

Saving Lives: Be Their Hero Animal Welfare Conference

### THE POWER OF EARLY SPAY & NEUTER

Presented by: Candice Hopper Lead Veterinary Technician Spay Neuter Idaho Pets

### INTRODUCTION

Good evening, friends. My name is Candice Hopper, and I am the Lead Veterinary Technician at SNIP (Spay Neuter Idaho Pets).

Thank you to SNARF for organizing this conference and to all of you for your tireless work in rescue.

We are united in the mission of saving lives, easing suffering, and giving animals the futures they deserve.



### Overcrowding

Shelters and rescues are overcrowded, fosters are stretched thin.

### Overpopulation

Every day, healthy animals lose their chance at life because of overpopulation.

### Prevention

One of the most powerful tools: Early spay & neuter (pediatric, 8–16 weeks).

### WE KNOW THE CHALLENGES

Shelters and rescues are full, fosters are stretched thin, and the heartbreaking truth is, every single day, healthy animals lose their chance at life because of overpopulation. One of the most powerful tools we have to change the cycle is early spay and neuter.

# BENEFITS OF SPAY & NEUTER

The purpose of early spay and neuter procedures serves a multifaceted role in the health and behavior management of puppies and kittens. These operations help extend the lifespan of pets by potentially preventing certain types of cancers and eliminating reproductive-related health issues.

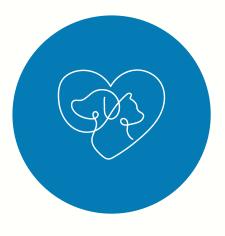
Through such interventions, pet owners can avoid unwanted litters, which contributes to controlling the population of stray animals. Early actions against heat cycles prevent females from experiencing stress and discomfort associated with being in heat. Neutering males at a young age significantly reduces aggressive behavior and decreases their urge to roam or fight over potential mates, leading to safer environments for both pets and their communities.

It also curtails undesirable behaviors like mounting other dogs, people, or objects. Despite some concerns about potential risks such as loss of bone mass or joint problems linked with early-age procedures, these surgeries ensure pets lead longer, healthier lives by sidestepping future complications related to reproductive organs.



### **Longer Lifespan**

Dogs and cats who are spayed live significantly longer than those who are not sterilized. This impact is most profound in cats: One study showed that spayed cats lived 39% longer and neutered cats lived 62% longer than unaltered cats.



### **Healthier Life**

Spaying your female dog or cat will eliminate her chances of developing ovarian cancer, uterine cancer and pyometra (an infection of the uterus). When spayed before her first heat cycle, your dog's risk of mammary cancer (the most common cancer in female dogs) is nearly eliminated. For males, neutering eliminates the risk of testicular cancer and some prostate disorders. S terilization also reduces the risk of your pet contracting a sexually transmitted infection.



### **Better Behavior**

Spaying or neutering may reduce the chances of your pet developing unwanted behaviors such as urine marking and mounting. It can also reduce aggression and roaming, making your pet less likely to fight with other animals or to be hit by a car.

### STEPS TO COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Community education is vital for spay-neuter programs because it reduces pet overpopulation, leading to fewer homeless animals, fewer euthanasia deaths, and improved public health. It helps by dispelling myths, fostering responsible pet ownership, making people aware of available resources, and encouraging collective action like <a href="Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)">Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)</a> programs. By increasing knowledge and participation, communities create a more humane environment for both pets and people

- Partner with schools, libraries, and community centers
- Outreach through food banks and service agencies
- Social media campaigns, infographics, and stories
- ▼ Flyers and posters in everyday places
- ✓ Voucher programs for affordable surgeries
- Address misconceptions directly



Early spay and neuter prevents suffering, and saves lives.

## CONCLUSION & CALL TO ACTION



It eases workload for staff and fosters, frees resources, and benefits animals, families, and rescues.



When we commit to early spay and neuter, we prevent suffering for hundreds more we'll never meet.





## THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Early spay and neuter: the power to end overpopulation