

PetSmart Charities Study: Barriers to Pet Adoption and Spaying/Neutering

PetSmart Charities recently released research it commissioned to measure perceptions about pet adoption and spaying/neutering. The charity hoped to gain four pieces of information with the research: the level of awareness of issues about adoption and spaying/neutering pets; whether different geographic regions of the U.S. had different perceptions about these issues; what motivates people to adopt or spay/neuter; and what prevents people from adopting or spaying/neutering a pet.

PetSmart Charities commissioned a marketing firm to do the research. The research was conducted online among 3,000 adults, including 1,000 that adopted a dog or cat in the past year. The methodology and



Photo by academic.

large size of the survey sample should mean the results accurately reflect American beliefs about pets. PetSmart Charities shared the results in the hopes that the data would be used to craft new messages that take into account what motivates and prevents Americans from

both pet adoptions and spaying/neutering pets.

Awareness

The results of the study showed that while the majority of Americans claim to have

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*Newsletter printed courtesy of
Corporate Business Systems*





SNAP's mission is to eliminate the need for euthanasia in our community's shelters, to reduce the number of homeless animals, and to educate the public about the importance of spay/neuter.

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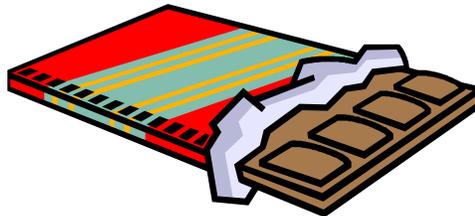
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HOW MANY CANDY BARS DOES IT TAKE TO SPAY A CAT?

By Phyllis Kiefer



If you work in a large office, you might try my "snacks for SNAP" fundraising idea. I stock a basket in our break-room with nuts, breakfast items (muffins, cinnamon rolls, pastries), candy bars, popcorn, chips, etc. All are purchased in individual servings at a discount store. Each item sells for \$1, which for most items represents a 50% profit.

Each item sells for \$1, which for most items represents a 50% profit.

Last year I was able to donate over \$1,000 in profits to SNAP, and my snacks are a convenience for co-workers with the munchies. Payment is on the "honor system," and all I have to do is shop every two weeks, empty the money can every day or so, and make a monthly deposit.

How many candy bars does it take to spay a cat? About 110!

Random Pet Fact

The use of pet therapy reduced the need for pain medication by 50 percent in adults recovering from total joint-replacement surgery.

In Memoriam

Mary Baker

Dorothy George

In Honor Of

Julie Madsen



(Continued from page 1)

heard about the problem of homeless pets, they dramatically underestimate the size of the problem. They also underestimate how many dogs and cats are euthanized in shelters. About 4 million pets are euthanized in shelters each year, but three-quarters of those surveyed believed that number to be 1 million or fewer. The lack of awareness was greater among younger respondents.

Adoption

Three-quarters of pets are adopted from somewhere other than an animal shelter. The most common reason Americans adopt elsewhere is because they want a particular breed or type of pet. Other reasons proffered pointed to the respondents' uncertainty about adopting in general and what sort of pet an animal from a shelter would make.

The most popular reason respondents who had recently acquired a pet offered for adopting from a shelter or taking in a stray or an animal from a family member was that they wanted to "save a life." This reason was also identified as the most popular among all respondents as a motivator for adoption. The second most popular motivator was that shelter pets make "some of the best companion animals." Other motivators to adopt from shelters included a desire for a pet that was an adult or already vaccinated or spayed/neutered. Younger adults viewed adopting shelter pets as less expensive and convenient.

Spaying and Neutering

One-third of those respondents who owned unspayed/neutered pets listed a belief that their pet was too young for the procedure as the reason for not having the procedure performed, and just under one-third claimed the reason was that the cost was too expensive.

Despite these issues, 65 percent of respondents claimed their pet was spayed or neutered. Of those with unaltered pets, 75 percent claimed to be considering the procedure for the future. The top motivator to spay/neuter was to reduce the number of unwanted pets.

Despite cost being such an important reason for not having spay/neuter procedures performed, respondents showed a lack of awareness of low-cost spay/neuter clinics. Of those aware of such clinics, many stated they would trust private veterinary hospitals more than those clinics and expect private hospitals to be more clean and safe.

Thirteen percents of respondents reported their dog had delivered a litter while nineteen percent reported their cat had delivered a litter. A little over half of both dog and cat owners whose pets had a litter stated the litter was an accident.

Geography

Geographic region made little difference in determining whether a respondent had adopted a pet, although there was a modestly higher percentage of adopters in the West. Western pet owners also had the highest proportion of spayed/neutered pets, while Southern pet owners were the least likely to have their pet altered.

Suggestions

The study's authors made suggestions about the ways the data could be used. First, the public needs to understand the actual number of animals being euthanized. Second, advocates should craft messages about adoption that emphasize that adoption saves lives and provides the joys of pet companionship. Third, messages about spaying/neutering should emphasize how the procedures reduce the numbers of unwanted animals. Finally, the public must be educated regarding the age a pet can be spayed or neutered and that low-cost clinics provide safe, good quality procedures.



Special Thanks

Pocket Change for Pets Program

Cheers for our loyal "Pocket Change for Pets" participants:

Race Brothers Farm Supply

Camp Bow Wow

All Pet Supplies

A special welcome and thank you to our newest supporter:

Indie



These businesses allow SNAP to display donation canisters in their stores. The donations from their generous customers help pay for a significant number of spay/neuter surgeries each year. In fact, during the 2009 year, over \$3,500 was collected from 30 donation canisters--enough for 165 surgeries!

Meeting Dates

Board of Directors Meetings

6:30 pm

April 19 (Room A)

May 17 (Room A)

June 21 (Room A)



Volunteer Meeting

6:30 pm

June 2 (Room A)

All meetings are held at the Library Center, 4653 S. Campbell, unless otherwise noted.



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Obese Pets



Nearly 50 percent of domestic animals are overweight or obese. Pets can suffer obesity for the same reasons humans do: not enough physical activity, age, and too many calories. Genetics can also contribute to pet obesity. Among dogs, Labrador retrievers, beagles, and cocker spaniels have a higher risk of being overweight. Some endocrine diseases are re-

lated to obesity, and obese pets should also be evaluated for these diseases.

Obesity can have serious health consequences for pets. Both dogs and cats that are obese are more likely to develop diabetes. Obesity can also lead to musculoskeletal, orthopedic, and dermatological problems.

Pet owners should consult a veterinarian about a weight loss program for their dog or cat, especially the rate at which their pet should lose weight. Once the program is begun, owners should weigh the animal every couple of weeks to ensure that their pet is losing weight at the rate desired. Part of the reason monitoring is very important is because weight-loss foods marketed for pets vary widely in calorie content.

Pet owners would be wise to read the label of weight-loss foods carefully. A recent study published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* reviewed almost 100 commercial pet diets that were promoted for weight loss. The study found that the dry dog foods reviewed had anywhere from 217 to 440 kilocalories per cup. Wet dog food had between 189 to 398 kilocalories per can, and cat food had between 235 to 480 kilocalories per cup.

Quotes about Dogs

We give dogs time we can spare, space we can spare and love we can spare. And in return, dogs give us their all. It's the best deal man has ever made.

M. Acklam

The average dog is a nicer person than the average person.

Andy Rooney

There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face.

Ben Williams



Solutions!
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Spay Neuter Assistance Program, Inc.
The Humane Solution to Pet Overpopulation

YES!

I would like to become a member of SNAP to help reduce the number of unwanted animals born in Southwest Missouri. I understand that by becoming a member, I will receive a quarterly newsletter, acknowledgement on the SNAP website, and an invitation to SNAP's annual meeting. (Membership is renewable annually and is tax deductible. Payment may be made by check or money order.)

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student/Senior (60 & over) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Lifetime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Family | |

OR...

- ___ I want to help! Please send information about becoming a SNAP volunteer.
___ I want to support SNAP's work with the enclosed tax-deductible donation.
___ Please make a donation in memory of _____
___ Please send me information on estate planning .
___ I would like to "Sponsor-a-Spay." I am enclosing \$ _____ to sponsor:
___ A specific pet (indicate pet's name) _____
___ The pet at the top of SNAP's waiting list

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