

NKLA TIMELINE

JUST LIKE A MARATHON, the race to reaching no-kill in Los Angeles took place one step at a time. There were mile markers along the way — key moments that added up to the ultimate goal of making L.A. one of the largest no-kill cities in the country and saving thousands of pets each year. It was a significant accomplishment and here's how it happened.

LATE 2010

Best Friends assembles a steering committee to lay the groundwork for a systematic and comprehensive lifesaving campaign in Los Angeles. The committee includes representatives from local animal welfare organizations, the Board of Animal Services Commissioners, Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) and Best Friends.

MID-2011

The advertising agency TBWA\Chiat\Day jumps on board, pro-bono, to help launch the NKLA initiative.



EARLY 2012

Best Friends launches the Best Friends Pet Adoption and Spay/Neuter Center. The grand opening celebration is featured on *Access Hollywood*.

The L.A. Neuter Cruiser is wrapped with NKLA branding, making the promotional campaign mobile.

2010 2011 2012

EARLY 2011

With the support of Brenda Barnette, general manager of LAAS and the steering committee, Best Friends establishes the NKLA Coalition.

FALL 2011

Addressing a crowd of more than 120 members of the Los Angeles rescue community, Best Friends CEO Gregory Castle and the steering committee present the plan to make L.A. a no-kill city. Reactions are overwhelmingly positive.

The Los Angeles City Council approves a three-year contract with Best Friends to operate the vacant Northeast Animal Shelter in Mission Hills.



SPRING 2012

The NKLA initiative is celebrated at a launch party at the House of Blues, attended by city officials, animal welfare leaders and Hollywood celebrities. The day after the event, the NKLA website launches.

MID-2012

Weeds star and *Saturday Night Live* alum Kevin Nealon records the first NKLA PSA released nationally.

A July Best Friends press release announces a 15.7% decrease in killing just five months into the launch of NKLA. Members of the NKLA Coalition, consisting of 48 rescue groups, shelters and clinics dedicated to the no-kill movement, have found homes for about 9,000 dogs and cats during the first five months of 2012, approximately 1,500 more than during the same five months of 2011.

FALL 2012

The NKLA initiative begins getting both local and national recognition in the press.

LATE 2012

Best Friends reports that in December, LAAS reached a save rate of 84%, an all-time high. Comparing 2012 to 2011, the killing was reduced by more than 4,200 animals.



EARLY 2013

Best Friends opens a kitten nursery at the Best Friends Pet Adoption and Spay/Neuter Center, with a plan to pull approximately 3,000 newborn kittens from LAAS annually.

FALL 2013

The NKLA Pet Adoption Center opens. Funded with support from the Ronald and Catherine Gershman Foundation, the center features the latest interactive touch-screen technology and personalized pet matchmaking services.

BuzzFeed identifies an NKLA PSA with Kristin Bauer van Straten as number one on their list of the best pet adoption ads.

EARLY 2014

The NKLA Coalition has grown to include 70 groups.

The Los Angeles Kings, a professional ice hockey team, partners with Best Friends to promote pet adoption by having players photographed with dogs and putting on adoption events during team practice sessions.

2013 2014



MID-2013

Data from January through May of 2013 shows that, since the start of NKLA, the number of deaths in L.A. city shelters was reduced every month. And the save rate for cats and dogs increased an average of almost 6% each month from the previous year.

MID-2014

From January to September 2014, the NKLA Coalition finds homes for almost 22,000 animals.

NKLA becomes an official registered trademark.

A Doberman named Frieda becomes the 1,000th pet adopted from the NKLA Pet Adoption Center.



FALL 2015

The 100th partner joins the NKLA Coalition.



EARLY 2016

Best Friends helps NKLA Coalition partners fund and open their own kitten nurseries.



LATE 2017

At the end of the year, the combined dog and cat save rate is around 87%, shy of the 90% no-kill threshold. While the dog save rate has reached that benchmark, the injunction that prevents LAAS from implementing trap-neuter-return (TNR) is holding back the cat save rate.

2015 2016 2017 2018

MID-2016

Best Friends partners with LAAS and Stray Cat Alliance to launch Safe at Home. The program encourages community members who find newborn stray kittens to foster them until they can be spayed or neutered and made available for adoption.

The NKLA Super Adoption event breaks records, with more than 500 animals adopted from 50 rescue partners. About 8,000 people attend to support the NKLA initiative.

FALL 2018

Best Friends makes extra space available to regularly house and treat about 75 LAAS cats and kittens with ringworm. And the Best Friends Training Academy is launched to give shelter workers hands-on training in lifesaving.



MID-2019

Based largely on 2018 shelter data, California is identified as the state with the second largest lifesaving gap in the country. (Texas is first.)

Angelinos show up in droves to the Clear the Nursery event. In just five hours, 149 kittens go to foster homes.



FALL 2020

To accommodate the need for social distancing as a result of the pandemic, the Best Friends team in L.A. gets creative and hosts a drive-through adoption event in the parking lot of the Best Friends Pet Adoption and Spay/Neuter Center. In just two days, 72 kittens find homes.

LATE 2020

After nearly 11 years of legal, political and financial wrangling, the Los Angeles City Council votes unanimously to approve the final environmental impact report that will allow the city to move forward on the long-awaited Citywide Cat Program. It includes a robust TNR program coordinated by LAAS and funding for 20,000 community cat spay/neuter surgeries annually, in addition to funds already allocated for residents' pets.

2019 2020 2021

MID-2020

With 2019 data in, California takes the number-one spot as the state with the largest lifesaving gap.

The Best Friends team in Los Angeles starts a hotline that diverts neonatal kittens from going to a shelter or a nursery in favor of being fostered by the public.

California closes a loophole in an existing law and strengthens its statewide ban on dogs and cats sold in pet stores. And, along with other animal protection organizations, as well as the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program, Best Friends joins the effort to ensure that the California legislature approves \$5 million in state funding, proposed by Governor Newsom, to help animal shelters increase lifesaving. This funding is especially significant, considering that the pandemic nearly decimated the state's budget.

EARLY 2021

Best Friends makes a major announcement: L.A. has become no-kill, with a sustained save rate of 90.49% in 2020. Thanks to the hard work of so many — including the entire NKLA Coalition, devoted volunteers, Mayor Garcetti, Brenda Barnette and everyone at Los Angeles Animal Services, and the local community — we are NKLA! 🐾

