

Showcase Available Cats



Portals!



Pathways to Shorter Length of Stay

- Create Cat Team
- Improve Intake Exams
- Start Daily Rounds
- Recruit More Foster Homes
- Shelter Neuter Return
- Intake Appointments
- If it meows, fix it for free!



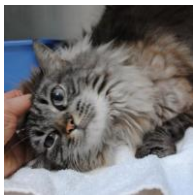
Improve Shelter Operations

Switch to one step cleaning protocol





Shorten public hours for more staff training and animal care time



Establish a Dedicated Customer Service Call Center



&



Director of First Impressions
Greeter Station

Launch a "Foster to Surrender" Program for Neonates




Challenge Ahead: Capital Campaign for Shelter Remodel



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Tacoma & Pierce County
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#Cap4Care
Thank you!
Kathleen Olson, CAWA
Executive Director

Capacity for Care

When Less Adds Up to a Whole Lot More for Shelter Cats




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#Cap4Care

Brief History

Started in 1971 and became a leader of the no-kill, cageless movement - proving cats better off in colony environments

Innovative programs, including AAT, Pet Food Pantry, housing FIV+ cats

Mismanagement in the 90s lead to, among other things, severe overcrowding and stalled programs.



By 2004

350 cats in building, 90% of which were feral or semi-feral

Adoptions around 300 annually and around 400 admissions

Cats were overcrowded in community housing, and health issues were out of control



Identifying the Problems



Majority of Cats Hard to Adopt

Too Many Feral Cats

Cats overcrowded and segregated (feral room semi-shy room, aggressive/alpha room, etc.)

Unstructured Volunteer and Enrichment Programs

Many Cats with Chronic Health Issues



Admissions and Adoptions Programs Outdated/Mismanaged

Admissions were arbitrary, inefficient and lacked structure

No behavior assessment, leading to many feral admissions

Health care protocols were outdated, slowing down both admissions and adoptions

Poor lines of communication with admitters and adopters

Adoption process was restrictive, and limited hours for adoption

Inferior promotion of adoptable cats - outdated restrictions like no black (or white!) cats adopted out during month of October!

Lack of Programmatic Advancement

Lack of leadership and enthusiasm lead to stalled growth and inertia

Too much bureaucracy - staff were unable to advance new ideas because of unnecessary red tape

Lack of collaboration - much of the shelter was controlled by a couple close-minded (paranoid) individuals



Solving the Issues



Turning Unadoptable Into Adoptable

Cats classified into 5 groups internally: Shy, Semi-shy, Overstimulated, Special Needs, "Friendly"

Divided larger spaces into smaller colony rooms, and determined maximum number of capacity per room based on current metrics (today 18 sq.ft./cat - 20 sq. ft. for FIV+ cats)

Mixed populations, ensuring an equal mix of our 5 categories and promoting "mentor cats" in each room



Turning Unadoptable Into Adoptable cont.

Created smaller enclosures, or condos, for cat(s) that needed extra attention or did "play well" other cats

Volunteers certification program was developed, and volunteers were directed into structured socialization and enrichment programs

Cats with ongoing medical issues were given health contracts to cover future medical issues related to the ongoing issue



Revamping Admissions and Adoptions

Date-based intake system developed, based on requests placed on a waiting list - committees decide complicated admissions, with emergencies pushed through

Behavior assessment on multiple levels, including initial admission request and intake exam Our Director of Veterinary Services Dr. Lynda Ewald, and Dr. Sandra Newbury, streamlined veterinary protocols

Greater emphasis was put into customer service and reception, with push for non-judgemental communication, and all calls and emails returned within 1 business day

Application process was made easier, with open adoption conversation style and adoption hours extended to 7 days a week/6 - 8 hours/day

Digital presence was created, multiple platforms for adoption promotion used - especially social media, and street teams spread our message on a weekly basis

Innovative Programs Created

Changes at the top, including the hiring of Executive Director David de Funiak, and Development and Community Cats Program Director Jenny Schlueter brought fresh ideas and new purpose

The core team of Dave, Jenny, Dr. Ewald and myself were given the freedom to research and implement new ideas that brought our organization to the next level

These ideas included the creation of Community Cats - with its offshoots, Working Cats and Feral Freedom Programs, Our Transfer and Kitten on Deck Programs with Chicago Animal Care and Control, and expanded Foster and Off-Site Adoption Programs to help us save this huge influx of cats we were dealing with

Seminal moment - a fire next door caused an evacuation of all 350 cats at the shelter. This event lead to many adoptions, as some of our shyest and neediest cats were fostered by volunteers who decided to keep them. The event lead to a foster to adopt program, where cats that were shy or had special medical needs are placed into foster with "Adoption Ambassadors" who work to adopt the cat from their home.

Impact of Programs

Our Community Cats Program allows us to return and relocate feral cats to managed colonies, keeping them out of our shelter - Tree House was also one of the lead agencies to help created the Cook County Feral Cat Ordinance

Our Foster Program allows us to admit more cats, provides the with extra socialization and TLC, and provides more exposure to potential adopters while reducing stress and expenses at shelter resident clinic.

Off-site adoption and "Adoption Ambassador" Programs increase adoptions and allow us to reach different audiences who might not otherwise come to the shelter.



Tree House Today

Upward trending adoptions, with a records being set every year for the last 8 years, culminating with 1470 adoptions in 2014 (totals include in-house and offsite).

Over 900 cats admitted in 2014, with another 1000 transferred from Chicago's Animal Care and Control

Tree House now has two locations, with an average of 110 cats at our Headquarters and 45 cats at our Bucktown branch.



Tree House Today cont.

Of our previous classifications, less than 5% considered shy or semi-shy

Over 100 foster homes, with an average of 150 cats in foster at any given time.

In Spring, 2016, Tree House will be opening the largest, state-of-the-art, cat-focused facility in the country. The building, consulted on by Dr. Sandra Newbury and Jackson Galaxy, will feature a cat'fe, education center, resident clinic, low-cost public client (dogs and cats), and of course, modern and comfortable cat wings, complete with outdoor enclosures.