

BECOMING A NO-KILL COMMUNITY: SAN ANTONIO REACHES A “TIPPING POINT”

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

In 2006, San Antonio had the third highest euthanasia rate of pets per capita in the country, with more than 50,000 euthanized annually. Less than 10% of the dogs and cats impounded at the City of San Antonio’s Animal Care Services (ACS) shelter made it out alive via adoption, transfer to rescue groups, or returned to owners (collectively known as “live release”).

Over the last 15 years, numerous communities across the country have implemented No-Kill animal control shelters. These communities are saving the lives of impounded animals while reducing animal birthrates, preventing surrenders, increasing pet adoptions and ensuring animals remain with responsible caretakers.

SAN ANTONIO MOVES TO BECOME A NO-KILL COMMUNITY

In 2007, drawing on the work of experts such as Nathan Winograd, who developed the No-Kill Equation, the City of San Antonio, the San Antonio Area Foundation and the nonprofit animal welfare community launched a bold effort to make San Antonio a No-Kill community.

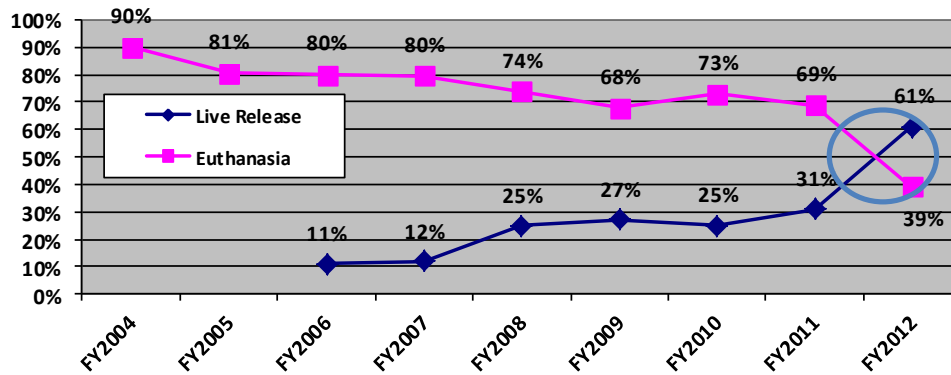
Since then, the community has undertaken the following activities in an effort to move the community toward No-Kill animal control:

- Hosted community conversations and invited No Kill experts Nathan Winograd, Bonney Brown, Executive Director of the Nevada Humane Society, Mitch Schneider, Manager of Washoe County (Reno and Sparks, NV) Regional Animal Services and Mike Arms, President of the Helen Woodward Animal Center and a pioneer in the animal welfare industry to speak about No-Kill
- Implemented *Talk About It!*, a grassroots campaign to promote responsible pet ownership and low-cost spay and neutering that includes:
 - Informational materials in English and Spanish
 - Door-to-door canvassing in areas of the city with the largest number of stray animals
 - High profile pet events such as Bark in the Park and Pet Fiesta
- Began an aggressive, user-friendly pet adoption and rescue program that includes:
 - Super adoption events held regularly in locations across the community with numerous agencies participating to promote easy access
 - Shelter hour expansion to seven days a week and on weekdays until 7 p.m.
 - Adoption counselors with access to the on-line system placed in each kennel building to eliminate the bottleneck at the adoption office.
- Expanded the capacity of the community to conduct high-volume, low-cost spay/neuter surgeries.
- Enlisted the support of the *San Antonio Express-News* Editorial Board to inform the community about resources available to the public to achieve the No-Kill goals. The newspaper has since printed many positive stories.

NO KILL REACHES A “TIPPING POINT” IN SAN ANTONIO

In November 2011, ACS achieved a 52.2% live release rate. For the first time ever, more dogs and cats were saved than were put down at the shelter. There were over 1,000 live releases that month.

The live release rate continues to increase. Today, San Antonio is truly at a “tipping point” in achieving No-Kill goals in San Antonio as shown in the graph below.



Source: City of San Antonio, Animal Care Services

Other notable achievements include:

- The number of pet adoptions in FY 2012 was 43% higher than FY 2011. In December 2011, ACS had a record 616 adoptions. This was 200 more adoptions than the previous record.
- Over 300% more animals were rescued in FY 2012 than FY 2011, and transfers to rescue groups continue to set new records each month.
- ACS and a consortium of animal partner agencies dramatically increased the annual number of spay/neuter surgeries from 8,000 in 2006 to over 55,000 in 2012.

LOCAL AGENCIES WORKING TO ACHIEVE NO-KILL IN SAN ANTONIO

Alamo Area Partners for Animal Welfare (AAPAW) -- <http://www.aapaw.org>

Animal Defense League of Texas – <http://www.adltexas.org>

City of San Antonio Animal Care Services -- <http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare>

Helotes Humane Society -- <http://www.hhsanimals.org>

Hill Country Animal League -- <http://hcaltx.com>

Homes for Pets/Schertz Humane Society -- <http://www.homesforpets.org>

San Antonio Feral Cat Coalition – <http://www.sanantonioferalcats.org>

San Antonio Humane Society -- <http://www.sahumane.org>

Spay-Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP) -- <http://www.snapus.org>

Spay Neuter Inject Protect San Antonio (SNIPSA) -- <http://www.snipsa.org>

SpaySA -- <http://www.spaysa.org>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Best Friends Animal Society Resource Library available at: <http://www.bestfriends.org/Resources/No-Kill-Resources/>

City of San Antonio – Animal Care Services Report to the Animal Care Services Advisory Board on Fiscal Year 2012 Goals, Strategies and Initiatives available at:

http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare/forms/Docs/ACS%20Strategic%20Plan_2011.pdf

Dollars & Sense: The Economic Benefits of No Kill Animal Control -

<http://www.nokilladvocacycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/econbenefits.pdf>

Maddie's Fund Resource Library available at: http://www.maddiesfund.org/Resource_Library.html

North Shore Animal League America's Spay USA available at: <http://spayusa.org>

Talk About it! San Antonio - <http://talkaboutitsa.org>

Winograd, Nathan J., Redemption, Almaden Books, 2007.

References

City of San Antonio – Animal Care Services Report to the Animal Care Services Advisory Board on Fiscal Year 2012 Goals, Strategies and Initiatives

http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare/forms/Docs/ACS%20Strategic%20Plan_2011.pdf