

Why Buy a Pet When You Can Adopt?

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Image credit PublicDomainPictures.net

I would bet that in most homes, these words have been said more than once. “Can I get a pet for my birthday?” Many people might have had their wish come true and have received a pet as a present. Pets often come from a pet store with a hefty price attached. The alternative and best option is to get a pet by adoption. Local animal shelters receive lots of animals that need a forever home.

If there are animals that need a home, why do people buy pets? That is something that we might not help or never know. If more people knew about this problem, the animal shelter and all the work they do to give pets a second chance would greatly benefit. For example, animal shelters often run a special, waiving any adoption fee or free pet services, including spays or neuters.

Our team looked into the collected data from the Austin Animal Shelter to see if there are trends and to understand what factors contribute to a pet’s adoption. Our team is composed of people who care for animals. Our first question was, what kind of animals

does the animal shelter have? We saw that the population at the shelter is predominantly cats and dogs. We looked into the data and compared if more cat or dog people were around.

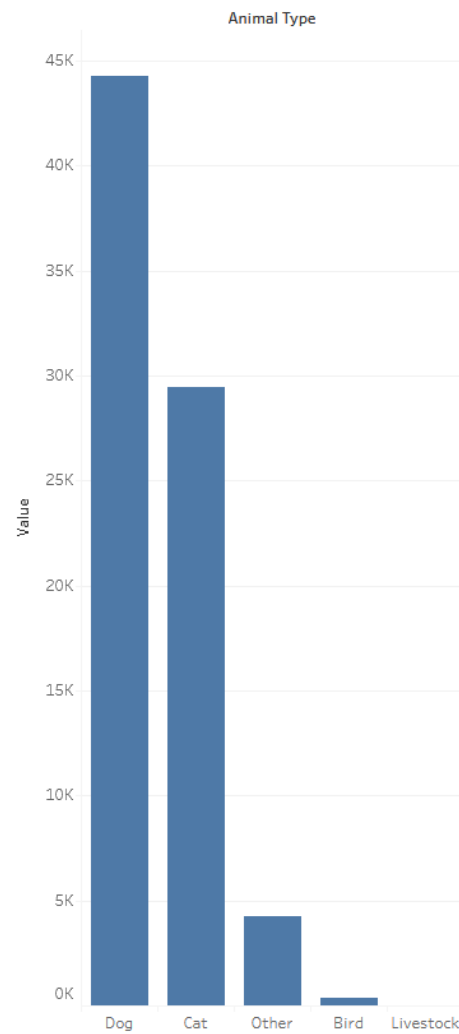
Below is the image of the first ten data points from the dataset. This snapshot shows the wide range of ages of the animals the animal shelter hosts. The shelter has animals that are a few days old and others that are sixteen years old.

Abc aac_shelter_outcomes.csv	Abc aac_shelter_outcomes.csv	Abc aac_shelter_outcomes.csv	Abc aac_shelter_outcomes.csv	Abc aac_shelter_outcomes.csv
Age Upon Outcome	Animal Id	Animal Type	Breed	Color
2 years	A747283	Dog	Chihuahua Shorthair Mix	Tan/White
1 year	A739676	Dog	Great Pyrenees Mix	White/Buff
1 year	A737852	Dog	Pit Bull Mix	White/Black
2 weeks	A701935	Cat	Domestic Shorthair Mix	Brown Tabby
4 months	A745843	Dog	Labrador Retriever Mix	Black/White
8 years	A720538	Other	Raccoon Mix	Gray/Black
2 years	A758138	Dog	Pit Bull Mix	Brown Brindle
3 weeks	A704904	Cat	Domestic Medium Hair Mix	Brown Tabby
7 months	A742915	Cat	Domestic Shorthair Mix	Brown/Brown Tabby
1 month	A751172	Cat	Domestic Shorthair Mix	Blue

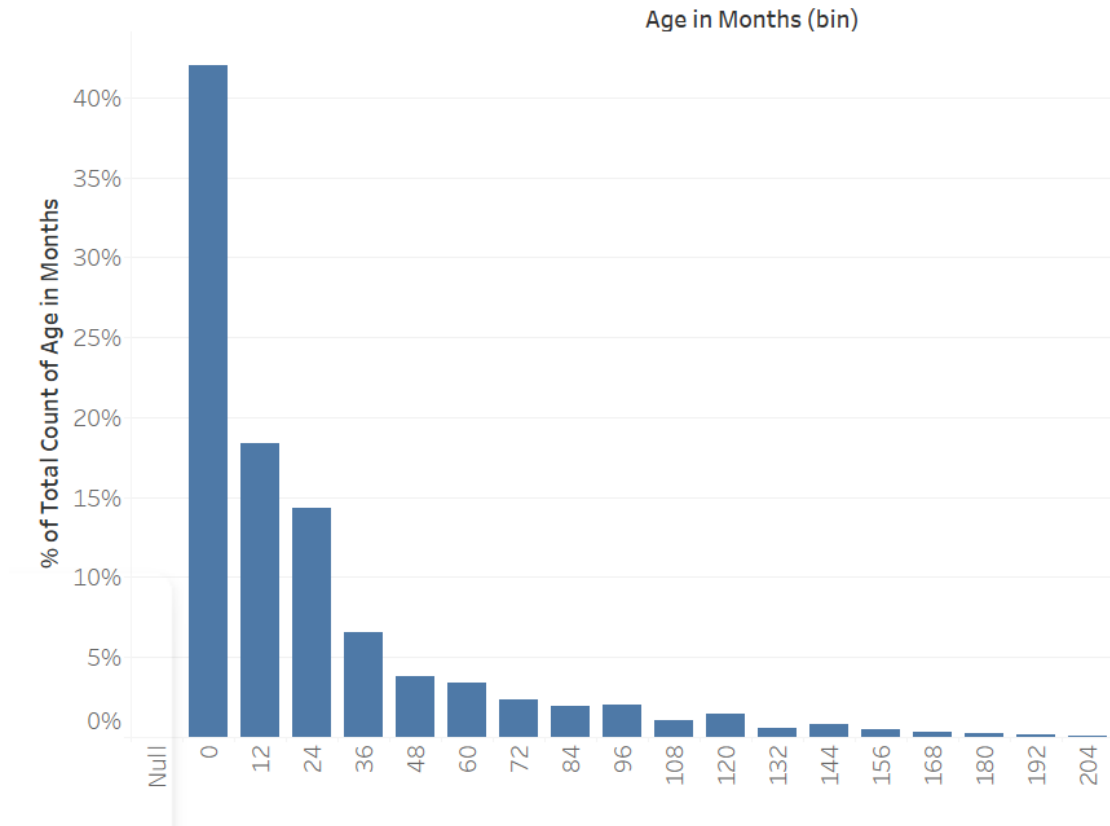
By reading the lines above, the team saw the work that we needed to do. Using Tableau, the team filtered, grouped, and cleaned the data to create graphs that will explain our findings.

The team chose some graphs to explain our findings. The graph below represents the animals at the shelter when the data was collected. From it, we can see that dogs have a significant number present at the shelter, followed by cats. Therefore, the team focused on animal types, specifically cats and dogs.

Number of Animals by Type

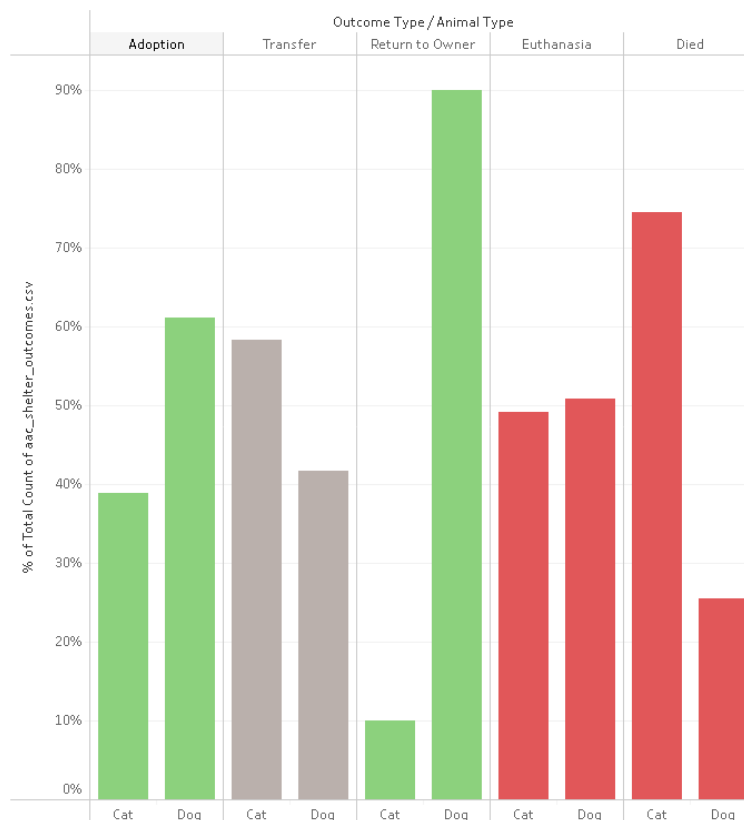


The following graph shows the age range by months old, in which it is clear that the population at the shelter is predominantly young animals, but they still host not-so-young pets.



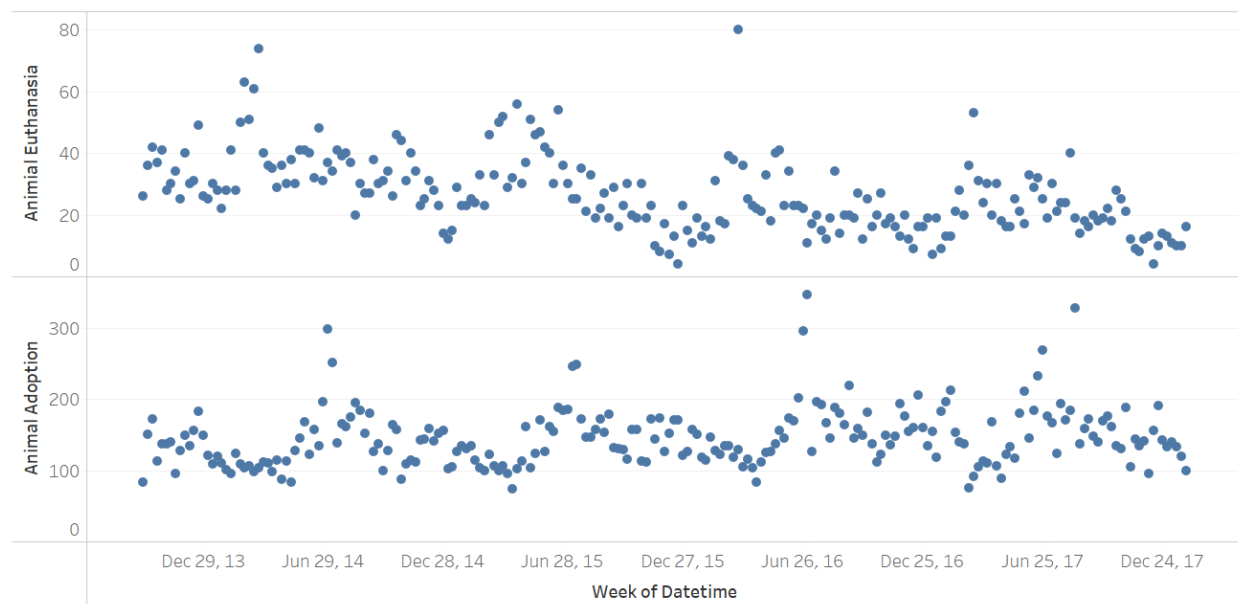
Now, we know that animals of different ages exist and coexist at Austin Animal Shelter. The team has decided to inspect the outcome type of these fellows. The team wanted to illustrate the positive and not-so-positive outcome by adding color to the graph to make it more descriptive. The data needed to be filtered to show the outcome type that cats and dogs have once they are admitted to the animal shelter. See the graph below it is divided by outcome type which were divided by adoption, transfer, return to owner, euthanasia, and dead, which are the most common outcomes for animals at the shelter. The team decided to use green for the positive outcome, grey for neutral and red for a negative outcome.

Outcome Type by Animal



The team decided to look further down and see if dates affect the outcome of animals, the following graph shows some interesting trends.

Animal Adoption and Euthanasia Over the Years



Shown in this graph above is the trends for animal adoption and euthanasia rates over the

years. While euthanasia rates have a pattern, it isn't as consistent as adoption rates, which shows that many people adopt a pet during the summer months.

In conclusion, if you are thinking of buying a pet for any reason. You should consider adopting. Pay a visit to your local animal shelter, if the shelter is close to you. Another good tool is their website. It is user-friendly and is updated very often. The Austin Animal Shelter is eager for people who are willing to adopt or foster a pet. The Austin Shelter website usually shows promotions like days where adoption fees are waived.