



Pet Overpopulation

Adapted from <https://www.paws.org/kids/learn/pets/overpopulation>

What happens where there are too many dogs and cats and not enough homes to care for them all?

- Pet overpopulation is a serious problem. Animal shelters become overcrowded and are unable to care for the millions of homeless pets in the United States. Sadly, not enough people adopt their pets from shelters to help ease the crowding.

Why are there so many homeless companion animals?

- There are too many puppies and kittens being born who are unwanted. Sometimes people let their dogs and cats have babies and then can't find homes for all of them. Sometimes homeless animals wandering the streets have babies. Since they do not have a home, there are no people to take care of them.
- Pets get lost. If they don't have proper identification, like a collar with an ID tag, they can't be returned home.
- Pets are surrendered or given up to animal shelters because their guardians can no longer care for them.
- Not everyone goes to an animal shelter to adopt a pet.

How to help end the pet overpopulation problem

- Have your pets spayed or neutered. Veterinarians perform a simple operation on cats and dogs to prevent them from having unwanted kittens and puppies.
- Adopt your next pet from your local animal shelter – like the Maryland SPCA! There are a lot of wonderful dogs and cats just waiting for a loving home.
- Organize a supplies drive to help animal shelters care for homeless pets until they can find homes for the animals.
- License your pets. Make sure they have an identification tag and collar or microchip.
- Learn about pets before you adopt to make sure you are ready for the responsibility. It is a big responsibility!
- Teach others about pet overpopulation and spay and neutering and how they can help.