Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Initiative

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2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Coalition

Los Angeles County

MISSION

To use the connections between human and animal health in order to promote a healthy community

VISION

Healthy people and pets in healthy communities

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Introduction

Healthy pets are an important part of healthy families. That's why the Los Angeles County (LAC) Veterinary Public Health Program (VPH) started the **2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families** initiative. The county-wide initiative aims to:

1. Create animal health goals based on the latest research.
2. Track trends in animal health.
3. Create programs that improve both animal and human health.

The initiative combines the *One Health* movement with the national *Healthy People 2020* model. *One Health* refers to the relationships between human, animal and environmental health. It's supported by the American Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association. *Healthy People 2020* is a national campaign by the US Department of Health and Human Services. It aims to improve the health of Americans by creating long-term health goals that are evidence-based.

The Coalition

The 2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families initiative promotes working with community partners to find ways that animal and human health overlap. In 2011, VPH launched the 2020 Healthy Pets, Health Families Coalition, which brings together doctors, veterinarians, animal health professionals and public health professionals from all over Los Angeles County and neighboring counties. Members meet each quarter to discuss animal and human health concerns.

The Coalition set goals for the year 2020 around seven focus areas. These goals will be met by tracking local animal health data and developing specific strategies to improve both the health of humans and animals.

The Focus Areas

1. Spay and Neuter

2. Bite Prevention

3. Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

4. Pet Obesity

5. Secondhand Smoke

6. Disaster Preparedness and Pets

7. Zoonotic Disease and Parasite Prevention

This Report

This report helps the Coalition accomplish the following:

- ❒ Announce its goals for the year 2020.
- ❒ Educate the public on these goals.
- ❒ Work with partners to meet these goals.

In the future, the 2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Coalition will release more in-depth publications on each focus area.

Focus Area 1: Spay and Neuter

Background

Spaying and neutering refers to the sterilization of animals to prevent unwanted pets. It may be an effective way to reduce the large population of homeless stray dogs and cats in LAC. According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), in 2010, LAC had a total of 110,833 dogs entering animal shelters; of these, 17,546 dogs were reclaimed by owners, 47,701 were adopted, and 37,914 were euthanized.[1] Controlling the population of dogs and cats, especially strays, is crucial. Euthanizing almost 38,000 dogs and 64,000 cats annually takes an enormous toll not only on homeless animals themselves, but also on the staff who carry out this task. Because stray dogs are drawn to other pets, they can make it very hard for pet owners to walk their own dogs and these encounters can often lead to dog fights. In addition, people are more likely to be bitten in areas where stray dogs are present. Strays may also carry fleas, ticks, internal parasites and other infections that can spread diseases to domestic pets and even their owners.

Through spaying and neutering, this over-population can be efficiently controlled. Furthermore, sterilized pets are less likely to spray, mark, fight, or exhibit other undesirable behaviors. There are also fewer chances that they bite someone, roam, or be hit by a car, and they have a reduced risk of certain cancers.[2, 3] In fact, a study in the *Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics* showed that dogs with a tendency to bite were significantly more likely to be intact (that is, not spayed/neutered) compared to dogs that did not bite.[2] Finally,

spaying and neutering of dogs and cats can save taxpayer dollars in the long-term by decreasing the burden of animals that are stray or homeless in shelters.

Current Local Data

In 2009, The Found Animals Foundation estimated that there were about 1 million owned dogs and 1.5 million owned cats living in LAC, along with 1.5 million-4 million feral or stray cats.[4] Shelters in Los Angeles report that in 2011, approximately 84% of cats and 75% of dogs were intact at the time of impounding. This means that only about 20% of dogs and cats brought to the shelter are spayed or neutered. In 2011, almost 84% of cats and 60% of dogs entering shelters were stray animals, versus slightly over 14% cats and 25% of dogs who were owner-surrendered to the shelter. The numbers above illustrate the enormous overpopulation and stray animal problem that we struggle with here in LAC.

In 2011, VPH conducted a survey of pet owners attending vaccine clinics at animal shelters around LAC, which included questions about spay-neuter attitudes and practices. While 86% of those who took this survey mentioned that they do believe it is important to spay-neuter their dog, nearly one-third of those with dog(s) 1 year of age or older reported that their dog was not neutered. Our experience from local health fairs indicates that this gap in attitudes and actions may be due to financial and educational barriers. Perhaps pet owners need to be better connected to low-cost options as well as accessible information about the benefits of spay-neuter.

2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Spay and Neuter

Animal Shelters

1. 10% decrease in the total number of dogs (~11,000 less) and cats (~7,500 less) *entering* the shelters in Los Angeles County each year.
2. 10% decrease in the total number of dogs (~3,800 less) and cats (~6,400 less) *euthanized* at the shelters in LAC each year.
3. 10% increase in total number respondents who answer that their dog is spayed or neutered.
4. 10% increase in the number of respondents who adopted their dog or cat from the shelter.
5. 10% increase in the total number of respondents who believe it is important to spay-neuter their pets.

Existing and Future Interventions

There are several strategies that can be used to increase spaying-neutering in the community. Some cities in LAC already have laws that require pets be sterilized, while others have a price differentiation for licensing pets, requiring owners to pay higher fees for intact animals.

Our coalition plans to:

- ❒ Create targeted educational campaigns promoting the benefits of spay-neuter.
- ❒ Shed light on the pet overpopulation issue that currently exists in LAC.
- ❒ Act as a coordinating body, which can connect at-need populations with existing resources, such as low-cost spay-neuter organizations.

Focus Area 2: Bite Prevention

Background

Although dogs make great pets and provide many benefits, nearly 4.4 million people are bitten by dogs each year in the United States, 20 percent of which need medical attention.[5] In Los Angeles County, hospital admissions and emergency room visits due to dog bites have been increasing since 2006.[6] In addition, a large insurance company reported that dog bite insurance claims are also on the rise. California leads the pack with the highest number of claims in both 2010 and 2011.[7] Only active community involvement can turn the tide and help reduce local dog bites.[8]

Animal bites can cause severe injury, infections and even death. Children are the most frequent dog bite victims seen in emergency rooms.[9] Younger children (under 7 years old) tend to be bitten on the face by dogs they know when they are trying to interact with them. Older children are more likely to get bitten on the hands, feet or legs, by a dog they don't know while they are outdoors. Reports indicate that most children have been bitten by a dog by the time they are 11 years old.[9]

Why do dogs bite? Most dog bites in the United States are caused by owned dogs, not strays.[10] More often than not, people are bitten by dogs they know, whether it is a family dog, or belongs to a neighbor or friend.[11] Bites can occur when someone misreads the dog's behavior, a dog gets too excited or fearful, or if the dog is not properly contained in its yard. Many of these bites could be prevented if dogs were properly socialized, trained and restrained, and if people became familiar with dog body language, signals and behavior.

Current Local Data

Last year, 4 percent of dog owners visiting vaccination clinics at local animal shelters reported that someone in their family had been bitten by a dog in the last 12 months. VPH receives over 9,000 animal bite reports each year,[6] but that is just the tip of the iceberg. In 2009, 8,343 people visited local emergency rooms after being bitten by dogs. Considering only 20 percent of bite victims seek medical care, it is clear bites are seriously under-reported. However, local bite data does help us see who is most at risk and where. In LAC, the highest rates of bites are children ages 5-9 years old and children younger than 4.[6] Bites were most frequently reported in South Los Angeles and the parts of the Antelope Valley.

2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Bite Prevention

1. 10% reduction in emergency department visits due to dog bites.
2. 10% reduction of the percentage of individuals surveyed that report a family member was bitten by a dog in the preceding 12 months.

Existing and Future Interventions

There are many ways dog bites can be reduced, including the following:

- ❒ Educate children about how to be safe around dogs through:
  - A school-based bite prevention program (initially focusing on areas with the highest number of bites).
  - Distributing dog bite prevention handouts to parents, possibly through veterinary offices, animal shelters and pediatric clinics.
  - Creating and distributing videos regarding dog body language, signals and behaviors on the internet, with the assistance of local veterinarians, physicians and animal control staff.
- ❒ Encourage dog owners to make sure that their dogs are properly socialized and trained. Work with veterinarians, animal control agencies, recreation departments and individuals to create and promote dog obedience classes.
- ❒ Make sure dog owners keep their pets appropriately contained, including proper fencing.

Focus Area 3: Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Background
Vaccination is one of the most useful tools for preventing infectious diseases.[12] It is also a basic part of veterinary care recommended for all dogs and cats.[13] Areas where many pets suffer from vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) likely have reduced access to, or use of, veterinary care. VPDs also cause avoidable suffering on animals and can sometimes be transmissible to humans (e.g., leptospirosis and rabies). They place financial and emotional costs on the people who strive to save these pets.

Current Local Data
Rabies is a VPD that has been tracked in local animals for over 100 years. In 2007, LAC began tracking four other VPDs in pets: parvo, distemper, and leptospirosis in dogs, and panleukopenia in cats.

Rabies
The rabies virus, spread by the bite of infected animal, is over 99% fatal. Rabies can only be diagnosed in a person after symptoms begin and in animals after death.

Rabies is currently very rare in LAC dogs and cats because of laws requiring rabies vaccination.

However, rabies is found every year in local bats, as outlined in the following section about *Zoonotic Diseases*. The presence of rabies in local bats highlights the importance of vaccinating pets. The rabies vaccine should be administered to dogs and cats at age 4 months, repeated a year later, then every three years thereafter.

Parvovirus (Parvo)
The parvovirus attacks the lining of a dog's intestines and its immune system. The virus lives in the feces of an infected dog, and can

survive for many months in the environment. Parvo is the easiest VPD to track because it is diagnosed by a simple test on a dog's feces. The parvo vaccine is part of the "DHLPP" vaccine recommended for all dogs. In order to be fully protected from parvo, dogs should receive the vaccine at ages 2, 3, and 4 months, again a year later, and then every three years. The DHLPP vaccine has the added benefit of protecting dogs from Distemper, another common VPD in our county.

- ❒ There were 1,788 cases of parvo reported to VPH from 2007-2012. Most of these dogs were puppies, with half being less than 4 months old and75% being younger than 7 months old.
- ❒ A survey conducted by VPH in 2011-2012 at low-cost vaccine clinics in LAC found:
  - 63% of people were familiar with the word "parvo", however, only 42% could correctly identify parvo symptoms from a list of three basic choices.
  - Only 18% knew that puppies need a series of vaccinations during puppyhood to be fully protected.

Leptospirosis (Lepto)
Leptospirosis is caused by water-loving bacteria that attack the kidneys and liver. It is most commonly diagnosed in people and pets that engage in water-related sports.

Efforts to track lepto in LAC dogs began in 2007. The results have shown that, surprisingly, "backyard" dogs may become infected when their drinking water is contaminated by local wildlife. Lepto is often, but not always, included in the routinely used DHLPP vaccine for dogs.

2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

1. 10% decrease in the number of parvo cases reported in two zip codes in LAC where efforts to track parvo already exist.
2. 10% increase the proportion of people surveyed at vaccine clinics who know that puppies and kittens need a series of vaccinations from 18% to 28%.
3. Equip all shelter-based low-cost vaccine clinics with outreach material listing nearby veterinarians, to promote pet owner-veterinarian relationships.

Existing and Future Interventions

Large-scale efforts to increase pet vaccinations include the following:

- ❒ Educational and media campaigns:
  - On pet vaccinations, targeting areas with the highest amounts of reported VPDs in pets.
  - On basic steps pet owners should take to reduce pet-wildlife interactions.
- ❒ Enhance access to vaccines through:
  - Low or no-cost vaccination clinics focusing on areas with higher amounts of VPDs.

Focus Area 4: Pet Obesity

Background

Obesity is a growing problem in people and pets. According to the 2009 California Health Interview Survey, 55.9% of adults are overweight or obese in LAC.[14] The Association for Pet Obesity Prevention's 2011 National Pet Obesity Awareness Day Study also found approximately 53% of dogs and 55% of cats were overweight and obese in the US.[15] The amount of dogs with severe fat deposits (obese) jumped from just over 10% in 2007 to 21% in 2011 for dogs. Almost 25% of cats were considered obese in 2011.

Research has shown that obesity in pets and people may be linked; specifically, that the degree of overweight of dogs and the body mass index of their owners were related.[16] Excess weight is problematic for both pets and people, as it increases the risk of chronic diseases.[17-19]

As with people, lack of exercise combined with over-eating may help explain why obesity is becoming a bigger problem among pets. For example, local survey data indicates that 27% of LAC dog owners are obese and only 59% get the recommended amount of exercise each week.[20] Recent research found that dog walking was associated with meeting physical activity guidelines for people.[21] Another study reported that while a human companion can both encourage and discourage regular exercise; a dog is a consistent positive influence – initiating exercise and adding enjoyment.[22] Encouraging pet owners in LAC to walk their dogs regularly and practice dietary management may help adults and pets obtain the recommended amount of exercise

each week, and reduce pet and human obesity locally.

Current Local Data

Last year, only 11% of dog owners surveyed at local animal shelter vaccine clinics reported that they think their dog is overweight, while 49% said that they could not feel the ribs of their dog (an indicator of pet obesity). Over 50% of respondents reported that they walk their dog less than once per day and 73% reported free-feeding. Free-feeding is when food is available to the pet at all times. Many pets do not know when to stop eating, so free-feeding can contribute to weight issues. Research suggests dietary management as a treatment option for obesity in companion animals. In fact, survey respondents who reported free-feeding their dog(s) were 1.5 times more likely to be unable to feel the ribs of their dog(s) compared to those who did not report free-feeding.

This year, local veterinarians were surveyed about pet obesity. Forty-nine percent reported that 26 to 50% of the pets they see are overweight, while an astounding 43% stated that 51%-75% of the pets are overweight. However, only 56% of veterinarians reported that they always address pet obesity when it is noted on exam. Obviously pet obesity is a local problem that may only be addressed with the help of both pet owners and local veterinarians.

2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Pet Obesity

1. 10% decrease in the percentage of surveyed owners that report they can't feel their dog's ribs.
2. 10% decrease in the percentage of surveyed owners that report they free feed their dog.
3. 10% increase in the percentage of surveyed owners that report they walk their dog by at least daily.
4. 10% increase the percentage of veterinarians that report they always address obesity when seen during an exam.

Existing and Future Interventions

To reduce the number of pets that are obese, possible interventions include:

- ❒ Educate pet owners about proper pet weight and how to assess it.
- ❒ Veterinarians and their staff can address pet obesity in their patients by providing nutritional guidelines to all pet owners, weight loss programs, scheduled weigh ins and other guidance.
- ❒ Educate dog owners about the importance of pet exercise, and provide tools so that they may train their dogs to walk politely.
- ❒ Organize and expand dog walking clubs and other venues to encourage joint (human-pet) exercise.
- ❒ Direct owners to trainers or pet fitness experts to help the pets become more fit.
- ❒ Educate the public about the importance of not letting dogs loose, in order to make their neighborhoods safer for dog walking.

Shelter Pet Survey Data given to pet owners:

How often do you walk this dog?		
Never	26	5%
Once a month	31	5%
Once a week	69	12%
2-3 times per week	157	28%
Once daily	242	43%

Can you feel the ribs of your dog?		
Yes	277	49%
No	263	46%
No answer	29	5%

Focus Area 5: Secondhand Smoke

Background

There is a vast amount of evidence documenting the harm of firsthand and secondhand smoke (SHS) on humans such as coronary heart disease, stroke, respiratory cancers, pneumonia and emphysema.[23] In fact, one of six deaths in LAC is attributed to a tobacco-related illness, at a cost of $2.3.[23] Also, a study from the University of California, Davis, shows that smoking is a leading cause of fire disaster and death worldwide costing over $27 billion yearly.[24]

SHS is the third-leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., with an estimated 65,000 nonsmoking Americans killed each year. In 2006, the Surgeon General's Report concluded there is NO risk-free or safe level of SHS exposure.

It has also been documented that pets can be harmed by the effects of cigarette smoke, as well as to the environmental hazards of cigarette butt and other tobacco residues. Research conducted at several prominent universities has shown that environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) increases a dog's risk of developing certain kinds of cancer such as nasal and sinus cancers in dogs[25] or squamous cell carcinomas in cats.[26] In fact, substances causing cancer can remain in dogs' hair and urine for months following exposure to ETS.[27] Finally, just like their human counterparts, pets can also get respiratory infections and asthma from SHS.

A report published by *Tobacco Control* in 2009 indicated that educational campaigns informing pet owners of the risks of SHS exposure for pets could help people decrease their use of tobacco products around pets, potentially make their homes smoke-free, and eventually lead to cigarette smoking cessation altogether.[28]

Current Local Data

Pets in Los Angeles County are frequently exposed to SHS. A survey done at vaccine clinics by VPH revealed that:

- ❒ 20% of dog owners reported that a household member smoked, a quarter of which smoke around their pets.

- ❒ 28% of smokers were motivated to quit smoking after receiving information on the dangers of pet exposure.
- ❒ 16% of nonsmoking pet owners living with smokers would ask them to quit when given the same information, a quarter of which would ask them to not smoke indoors.
- ❒ About 40% of current smokers and 24% of nonsmokers living with smokers said they would be interested in more information on smoking, quitting, or SHS.

In a survey done by VPH of 10% of the parks in LAC:

- ❒ 54% of parks lacked "No Smoking" signs.
- ❒ Cigarette butts were found in 34% of parks surveyed.
- ❒ Staff saw people smoking on-premises at 10% of these parks.

2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Secondhand Smoke

1. Gathering more information regarding pet exposure to SHS and the effect of smoking in pets:
    - Survey an additional 10% of parks in LAC each year until the 2020.
    - 10% increase in survey participation from different populations (e.g. different ethnic groups, multi-unit housing residents).
    - Assessing the number of cases of cigarette butt toxicity seen by veterinarians.
2. Promote improvement for all indicators such as:
    - 10% decrease in pet-owning household members that smoke.
    - 10% increase in number of non-smoking signs at parks.
    - 10% decrease in number of cigarette butt liter found at parks.
3. Assessing the burden of SHS in veterinary clinics of LAC:
    - Reaching out to 10% of veterinarians in LAC to report to VPH animals with cigarette butt poisoning.

Focus Area 6: Disaster Preparedness and Pets

Background

There have been many difficult lessons that helped pave the way for important legislation ensuring that pets be included in local, state, and national emergency and disaster planning.

Hurricane Katrina is an example of this when, in 2005, people were told they could not enter evacuation shelters with their animals. This was a traumatic experience for both the pets and their owners who were faced with a difficult choice: either abandoning their pets, or returning to their homes, endangering their lives and the lives of first responders during their rescue efforts.

In the wake of this disaster, the *Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006,* or PETS Act, was signed into federal law, requiring that pets and service animals be included in disaster planning efforts.[29] Within that same year, California passed its own state law, Assembly Bill 450, which reaffirmed the same principles.[30]

Unfortunately, some organizations, such as the Red Cross, are not able to house pets during emergencies. Therefore, it is important for animal owners to know prior to a disaster where they can house their pets in case of an evacuation and include this information as they develop a plan of action.

In LAC, there are several organizations that are already preparing to respond to local disasters impacting pets. These include the California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (CAVMRC),[31] County Animal Response Team (CART), Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control (LACDACC), and the Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA) Animal Services Subcommittee.[32]

Current Local Data

In 2007, the LAC Public Health Response to Emergent Health Threats Survey yielded the following data in order to assess the level of preparedness of households that have a pet:

- 39% (1.24 million households) indicated they had a pet.

- 75% (940,000 households) reported having extra food, water and medical supplies for their pets.
- 46% (579,000 households) reported having a pet evacuation plan for a large scale emergency evacuation.

In addition, 48% of dog owners surveyed at local shelter vaccine clinics reported that they know where they would take their pets in the event of a disaster. Thirty nine percent reported that their pet was microchipped. While all pets should have identification tags on their collars, microchips are embedded under the skin and provide a more permanent form of identification.

Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Disaster Preparedness and Pets

1. 10% increase in the number of microchipped pets.
2. 10% increase in the number of pet owners in LAC that have an evacuation plan that includes pets.
3. 10% increase in the number of pet owners that have a pet First-Aid Kit.
4. 10% increase in the use of stickers for the home alerting first responders of the presence of pets in the residence.
5. 10% increase in the number of pet owners who know where to take their pets in case of an evacuation.
6. 10% increase in the number of pet owners who have practiced evacuating safely with their pets using proper carriers.

Existing and Future Interventions

Interventions include creating educational outreach materials, such as presentations, and attending health fairs to distribute animal disaster preparedness flyers.

- ❒ Connecting with the community through emergency response teams, the Society for the Protection of Animals, animal search efforts, and pet first aid training.
- ❒ Reach out to partners at local veterinary medical associations, the Humane Society of the United States, Federal Emergency Management Agency, veterinary clinics, animal shelters, fairs, pet stores, dog parks, pet-friendly dining locations, etc. to share information and track progress.
- ❒ Engage community members, such as youth groups, nonprofit organizations, daycare centers, hospitals, and doctor offices.

Focus Area 7: Zoonotic Diseases and Parasite Prevention

Background

Diseases that can be transmitted between animals and people are known as zoonotic diseases, or zoonoses. In fact, approximately 75% of new infectious diseases seen in humans during the past ten years have originated in animals.[33]

People and animals can share diseases through several different ways. These include: directly touching an animal, coughing/sneezing near each other, being bitten by an infected flea/mosquito/tick, contact with animal feces/urine or through a bite or a scratch.

Approximately 40% of people in LAC have pets.[34] There are great benefits to having pets, and transmission of zoonoses can be minimized.

The best way to prevent the spread of zoonoses is to practice good hygiene, and to work with a veterinarian to keep pets healthy. All pets should be kept up-to-date on recommended vaccinations, deworming, and flea and tick preventive care. Pet owners should wash their hands after touching pets and keeping a pet's bedding clean.

Wildlife can also play a role in the spread of zoonoses. Wild animals such as rats, opossums, skunks and raccoons are attracted to areas where people and pets live, especially when pet food and water are left outside.

Current Local Data

The data on just a few zoonoses are presented here.

- ❒ ***Flea-borne typhus*** (aka murine typhus, endemic typhus) can be spread by fleas from wildlife and pets to humans. While pets do not get sick from it, between 9 and 18 people have been diagnosed with the disease in LAC each year. This number has increased recently, from 31 individuals diagnosed with the disease in 2010, to 38 in 2011, and 50 in 2012.
- ❒ In 2012, ***West Nile Virus***, transmitted by mosquitoes, was documented in 173 people and 249 birds in LAC, a significant increase compared to 63 people and 226 birds in 2011.
- ❒ ***Heartworm***, also transmitted by mosquitoes, lives in the bloodstream of

dogs and cats. In the past, most veterinarians thought that this disease did not exist locally. Recent efforts to track the parasite have brought forth reports of 87 dogs and 12 cats diagnosed with the parasite in LAC, one-third of which were infected locally. People can also very rarely become infected from a mosquito bite, however, so far no human cases of heartworm have been reported in LAC.

- ❒ ***Rabies*** is usually detected in 8-10 bats every year in our county. There has been a significant increase recently, with 38 positive bats detected in 2011, and 56 in 2012, putting people and their pets at risk.
- ❒ ***Intestinal parasites*** carried by pets can cause serious illness in people, especially children. In 2007, VPH showed that 29% of fecal samples from dog parks in LAC had parasites such as *Giardia* (22%), whipworm (7%), and roundworm (3%). A smaller study in shelters in 2008 had 47% parasite-positive samples, including *Giardia* (37%), whipworms (8%), roundworms (11%), and hookworms (3%).
- ❒ ***Salmonella***, bacteria commonly found in reptiles, can cause severe gastrointestinal disease in people. In 2012, 93 (9%) of the 1041 people with confirmed salmonellosis in LAC had contact with reptiles, especially pet turtles. Over half of these cases were in children.
- ❒ In our animal-shelter based survey, 24% of pet owners said they never use ***flea/tick*** preventive care, and 70% of them do not use heartworm preventive care. This survey also showed that 46% of pet owners leave food outside, and 57% leave water outside for their pets, which can attract wildlife.

2020 Healthy Pets, Healthy Families Goals for Zoonotic Disease and Parasite Prevention

1. 10% increase in people's reporting that they are use flea/tick/heartworm/ parasites medications.
2. 10% decrease in dog stool samples collected at dog parks that are positive for parasite eggs.
3. 10% increase in the number of facilities contributing to the VPH effort to track zoonoses in animals.

Existing and Future Interventions

Special ongoing projects include the following:

- ❒ Educational and Media Campaigns:
  - On basic steps for pet owners to reduce pet-wildlife interactions.
  - On basic steps "backyard" poultry owners can take to reduce the risk of avian influenza.
  - On salmonellosis in young children from turtles, using a fotonovela to educate parents.

Glossary & Acronyms

2020 Healthy Pets Healthy Families Initiative – The initiative, spearheaded by the Veterinary Public Health Program at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, which aims to promote a healthier community in Los Angeles County, both in people and animals alike.

2020 Healthy Pets Healthy Families Coalition – A group reuniting leaders in the fields of human, animal and environmental care in Los Angeles County, aiming to promote the goals of the 2020 Healthy Pets Healthy Families Initiative.

CART – County Animal Response Team

CAVMRC – California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps

CFTFLAC – Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Los Angeles County

ENLA – Emergency Network Los Angeles

ETS – Environmental tobacco smoke – The chemical left in the environment after a person smokes, these can stick to a pet's fur and cause certain cancers if ingested.

Intact pet – A pet, or animal, that is not spayed or neutered. The animal is able to reproduce and have babies.

LAC – Los Angeles County

LACDACC – Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control

LACDPH – Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Microchip – A small, harmless, device that is injected under the skin of a pet, in order to provide a permanent form of identification through a specific series of numbers. Most animal care facilities have microchip readers able to read these numbers. Pet owners must register with the microchip company so that their pets can be returned to them if lost or stolen.

Obesity – A condition where a large amount of fat deposits are found in the body, usually more severe than "overweight".

PETS Act – Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006

SHS – Secondhand smoke – The effect of cigarette smoking on those who are non-smokers when a person smokes near others.

Spaying/neutering – A surgery done on female (spaying) and male (neutering) animals by veterinarians to sterilize them and prevent them from having babies. The pets are able to live a normal life after the surgery and are less likely to suffer from certain cancers and infections.

Stray animal – An animal that is walking freely in the community, without a known owner.

VPD – Vaccine-preventable diseases – Those diseases that can be easily prevented by using proper vaccinations protocols.

VPH – Veterinary public health – The county program author of this report and in charge of promoting human and animal health within the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

Zoonotic diseases – Those diseases that can be transmitted between animals and people such as rabies, *Salmonella*, or West Nile virus. Zoonoses make up the majority of infectious diseases of humans.

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Spay & neuter

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