisation needs someone with design or IT experience or help with writing newsletters? Maybe you need help returning phone calls or writing thank-you notes? Perhaps a photographer could help by taking photos of animals for adoption or a PR person could promote your work to the local media? What about planning and organising a fundraising event? Could you benefit from free legal or accounting advice? By including some of the specific skills and jobs that you need help with in your recruitment materials, you will get a much stronger response than with a generic appeal for volunteers.

To help you attract new volunteers, make sure that your recruitment materials, such as flyers and posters, are clear and appealing. Beautiful or fun images of animals can really help catch the eye of your target audience. Don't forget to focus on the fun – people want to do things to feel good, help others and meet like-minded people.

Make sure that your recruitment materials include:

- Your organisation's logo, mission and goals.
- A brief outline of the organisation's programmes and services.
- A listing and description of the available volunteer opportunities.
- Contact details for your organisation (i.e. website address, phone number and ideally the name of your volunteer coordinator.)
- The type of working environment, contact with people/animals and team the volunteer can expect on the job.

RECRUITMENT METHODS

- A simple poster and/or flyer campaign is an inexpensive but highly effective way to find new volunteers. Ask members and current volunteers to help distribute them to vet clinics, pet supply stores, markets, health food stores, health clubs, internet cafes, libraries, universities etc.
- Local radio station/newspaper plea. – Ask editors or reporters at the local paper(s) if they would consider writing an article that profiles a current volunteer or one of your volunteer-run programmes and include a plea for more volunteers.
- Devote a section of your website to volunteer information and opportunities.
- Recruitment days – set up an information table at local pet supply stores, shopping malls, universities or community events.

Remember to have an information form/questionnaire ready for potential volunteers to complete when they apply.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

If you are recruiting a number of volunteers at the same time, you could plan a group training session during which you can give out volunteer job information. In addition to this general training, make sure you provide training specific to each volunteer's job, be it animal care, use of equipment, or office skills. Here are some tips:

- Explain and demonstrate a task, then watch while the volunteer does it.
- Take the time to observe even those volunteers who have had prior experience; you may learn something new or head off a potential problem.
- Allow plenty of time for volunteers to ask questions.
- Pair up a new volunteer with a long-term volunteer for an initial period of a few days or weeks.
- If the task is complex or has many variables it will be helpful to provide written instructions and background information on the task or skill.
- Let your volunteers know that you are always willing to answer questions.
- Remember, training is an ongoing process and should include ongoing, two-way communication. Make sure to regularly ask volunteers how things are going.

Get a Volunteer Coordinator!

Even if your organisation is too small to hire staff, you can still recruit a volunteer coordinator who may actually be a volunteer! Part of the volunteer coordinator's job is to assess people's needs and skills and then match them up with the right job. Some volunteers want a challenge and the chance to take part in a major project, or get involved with "hands on" work. Other volunteers are looking for an easy, stress-free experience and may not want to commit to helping on a regular basis. Having a volunteer coordinator will help your organisation find out what volunteers are looking for and what skills they possess and will ensure that volunteers become an effective part of your workforce.

KEEPING VOLUNTEERS**Provide a good experience:**

- Talk with volunteers regularly. A volunteer's needs, interests and commitment level may change over time; a volunteer may be ready to become more involved, want to change roles, or they may want less responsibility as time goes by. By keeping volunteers informed about new opportunities to help and talking with them regularly you can ensure that they stay happy and continue benefiting your organisation.
- Provide encouragement and feedback on each volunteer's performance.
- Always treat volunteers with respect and courtesy.
- Make time to listen.
- Ask for feedback and recommendations.
- Address concerns and implement good ideas.
- Provide lockers for volunteers and a place to relax, sit and have a cup of coffee or chat with others about favourite dogs and cats.

Show appreciation and recognition:

- Send a simple hand-written thank you card once a year, such as at Chinese New Year.
- Send regular emails after events to say thank you and update volunteers on the outcome.
- Make sure volunteers feel a part of your organisation's success – "With your help, we managed to re-home four dogs this weekend!"
- Host informal get-togethers, even just a coffee after work.
- Highlight a volunteer's commitment and help through an article in the local paper.
- Highlight volunteers on your website or in your newsletter.
- Give annual certificates/special awards to volunteers.
- Offer long-term volunteers the chance to participate in educational opportunities (such as seminars, conferences etc.)



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STAFF/VOLUNTEER SAFETY

Every shelter should have an easy access/well marked first aid box on site containing:

- Sterile dressings
- Sterile swabs for wound cleaning and absorbing bleeding (cotton wool sticks to wounds so is not as good)
- Sterile cotton buds
- Cotton wool
- Alcohol swabs
- Plastic bowl
- Hibiscrub antiseptic
- Betadine antiseptic
- Non-adhesive dressings
- Woven Bandage
- Softban bandage
- Coflex elasticated bandage
- Micropore tape
- Elastoplast tape
- Triangular bandage
- Sterile eye pads
- Safety pins
- First aid book
- Plasters/Band-aids – various sizes and types
- Sterile eye wash
- Eye bath
- Scissors
- Tweezers (for splinters)
- Latex/nitrile gloves – multiple pairs and sizes

Possible drugs:

- Chlorphenamine ('Piriton') an antihistamine useful in insect stings or allergies.
- Tylenol/Paracetamol – for fevers, pain etc.
- Aspirin – anti-inflammatory, also reduces clotting so can be given for suspected heart attacks. Please note that aspirin can be fatal for cats.

Consideration should be given to anyone suffering from drug or latex allergies as in these cases even sharing airspace with their allergen may be fatal. E.g. use nitrile gloves if latex allergy present. Organisations should check with local government and medical services regarding the legality/ethics of offering anything more than basic first aid to staff.

Shelters have a responsibility to make staff and volunteers aware of the health risks of working with animals. These risks commonly include, parasites, leptospirosis, salmonella, ring worm, cat scratch fever and giardia. Disinfectant soap should be readily available at several wash stations around the shelter and you should ensure that all volunteers and staff follow these guidelines to avoid developing a serious zoonotic disease:

1. If possible, have vaccinations to protect against rabies and tetanus. Ensure these vaccinations remain up to date.
2. Wash hands frequently with antibacterial soap, especially after handling any animal and prior to eating or smoking.
3. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes or boots (no sandals).
4. Use gloves (preferably disposable) when changing litter pans, washing food and water dishes, or cleaning up faeces, urine or vomit.
5. Disinfect scratches and bite wounds immediately and thoroughly.
6. Do not allow animals to lick your face or any wounds.
7. Learn safe and humane animal-handling techniques and use proper equipment.
8. Seek assistance when handling animals whose dispositions are questionable.
9. Keep cuts, scratches and other abrasions covered, especially while cleaning up after animals.

FUNDRAISING

The number one rule of fundraising is “If you don’t ask, you don’t get!” Don’t be afraid to ask for funding – be proud of your work and what you have achieved. Your organisation is providing a valuable community service and the animals you are helping deserve the funding. If you are positive and enthusiastic about your work, you will inspire others to donate and be a part of your success.

Begin by developing a comprehensive fundraising plan, which should aim to seek funding from different groups of potential donors in different ways:

- Members and volunteers (through annual membership fees, sponsorship programmes, in-kind donations and volunteer services).
- Local animal lovers – through community outreach tables, brochures, newsletters, direct mail, news articles etc.
- The general public at large (through special events, fees for services, sale of goods).
- Businesses and foundations – through grants, matching gifts, product donations, sponsorships, partnerships etc.



People donate because they believe that the organisation will do something positive with their money, which will make them feel good. To be successful, a fundraiser must convince potential donors that there is a problem which concerns them, show them the plan to address that problem, and let them know that their involvement is critical to the success of that plan. This is true whether you are asking an individual for 10 RMB or a foundation for 50,000 RMB.

Before approaching potential donors, your organisation must:

- Identify the problem (what is the problem?)
- Analyse the problem (why does the problem exist?)
- Clearly set out your organisation’s plan to tackle the problem.
- Prove your organisation’s credibility (highlight specific successes/achievements).
- Identify what you want from the donor.
- Define how their support will help.

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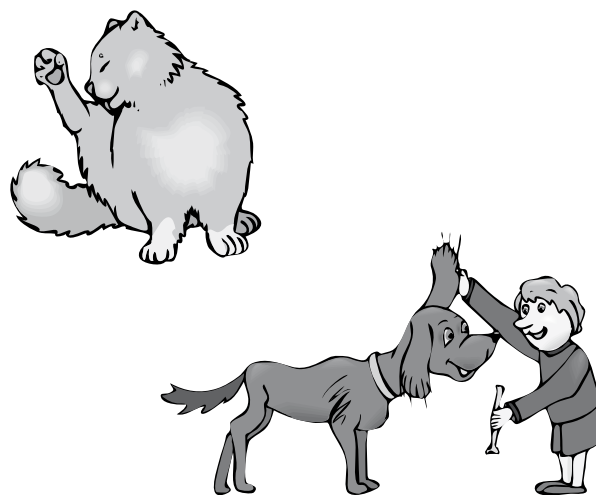
FUNDRAISING MATERIALS

When creating your fundraising materials, follow these top tips to get the best results:

- Focus on the animals – they are the beneficiaries of the donations. People give money to help animals, not to help organisations.
- Highlight the individual – people can identify more easily with an individual animal that needs help, it's much harder to relate to thousands of animals that need help and this can also overwhelm donors. Promote success stories about individual animals that your organisation has helped.
- Don't complain about your lack of funding – focus on what you need to solve the problem – then ask for it!
- Don't complain about other groups – focus on the good work of your organisation and the difference that you are making for the animals.
- Choose pictures carefully – a clear photograph can help to convey your message more effectively. Make sure you have a balance between positive and negative images.
- Don't underestimate the power of “before” and “after” pictures to show people how their support helps.
- Use colour and graphics to grab people's attention. But make sure that your materials are consistent and have an overall signature look. Try and find a designer who will donate their time to help create professional materials.
- Always include your logo, website and contact details prominently on all fundraising materials.
- Avoid negative appeals that rely on guilt – it won't help to say “If you don't donate we'll have to close down” or threaten that animals will die. People do not want to support an organisation they feel is unsuccessful. Success creates more success – so project a positive image!
- Make a specific request. People need to know exactly what you need. It's proven that donors give more when you suggest specific amounts, such as 200 RMB will help us feed xxx cats per month.
- Make donating easy – include a donation form and highlight different ways to donate i.e. credit card, cheque, bank transfer etc.
- Have information materials available to back up your appeals. Maintain a file of news clippings about your organisation, statistics and information about the problem and your solution, and a list of your achievements.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

- Appeal letters and newsletters targeting existing donors.
- Individual donations.
- Annual/lifetime membership fees.
- Special events.
- Sponsored events such as a walkathon.
- Corporate partnerships, such as a pet food company.
- Income from the sale of merchandise or services.
- Auction/Raffle.
- Animal sponsorship programmes (this is ideal for people who can't actually adopt a pet, but still want to help feed a dog/cat for a month, pay for toys, vet bills etc).
- Adoption fees.
- Fees for services, such as pet grooming.
- Outreach tables.
- Memorial and in-honour donations.
- In-kind donations, such as office equipment, printing/accounting/legal services, veterinary care, office supplies, pet food and animal handling equipment, mailing lists, training/meeting space, free advertising space, land, construction materials, vaccines, medical supplies etc. Keep a “Wish List” of items and services your organisation needs and share it with your members.
- Foundation grants.
- A capital campaign (a special fundraising campaign to fund the purchase of a building, land or a major expansion).



SAY THANK YOU!

The simplest and most important aspect of fundraising development (that is, developing relationships) is acknowledging people for their contributions.

Be prompt

Your “thank you” routine should be established so that cheques are cashed promptly (within 72 hours) and donors receive a sincere thank you and receipt within 2 to 7 days of their donation. The shorter the turn-around, the more the donor is impressed with your personal attention and by the notion that you must really need and appreciate the money.

Be sincere

Change your thank you letters regularly and use letters rather than pre-printed notes. Aim to have at least four different thank you letters in a year, so that regular donors receive different letters.

Thank you letters that detail recent initiatives and success stories help to give your donor a sense of how their money is being put to use and gives your organisation an opportunity to educate the public about the work you do.

A hand-written “p.s.” on a standard thank you letter goes a long way to make a personal connection with a donor.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

First, you need to choose the type of fundraising activity you would like to organise. If this is your first attempt at organising an event keep it simple, start small and build up to larger events.

The following is a brief list of actions, which you can carry out to help improve the success of your event:

ACTION	NOTES
Decide upon the type of event	Choose your event carefully – think about the time of year, especially if it is to be an outside event.
Organise a committee	This will allow you to divide up the work of organising an event. The committee can also draw up an approximate budget for the event.
Name your event	Providing a fun, catchy name for the event will help people remember it and also pass on the information once it is up and running.
Circulate sponsorship forms	Ideal for walkathons, swimathons etc. The earlier you do this the more sponsorship you are likely to receive. Circulate forms to friends, family and work colleagues.
Contact your local school	Schools may want to be involved with local community events and can help to publicise your event.
Contact local businesses	Businesses may be keen to provide financial support for local community events. This could be one way of covering the costs of organising an event. A local business may also be able to help with providing a venue for your event, raffle prizes, discount vouchers etc
Publicise your event	Posters and flyers are good but can be expensive. Again maybe a local business will help you here, or contact a local school and go in and talk with the children about your event. The children may like to produce posters to help you with publicity.
Contact the local press	Details of editors and writers can usually be found in the front of your local paper. Papers will be interested in covering your event if it is a little different from their usual news items. Consider linking up in a joint event i.e. “Ming Pao joinsin raising funds to build a shelter extension for World Animal Day”.
Contact your local press again after the event	Even if the press don’t attend your event, send them some information about how successful it was and also some photos. They may publish a story afterwards!
Send thank you letters	Remember to thank everybody involved – this includes any sponsors and the local press. Doing this may help you get their support again for future events.

Created by Animals Asia and the Humane Society International

HUMANE EDUCATION

What is it?

- Teaching compassion and respect for all living things
- Promoting the value of kindness
- Encouraging responsible pet ownership
- Understanding animals' needs and the way they behave
- Understanding the consequences of irresponsible behaviour toward animals
- Preventing dog bites
- Creating a community that embraces humane values

Why is it important?

- Animals will receive better care
- People will help an animal in need
- People will support your efforts to help animals
- There will be less abuse and neglect of animals

Who should it be directed at?

- Young children
- Teachers who work with children
- Pet owners
- Lawmakers
- Everyone in the community!



HOW TO DO IT

Stick to your mission

If your organisation focuses on helping dogs and cats, planning education programmes about wild animals will not help your work. Make sure your educational message will support your organisation's mission and goals.

Consider your resources

How much will it cost to run an educational programme? Consider manpower, transportation materials and other expenses you may incur. Who will run your programmes – volunteers, paid staff, or both? Can you obtain donated materials or sponsorship? How will you promote your programme? How much time will be involved in selling the programme to your target audience? The answers to these questions will help you create a programme that can be achieved within your budget, without affecting your daily operations.

Understand your community

Each community has different animal-related problems. Talk to community leaders to understand what they perceive as the most important issues. What are the barriers that prevent the problem from being solved? This will help your organisation to prioritise work and develop educational strategies.

Determine your audience

Different audiences require different messages. Who is your target audience? On which target group are your resources best spent – primary students, university students, pet shops? Where will your education programme be most effective? Who do you want to reach? A pet care class for primary 3 students is very different in content from even primary 6 students and certainly from university students. Your education programmes need to be tailored to the age, prior knowledge and audience comprehension levels.

Visiting schools

Talk to teachers and find out the goals of their school. Is there an emphasis on character education, diversity or community service? Humane education belongs in all of these areas of concern. You may be asked, “Why are animals important when there are so many problems that humans face?” You need to be able to show why your topic is relevant and may find the following overview helpful when trying to convince teachers to include your programme in their timetable:

Animals throughout the world are commonly viewed as being the least important beings in society. If we can create a society where no animal is abused, this compassion will suffuse upwards and ensure that no child is abused, no woman beaten and no culture persecuted. The recognition of animals as sentient beings is a powerful first step towards initiating positive changes in any society’s attitudes and encourages the development of compassion and empathy not only towards animals, but to our fellow humans as well – regardless of age, class, race or disability. Many studies in psychology, sociology and criminology during the last 25 years have also demonstrated that violent offenders frequently have childhood and adolescent histories of serious and repeated animal cruelty. Animal protection is therefore a vital component of any progressive society.

Don’t forget to tell teachers that you can help promote respect for animals in lots of different subjects: arts, social studies, psychology, maths, science, history etc.

For example, maths lessons involve numbers. Encourage students to find out the real cost of caring for a puppy or kitten for their whole life – food, toys, de-sexing surgery, yearly veterinary care, vaccinations, illnesses in old age etc. This will help students to understand what an enormous commitment pet ownership is and improve their maths skills in a fun and interesting way!

Remember to start small and don’t spread your resources too thinly. It’s better to concentrate on one area and ensure that your efforts are effective, than try to do everything at once. Pick one of the following ideas and then gradually build your education programme as more manpower and resources become available.

- Visit local classrooms
- Host workshops for teachers
- Organise special classes for pet owners
- Write articles for local newspapers and magazines
- Give presentations to community groups



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PUBLIC RELATION

YOUR SHELTER SHOULD BE YOUR BIGGEST PR ASSET

Shelter experience – what is it?

- How do people feel when contacting or visiting your shelter?
- How can you improve their experience?

Service – why is it important?

- People will want to come to the shelter.
- People will tell people about their positive experience.
- More animals will get adopted.
- More lost animals will be returned to their owners.
- You can have a positive influence on how people care for their own animals.

How to do it:

- Ensure your shelter is physically attractive (get local school children to help paint bright pictures and murals on the walls in non-toxic, non-lead paint), as well as clean and well maintained at all times.
- Ensure that the comfort of the animals, public and staff is first and foremost in all shelter operations.
- Ensure that the hours of operation are convenient for the public to visit.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are knowledgeable, compassionate, courteous and professional toward animals, the public and each other at all times.

PR STRATEGIES

Pick up the Phone

Make a connection with a local media outlet by simply dialling them up: “Hello, Mr. Wong, I think your readers would be interested to hear about a dog we rescued from the river today....” If you’re pitching a story to a reporter, however, the subject doesn’t need to be this dramatic. Local newspapers and radio and television stations are always looking for interesting stories on adoptions, spay/neuter clinics and the busy day-to-day work of shelters.



Let the Picture Tell the Story

Have an experienced amateur photographer, staff member, volunteer or friend take a quality photo of a cat adopted to a new family, or a stray dog returned to his owners. Write a simple caption on the back of the photo: “JouJou, a shepherd mix, found wandering on xxx street in June, was sheltered at xxxxx animal shelter for weeks before being reunited with her owners.” Send it off to one of the local papers. A simple effort like this can pay huge dividends.

Write a Letter

Next time your blood pressure rises over a common problem that could be easily prevented, write a letter to the editor: “For the fourth time this week, xxxx animal shelter has found abandoned litters of kittens, we’d like to prevent these cases in the future....” Your letter might provide tips for pet owners to get their pets de-sexed to prevent unwanted litters. For maximum impact, be sure your letter focuses on just one issue. If you receive no response from the first newspaper, send it to another.

Get Schools and Universities Involved

Call your local college and ask communications professors if their students might be willing to work on a special project for the shelter, such as an advertising campaign. Or ask primary students to draw posters that will promote your work and expose children to your shelter’s mission.

Go Public

Promote your work in shopping malls and other unique environments where a large number of people are sure to take note. Post photos of shelter animals available for adoption on bulletin boards at local supermarkets, increasing adoptions, but also increasing the number of visitors to your shelter.

Get Help

Try to locate a local advertising or communications firm willing to work for free. Work with them to devise a logo, plan a campaign and develop print ads that you can use at any time. Advertising agencies are often willing to take on pro bono projects for the opportunity to exert more control and creative influence than they might on other clients' projects. The downside? Paying clients take priority, so your materials may have to wait.

**Find a Partner**

Link a special promotion to local community events, such as teaming up with an arts festival organiser – you could create a competition for the best animal painting and promote your shelter animals for adoption at the same time! There are plenty of opportunities to work together with fashion shows, food festivals, photography exhibitions – you just have to be creative and think of an angle to connect their event with your work!

Get Mobile

Consider advertising your message with the help of public transportation – approach a local bus company to put up posters or video loops inside the bus, or ask a local taxi company to include flyers in a pouch on the back seat. This can help to spread your message to thousands of people every day at a minimal cost

ANIMALS ASIA RECOMMENDATIONS: ALTERNATIVES TO ANIMAL SHELTERS

Animal shelters are not THE solution to companion animal overpopulation - they are only a part of the solution. Shelters address the effects of animal overpopulation without addressing the cause.

Building a shelter will not, on its own, solve a stray animal problem in the long term. Shelters provide an easy route for pet owners to dispose of their animals rather than provide for their needs and can therefore exasperate the issue.

Poor planning, and underestimating the financial commitment and operational requirements of a shelter can seriously compromise the welfare of animals. Inadequately managed shelters can lead to disease, overcrowding, conflicts, poor housing and lack of exercise and stimulation. Animals held in shelters long term are in danger of becoming institutionalised and difficult to rehome. A poorly managed shelter with inadequate or non-existent admission and euthanasia policies will quickly reach and exceed capacity and cause suffering to animals within the shelter and be unable to provide for the welfare needs of further unwanted animals.

A comprehensive and humane animal management programme must involve much more than providing a shelter for homeless animals, and should include the following elements;

- a widespread rabies vaccination campaign;
- comprehensive and compulsory registration;
- microchip identification;
- spay/neuter requirements for all owned dogs and cats;
- adoption programmes;
- animal cruelty legislation and enforcement;
- regulation of the breeding and sale of pets;
- comprehensive public education initiatives to promote responsible pet ownership.

Legislation

Permanent improvements in animal welfare can be achieved through legislation and subsequent enforcement. This process is often lengthy and requires coordinated lobbying and the development of partnership between organisations seeking similar goals. An effective lobbying campaign will engage and generate support from all members of society including the media, general public and politicians, and offer

positive and achievable solutions. It is an essential part of an overall strategy. Legislation which effectively controls the breeding and sale of pets, requires dog owners to register and vaccinate their dogs, and penalises individuals for abandoning animals and for acts of animal cruelty will help to develop a healthy and stable animal population. The success of such legislation is dependent upon widespread community and political support, effective enforcement and government assistance to help a community to meet the registration and vaccination requirements.

Education

An education programme needs to be coordinated in partnership with the local government, schools and educational institutions, veterinary community, animal-welfare organisations, the local community (both dog-owners and non-owners), local health service providers, and international NGOs.

Education is essential to encourage greater responsibility among pet owners for population management and the care and welfare of individual animals. An education initiative should focus on issues such as;

- appropriate pet selection;
- bite-prevention and the supervision of dog and child interactions;
- caring for dogs & cats to meet their nutritional, health and welfare needs;
- responsible dog & cat ownership;
- health and welfare benefits of de-sexing dogs & cats;
- promoting the importance of, and access to, preventative treatments such as rabies vaccination and parasite-control;
- knowledge of normal and abnormal canine behaviour in both owned and non-owned dogs;
- compliance with licensing regulations;
- behaviour training

Efforts to address companion animal overpopulation and animal cruelty need to be developed and supported by the community as a whole in order to address the causes and not just the effects of animal problems. Where possible, shelters should try to work in tandem with the authorities to educate the public about the issues affecting animals in the province or country.

For detailed recommendations on humane dog population management please see the 'Humane Dog Population Management Guidance' published by the International Companion Animal Management Coalition <http://www.icam-coalition.org/>

Community cat neutering programme

Stray/feral cat populations if left unmanaged increase exponentially leading to potential animal health and welfare issues as well as potential conflicts with residents. Many cats may die due to the administration of poison, killed in road accidents, or due to untreated infections and diseases. Mass killing of a cat colony is an ineffective and inhumane way to manage a population in the long term, removing cats from a population creates a vacuum allowing cats from neighbouring colonies to migrate into the available area. In addition, stray cats which escaped the killing will reproduce rapidly, and cats newly abandoned by irresponsible cat owners will move into these areas. Killing is a short term solution often carried out to gain public support following negative publicity with regards to cats causing a nuisance in a community, but such action cannot control the population of stray cats for the long-term, as the population quickly returns to the previous level.

Working in partnership stray/feral cats can be humanely trapped, neutered, vaccinated, treated for minor ailments and if appropriate returned to their home environment, to be cared for by caregivers in a local community. During this process cats can also be assessed for their potential for adoption if appropriate.

Through a well managed programme stray/feral cat populations can be effectively managed to the benefit of the health and welfare of the cats and to the satisfaction of the community. De-sexed cat colonies will stabilise in size and subsequently decrease as the breeding rate declines; de-sexed cats will vocalise, roam and spray less leading to less potential for conflicts from local residents. In many cases local residents act as caregivers within the community providing resources for a cat population, a community cat neutering programme must work with the full support of the caregivers to provide a humane solution for a cat population. A cat neutering programme requires the support of the local community, government, welfare organisations, and the veterinary community.

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What's TNR

Trap : a welfare organisation must cooperate with the current feeders of cats (caregivers). The caregivers know the cats as individuals, they know the number and condition of the cats in the community, and are able to approach the cats more easily. With appropriate training caregivers will be able to trap the cats using food and cat cages. During the trapping, care must be taken to avoid injury to both the cat and the carers.

Neuter* : cats must be neutered by qualified veterinary surgeons trained in carrying out desexing surgery to the highest welfare standards in well-appointed veterinary hospitals, following the surgery cats should be "ear tipped" whilst under anaesthetic in order to distinguish them from non-neutered cats in the community. Meanwhile, cats can be provided with preventative rabies and disease vaccines and treated for minor ailments. If appropriate, male cats can return home the same day, while female cats may need several days to recover from the surgery.

Release : after neutering, cats which are not suitable for adoption should be released back into the community as soon as possible, and continue to be fed, offered water and monitored to identify potential complications following the surgery by the caregivers.

Continued action: for a neutering programme to be effective and the overall population to stabilise and decrease, 70-80% of stray cats must be neutered. Caregivers must continue to monitor the cats' situation and status. If they find new stray cats in the area, they must be caught and desexed to prevent the population from increasing again. Throughout the programme, caregivers must carry out educational activities to ensure the community are aware of their actions and support this approach.

It is essential that a community cat neutering programme is carried out by the caregivers with the support of a local welfare organisation acting as the central coordinator and with the support of the local veterinary. The caregivers and the coordinating organisation must be responsible for initiating educational initiatives within the local community to provide information to residents on why the cats are being trapped, the benefits of neutering and how they can help to care for the cat population and identify new cats entering the population which require neutering. Community education initiatives must also provide information to cat owners with regards the benefits of neutering and how to care for their cat responsibly.

Case-study: Beijing Lucky

Founded in 2001, Beijing Lucky Cats focus on helping stray cats, including a re-homing project, trap, neuter and release (TNR), and educational activities. Lucky Cats began a TNR programme for stray cats in Beijing in 2004, and have since covered over 200 living areas, de-sexing more than 8000 stray cats.

Their working principle is "Let the public be the protagonist", they coordinate, support and conduct training for the local volunteers, and the volunteers then carry out the TNR programme. The volunteers provide the human resources and pay part of the fees to cover the costs. The volunteers 'own' the programme and ensure it continues over time. The volunteers release the stray cats back to the living area after their surgery, identify and trap new cats arriving in the area and keep good communication with local residents to ensure the project is accepted within the community.

Example: Zhongshan Park

Beijing Lucky Cats began TNR in the park in January 2008; there are approximately 110 stray cats. By spring 2010 they have desexed 90 stray cats, and currently there have been no new kittens, the number of cats has stabilized, and all the cats are healthy.

Foster Care Programme

A well managed fostering scheme requires excellent coordination and record keeping, ensuring all individuals within the scheme are kept up to date with the status of animals within the rehoming process. This includes foster carers, potential adopters, local government dog management personnel and local animal shelters. All animals should be photographed and be provided with individual record cards to track their progress, location, vaccination, and training. This should be administered by a central coordinator and all individuals should be able to approach this coordinator for information on specific dogs & cats.

A fostering scheme requires support from the local authority dog management team and the local veterinary community to work effectively. All dogs & cats entering the scheme should be examined by a vet, vaccinated, and provided with appropriate treatment. Ideally all dogs & cats should be neutered before they are fostered or at the very least neutered before they are rehomed.

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Foster carers need to be assessed for their suitability and provided with a limit of the number of animals they can foster at any one time based on the space and resources they have available. Ideally support needs to be given with regards food, equipment, and vet bills. In addition regular contact including visits by a central coordinator should be made to ensure continued suitability over time.

A successful scheme requires a strict adoption policy to ensure animals are placed in homes that can meet their welfare needs. The central coordinating organisation should develop clear contracts between foster carers and adopters to ensure that dogs & cats can be removed if it is deemed they are not being cared for appropriately.

The central coordinating organisation should develop clear adoption guidelines to lead potential adopters through the adoption process this should include identification of potentially suitable animals prior to meeting the animals, and arranging subsequent meetings and introductions.

Following adoption/or animals being claimed by their previous owners, educational initiatives must be employed to ensure responsible pet ownership, this should include information on how to meet the needs of animals and the advantages of neutering.

A fostering scheme is successful if it is able to recruit a sufficient number of suitable foster carers, and subsequently place animals in permanent homes. Much of this success will depend upon the development of appropriate publicity information and subsequent promotion to the local community. The support of the local media is essential to generate support within the community.

A fostering scheme can be less stressful for animals than entering a shelter and allows unwanted animals to become accustomed to living in a family home. Foster carers have the necessary time to socialize animals, provide basic training and begin a rehabilitation process if this is necessary. All of these aspects will increase the rehoming prospects for a dog or cat. In addition foster carers will be able to provide potential adopters with specific behavioural issues and needs of individual animals, something that an animal shelter may not be able to provide.



CONCLUSION

Remember every animal shelter's aim is ultimately to reduce the number of animals it houses, so that funding and manpower can be better spent on practical programmes, as well as far-reaching educational initiatives, to tackle the problems of rabies and pet overpopulation at their source. As reported by the BBC, recent research by Edinburgh University's Royal Dick Veterinary School indicates that rabies "could be wiped out across the world within a decade if sufficient vaccination programmes are introduced." There is real hope for the dogs and cats of Asia, but only if we can find ways of engaging the community in positive programmes that benefit both animals and people. If shelters continue to just "mop up" the problem, you could spend a lifetime's work caring for individual animals, without making any real difference to the overall problem. With education at the forefront of your shelter's mission, the core message of reducing stray and homeless animals in the community and living in harmony with our four-legged best friends will ultimately see that world of change.