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Community Partnering as a Tool for Improving Live Release Rate in Animal Shelters in the United States

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Abstract

Collaboration among all shelters and nonhuman animal welfare groups within a community along with the transparent, shared reporting of uniform data have been promoted as effective ways to increase the number of animals' lives saved. This article summarizes the shelter intakes, outcomes, and live release rate

(LRR) from 6 geographically diverse communities participating in the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Partnership program for 5 years (2007–2011). This program is both a grant program and a coaching program that works to focus the community partners on a data-driven goal using standardized definitions and metrics. There was improvement in LRR in all communities over time regardless of intake numbers, human population, or mix of dogs/puppies and cats/kittens entering shelters. Averaged across all communities over the 5-year period, there was an overall improvement in LRR of 62%. Within individual communities, the degree of improvement ranged from 18% to 96%. This improvement in LRR was accomplished through a wide variety of programs in each community based on resources and interests during the time period.

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Keywords

- animal shelter,
- live release rate,
- dog,
- cat

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Abstract

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Collaboration among all shelters and nonhuman animal welfare groups within a community along with the transparent, shared reporting of uniform data have been promoted as effective ways to increase the number of animals' lives saved. This article summarizes the shelter intakes, outcomes, and live release rate (LRR) from 6 geographically diverse communities participating in the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Partnership program for 5 years (2007–2011). This program is both a grant program and a coaching program that works to focus the community partners on a data-driven goal using standardized definitions and metrics. There was improvement in LRR in all communities over time regardless of intake numbers, human population, or mix of dogs/puppies and cats/kittens entering shelters. Averaged across all communities over the 5-year period, there was an overall improvement in LRR of 62%. Within individual communities, the degree of improvement ranged from 18% to 96%. This improvement in LRR was accomplished through a wide variety of programs in each community based on resources and interests during the time period.

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