



No Unwanted Litters **FACT SHEET**

To reach the objective of reducing the euthanasia of homeless dogs and cats in our region by 50 percent by 2014, the **St. Louis PetLover Coalition – with Nestlé Purina Petcare as the launch partner – created the No Unwanted Litters (NUL) campaign.** This exciting new campaign will **help increase funding and region-wide awareness of the importance of spaying and neutering.**

Following is more information on the campaign, why it was created and how you can help:

Pet Overpopulation in the St. Louis Area

- It is estimated that more than **23,000 dogs and cats are euthanized** in St. Louis City and County every year due to pet overpopulation, according to the Missouri Department of Agriculture.
- The biggest cause of pet overpopulation is pet owners failing to spay or neuter their dogs and cats.
- One dog or cat that is not spayed or neutered **can produce thousands of unwanted offspring** in a very short time.
- In fact, an unsprayed female dog and her mate along with all of their offspring can produce a staggering **67,000** dogs in only six years. The numbers for cats are similar.
- Our area shelters are doing a great job adopting out as many dogs and cats as possible, but there are not nearly enough people to adopt the enormous numbers of homeless, and often sick and starving animals, that come through their doors.
- In fact, while approximately 25 percent of animals entering our area's public and private shelters are adopted and a similar number are returned to their owners or transferred, sadly **approximately two in four (44 percent) are euthanized**, according to the Missouri Department of Agriculture, because there simply aren't enough people to adopt them.
- These unwanted pets also pose a threat to our health and safety, including through **potential attacks on kids and adults** on our streets and in our neighborhoods.
- In addition to increasing adoptions, another important way to bring euthanasia numbers down is to reduce the number of pets that enter the system in the first place through spaying and neutering.

The Obstacles

- For many people, the **cost of spaying/neutering their pets is a major obstacle.** Low-cost programs are critical for those who can't afford the service.
- Others in our region have **misconceptions about spaying/neutering their pets** or are simply not educated about the implications and benefits. Education programs are essential to help bust the myths and negative opinions surrounding pet spaying/neutering.

Enlisting Supporters

- It's going to take many of us to solve pet overpopulation in our region. We need **an army of supporters**, who are committed to saving dogs and cats and creating safer neighborhoods by increasing funding and region-wide awareness of the importance of spaying and neutering.
- Getting involved can be as simple as taking a pledge or making a donation to one of the four low-cost spay/neuter providers; or you can become a community ambassador, sharing information about this critical issue in our community.

Participating Low-cost Spay/Neuter Providers

- For every \$100 donated to the following low-cost spay/neuter providers, approximately three pets could be spayed or neutered (costs vary depending on whether it's a dog or cat, as well as the gender and size of the pet). Recognizing that one dog or cat that is not spayed or neutered can produce thousands of unwanted offspring in a very short time, the impact is huge.
 - **BARC St. Louis** (Benefitting Animals through Responsibility & Compassion) is an all volunteer group dedicated to reducing euthanasia by promoting and providing spay/neuter surgeries for pets of low-income families. BARC offers a one-of-a-kind spay/neuter program, which is open to anyone who can provide proof of financial need, regardless of residency.
 - **Humane Society of Missouri's** mission is to provide a safe and caring haven to all abused, neglected and abandoned animals; work toward ending the cycle of abuse and pet overpopulation through their Animal Cruelty Task Force, spay/neuter and humane education programs; and create lasting relationships between people and animals through adoption programs and veterinary medical services. HSMO offers a variety of spay/neuter programs, including SNIP, a low-cost option for Missouri residents.
 - **Operation SPOT** (OpSPOT) is dedicated to eliminating the unnecessary euthanasia of dogs and cats in St. Louis and surrounding areas. OpSPOT facilitates affordable spaying and neutering by area veterinarians for pet owners, who could not otherwise afford to have their dog or cat fixed.
 - **Saint Louis Metropolitan Spay Neuter Clinic** envisions a community in which pets are not euthanized just because they are homeless. The clinic will offer low cost spay neuter options.

The St. Louis PetLover Coalition

- The St. Louis PetLover Coalition fosters collaborative efforts of local animal welfare groups and the community to **promote responsible pet ownership and to increase the save rate of companion animals in our community**.
- The Coalition has committed to help St. Louis earn the title of **America's Ultimate Pet Community** by the year 2014. To achieve this vision the Coalition has committed to:
 - **Reduce the euthanasia** of homeless dogs and cats in our region by 50 percent through lowering the intake of unwanted dogs and cats with education and spay/neuter assistance programs for those currently unable to afford the service.
 - **Increase the number of dogs and cats adopted** into forever homes by 20 percent.
 - **Support community-based education**, especially in the identified target areas of concern by creating greater links between the humane educator experts and the community.
 - Provide input on new facilities/programs being proposed to **enhance collaboration among facilities and groups**.