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# FELINE TRAINING SERVICES

Program Summary

## Executive Summary

The feline training program fulfills the purpose of contributing to overall shelter revenue via behaviour consultations and virtual training/coaching for pet owners; whilst also providing a rare avenue of support for cat owners faced with behavioural challenges that can fray the human-animal bond. Further, it is a way for Toronto Humane Society to lead and improve the quality of welfare for cats in Canada.

Addressing this long-ignored issue is an exciting opportunity for Toronto Humane Society and presents a way to educate and support feline ownership through humane training intervention. This program is overseen by one of the few Certified Applied Animal Behaviourists in Canada, and the trainers are certified, or in the process of achieving certification, through internationally recognized bodies.

## Program Objectives

### **Objective One: To Provide Humane, Evidence-Based Training and Care Support to All Levels of Pet Owners, Strengthening the Human-Animal Bond**

A compassionate, non-judgemental approach to behavior problems makes for an accessible and valued trainer/client relationship. Toronto Humane Society's highly certified behavior consultants and trainers employ a collaborative approach to behavior and training intervention. Different backgrounds and areas of strength bolster each other, and clients benefit from the collaborative knowledge of the team as trainers cross-consult on challenging cases, giving clients a wide spectrum of support.

Along with building an additional revenue stream, this important program strives to establish the relevance of feline behavior and consultations to equal that of their canine counterparts.

### **Objective Two: To Create Visible Revenue Streams to a Financially Independent Business Model – Establishing Our Training Services Within a Social Enterprise Framework**

With the aim of creating an additional revenue stream for Toronto Humane Society, a series of tiered, premium service packages have been developed for cat owner experiencing challenges. With marketing highlighting these novel services to the public, and personal networking with privately-owned veterinary clinics, annual growth is expected. To date, virtual training sessions for feline pet owners is a relatively untapped market, and the potential for departmental growth is wide-reaching as the public become aware of these opportunities.



## Program Leadership

### **Division Manager, Public Programs and Services – Sam Jones, RVT**

Sam brings an extensive range of managerial experience to Toronto Humane Society from years of working in the retail sector. During this time, she honed her business and staff management expertise and enhanced her reputation for being diligent, resourceful, and a great motivator.

In her 20 years in retail, Sam worked her way up from a Salesclerk to the Ontario Regional Manager of a multi-million-dollar enterprise. In 2011, Sam started on a new career path as a Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) at Toronto Humane Society, and went from Assistant Manager, Shelter Care, in 2014 to Manager, Shelter Care.

In 2018, Sam became the Senior Manager, Shelter Operations tasked with overseeing the Foster, and Shelter Care departments and relaunching the Training department. During this period, she grew the training team from a staff of 3 to a team of 18 team, relaunched Toronto Humane Society's public training services and successfully implemented a public dog walking service.

Sam now oversees Toronto Humane Society's public service division which consists of the Training Department, Retail Department, and the Pet Parent Support Network. Sam is a passionate, proud member of Toronto Humane Society and is dedicated to Improving the Lives of Animals.

### **Program Manager, Public Training Services and Care Support – Beverley McKee, BA, CDBC, CPDT**

Beverley McKee brings a wide range of experience to the world of dog training, pet care, and pet owner education period she is an entrepreneur, handler, trainer, educator, collaborator, and industry builder.

After a long career in the entertainment industry, Beverly launched a successful pet care and dog training company in 2011. She joined Toronto Humane Society in 2018 as a certified animal trainer and has worked up to the position of program manager, public training services and care support. Bev draws on her entrepreneurial skills to drive the growth of her department with a view of creating accessible, client friendly, evidenced based, results driven programs to achieve results an enrichment care support.

Bev is a certified animal trainer through The Certification Council of Professional Dog Trainers, a Certified Dog Behavior Consultant through the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC - on which she is also a board member) and a Fear Free Animal trainer professional through Fear Free Pets.

### **Director, Behaviour – Dr. Jacklyn Ellis, MRes PhD CAAB T**

Dr. Ellis is the Director, Behaviour at Toronto Humane Society. Prior to joining the position, she served as Nestlé Purina's leading authority on feline behaviour in her role as a Behaviour Scientist in their research and development division. She earned her PhD in Animal Welfare at the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, where she conducted research on methods for reducing stress in shelter cats. Her work has been published widely in peer reviewed journals and she has presented at many national and international conferences, particularly on feline stress and elimination behaviour. She is currently in the process of writing a chapter on feline behavioural assessment for a new edition of the leading textbook on the behaviour and welfare of shelter animals.

