



Pet Support Services Providing Behavior and Training Support

Behavior Advice and Trainer Referrals

Offering behavioral support can be lifesaving and life-changing for pets experiencing behaviors that aren't easily managed. Changes in environment, new people, and other stressors can all create behavioral challenges or changes such as excessive barking, lunging while on a leash, not using the litter box, and more. Creating a safe space for a person to discuss these challenges and receive advice can help keep more people and pets together. Here are a few resources to get started:

- [Integrate Behavior into the Every Day: Gaining Buy-In and Training Your Staff](#)
- [Foster-Centric Programming \(See Behavior Foster section\)](#)
- [Learn more about community-based behavior support](#)

Offer Behavior Support From Volunteers in Shelter or at Home

- Create a behavior support email address and/or phone number.
- Develop protocols regarding support such as what volunteers can handle vs. staff, how support is provided, what resources and handouts are shared, how communication is tracked, and how follow-up is handled.
- Develop training for volunteers who directly or indirectly provide behavior support.
- Identify people to supervise, train, and schedule behavior support volunteers.
- Develop a list of local trainers and behavior professionals for referral.

Offer Free Training Programs or Resources

Investigate whether your organization or other organizations in your community offer free behavior support resources. [Pets.findhelp.com](https://pets.findhelp.com) is a great place to start.

Additional Resources

You may access [additional behavior resources available here](#), or reference the sections below.

Websites

- HRA [Humane Rescue Alliance Behavior Helpline](#)
- HRA [Head Halter Desensitization](#)
- HRA [Crate Training](#)
- HRA [Cat Behavior](#)

- [San Diego Humane Behavior Helpline](#)
- [Humane Dog Training Advocates](#)
- [Instinct Dog Training](#)
- [Maddie's Pet Assistant \(PetHealth\)](#) for newly adopted/fostered dogs and cats
- [East Bay SPCA Behavior Helpline](#)
- [ASPCA Pet Care](#)

Videos

- [The Family Dog](#)
- [Dog Training by Kikopup](#)
- [Pam's Dog Academy](#)
- [Zak George](#)
- [Grisha Stewart](#)
- [Dr. Sophia Yin](#)
- [Dunbar Academy](#)

Podcasts

- [Hannah Brannigan - Drinking from the Toilet](#)
- [How Do You Train That?](#)
- [Paws and Reward](#)

Fundraising

Looking for support with fundraising to create a new program? See the [HASS Philanthropy Toolkit for Development and Fundraising](#).

Ecosystem Mapping and Community Partnerships

People and pets in your community are going to need support when unexpected or complex situations arise. You will be better equipped to prevent pets from being surrendered to shelters, if you know which support programs and services are available in your community. You can build that knowledge and identify gaps that show the need for new programs or community partnerships by mapping your local ecosystem.

Our [HASS Pet Support Services guide, Establishing Partnerships for Pet Support](#) outlines how to map your local ecosystem and begin establishing partnerships. Don't forget to search pets.findhelp.com by zip code and category to find support in your community!

Tip: You may be asked for support—say, access to pet food—that you can provide. Sounds simple! But make sure you aren't leaving other important support options on the table that will address a current situation or even root causes. The [HASS Pet Support Guide and Worksheet](#) can help get you started with this type of problem-solving. This worksheet works best if you fill one out in advance so you can pre-identify programs and services.

Supporting Research

- [Predictors of successful diversion of cats and dogs away from animal shelter intake: Analysis of data from a self-rehoming website](#) (Ly & Protopopova, 2023)
 - “Animals with behavioural challenges, including those who are being surrendered for behavioural issues, have greater odds of being surrendered to a shelter or rescue. As such, **animal shelters may consider redistributing their resources to accommodate for behavioural challenges.**”
- [Understanding feline feelings: An investigation of cat owners’ perceptions of problematic cat behaviors](#) (Powell et al., 2023)
 - “**Undesirable feline behaviors can detrimentally effects [sic] on the human-cat relationship, owner satisfaction, and animal welfare.** This study explored cat owners’ perceptions of cat behavior and identified specific behaviors that owners found problematic... Our results suggest cat owners were more likely to view their cat’s behavior as problematic if the behavior directly affected their lifestyle or environment, such as aggression, house soiling or activity during the night, while other behaviors, such as separation-related behavior, excessive self-grooming, and predatory behavior, did not influence owners’ perceptions of cat behavior within the multivariate models. **Further education may help cat owners** to recognize the importance of these other behaviors as indicators of animal welfare and understand the wider impacts of cat behavior, including through predation on wildlife.”
- [Reducing Dog Relinquishment to Rescue Centres Due to Behaviour Problems: Identifying Cases to Target with an Advice Intervention at the Point of Relinquishment Request](#) (Powdrill-Wells et al., 2021)
 - “Annually, thousands of dogs are relinquished to rescue centres globally. Dog owners report that **a leading cause for relinquishment are their dogs’ behavioural problems.** Efforts are needed to reduce dog relinquishment, by enabling dog owners to feel comfortable and confident with having them in their home. Free behavioural advice was offered to 1131 dog owners at the time of them calling to relinquish their dog to animal welfare charity. **Behavioural advice was accepted by 24.4% of the dog owners calling to relinquish their dogs.** The advice was accepted almost six times more often by owners with dogs with general management behaviour problems, compared to owners who had problems with aggression between dogs in their home. **Offering free behavioural advice reduced the number of dog relinquishments. Consequently, the stress associated with maintaining a dog in sheltered conditions and rehoming them, and the trauma for the owner was eliminated in a quarter of cases.** Moving forward, additional strategies are needed to enable more owners to keep their dogs in their homes and reduce relinquishment.”
- [Animal welfare deserts: human and nonhuman animal inequities](#) (Reese & Li, 2023)
 - “The study concludes that the overlap between human economic distress and pet resource deserts presents a threat to the goals of One Health. Potential policy solutions are proposed to address inequities in the distribution of animal welfare resources.”

- [Measuring Changes in Perceptions of Access to Pet Support Care in Underserved Communities](#) (Hawes et al., 2021)
 - “Access to veterinary care and other pet supportive services (e.g., grooming, **behavior training**, pet supplies) has been increasingly recognized within the animal welfare sector as a substantial barrier to the health and welfare of companion animals (henceforth referred to as “pets”).”
- [Owner-companion dog interactions: Relationships between demographic variables, potentially problematic behaviours, training engagement and shared activities](#) (Bennett & Rohlf, 2007)
 - “This confirms that strategies designed to increase participation in dog training activities and promote canine sociability may have significant benefits for both companion dog owners and their dogs.”
 - “... engagement in a range of training activities, but not only attending formal training classes, is predictive of a lower frequency of reported behavioural problems.
 - “... the extent to which owners engage in training activities and the extent to which their dogs are perceived to be unfriendly or aggressive, are predictive of engagement in a range of shared activities. **This suggests that interventions which aim to increase involvement in dog training and improve dog sociability may have significant implications for companion animal owners through reducing behavioural problems.** Such interventions may also have significant implications for companion dogs, whose welfare is likely to be considerably improved if they are sufficiently well mannered and sociable to engage in shared activities with their owners.”