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Spaying And Neutering

Every year in the United States about 2.7 million companion animals are euthanized, most of which are cats and dogs. (Pet Statistics.) We can change this problem if every pet owner spays and neuters their animal. There are many reasons for animal overpopulation; one of which is that many people are not aware of the responsibilities they will have to take on with owning a pet, so they relinquish the animal. Another reason is that people allow their pets to reproduce without having sufficient resources to keep all of the offspring or they can not find homes for them. You need to spread the word about spaying and neutering, and if you have or know anybody who has an unaltered animal please make them aware of the consequences for their actions.

“Prior research studies suggest that 7 to 20 percent of pets entering a home are no longer in that home six months after acquisition.” (Pet Overpopulation.) This fact shows that many people are not ready to care for an animal because they are oblivious to the amount of time, work and money that is necessary to keep their pet satisfied. Here are some questions to ask yourself before you take on the responsibilities of owning a pet. Do you have a yard or a place the animal is allowed to stay? How much outdoor time will the animal have? “The minimum cost of dog ownership is estimated to be over \$500 per year. Have you considered, and are able to assume,

the financial responsibility of veterinary care and providing ongoing food/shelter/training for this animal?” (Dog Adoption Survey.) Lastly, can you afford to provide for the animal over its entire lifespan that is usually 10-20 years?

Animal overpopulation is a serious problem, however some people don't realize it, and they allow their animals to reproduce without thinking about the consequences. A matured cat can have about three litters in one year with the outcome of around 4-6 kittens. According to LA Animal Shelter and backed up by the Humane Society, one female cat and her offspring can theoretically produce 420,000. (LA Animal Shelter.) Sadly only one in twelve of those cats finds a home. (LA Animal Shelter.) One of the most common excuses for people not to spay and neuter is that they cannot afford it. The average cost of spaying and neutering is \$40 according to the Scott County Humane Society. However they offer programs to assist those that cannot afford it which can lower the cost to \$18. (Spay/Neuter - Scott Co. Humane Society.)

Some people believe that spaying and neutering your pets at a young age can increase chances of your animal getting serious injuries and conditions that will need surgeries and be very costly. “The prestigious Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine published a study that hypothesized dogs spayed at an early age were more likely to develop hip dysplasia.” (10 Reasons NOT To Spay And Neuter Your Dog.) They believe this because spaying removes an estrogen producing organ, and if it is too soon then the bones and joints might not get the estrogen they need. This article also talks about how spaying and neutering early on can cause higher risk of heart tumors, abnormal bone growth, acl ruptures, hypothyroidism, etc. However, if you wait to spay your animal then they might start having offspring and the outcome of that is very painful to your pet and can cause problems. They are less likely to catch serious diseases

such as aids and leukemia. “In fact, the evidence shows that females spayed before their first heat are typically healthier. Many veterinarians now sterilize dogs and cats as young as eight weeks of age.” (HUMANE SOCIETY ANIMAL LEAGUE FOR LIFE OF MADISON COUNTY KENTUCKY.) Not to mention, unsplayed animals reproducing contributes negatively to animal overpopulation.

Animal overpopulation is a gigantic problem, many animals are killed each year because some owners refuse to spay and neuter their pets. We can turn this around if everyone does their part by spaying and neutering their animals. Please before you, your family, or friends adopt an animal, consider how much work and money it will take to own a pet. If you want your pet to have a litter, make sure you are able to care for the offspring. Even if you have found homes for them, that is taking away a home from an animal that needs it more. After learning these facts you are educated and encouraged to spay and neuter your pets.

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