

Escaping Together: Safe Housing Networks for Pets Fleeing Domestic Violence

Dayna Desmarais
President, SafePet Ottawa



I Need to Get Out: Help Save Two Lives

- ▶ We all know why
 - ▶ In Ontario 48% of women will refuse to leave or will delay leaving because they do not want to leave their animals behind
 - ▶ In Canada 1 in 3 women will experience some form of partner assault in their lifetime
 - ▶ In Ontario 61% of women who left an animal behind indicate that the animal was killed or harmed
- ▶ Research & Education
 - ▶ Research papers on applicable topics are regularly posted on our website for the public to access and read
- ▶ Our Mandate: Fostering on behalf of all domestic violence victims entering Violence Against Women shelters, education and outreach, provide public information on the domestic violence link, assist with the provincial wide fostering programs

Who Are We?

- ▶ What is the Origin of SafePet Ottawa?
 - ▶ Originally an OVMA program that was not successful in its original structure
- ▶ Importance of Individual Roles within the new SafePet Ottawa structure
 - ▶ Variety of expertise - a collaboration of community
- ▶ How is our Board Structured and why did we do it that way?
 - ▶ Lawyer, Treasurer, Trainer or Behaviour Consultant, Social Worker, Veterinarian, Graphic Designer/Marketing Specialist
- ▶ We are all volunteers! We rely on our community relationships to continue and build SafePet Ottawa
 - ▶ We recognize and address compassion fatigue
- ▶ Importance of Continuity
- ▶ Who are our clients?
 - ▶ Everybody!

Community Collaboration: Collaboration & Trust building in the Community

- ▶ Community Collaboration
- ▶ Fostering relationships with community partners
 - ▶ Ottawa Spay/Neuter, Empties for Paws, Pet Resource Bank, Ottawa Paw Pantry, Retailers, OCTEVAW, Ottawa Humane Society
- ▶ What is missing?
 - ▶ The resource partners for women

48% of Ontario women
who left their abusive partner said their decision
was delayed **out of fear for their pet's safety.**
SafePet Ottawa eliminates that fear.



What Do We Do?

- ▶ What do we do?
 - ▶ Education & Outreach
 - ▶ DILA program
 - ▶ Day of Information for a Lifetime of Action
 - ▶ Conference Speaking
 - ▶ Seminars & Workshops
 - ▶ Dissemination of materials through Social Media
 - ▶ Best Practice Meetings



How Do We Do It?

- ▶ How do we do it?
 - ▶ Well, we talk... a LOT!
- ▶ How does it work?
 - ▶ Our Protocols
 - ▶ Community Collaboration
 - ▶ Social media
- ▶ What isn't working?
 - ▶ How do we fix it?

