

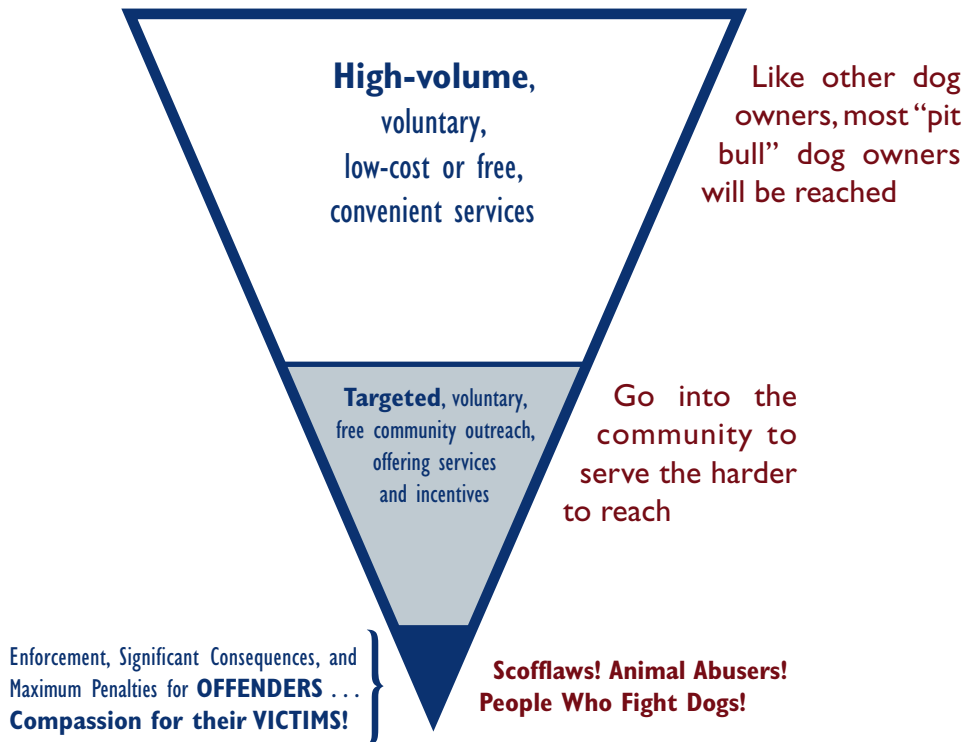
SPAY/NEUTER PARTNERSHIPS

Cooperation, Education, and Accessible & Affordable Services NOT Mandates

Decrease euthanasia rates, encourage responsible pet ownership and support the human-canine bond.

Most dog owners want to provide good care for their pets, but some owners need assistance. Safe and humane communities provide accessible and affordable spay/neuter services so everyone has the opportunity to be a responsible pet owner.

Mandatory spay/neuter laws criminalize dog owners who want to provide good care for their pets but cannot afford it. Accessible and targeted services will reach the majority of dog owners. Mandatory spay/neuter laws do not.



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Mandatory spay/neuter laws divide the community and break the human-animal bond:

In 2005, San Francisco, California, implemented a mandatory spay/neuter law for “pit bulls” and “pit bull” mixes. As soon as the measure passed, some San Francisco dog owners faced landlord ultimatums: keep the dog and move, or be evicted. Although “pit bulls” were still legal, the law’s

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OUTREACH

designation of “pit bulls” as a special “problem” had stigmatized both the dogs and their owners. Breed specific mandates endorse discrimination and profiling of all kinds, including by landlords and insurance companies. And, San Francisco’s mandatory spay/neuter law did nothing to lower the overall dog population in its shelter. While the “pit bull” dog in-take numbers dropped, non-“pit bull” dog overall shelter increased.

Kansas, Missouri’s breed specific mandatory spay/neuter resulted in a steady increase in not only its pit bull euthanasia, despite the mandate, but also the number of all dogs euthanized as well.

Mandatory spay/neuter laws miss the owners they were designed to reach and lead to an increase euthanasia.

Shots fairs in lower income communities offering affordable and easily accessible vaccinations and spay/neuters, as well as education about responsible dog ownership, have had a positive impact on dogs and owners, and have resulted in fewer shelter intakes and euthanasia. Over a period of 2 years, at shots fairs in Oakland, California, over 2500 canines were vaccinated; and more than 1700 dogs identified as “pit bull” dogs were spayed or neutered.

The hardest to reach are reachable with voluntary programs that make special offers where there are special needs. In Florida, the City of Jacksonville and First Coast No More Homeless Pets partner to provide free and low-cost spay/neuter surgeries for dogs and cats. Since 2002, over 85,000 pet sterilizations have been facilitated. The city has seen an overall

reduction in pet intake of approximately 31% and a 58% decrease in the number of animals being euthanized. An estimated 3,000 “pit bulls” are sterilized annually in this voluntary program. By providing targeted incentives instead of issuing mandates, Jacksonville, FL is better serving their pets and pet owners.

In 2006, Calgary, Alberta, a city of over 1 million people, enacted its Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw. Calgary’s breed-neutral approach is built on its “four principles of responsible ownership”: licensing and permanent identification; spay and neutering; proper care and training; and appropriate management and control. Through outreach, licensing discounts for altered pets, and appropriate enforcement of licensing and nuisance provisions, Calgary has increased licensure compliance to 95%, increased its return-to-owner rate to 86%, and reduced dog bites and shelter intake. Its canine euthanasia rate is now 5% and confined to dogs with significant health or behavioral issues!

“Not only are proactive programs...cost effective, in the end they are our only hope to end pet overpopulation. Bitter experience has shown that we cannot adopt our way out of pet overpopulation or build our way out. A system that continues to spend upwards of 95% of its resources on reactive programs is doomed to failure and frustration... Investing in proactive programs allows the increasing reallocation of resources to proactive programs, building momentum to the day when shelters will realize their century-long mission – to rescue and rehabilitate homeless animals and find a loving home for each and every one.”

~ Peter March, Esq