



Pets & People

Three Surefire Signs That It's Time To Have 'The Talk' With Tabby

(NAPSA)—These days, many people know that spaying and neutering are the most humane and effective ways to reduce pet overpopulation. Not everyone, however, knows that fixing your cat will also address some of the most vexing and bothersome cat behaviors, including:

Spraying—When cats back up to a vertical surface and spray urine (compared to crouching over a horizontal surface), most likely, they are leaving a message for other cats: “I’m interested in mating.” This spraying can result in foul smells and even permanent stains in your home.

Yowling—What are those stressful moaning or wailing sounds your cat is making day or night? Most likely, it’s yowling, a behavior that female cats employ when ovulating, not unlike a feline booty call. When sensing a fertile female nearby, male cats answer that call with a yowl of their own. This cycle repeats every 18 to 24 days unless you spay or neuter.

Escaping and Fighting—Unfixed cats often escape and disappear for a long time, roaming to find a potential mate. When wandering cats return, they often show signs of fighting such as cuts, scratches and missing fur, which can lead to infections or worse.

To encourage pet owners to “Talk to Your Cat About Sex,” the Cincinnati-based GiveThemTen movement, sponsored by The Joanie Bernard Foundation, recently released a new campaign.



Fixing your cat can make both of you happier.

The campaign’s ads depict families having those difficult coming-of-age discussions with teenagers—but with a real catty twist. The spots are part of an ongoing effort aimed at encouraging spaying and neutering programs. The campaign appears to be working. Live cat-release counts, reflecting the number of cats trapped, fixed and let go again, are climbing in the markets where the ads are shown.

“We want to educate cat owners that bad cat behaviors, sometimes viewed as natural, can be prevented,” said Deborah Cribbs, The Joanie Bernard Foundation board chairwoman. “Fixing both male and female cats curbs the unwanted behaviors of amorous felines looking for love. But most important, spayed or neutered cats help prevent feline lives lost to overpopulation.”

The cost of a spaying or neutering is far less than most imagine. Visit www.givethemten.org to find high-quality, low-cost spay/neuter clinics nearby.