

## The Danger of when Animal Abuse Co-Occurs with Family Violence: Strategies and Policies for Keeping Families Safe

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### • Work experience:

- Assistant Prosecutor (Michigan)
- National District Attorneys Association
  - Senior Attorney, National Child Protection Training Center
- American Humane Association
  - Vice President of Public Policy and Human-Animal Strategic Initiatives
- National District Attorneys Association
  - Founder/Director, National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse
  - Deputy Director/Interim Director, National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse

### • Author:

- 2 books, 10 book chapters



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### • Boards/Associations:

- ABA's Commission on Domestic & Sexual Violence (Liaison)
- Association of Professional Humane Educators (Advisory Group)
- Denver Pet Partners (Advisory Council)
- Michigan State Bar Animal Law Section (Council Member)
- Michiganders for Shelter Pets (Co-Founder)
- National Coalition on Violence Against Animals (Executive Board)
- National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse (Advisory Group)
- National Link Coalition (Steering Committee)

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### America's Top 10 Animal Defenders

## AMERICA'S TOP 10 ANIMAL DEFENDERS

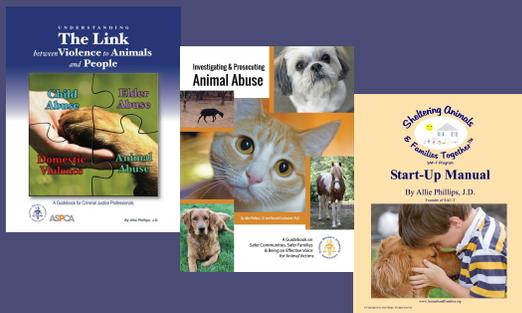
Animal victims of abuse cannot speak for themselves, but these extraordinary people are taking a stand in seeking justice for abused and neglected animals. During National Justice for Animals Week 2014, the Animal Legal Defense Fund is delighted to announce America's Top Ten Animal Defenders.



#### Allie Phillips

Allie Phillips is the director of the National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse at the National District Attorneys Association. She founded the network Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T) to help families with pets flee abusive homes and find safety. She is a nationally-recognized author, attorney, and legal advocate for animal protection.

## Resources



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*"Anyone who has accustomed himself to regard the life of any living creature as worthless is in danger of arriving also at the idea of worthless human lives."*

*- Albert Schweitzer, Humanitarian*

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## Animal Abuse, Child Abuse, Domestic and Elder Violence

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## Why is this important?

- Animal abuse presents a risk of child abuse
- Animal violence may predict future violence
- Animal abuse to threaten victims
- Animal abuse to prevent families from leaving
- Co-occurrence of multiple forms of violence increases future violence

Hackett & Uprichard, "Animal abuse and child maltreatment: A review of the literature and findings from a UK study" (October 2007)

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## This is why.

Before killing a school bus driver and kidnapping a 5-year-old boy and holding him hostage in a bunker for a week, he beat a neighbor's 120-pound dog with a lead pipe who died a week later. Animal control spoke with Dykes. "He said his only regret was he didn't beat him to death all the way. If a man can kill a dog, and beat it with a lead pipe and brag about it, it's nothing until it's going to be people."

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## And this is why.

Colorado Springs – November 2015

Alleged to have killed 3 people at a Planned Parenthood office. Reports have surfaced that he was suspected of stalking/leering a neighbor and her dog was shot with a pellet gun.

Dear told police that he did not shoot the dog but also said, "Douglas was lucky that it was only a pellet that hit the dog and not a bigger round."

## Pets are part of the family

- Almost 80 million (65%) American homes have pets
- Over 35% of millennials have a pet
- 67% of homes with children under age 6 have at least one pet
- 74% of homes with children over age 6 have at least one pet
- 72% of homes have women as the primary caretaker of pet

Source: 2015-16 National Pet Owner's Survey and American Veterinary Medical Association; Global Pet Expo 2015; American Veterinary Medical Association (2007). U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook; Nat'l Ctr. For Injury Prev. & Control, 2011

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## Pets are part of the family

- 94% of dog owners and 89% of cat owners stated the primary benefit of a pet is companionship.
- 50% of dog owners and 36% of cat owners buy holiday gifts.
- 25% of dog owners and 12% of cat owners buy birthday gifts.
- In 2015, \$60.5 billion was spent in the pet industry
- American Pet Products Association Pet Owner Survey (2015-16)

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## Children and animals go together

- Learning
- Self-esteem
- Social support
- Help children cope with grief and loss
- Promote compassion, kindness and nurturance
- Improve cognitive, social-emotional and moral development



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## Children and Pets in Families



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A child in America is more likely to grow up with a pet than with a father

- Melson (2001)

## Animals as Family Members



*“Being a member of the family means that not only do humans and other animals benefit from that association—they can also be victims of it”*

-Christina Risley-Curtiss

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## Protecting Pets at all Costs

- 62-76% of animal cruelty in the home occurs in front of children.
- Children may protect their mothers from being battered.
- Anecdotal evidence is growing that children will protect their pets.



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## Why animals are abused

### 2012 Study from New Zealand:

- to normalize violence
- to gain perverse satisfaction and instill fear
- punish the animals for a person’s misbehavior
- jealousy of the pet
- to demonstrate intolerance for rules being broken (*if I can do this to the dog, I can do it to you*)
- threats to keep the woman from leaving
- as collateral violence (not the target)
- no fear of police action
- bestiality – related pornography

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## Why animals are abused

- 2012 Study (cont.)
- Cruelty to animals after leaving the relationship
  - to create anxiety that forces a return home
  - as malicious punishment for her leaving
  - harming animals of friends and extended family as retribution for their helping the partner leave

Roguski, M. (2012). *Pets as Pawns: The Co-existence of Animal Cruelty and Family Violence*. Auckland: Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

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## Predictors & Indicators

- 2009 Study – The first study focusing on the linkage between animals, children and domestic violence

(DeGue & DeLillo, Is Animal Cruelty a “Red Flag” for Family Violence? Investigating Co-Occuring Violence Toward Children, Partners and Pets, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24(6), p. 1036-1056)

- Nearly half (49.4%) of the sample experienced one form of family violence during childhood
- **Individuals who witnessed animal cruelty were 8.14 times more likely to perpetrate on animals**

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## Predictors & Indicators

- 2009 Study (cont.) – General Findings
  - Witnessing animal cruelty was the biggest predictor of later violence by the witness
  - Witnessing animal cruelty with child abuse or exposure to domestic violence increases the risk of animal cruelty
  - Exposed individuals to severe domestic violence were more likely to have witnessed animal abuse
  - Animal abuse was also associated with higher rates of child neglect

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## Philadelphia

### Father sent to jail for setting dog afire in front of children

March 12, 2011 | By Joseph A. Slobodzian, Inquirer Staff Writer

Jan. 28, 2010, was the ultimate stressful day for John W. Fleet III.

He was working full-time, his marriage was over, he was fighting to keep shared custody of his two children - and he was drinking too much.

Then the dog bit at his 11-year-old son.

"I took it out on the dog," Fleet, 34, told a Philadelphia Judge Friday, an understatement considering that he set the five-month-old pit-bull mix on fire in front of his children.

Fleet pleaded no contest to animal cruelty, child endangerment, and corrupting a minor, and learned that he had accomplished just what he had been fighting to avoid: He lost his children.

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## Indicator that “something is wrong”

### Man Charged in Son's Homicide Had Animal Abuse, Domestic Violence Charges

Before he was charged with second-degree murder in the death of his 9-week-old son, Christopher Berry, of Lowell, Mass., was also charged with animal cruelty for allegedly putting down bird seed in a parking lot to attract pigeons and then running through the flock, killing six of the birds. Berry is also facing charges of assault and battery for allegedly forcing his girlfriend out of a chair and shoving her out the door of their apartment when she was moving out. The [Lowell Sun](#) reported that Berry is also accused of receiving stolen property and of breaking into an auto parts store where he worked and stealing \$1,500 from a safe.

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## The Link: Domestic Violence

- 2007 Study: Survey comparing shelter – vs- nonabused women
  - (Ascione, Weber, Thompson, Heath, Maruyama & Hayashi (2007). Battered Pets and Domestic Violence: Animal Abuse Reported by Women Experiencing Intimate Violence and by Nonabused Women. *Violence Against Women* 13(4), 354-73.)
  - Shelter women were nearly 11 times more likely to report their partner had hurt/killed their pet
  - Shelter women were more than 4 times higher to report their pet was threatened

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## The Link: Domestic Violence

- 2007 Study (cont.)
  - 66.7% of children observed animal abuse
  - 37.5% of shelter children harmed or killed pets
  - 22.8% of shelter women delayed leaving home due to concerns of the pets
  - If pets were actually threatened and harmed, 34.3% of women delayed leaving

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### The Link: Domestic Violence

- 41% of men arrested for domestic violence committed animal abuse after the age of 18
  - Over 9 acts on average involving physical abuse or threats
  - Adulthood animal abuse was significantly associated with severe psych aggression and physical assault beyond anti-social personality disorder and alcohol use

(Frebres, 2012. Adulthood Animal Abuse among Men Arrested for Domestic Violence, Master's Thesis, Univ. of TN)

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### Shifting focus to animal abusers

One of the strongest studies covered a seven-year period in 11 different site locations, to look at factors that initiate battering behavior. While the study did not set out to focus on animal abuse, the results showed that animal abuse was a significant variable and was one of only four factors associated with becoming a batterer (Walton-Moss, et al., 2005).

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### If I can't have the dog, no one will have the dog

#### Former Lawyer Gets Probation, One-Day Jail Term in Animal Abuse/Domestic Violence Case



A former Birmingham, Ala. attorney who pleaded guilty to slitting his family dog's throat, texting a photo of it to his now ex-wife, and leaving her a voice mail stating "your day is coming, girl," was sentenced to probation – and also ordered to serve one day in jail for violating a no-contact order. James Stewart Robinson, 48, was sentenced on Jan. 15 to a five-year suspended sentence and three years supervised probation on the Class C felony cruelty charge. He received a concurrent one-year suspended sentence with two years supervised probation on the misdemeanor domestic violence harassment charge, the [Alabama Media Group](#) reported. The domestic violence charge resulted from Robinson's emailing a Christmas greeting to his ex-wife in violation of a judge's no-contact order following his guilty plea last summer. Apologizing for killing "Rufus," an American Staffordshire terrier, by slicing his throat, Robinson noted that he has been a recovering drug addict for nearly 10 years. Robinson surrendered to police following a five-month probe that included exhuming the dog's body and an investigation by a Florida animal forensics lab.

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**"Batterers who also abuse their pets are both more controlling and use more dangerous forms of violence [sexual violence, marital rape, emotional violence and stalking] than batterers who do not."**

-- Simmons & Lehmann (2007)  
*Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 22, No. 9,  
 p. 1211-1222 (2007)

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### Hartford, CT

#### Man Gets 5 Years in Cat-Killing and Threat Case



Johnen Velez, of Hartford, Conn., who allegedly killed his ex-girlfriend's cat, stuffed it in a pillowcase and left it outside the home of her new lover with a note that read, "You're next!" was sentenced to five years in prison. Velez, 19, pleaded no-contest to a charge of animal cruelty and guilty to third-degree assault in an unrelated case, the [Hartford Courant](#) reported. Prosecutor Anthony Bochicchio said DNA evidence was found linking Velez to the pillowcase and his fingerprints were on the threatening note. Police said Velez and the woman had broke up last September and she wanted to reunite with the other man.

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## The Link in Rural Communities

“Pets and/or farm animals are often threatened, harmed or neglected as a means of controlling an abused woman, and it is common for women to delay seeking help out of fear for their animals.”

Forty-five percent of the women in the study said that their pets and/or farm animals were deliberately threatened with harm, and in 41% of cases the pets actually were deliberately harmed or killed.

Doherty, D. & Hornosty, J. (2008). Exploring the Links: Firearms, Family Violence and Animal Abuse in Rural Communities, *The Latham Letter* (Summer 2008)

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## The Link: Domestic Violence

18-48% of battered women have delayed leaving an abusive home, or have returned to their batterer, out of fear for the welfare of their pets or livestock.

-- Ascione, 2007

Less than half of shelters ask about pets.

-- Krienert, et al, 2012



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## PAWS Act (HR 1258)

- Filed March 2015
- Prohibit taking pets across state lines to be harmed
- Federal grant program for sheltering pets

*“No one should have to make the choice between leaving an abusive situation and ensuring their pet’s safety.” – Rep. Katherine Clark (D-Mass.)*

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## Emotional targeting of animals

- Coercion and threats
- Emotional abuse
- Intimidation
- Minimizing, denying,
- Legal abuse
- Isolation
- Economic abuse
- Using children



Arkow (2014). Form of Emotional Blackmail: Animal Abuse as a Risk Factor for Domestic Violence. *Family & Intimate Partner Violence Quarterly*, 7/1, 7.

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## Animal Abuse as an act of DV

- Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, and Tennessee
- Arkansas has defined “harming the pet of a spouse” as a form of emotional abuse

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## Childhood Toxic Stress

- 14-year long CDC study of over 17,000 families
- ACEs examined over the lifespan
  - 10 types of adversity including child abuse and exposure to domestic violence
  - 4+ ACEs had significantly increased likelihoods of negative outcomes including chronic pulmonary lung disease (390%), hepatitis (240%), depression (460%), and suicide attempts (1,220%).
  - 6+ ACEs, there was a 4,600% greater likelihood of being an intravenous drug user.
  - Did not survey about animals

Vincent J Felitti et al., *Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study*, 14 Am. J. Preventive Med. 245 (1998)

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## Childhood Toxic Stress

“Childhood exposure to animal cruelty should be considered an adversity and included in such interviews. Child welfare, legal, medical and mental health professionals can use the information obtained about abusive treatment of animals to highlight its contribution to toxic stress and the subsequent risks to the child’s brain development, impaired potential, and negative health outcomes.”

- Dr. Barbara Boat (The Childhood Trust)

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## Childhood exposure to animal abuse

- Children are at greater risk of abusing animals when they witness animal abuse in the home (McEwen et al, 2014)
  - Social learning of controlling and punitive behavior
  - Poor modeling of proper treatment of animals
  - Socioeconomic disadvantage
  - Heredity?
- Children exposed to aggression against pets had significantly higher anxiety and depression scores as adults (Girardi & Pozzulo, 2015)

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## The Link: Child Abuse

- 1998-2005 study found that frequent use of spanking of 3-year-olds was associated with higher levels of child aggression when the child was 5, including temper tantrums and lashing out physically against other people and animals.
  - Taylor, C.A., Manganello, J.A., Lee, S.J., & Rice, J.C. (2010). Mothers' spanking of 3-year-old children and subsequent risk of children's aggressive behavior. *Pediatrics*, 125(5), 1057-1065.
- Children who are physically punished more frequently before adolescence are more likely to abuse animals.
  - Flynn, C. P. (1999) Animal abuse in childhood and later support for interpersonal violence in families. *Society and Animals*, 7, 161–172.)

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## The Link: Child Abuse

- Children exposed to domestic violence were 2.95 times more likely to engage in animal cruelty (Currie, 2006, *Animal Cruelty by Children Exposed to Domestic Violence*, in *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Vol. 30, p. 425-35)
- 36.8% of boys and 29.4% of girls who were victims of physical and sexual abuse and domestic violence have been reported to abuse their family pet. (Ascione, F. R. (2005). *Children & animals: Exploring the roots of kindness & cruelty* (p. 137). West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.

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“Teaching a child empathy and compassion and returning him to a toxic environment is like cleaning an oiled bird and returning it to the muck.”

- Dr. Randy Lockwood, ASPCA

## Child sexual assault & animal abuse

Nearly 50% of rapists and more than 25% of pedophiles harmed animals as children.

Tingle, et al, 1986. Childhood and adolescent characteristics of pedophiles and rapists. *Int'l J. of Law & Psych.*, 9, 103-116.

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## Former Sorrento mayor pleads guilty to child porn and cruelty to animal charges, sentenced to 40 years in prison

GONZALES – Former Sorrento Mayor Wilson Longanecker Jr. pleaded guilty to 42 counts of child pornography Tuesday in a plea bargain that resulted in a 40-year prison sentence and brought an end to a shocking chapter in the Ascension Parish town's tumultuous history.

Authorities swarmed Longanecker's columned home on Main Street on Oct. 23, 2014, and revealed in the days and weeks afterward that a state task force found Sorrento's mayor from mid-2011 to mid-2013 in possession of child pornography and videos of abuse and torture of kittens.

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## Animal Hoarding & Child Neglect

### Toddler and 17 Animals Removed from Filthy Home

Sixteen dogs, a macaw, and a toddler were removed from a home in Thibodaux, La. on Oct. 2 after police officers found urine, feces, mold and rotten food throughout a home in deplorable condition. Police charged Ronald Leblanc, 73, Ricky Leblanc, 40, Austin Leblanc, 17, Dakota Leblanc, 21, and Rachel Ledet, 20, with 27 counts of animal cruelty, failure to vaccinate dogs, possession of a vicious dog, and child desertion. Police had gone to the home after a loose dog nearly bit an animal control officer and a nearby resident, the Thibodaux *Daily Comet* reported. The child was placed in DCF custody and the animals were removed to the Lafourche Parish Animal Shelter which can house only 13 dogs.



Thibodaux police released photos of the home

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## Impact on Children

- Strained relationship with hoarder and other family
- Handling mental health issues of the hoarder
- Social isolation from friends
- Health and safety risks
- Worry

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## Bestiality & Child Abuse

- Only 38 states criminalize bestiality
- Bestiality has been related to crimes against people.  
(Hensley, Tallichet & Singer, 2006; Simons, Wurtele & Durham, 2008; Kowal, 1998).
- Children forced to engage in bestiality  
(Ascione, 1993)

the star press .com  
the online news source for east central Indiana

### Portland man held in molest, bestiality investigation

Written by  
The Star Press  
11:14 PM, Aug. 25, 2011

A Portland man was arrested this week on allegations he sexually abused both a child and a household pet.

James A. Sanders, 36, 230 E. Elder St., is charged with three counts of child molesting, possession of child pornography and bestiality.

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## Animal Fighting & Child Abuse

- Used to be bet runners, to raise dogs to fight, to throw animals into the ring
- Children watch animals being violently killed
- Growing up with violence
- Desensitization to harm
- Lower empathy
- Can be bitten by dogs

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## Chicago study

Chicago's Anti-Cruelty Society conducted written surveys with 37,702 students in grades K-12 between 2003 and 2006. The surveys were administered at over 1,500 schools, summer camps, and other venues.

	CITY OF CHICAGO	SUBURBS	TOTAL
No. of students surveyed:	35,815	1,887	37,702
No. who have attended dogfights	2,362 (6.6%)	323 (17.1%)	2,685 (7.1%)
No. aware of dog fights in the neighborhood	5,187 (14.4%)	623 (33%)	5,810 (15.4%)
No. who have attended cockfights	359 (1%)	93 (4.9%)	452 (1.2%)
No. of families entering dogfights	163	13	176
No. aware of serious dog bites	10,647 (29.7%)	636 (33.7%)	11,283 (29.9%)



### Better laws, better prosecution: Exposing children to animal abuse

- Children at animal fighting
  - 7 USC 2156
  - Cal. Penal. Code 310 (M)
  - 720 Ill Comp Stat 5/48-1 (F)
  - Va. Code 3-2-6571 (F)
- Animal torture in presence of child
  - Idaho Code 18-1506A (F)
  - IL St. Ch 720 5/12-33 (F)
  - La. Rev. Stat. 14:107-1 (F)
- Animal abuse in front of child
  - Ind. Code 35-46-3-12 & 12.5 (M) – as threat
  - Or. St. 167.320 (abuse), 325 (neglect) & 330 (neglect) (F)
  - Wash. Rev. Code 16.52.205 (F) - forcing
  - PR St. T. 5 1668, 1669, 1670 (F)
- Forcing bestiality on a child or in front of child
  - Fla. Stat. 800.04 (F)
  - Wash. Rev. Code 16.52.205 (F)

Children who grow up exposed to chronic violence develop beliefs that harming an animal, bullying, misbehaving and other criminal activity is the norm.

It is not.

### Onset of animal cruelty

Childhood onset of animal cruelty has a greater likelihood of continued cruelty, including adult Conduct Disorder and Anti-personality Disorder, than adolescent-onset of animal cruelty.

- Eleanora Gullone (2012). Animal cruelty, Antisocial Behaviour and Aggression: More than a Link, 28-33.

### Cycle of Violence for Kids

National Youth Survey Family Study

- Parents with early histories of animal abuse were **3.6 times more likely** to be violent interpersonal offenders
- Parents with early histories of animal abuse were **19.5 times more likely** to be victims of violent interpersonal violence
- Children of parents who abused animals were **3 times more likely** to have a history of animal abuse

Knight, Ellis & Simmons (2014). Parental Predictors of Children's Animal Abuse: Findings from a National and Intergenerational Sample. *J. of Interp. Viol.*, 1-21.

### Bullying and Animal Abuse

“When examining possible pathways of acquisition between animal abuse and bullying behaviors, it was found that each type of behavior was significantly predicted by the witnessing of animal abuse.”

Gullone (2011). Conceptualizing Animal Abuse with Antisocial Behavior Framework. *Animals*, 1, 144-60.

Gullone & Robertson (2008). The relationship between bullying and animal cruelty behaviours in Australian adolescents. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29, 371-79.

## Children who Abuse Animals

- Curiosity or exploration
- Peer pressure
- Sexual gratification
- To prevent harm by another
- Post-traumatic play
- Imitation
- Rehearsal
- Target of emotional abuse



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## Chicago Tribune

Breaking News, Since 1847

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### Cops: Bloody paw prints lead woman abusing dog

December 10, 2011 | By Rosemary Sobol | Tribune reporter

A woman who said she "no longer wanted" her dog was c animal abuse after letting it out in the cold today in the Ea apparently beat it with broomsticks and baseball bats, poli

Police responded to a 911 call of animal abuse about 6 p. found several children were trying to hit the dog with base report.

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## Youth mass shooters

43% of school shooters have committed prior animal abuse (Arluke & Madfis, 2013)

If youth cannot find a socially acceptable method for handling their sense of powerless, then the "early experiences with animal cruelty may become a training ground for later committing assaults, rape, and even murder." (Arluke & Madfis, 2013).

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## Highland Ranch, CO

### 16-Year-Old Charged in Colorado School Shooting Plot Had History of Pet Abuse

One of the two 16-year-old girls suspected in a plot to shoot students and staff at Mountain Vista High School in Highlands Ranch, Colo. – not far from the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School – had a history of harming pets, according to Douglas County prosecutors. Sienna Johnson was charged as an adult and was being held on \$1 million bond on two counts of conspiracy to commit murder because the court considered her too dangerous to go home. Prosecutors said she had compiled detailed maps of the school showing schedules for the students and the school's police officer, showed no remorse, had violent drawings on her Tumblr page, was practicing with a BB gun and was trying to purchase actual weapons. The map referenced "NBK" – *Natural Born Killers*, the 1994 Oliver Stone movie that was an obsession of the Columbine killers. The two girls were taken into custody on Dec. 12 after Douglas County Sheriff's investigators, acting on a tip, uncovered the alleged plot, Denver's KUSA-TV [9News](#) reported.



Douglas County D.A. George Brauchler

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## The Link: Elder Abuse

- Conservative estimate is that 1 in 3 elder adults have a pet. (Mason, Peak, Krannich, and Sanderson, 2002)
- 2003 study of APS workers found:
  - 35% said clients mentioned pets had been threatened/harmed
  - 92% felt self-neglect co-existed with pet neglect
  - 75% said pet ownership conflicted with services (i.e., not wanting to leave a pet behind) (Raymond, 2003)



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## The Link: Elder Abuse

- 2012 study (Peak, Ascione & Doney, 2012. Adult Protective Services and Animal Welfare: Should Animal Abuse and Neglect Be Assessed During Adult Protective Services Screening? *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 24/1):
  - Of 41 state APS agencies, 51% do not ask any pet-related questions, and only 1 agency asked about pet-related concerns
  - Some APS workers make notes regarding pet issues, although not required to
  - More issues than in domestic violence and child abuse, including animal hoarding, unable to manage pets, spending money on pets and not on self



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## Elder Abuse & Animal Abuse San Jose, CA – July 2012

### 5 charged with elder abuse, animal neglect

Published: July 17, 2012 at 7:48 AM

SAN JOSE, Calif., July 17 (UPI) — SAN JOSE, Calif., July 17 (UPI) — Members of a San Jose, Calif., family accused of elder abuse and animal neglect were arraigned in Santa Clara County Superior Court.

Bail was set at \$500,000 for each defendant, who face a possible 18 years in prison if convicted on charges of dependent adult abuse and animal neglect in their unlicensed group home in an upscale neighborhood of the city, the San Jose Mercury News reported Monday.

San Jose police arrested the family members in May after discovering about a dozen elderly and mentally disabled men and women living in squalid conditions with 25 dogs. Some victims told investigators the caretakers regularly beat them, fed them poorly, stole their Social Security and disability benefits, and sometimes withheld medication.

Officials did not offer an explanation about the presence of the 25 dogs found during the arrests or the 21 other dogs discovered at the house about a month after the arrests, the Mercury News said.

"There's no evidence of carcasses," district attorney Charles Huang said. "The dogs have been removed and are now in good care."

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When animal abuse is taken seriously, communities are safer.



## How you can help pets and families in crisis



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## Cross Training/Reporting Multi-Disciplinary Teams

- Prosecutor
- Case Worker
- Law enforcement
- Health care provider
- Forensic interviewer
- Victim advocate
- Mental health professional
- Probation department
- School personnel
- Child Care Provider
- Animal Welfare
- Animal Control Officer
- Veterinarian

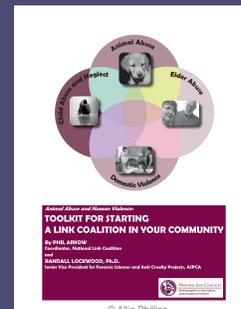
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## Link Coalitions

- National
- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- DC
- Florida
- Illinois
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- New York
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon (Hillsboro & Klamath Falls)
- Texas
- Virginia
- Wisconsin

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[www.nationallinkcoalition.org](http://www.nationallinkcoalition.org)



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## Idaho Cross-Reporting Laws

- Mandated reporting of animal abuse = none
- Discretionary reporting of animal abuse = none
  - But can report in good faith
- Mandated reporting of elder abuse = none
- Mandated child abuse reporting = **all people!**



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## Cross-reporting works!

- Between Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2015, DCF in Connecticut received 87 written reports from the Department of Agriculture where animal control officers suspected child maltreatment. Of the 87 reports received, 38 (43.7%) involved families who had histories with DCF.

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## Tragedies from not collaborating

- South Bend, IN
- Neighbors complained about neglected animals
  - Animal control sent letters and threatened citations; no animals removed
- Police and CPS visited the home
- Agencies were not talking
- Inside the home were children being tortured and a 10-yr-old was found dead 5 months later

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## Talk to Kids About Animals

- Assists with rapport building
- Provides information about the family dynamics
- May uncover other violence
- Helps with identifying key supports in a child's life
- May inform case planning



Children's Justice Center  
(Tooele County, Utah)

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## AniCare Model: Psychological Counseling

- Focuses on cruelty to animals (for adults and juveniles)
- Empathy counseling
- Provides practical suggestions for assessment and treatment
- Includes a "Working with Parents" section
- Certification available
- [www.animalsandsociety.org](http://www.animalsandsociety.org)



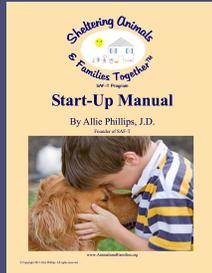
## Pet Protective Orders

- 28 states, DC and Puerto Rico have passed pet protective order laws:
  - Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia

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## Keeping Families and Pets Safe: Hotline Resources

- Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T)™ [Animalsandfamilies.net](http://Animalsandfamilies.net)
- Safe Havens [awionline.org/safe-havens](http://awionline.org/safe-havens)  
[Asafeplaceforpets.org](http://Asafeplaceforpets.org)



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## Backyard Shelter Meg's House - Greenwood, SC



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## SAF-T Shelters by state

- |              |                  |   |
|--------------|------------------|---|
| • Alabama    | • Michigan       | • Pennsylvania  |
| • Alaska     | • Minnesota      | • South Carolina                                      |
| • Arizona    | • Missouri       | • South Dakota  |
| • Arkansas   | • Montana        | • Tennessee   |
| • California | • Nevada         | • Texas   |
| • Colorado   | • New Jersey     | • Utah  |
| • Florida    | • New Mexico     | • Vermont   |
| • Georgia    | • New York       | • Virginia  |
| • Idaho      | • North Carolina | • Washington  |
| • Illinois   | • North Dakota   | • Wisconsin   |
| • Indiana    | • Ohio           | • Wyoming   |
| • Iowa       | • Oklahoma       | • International:<br>Australia, Canada,<br>New Zealand |
| • Kansas     | • Oregon         |   |
| • Kentucky   |                  |   |
| • Louisiana  |                  |   |
| • Maryland   |                  |   |

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## Investigation and Prosecution Issues



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## Rhode Island

*"Animal abuse cases are handled by the team of specialized prosecutors in our Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit, as the malicious treatment and killing of animals is an element we often see with domestic violence abusers. The nature of this crime and the senseless violence against a weaker person or animal is deplorable and will continue to be prosecuted aggressively by this Office."*

- Rhode Island Attorney General Kilmartin

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## FBI recognition of animal abuse

- Animal abuse is being added to the *National Incident-Based Reporting System*
  - Simple or gross neglect (i.e., animal hoarding);
  - intentional abuse and torture;
  - organized animal abuse (i.e., dog- and cock-fighting); and
  - animal sexual abuse.

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## Investigation/Charging Decisions

- Full picture of family dynamics
- Review animal control records
- Interview neighbors, veterinarian
- Photographs
- Observe pet behaviors
- Background on how the offender related to animals, current stressors, etc.
- Properly charge cases involving Link crimes

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## Pre-Trial Issues

- FRE 404b other acts evidence
  - Identity, motive, intent, preparation, scheme, plan, system of doing an act, absence of mistake or accident
    - Example: Child abuse was an accident; history of violence towards animals
- Timeliness of priors
  - US Air Force v Jones (1987) 25 M.J. 567
- Animal abuse defined as domestic violence and state-specific DV 404b statutes
- Curative instructions
  - OH v Dickinson 2009 WL 1200646 (Ohio App. 3 Dist.)

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## Pre-Trial Issues

- *S/he is just a bad person*
  - OH v Morris 2010 WL 3528992 (Ohio App. 9 Dist.)
- Using the Link to prove other facts or elements
- Threats/harm to animals explains delayed disclosure
  - To prove state of mind (NC v Thompson (2000) 139 N.C.App. 299, 533 S.E.2d 834)
  - To prove fear (WA v Drake (2011) 2011 WL 3243809 (Wash.App. Div. 1))
- Expert witnesses (US Air Force v Jones)

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## Plea Negotiations

- Avoid no contest pleas
- Request pre-plea psychological evaluation
- In a Link case, get a plea to each charge for special probationary terms

### Man Responsible for Killing Family Dog Pleads Guilty

spoLA investigation leads to felony animal cruelty conviction

February 26, 2013

Los Angeles, CA - A Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (spoLA) investigation and supporting evidence led to a felony animal cruelty conviction against Terrance Hawkins of Los Angeles, after he threw his girlfriend's dog out of a 9th story window during an argument. Hawkins pleaded guilty (no contest) to PC 597a and was sentenced to 16 months in custody. Restitution hearing, probation and sentencing scheduled for March 6th.

Rizzo, the beloved American Eskimo dog of Hawkins' girlfriend, succumbed to his injuries and perished after twelve days in intensive veterinary care.

"Where domestic violence is present, animal cruelty and child abuse can usually be found - we call it 'The Link,'" said spoLA President, Madeline Bornstein. "The cycle of violence continues until it is broken by law enforcement, education or other interventions."

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## Sentencing & Probation

- Pet owing/possession prohibition
- Victim impact statements regarding pets
- Community service considerations
- Court ordered evaluation and counseling
- Pet Protective Orders
- Fully documented pre-sentence report for use in future incidents
- Strong reaction needed

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## Animal abuse as the basis for CPS Intervention

- Schambon v Kentucky, 821 SW2d 804 (1991)
  - Animal control called regarding animal hoarding and neglect
  - Four children removed because of unsanitary condition of home
  - Subsequent disclosure of sexual and physical abuse
  - Termination of parental rights

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## Bestiality – Sex Offender Registration

- Registration for bestiality (or forcing another):
  - CT, DE, FL, **ID**, IL, IN, KS, LA, MD, MI, MS, MO, MT, NV, NH, NY, NC, OK, OR, SC, SD, and VA
  - AL, AZ, CA and MO – certain exceptions
- Bestiality in the definition of child pornography/obscenity, and requires registration for the production, promotion, distribution, or possession of such materials or live shows:
  - AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, DE, DC, FL, GA, HI, **ID**, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, WY.
  - Federal law, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands

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The image shows a screenshot of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) website. At the top, the NSA logo and name are visible. Below the navigation menu, there is a banner for the "National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse" featuring a photo of a horse. To the right, the "NCOVAA" logo is displayed with the tagline "National Coalition Of Victim Support Agencies". Below the logo, there is a "Join Us" section with a list of membership benefits and a "Join Now" button.



## NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

For our monthly newsletter, visit [www.nationallinkcoalition.org](http://www.nationallinkcoalition.org)

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## Animal abuse is a human safety issue



Working together is the only way to keep communities safe

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