Adventures in starting the SNYP truck
Toronto Animal Services’
Mobile Spay/Neuter Clinic
Agenda:

- The dream of a mobile
- The first steps
- Finding the funding
- Learning from the experts at the ASPCA
- Building the clinic from scratch
- Outreach, Partnerships and Branding
- Getting on the road
- Plans for the future
Background: Toronto Animal Services

• Municipal Animal Control in Toronto
• Intake about 10,000 animals/year
• 4 shelters across the city
• Enforcement and Mobile services
• Wildlife
• Complaint calls
• Pet Licensing
The Dream of a Mobile
...what motivated us

- Overpopulation of free-roaming and homeless cats
- Challenges of an open intake shelter
- Barriers for spay/neuter in our community
- Better approach to preventing the need for animals to be brought into shelters
2012 statistics on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness in Toronto

- Number of low-income people: 604,048
- Percentage of low-income people who work: 43%
- Low-income people are most likely: **visible minorities, recent immigrants, single parents**
- Average rent for one bedroom apartment: $1,010
- Annual income needed to afford a one bedroom apartment: $40,400
- Annual income of a low income family with 2 adults and 2 children: less than $38,610
- Annual income of a low income adult: less than $20,778
- Annual income for a full time employee making minimum wage: $19,490
- Annual amount for a single person receiving Ontario Disability Support: $12,900
- Number of people who accessed food banks in 2012: 946,000
Spay/Neuter Services

• 3 stationary spay/neuter clinics
  – Attached to the North, East and South Shelters
• Sterilize over 4000 animals annually
  – shelter animals, public animals, feral TNR surgeries
• Targeted spay/neuter project “Toronto West Cats”
Toronto West Cats Project

• Targeted Spay/Neuter Project in Toronto’s west end
• PetSmart Charities Grant
• Area covered 3 postal codes with the highest intake of cats to TAS
• 400 cats sterilized
Toronto West Cats

Source of Pet

Stray: 72%
Friend Who Had Litter: 12%
Found In Apartment: 6%
Kijiji: 4%
Other: 4%

Would you have been able to spay/neuter your pet without this program

No: 95%
Maybe: 3%
Yes: 2%
# Cat Intake by Postal Code Forward Sortation Area Between January 01, 2013 and October 18, 2015

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Forward Sortation Area</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
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<td>814</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>1,905</td>
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The First Steps

- Research the best approach for spay/neuter in Toronto
- Advocate for the operation of a mobile spay/neuter clinic
- Gain support from senior managers and Toronto City Council
- Create a plan for staffing resources
# Researching the best approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good For:</th>
<th>What it Takes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Densely populated urban areas</td>
<td>Intake data to determine audiences/locations to target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparsely populated rural areas</td>
<td>Qualified medical staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pros:**
- Easily accessible
- Can be multi-purpose vehicle
- Built-in advertising

**Cons:**
- Expensive to operate
- Managing remotely

**What it Takes:**
- Intake data to determine audiences/locations to target
- Qualified medical staff
- A well-designed vehicle
- Permission to park the mobile clinic in the neighborhoods served
- An energetic grassroots outreach and marketing campaign
- Arrangements for post-operative emergency care
- Adequate funding
CVO Accreditations

• Advocated for an accreditation for a mobile spay/neuter clinic
• Meetings and discussions with the CVO
• Pilot accreditation approved by CVO Council as a spay-neuter clinic and a companion animal mobile
• Advocating for change in the Veterinarians Act and legislation to allow the use of mobile sterilization clinics for certain purposes
Support for the program

• Support from Toronto City Council
• Toronto’s veterinary community
• PetSmart Charities
• Public support - donation dollars from the public will be used to operate the program
Funding

• PetSmart Charities $250,000
• Grant application process – 2 step process, information on cat populations, business case, detailed description of mobile unit and cost, targets, outreach
• Balance of purchase and operational costs paid for with donations.
Staff resources

- Starting a new program without extra resources
- Choosing qualified staff to certify for D class driver’s licence
- Working within a unionized environment
A visit to see the New York ASPCA spay/neuter mobiles in action!
We were so impressed!

- Amazing staff
- Well-oiled machine with well thought out policies
- A decade of experience
- Efficiency of clinics
  (Sterilize ~ 50,000 animals/yr)
- Great customer service
Personal tours of their mobile fleet

• The ASPCA has 5 different mobiles and they were in the process of building their 6th to perfection.
• Toured the different models and learned what they liked and disliked about each.
• Expert advice from their mechanics/designers
• Shared the blue prints for their latest design
Watching a clinic in action

Mobile parked at the side of the street in Brooklyn at 7am.
Lineup started at 4am
We learned so much that day!

- Client Greeting
- Registration
- Prep before surgery
- Flow of surgery
- Patient discharge
Procurement of vehicle

• Developing specifications

• Focus on what’s necessary and don’t get lured by bells and whistles (ie desk/office area, seating area)

• Competitive bid process (consider implications of choosing a vendor south of the border)

• Build from scratch vs. customized pre-fab
Successful Vendor

PK Welding and Fabricators Inc.

www.pkvans.com
Working with PK Welding and Fabricators Inc.

• Regular meetings and visits
• Lay out a plan for the build, but expect tweaks and adjustments along the way
• Network for advice
• Expect delays!
Program Brand

- 3M Vinyl Wrap
- Design the program identifier
- Demographic diversity and brand
- Integrate into other city services
- Planning the official launch (coming up this May)
Graphics become your brand
Graphics help to spread the word
Graphics cross language barriers
Communications Tools
Postcard style pamphlet

The Snyp Truck
Spay or Neuter Your Pet

Toronto Animal Services’
SNYP Mobile Clinic
Coming soon to a neighbourhood near you!
416-338-6281

toronto.ca/snyptruck

Why spay/neuter your pet?
• prevents overpopulation and is better for your pet
• can prevent or reduce a number of serious and expensive health problems
• reduces unwanted behaviour related to mating

@TOAnimalService  torontoanimalservices
Communications Tools
post operative care instructions

**THE snyp truck**

**POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

**Dog Spay or Neuter**

**TORONTO ANIMAL SERVICES SNYP MOBILE CLINIC**

Thank you for spaying or neutering your dog. You have made your dog healthier and happier, and have helped to decrease the potential number of homeless dogs in Toronto.

Your dog has had an anesthetic and surgery, so please remember the following:

- Keep your dog quiet and restrict activity for the next 10 days (no running or jumping).
- Offer your dog a small meal (half of the regular amount) and water when you get home. Normal feeding can resume the following day.
- Check your dog’s incision twice each day for any abnormalities (reddening, swelling, discharge, open incision).
- Ensure that your dog wears the E-collar at all times for the next seven days to prevent licking the incision. Licking can cause severe infection and open the incision.
- Do not clean or apply anything to the incision site. Do not bathe your pet for 10 days.
- There is a small green tattoo next to the incision that identifies your dog as spayed or neutered.

- Your dog has received pain medication that lasts 24 hours. You will receive two or three pre-measured syringes of oral pain reliever called Meloxicam to be given every 24 hours as instructed.

If you have health concerns with your dog related to the surgery, contact:

416-338-0281 Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
647-862-1791 Weekends or after hours

e-mail: snyptruck@utoronto.ca

toronto.ca/snyptruck
Communications Tools
post operative care instructions

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS
Cat Spay or Neuter

Thank you for spaying or neutering your cat. You have made your cat healthier and happier, and have helped to decrease the potential number of homeless cats in Toronto.

Your cat has had an anesthetic and surgery, so please remember the following:

- Keep your pet quiet and restrict activity for the next 10 days (keep them indoors, no running or jumping).
- Offer your pet a small meal (half of the regular amount) and water when you get home. Normal feeding can resume the following day.
- Check your cat's incision twice each day for any abnormalities: padsness, swelling, discharge, open incision.
- Ensure that your cat wears the E-collar at all times for the next seven days to prevent it from licking the incision. Licking can cause serious infection and open the incision.
- Do not clean or apply anything to the incision site. Do not bath your pet for 10 days.
- There is a small green tattoo next to the incision (this identifies your cat as spayed or neutered).
- Your cat has received pain medication that lasts 24 hours. Unless directed, do not give your cat any additional medication - this is very dangerous.

If you have health concerns with your cat related to the surgery, call:
416-338-6281 Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
647-482-1791 Weekends or after hours
spayneuter@toronto.ca

toronto.ca/snyptruck
Developing SOP’s

- Help from the ASPCA and the THS
- Still a work in progress
- Set expectations for staff and ensure all staff are on the same page
- Staff safety
- Client communication
Outreach

• Aiming for a “Pets For Life Strategy” approach
• Outreach coordinator
• City-designated “Neighbourhood Improvement Areas”
• Partnering with other social service agencies
• Challenges of limited staffing resources
Forming partnerships

- Shelter Support & Housing
  - Streets to Homes
- Social Service Agencies
- Community Veterinary Outreach
- Public Health
- Toronto Community Housing
Clinics so far...

Exhibition Place – South Shelter Animals
Yonge Street Mission
No Frills
A day in the life

• **8-9am** pick up mobile from garage, drive to location and set up

• **9-10am** client registration while vet does health checks

• **10:30-2** Surgery

• **3pm** start discharge process

• **4-5pm** Clean up and return mobile to garage.
Hopes for the future

• Aiming to do 3000 surgeries our first year and 6000 our second year
• Increase awareness in the community about the services
• Establish a regular schedule for clinic locations
• Further establish partnerships with stakeholders
Expected Outcomes

Increase the quality of health and welfare of free-roaming cats in Toronto

Reduced intake of cats into Toronto shelters

Minimized nuisance complaints from communities about free-roaming cats
Special Thanks to PetSmart Charities

This project would not have been possible without them...
Thank you PetSmart Charities!
Questions and Comments