

## **More about Safety Net/Keeping People and Pets Together**

The ASPCA believes that pets and people belong together; that financial circumstances alone are not reliable indicators of the capacity to love and care for a companion animal, and that strong bonds between people and pets make for stronger communities. From our direct care of companion animals, our work with animal welfare agencies, veterinarians, law enforcement and policy makers and our own research, we've also learned that there are a variety of challenging circumstances that can cause pets to lose their homes.

As we continue to work closely with communities and to study the reasons why people relinquish their pets, we've learned that too often pet owners who have strong emotional bonds with their pets would choose to keep their pet, if only provided the short-term help needed to make it possible. That help can come in many forms, like affordable veterinary care, pet care supplies, a well-insulated dog house, waiver of fees that keep owners from reclaiming lost pets, referral to supportive human services or affordable pet friendly housing options.

Providing the support that helps owners keep their pets when it is best for the animal to remain in his or her home has become a focus of the ASPCA and many other animal welfare organizations in recent years. We know that this approach 1) allows shelters and rescue groups to focus their sheltering and rehoming services on animals most in need, 2) frees up critical public safety resources to address the most serious criminal activities that threaten our collective well-being, and 3) fosters the human/animal bond that provides quality of life benefits to people and pets alike.