



Pets & People

Closing The “Cat Gap” Can Increase Adoptions

(NAPSA)—For many, cats and kittens can be an almost endless source of fascination. It’s not uncommon for people to confess they can spend hours watching cute cat videos on the Internet and sharing cat photos online.

Unfortunately, it seems this online fascination with cats is not translating into real-life adoptions. Every year, an estimated 8 million pets enter U.S. shelters, and approximately 4 million of them are euthanized because there are not enough homes.

A recent PetSmart Charities survey of people’s perceptions of cats found that the negative opinions some people have of cats are hurting their image.

For instance, when asked about the personality and behavioral traits of cats, respondents overwhelmingly described cats as curious, stubborn, moody and aloof. Dogs, on the other hand, were described in much more positive terms, such as friendly, loyal, protective and loving. It’s thought perceptions such as these that are making it more difficult for cats to be adopted into permanent homes.

Fortunately, there are indications that some people are taking steps to end these misperceptions once and for all. Sixty-six percent of respondents said that too many people have negative impressions of cats and 56 percent said that the stereotypes about cats simply



Experts say that cats are often the victim of negative stereotypes that hamper adoptions.

aren’t true. Additionally, half of the respondents believed that more people would have a pet cat if the stereotypes around cats were removed.

The survey also found that cat lovers may be uniquely positioned to help cats the most. Research shows that by sharing more about their cat online, particularly through social media, cat owners can help to counter the negative stereotypes surrounding cats and show them in a positive light.

The PetSmart Charities cat perception survey was fielded via Toluna Analytics to 1,022 U.S.-based respondents during the period from February 11–14, 2015. It has a +/- 3 percent margin of error.

To learn more, visit www.petcharities.org.