TORONTO HUMANE SOCIETY like no other.

Toronto Humane Society Position Statement: Animal Relocation Programs

Toronto Humane Society believes that animal relocation programs play an important role in battling pet over-population and improving animal lives. To maximize impact, these programs should work in tandem with other community initiatives, such as accessible spay & neuter services, to create long-term solutions.

The purpose of relocation programs is to improve animal welfare, so these programs must not cause inadvertent harm to the animals being relocated, or animals and humans within the local, destination community. To ensure this does not occur, all agencies relocating animals must screen animals for disease and behavioural issues prior to relocation and follow recognized *best practices* during transportation.

Toronto Humane Society's primary focus for animal relocation is on communities within Ontario experiencing pet over-population, extending our efforts to outside of our Province when we are able. We believe this is how we can improve the quality of life for the largest number of animals.

Background

- Pet over-population is a global challenge that leads to unnecessary animal suffering.
- Relocation programs benefit animals by providing them with access to an adoption home not available in their current community.
- Some risks associated with relocating animals are:
    - Animals from foreign countries may have diseases that do not already occur in the destination agency's geographic area. These diseases may carry risk of transference to both animals and humans within the destination community.
    - Animal welfare issues may arise from transporting animals with questionable health.
    - Behavioural issues may be present, for example, with animals who are not well socialized or who have never lived in a home environment that is traditional within the destination communities of relocation programs.
- Focusing on communities where greater efforts exist to correct pet over-population allows organizations to not only rescue animals in need, but also prevent suffering before it starts, by curbing over-population.
- It is each organization's responsibility, to ensure that their programs that have a purpose to improve welfare are not inadvertently causing harm. Adherence to recognized *best practices* is essential to ensure harm is minimized.

- In Toronto, Ontario, our community adoption demand is higher than the volume of available shelter animals, however, this is not consistent in other communities throughout the province.