



DOG CARE AND CONTROL PROGRAM



**ALBERTA
SPAY NEUTER
TASK FORCE**



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About the



ALBERTA SPAY NEUTER TASK FORCE



HELPING PEOPLE • HELPING ANIMALS

The ASNTF is excited to share the new Dog Care and Control Program with partner communities. This program was developed to help First Nation communities humanely manage their dog population in order to improve the safety of the people living in the community and the welfare of the dogs living with them.

OUR MISSION

We partner with communities who request guidance, support, and resources to humanely manage their companion animal population, in order to improve the safety of their community and the well being of the animals.

The Alberta Spay Neuter Task Force was formed in 2008 as a response to the need for a proactive and humane solution to pet overpopulation.

The ASNTF founding programming was focussed on providing on-site, high volume spay/neuter clinics to help communities humanely stabilize free-roaming dog populations.

DID YOU KNOW THAT SINCE INCEPTION, THE **ASNTF** HAS:

- Provided over 60 on-site, high volume Spay/Neuter Clinics in 21 communities.
- Supplied volunteers who have contributed a total of 3,000 volunteer hours/clinic.
- Examined, vaccinated, dewormed, spayed/neutered, and tattooed over 15,000 companion animals.
- Placed an additional 5,000 unwanted animals with partner rescue groups for rehoming.

The ASNTF Spay/Neuter Program has been most beneficial to First Nation communities where large, free-roaming dog populations have threatened the safety of the community and the welfare of the animals.

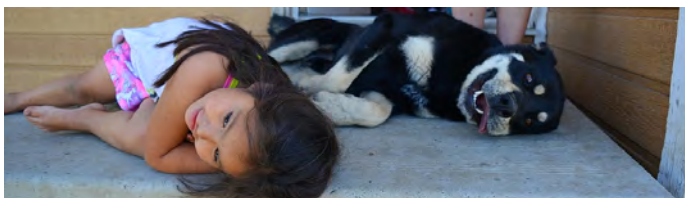
While traditionally most ASNTF resources have been allocated to spay and neuter initiatives, we recognize that spay/neuter is only one component of a long-term solution to pet overpopulation and community safety. The development of the community based ASNTF Dog Care and Control Program is the next phase in our strategic planning to address pet overpopulation.

WHY IS DOG POPULATION MANAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

1. COMMUNITY SAFETY

Reduces the risk to community members

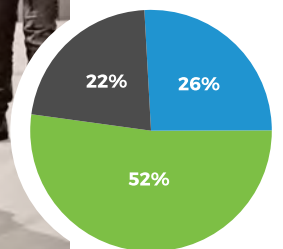
- One of the most common concerns we receive from community members is that they do not feel safe walking in their communities because of dogs who frighten them and their families.
- Staff at child care facilities, health care facilities, seniors lodges, administration buildings, arenas and schools would like to be able to provide safe environments for the users of their services.
- Another common complaint from community members is that unsupervised dogs are chasing and injuring livestock.



DID YOU KNOW? DOG/HUMAN CONFLICT

- First Nation children suffer from an inordinate amount of dog bite incidents.
- The 2011/2012 First Nations and Inuit Health Status Report states that dog bites have increased in First Nation communities by 740% from 2001.
- At least 14 children have been killed by dogs on Canada's First Nations.

DOG HEALTH

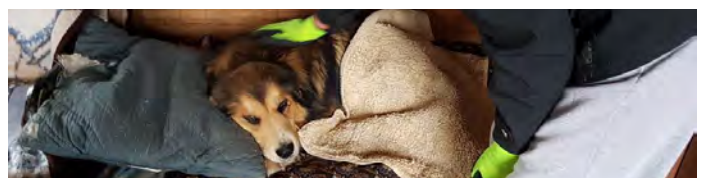


• Follow Up required
• No Follow Up Required
• Unknown

Example of Dog Population Demographics in an ASNTF Partner Community

2. ANIMAL WELFARE

- Chiefs and Councils across Canada have recognized the impact of animal welfare in their communities.
- Recent scientific research has resulted in the recognition that there is a relationship between children witnessing animal neglect or abuse, and the child experiencing mental distress. This risk increases as the bond between an animal and child increases.
- There is no denying the relationship between domestic violence, animal abuse and mental illness. In 2012, the Alberta SPCA published a report titled "Inside the Cruelty Connection". The report, supported by an independent study, identified that 36% of abused women with pets reported that their abuser threatened or harmed their animals.





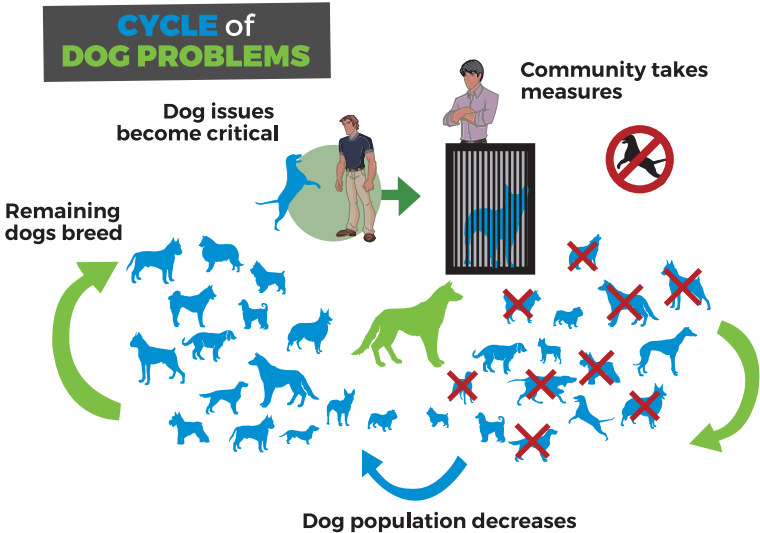
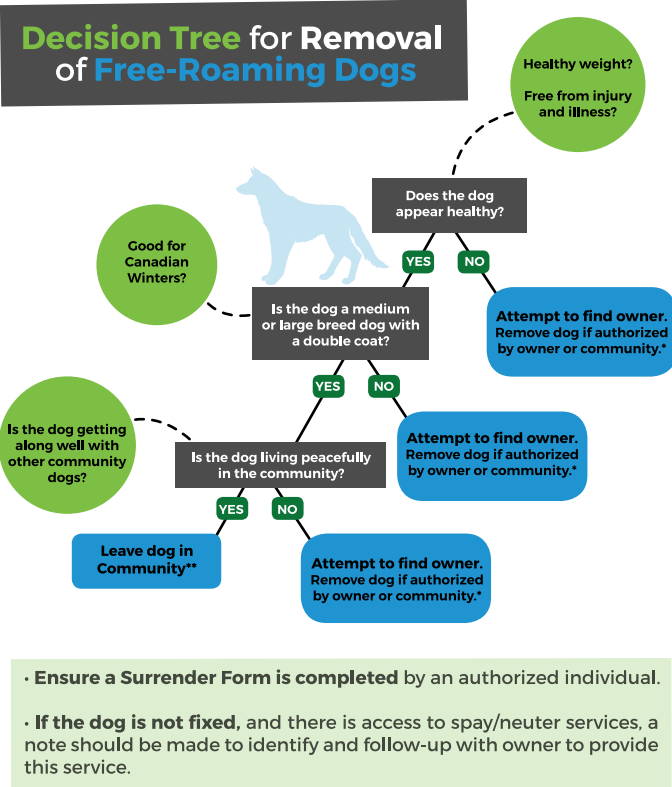
WHAT DOESN'T WORK

1. REMOVAL OF STRAYS

There are many instances where ASNTF has been contacted by communities who would like assistance with removing “stray” dogs. This is often a response to a serious dog bite incident or public pressure on leadership from community members.

However, it should be noted that in almost all cases, the “stray” dogs are in fact owned.

It is well documented that the removal of “stray” dogs is a short-term, “band-aid” solution to a long-term issue. If a community’s only tool for dog population management is to remove “strays”, they would have to remove them on an ongoing basis, forever. This puts an enormous amount of pressure on the animal welfare agencies assisting the community.



Removal of “strays” is only one part of a humane dog population management strategy. However, in instances where community dog issues have reached a critical level, due to the absence of a comprehensive dog program, the community may resort to initiating a removal of dogs. In order to ensure this initiative is sustainable, **there are 2 things** that must be considered...

1. REMOVAL OF STRAYS [continued]

#1

The community should commit to investigating and implementing longer-term strategies in an effort to avoid reaching this critical level of dog issues in the future.

#2

Removal of a 'stray' dog requires due diligence. An effort should be made to find an owner in order to receive authorization to remove a dog. This can be achieved by going door-to-door. In cases where the dog is of a large breed with a thick double-coat (suitable for Canadian weather), appears to be in good health, is friendly and not a nuisance, it is likely that the dog is being fed and cared for by someone in the community.

In some cases, the community elects to cull the dogs. As an animal welfare agency, we do not support culls which can be inhumane and very damaging to the mental health of community members, especially the children. Many community members have incredible bonds with their dogs, and the violent act of shooting dogs is very traumatic. As well, culls are indiscriminate often ending the lives of dogs who are living peacefully in the community.

During consultation with First Nation communities, there is a common message that we receive from leadership; they would like to encourage their community members to be responsible pet owners. Culling dogs, or continually removing "strays" does not promote this messaging.



Here are some additional reasons the removal of strays is not a long-term Dog Population Management strategy and can actually be detrimental to the community:

- It is our experience that the vast majority of dogs in First Nations communities are owned dogs and are sometimes mistaken as strays because they are free-roaming.
- There are actually very few truly STRAY dogs. For example, based on demographics we have completed in partner communities, we estimate that less than 5% of First Nations dog populations are truly stray.
- Based on the minimal number of strays, if we removed a large number of dogs, we would actually be removing dogs from community members and their families.
- It has been suggested that removing a large number of dogs may actually lead to redistribution of the surviving animals into newly vacant territories, which may actually increase risks to the community. For example, there are dogs living outside of the cull or rescue mission that will move into the townsites.
- Removing large numbers of dogs may also encourage community members to replace their confiscated pet with a new dog, who is not spayed or neutered, resulting in uncontrolled breeding.
- If due diligence is completed and it is concluded that an animal is truly a stray, then certainly the animal should be removed and placed with a partner animal welfare organization for care and re-homing. This also applies to ill or injured animals whose owners cannot provide care for the dog.

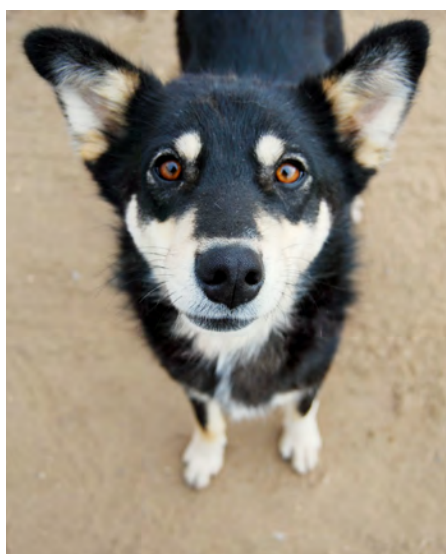
WHAT DOESN'T WORK

2. MANDATED TETHERING

- Tethering (or tying up) dogs can make a dog aggressive and can cause a serious risk to community members.
- Tethering has a negative impact on a dog physically, mentally and emotionally.
- When dogs are tethered, they are not able to meet their own needs. They are not able to forage for food or water.
- Some municipalities in North America have banned tethering based on the above risks.
- In 2017, one elder and one child were killed by tethered dogs in Canadian First Nation communities.



WHAT DOES WORK



COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMING!

- Throughout ASNTF programming, ASNTF leadership has become experts in the management of free-roaming dog populations. This expertise has been gained from experience, consultation with communities and collaboration with other organizations active in this field.
- The ASNTF's goal is to provide guidance to communities interested in developing and implementing humane, comprehensive, long-term and community based Dog Care and Control Programs.

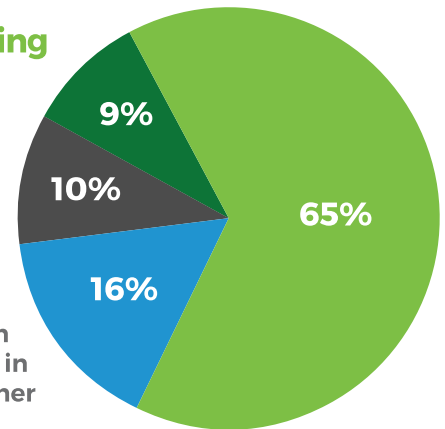
HOW DO WE KNOW it WORKS?

- The **ASNTF Dog Care and Control Program** is an effective and appropriate management program for free-roaming dog populations. Based on the success of our pilot program and consultation with communities, we know this program works. We have seen up to a **35% decline in reported dog bites!**



FREE ROAMING DOGS

- Free Roaming
- Tied Up
- Contained
- Unknown



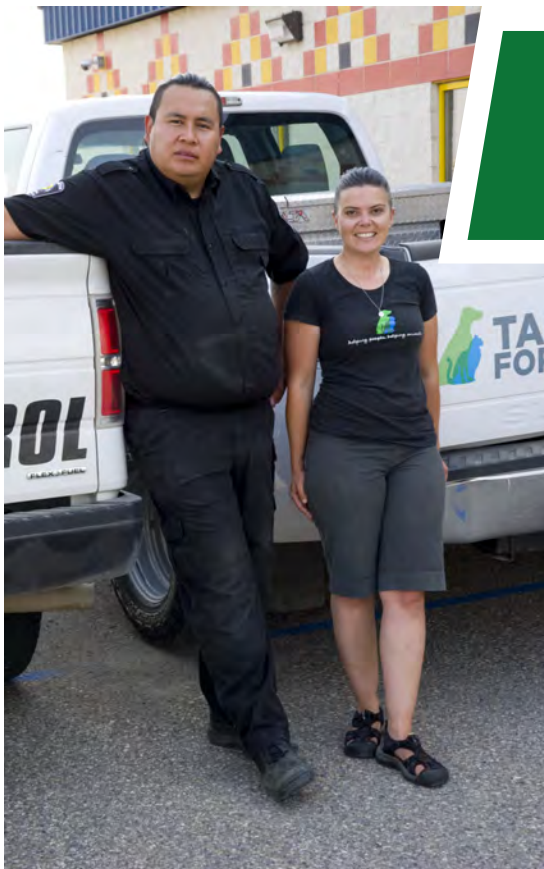
Example of Dog Population Demographics in an ASNTF Partner Community

Introducing the



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DOG CARE AND CONTROL PROGRAM





VALUES AND BELIEFS

• Community Based

Based on the research done by the International Companion Animal Coalition, we know that in order for a Dog Care and Control Program to be successful that it must be community based. The responsibility of dog control properly resides with the local government.

• Partnership

The ASNTF has resources and knowledge that we offer to communities in order to create an effective community based Dog Care and Control Program. We work with communities in order to reach the mutual goals of creating safer communities and improving the well being of the animals.

• Humane Methods

We advocate for the implementation of only humane methods.

• Sustainable

In order for a Dog Care and Control Program to be successful, we will all need to advocate for the long-term sustainability of budgets and resources. Dog Care and Control programs and services must be continuous and better yet, permanent!

• Responsibility of Ownership

We believe that owners have a responsibility to keep their fellow community members safe by ensuring their dog is not a threat to the community. We commend owners who provide for the needs of their pets.

• Respect

We would like community programs to be guided by respect; respect for each other, respect for culture and traditions, respect for community members and their families, and respect for the nation's animals!



7 Components of the



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1. EDUCATION

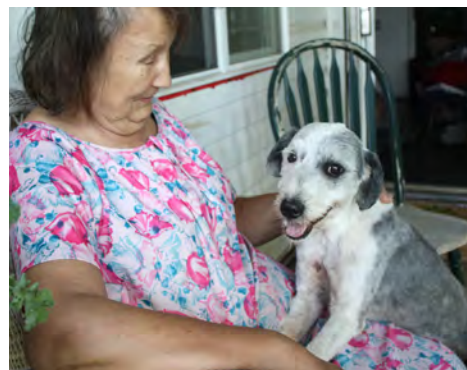
- Education is one of the most important components of a successful Dog Care and Control Program.
- Education programming is important for all stakeholders in the community (for example- Administration, Animal Welfare Agencies active in the community, Health Departments, School Board, community members of all ages, etc.)

Ideas!

- Local newspaper articles
- Information booths at community events
- Workshops - I.E. Bite Prevention
- Curriculum in schools
- Build your own dog house program
- Community service program - building fences

2. LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT

- Update or create a new Dog Care and Control by law. ASNTF can provide a template!
- Employment of Animal Control Officer - we offer training!



Ideas!

- Some communities use existing departments and positions to enforce a Dog Care and Control Bylaw such as Security or Tribal Police. ASNTF can help with training!
- Depending on the size of your community, the ACO could be Part-Time, Full-Time, or even a volunteer!

3. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

- Licensing the dogs in the community is an excellent way to collect demographics and encourage responsible dog ownership.

Ideas!

- Licensing fees can be free to encourage enrollment.
- Volunteer community members could help with a door-to-door campaign!



4. STERILIZATION

- Providing opportunities for community members to spay or neuter their pet is a fundamental component of a successful Dog Care and Control Program.

Ideas!

- Invite ASNTF to provide a Spay/Neuter Wellness Clinic.
- Develop a Spay Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP). If possible, partner with an animal welfare agency to facilitate the SNAP.

5. HOLDING FACILITIES AND REHOMING CENTRES

- Many municipalities across North America use a 3rd party to house impounded animals. This is a very efficient option because building, and then operating, a new animal control facility is a very expensive endeavor.

Ideas!

- Build relationships with local Animal Welfare Agencies and boarding facilities to hold impounded dogs and rehome unclaimed animals!

6. ACCESS TO VETERINARY CARE

This component is most important in two scenarios:

1. The community is semi-remote or remote.
2. A high percentage of community members are low income and cannot afford veterinary care.

Ideas!

- Contract a Licensed Veterinarian to visit the community on a monthly basis.
- Administration may consider a budget for helping community members with veterinary care costs.

7. CONTROLLING ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- Are you worried about funding? Budgets for Dog Care and Control Programs vary greatly. Don't be discouraged!!!

Ideas!

- Explore grant opportunities
- Declare 'No Dog Zones' (daycares, health clinic, schools) as per the new bylaws.
- Secure garbage
- Develop a Pet Food Bank for community members who are low income, unemployed, disabled or elderly. Ask a local animal welfare organizations to donate food!





SIKSIKA DOG CARE AND CONTROL PROGRAM

Pilot Project

The Results are In!

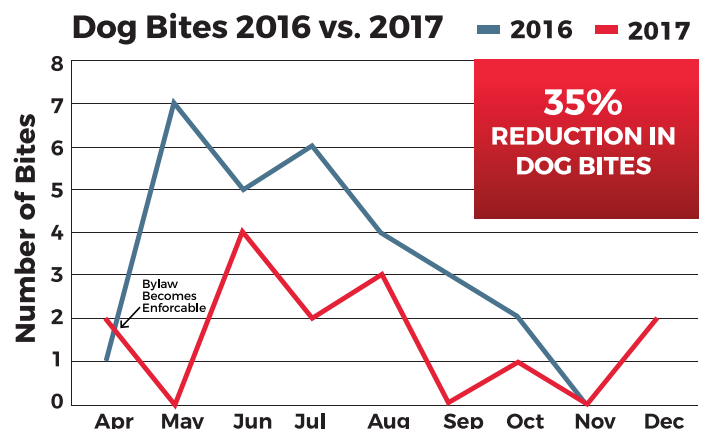
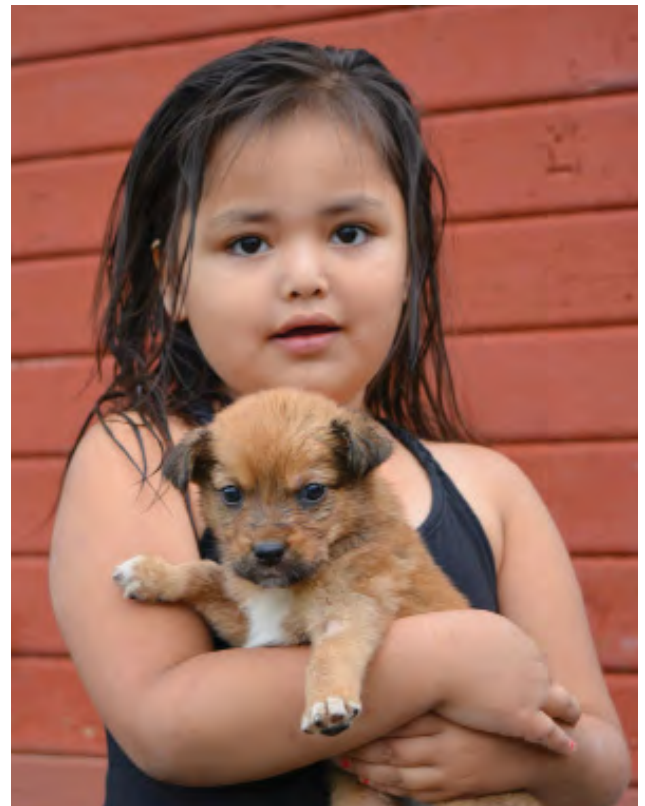
The **Siksika Dog Care and Control Program** was formed in May 2016 after a number of serious dog bite/attack incidences in Siksika Nation. The Alberta Spay Neuter Task Force and Siksika Nation developed a partnership with a goal of implementing long-term Dog Population Management initiatives.

The success of the Siksika Dog Care and Control Program (SDCCP) is being closely monitored by Health Canada, PetSmart Charities, the International Fund for the Welfare of Animals (IFAW) and First Nation communities across Canada and the United States.

- New by laws were drafted and approved by Chief and Council.
- The SDCCP received a grant for partial funding of program budget.
- An Animal Control Officer has been hired and trained.
- A Licensing and Registration program has been implemented.
- Humane dangerous dog management has resulted in a drastic decline in dog bites.
- Animal welfare issues have become less frequent and are quickly reported by community members.
- A formal Pet Food Bank is available for those community members who are in need.

- Formation of Stakeholder Committee (Members of this committee include Siksika Justice colleagues, Siksika Dog Care and Control Program Staff, Public Health Nurses, RCMP, local Animal Rescue Groups, the Alberta Spay Neuter Task Force and the Alberta SPCA).

- ASNTF Spay/Neuter Clinic 2017 and 2018.



HOW WE CAN HELP

Some of the things we can help with!

- Assistance with the development of a humane and effective dog by law
- Budget templates (for any size of budget)
- Funding opportunities
- Priority access to ASNTF spay neuter program
- Referral to legal counsel specializing in First Nation Bylaws (if required)

Animal Control Officer (ACO) documents such as:

- Job description template
- ACO job posting template
- Work experience role description template
- Animal control investigative form templates
- Animal control equipment and supplies procurement
- Referrals to Alberta Health Services for rabies vaccine program for Animal Control staff
- Humane handling tools and techniques
- Understanding dog behaviour
- Dog licensing form template
- Registration and licensing database template
- Volunteer role description template



Relationship Facilitation with:

- 3rd party animal control facility
- Animal welfare groups (to place strays, dogs with a bite history, etc.)
- Facilitating stakeholder meetings

Programming

- Design and implementation of a pet food bank
- Education programming for all people living, working, or volunteering in free-roaming dog environments

And much, much more!!!



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DON'T KNOW where to **START?**

CONTACT US!

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