



A monthly report of news about the connections between animal abuse and other forms of violence from the National Link Coalition -- www.nationallinkcoalition.org [Phil Arkow](#), Editor

CONNECTICUT ENACTS LANDMARK CROSS-REPORTING LAW

Connecticut has enacted one of the most comprehensive statutes requiring the cross-reporting of animal abuse and child maltreatment cases. House Bill 6226 was co-sponsored by Reps. Susan M. Johnson and Diana S. Urban with 30 other representatives and senators.

Beginning Oct. 1, 2011, all Connecticut animal control officers who find suspected animal cruelty will be required to report those cases to the Commissioner of Agriculture who, in turn, will provide monthly reports of this information to the Commissioner of Children and Families. Addresses in these reports where child abuse/neglect investigations are ongoing will be transmitted to child welfare investigators.

Meanwhile, employees of the Department of Children and Families who suspect that an animal is being harmed, neglected or treated cruelly will be required to report it to the Commissioner of Agriculture.

The two Commissioners will develop training for DCF employees on identifying neglect and cruelty to animals and its relationship to child welfare practice, and for animal control officers on identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.

Connecticut joins West Virginia and Illinois as the only states with full mandated, two-way cross-reporting, in which animal welfare/control and child welfare personnel must report to each other. Several other states have either one-way or permissive reporting systems:

PERMISSIVE CROSS-REPORTING	
Child protection MAY report animal abuse	Animal care & control MAY report child abuse
Maine	Maine
California	
Oregon	
MANDATORY CROSS-REPORTING	
Child protection MUST report animal abuse	Animal care & control MUST report child abuse
Connecticut	Connecticut
Illinois	Illinois
West Virginia	West Virginia
Louisiana	California
Massachusetts	Colorado
Nebraska	Ohio
Tennessee	Virginia

SAF-T CONTINUES LEGACY OF HOUSING ANIMAL VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

[Sheltering Animals & Families Together \(SAF-T\)](#), previously the American Humane Association's Pets and



Women's Shelters (PAWS) program which was discontinued in September, 2010, is continuing the legacy of assisting domestic violence shelters to accommodate family pets on-site. The guidelines for on-site housing of pets, created by Allie Phillips in the 1990s, were initially published in 2008 (under the PAWS name) when only four family violence shelters were known to house pets. Since then, SAF-T has grown to 57 shelters. The program has been featured by The Today Show, *USA Today* and *The Washington Post*.

Shelters that have implemented SAF-T have shared that they were not adequately protecting families when they ignored the family pet. Jeannette Aston, with the Mt. Graham Safe House in Safford, AZ, wrote, "The [SAF-T] shelter has made a world of difference to our participants. I have heard from so many women than they were finally able to leave because they didn't have to leave their 'baby' behind. The interaction we see with our participants and their pets is amazing and it seems to be so healing for them to have their furry family member with them. I have heard from them also that they see a difference in their pet being here in comparison to their way they were at home with the abuser. Many have attributed it to the pet being under less stress."

OHIO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NETWORK DESCRIBES LINK NEEDS AND RESPONSES

The Ohio Domestic Violence Network's Steering Committee on Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse surveyed programs to assess the needs and resources available to survivors concerned about the well-being of their pets. The results established a strong connection between the safety of abuse victims and their animals but showed only sporadic responses to these needs across Ohio. Among the findings:

- Over 79% of interviewees felt support for victims' pets is needed.
- Over 40% saw pet safety as a barrier for human survivors.
- Nearly half the respondents were unable to provide any pet support.
- There are a variety of on- and off-site animal sheltering plans in place.
- One-half of respondents screen for incidents of pet abuse with their clients.
- 88% of organizations wanted to learn more about model programs.

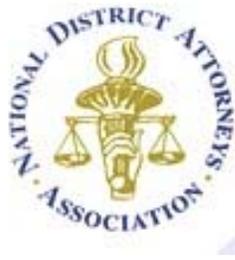
An [executive summary](#) of the report describes the needs, findings, challenges and opportunities.

CHRIS RISLEY-CURTISS NAMED TO G-10



[Christina Risley-Curtiss](#), M.S.S.W., Ph.D., Associate Professor and Animal-Human Interactions Coordinator at the School of Social Work at Arizona State University, has joined the National Link Coalition's Steering Committee (the "G-10"). Chris has been active in Phoenix's [Humane Link](#) coalition and is a frequent presenter and author on human-animal bond, child welfare, domestic violence and Link topics. She is a Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics and an Affiliate Professor in the Women and Gender Studies Program.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROSECUTION OF ANIMAL ABUSE LAUNCHED



Animal cruelty and neglect cases can be some of the most complex cases that investigators and prosecutors handle for a variety of reasons: victims cannot give a statement or testify; proving intent is challenging; forensic evidence is often required; housing large-scale seizures of animals from fighting, puppy mill or hoarding situations result in huge financial burdens; and community response to animal abuse cases is often strong, resulting in an outpouring of support (or criticism) to prosecutors who are confined by the laws protecting animals.

In response, [The National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse \(NCPAA\)](#) will train prosecutors and allied professionals to handle animal cruelty and neglect cases effectively, including cases involving the co-occurrence of animal abuse and violence to people. NCPAA is a program of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), created in partnership with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

“NDAA desires to bring greater awareness to the often misunderstood nature of animal maltreatment and how it can interconnect with family violence and contribute to lethality issues for victims of interpersonal violence,” says Allie Phillips, J.D., Director. “With growing awareness by the public to recognize and report animal abuse, combined with increased attention by the media, prosecuting attorneys need the resources to properly address incidents of animal abuse in their community and properly hold offenders accountable.”

NCPAA’s resources include lists of state animal cruelty laws and provisions for psychiatric evaluations and counseling for cruelty offenders, webinars, technical assistance for prosecutors, publications, and the *Tales of Justice* newsletter.

THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

Animal Abuse and Gangs

While considerable literature has focused on the connections between youths who commit animal abuse and interpersonal violence, the research largely describes individual abuse rather than the group or social context. Jennifer Maher and Harriet Pierpoint have examined links between youth groups, gangs, their culture and their dogs, who often represent status symbols, a stylistic code of machismo, and a link to dogfighting. In a largely male culture lacking traditional methods, such as employment, of constructing and confirming masculine identities, animal abuse may be a mechanism to illustrate valued male traits of aggression and power. The Maher-Pierpoint study revealed that a majority of gang members and their friends were dog owners, with bull breeds and other “tough” dogs being the most popular. More than 20 types of animal abuse were reported. The most common extrinsic roles for the dogs were as weapons, status symbols and for fighting, while intrinsically dogs served as loyal companions for socializing.

Maher, J., & Pierpoint, H. (2011). Friends, status symbols and weapons: The use of dogs by youth groups and youth gangs. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 55(5), 405-420.

Animal Abuse and Youth Delinquency

The [Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime](#) is a longitudinal study following some 4,300 Scottish youth since 1998 to address fundamental questions about the causes of criminal and risky

behaviors in young people. In its second year, researchers began to include cruelty to animals among the delinquent behaviors identified. Several research studies have reported such findings as:

- 13% of respondents had harmed or injured an animal or bird on purpose.
- Frequency of animal abuse peaked between ages 14-15, then gradually declined to age 17.
- Cruelty to animals is much more common among boys than girls.
- Youth involved in animal abuse shared many characteristics with those involved in other types of violence.
- “Animal abusers are a highly problematic, risk prone and vulnerable group. Compared to other violent offenders, they are more impulsive, less committed to school, more likely to be involved in a gang, more likely to drink and take drugs, highly victimized, and more likely to self-harm.”
- Low-level animal abuse is a transient stage and part of a more general pattern of low-level interpersonal violence. The later animal abuse starts, the less it appears to be linked to interpersonal violence in adolescence.
- Early warning signs could form useful markers, but early prediction of animal abuser types is problematic.
- School-based prevention strategies may be beneficial, but animal abuse should be “mainstreamed” alongside other forms of violence.
- Generic interventions for youth identified as vulnerable, problematic and risk-prone is recommended over trying to predict future offenders based on early involvement in interpersonal violence.

McVie, S. (2007) *Animal abuse amongst young people aged 13 to 17: Trends, trajectories and theoretical explanations. Policy Report for the RSPCA.* .Edinburgh, Scotland: University of Edinburgh Centre for Law and Society, Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime.

Smith, D., & McAra, L. (2004). *Gender and youth offending.* Edinburgh, Scotland: University of Edinburgh Centre for Law and Society, Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime.

Smith, D., McVie, S., Woodward, R., Shute, J., Flint, J., & McAra, L. (2001). *The Edinburgh study of youth transitions and crime: Key findings at ages 12 and 13.* Edinburgh, Scotland: University of Edinburgh Centre for Law and Society, Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime.

ANIMAL ABUSE INCLUDED IN DEFINITIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

At least six states are now believed to include acts of animal abuse within their statutory definitions of what constitutes domestic violence. Legislatures in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Nebraska, Nevada, and Tennessee have enacted these laws in recognition of how batterers harm or threaten animals to hold their human victims hostage and fearful of leaving.

The Nebraska statute, for example, includes among the definitions of domestic intimate partner abuse a pattern or history of abuse that contribute to the coercion or intimidation of an intimate partner. These include child abuse or neglect or threats of such acts, and cruel mistreatment or cruel neglect of an animal or threats of such acts. The definition of emotional abuse includes a pattern of acts, threats of acts, or coercive tactics, including, but not limited to, threatening or intimidating to gain compliance, destruction of the victim’s personal property or threats to do so, and violence to an animal or object in the presence of the victim as a way to instill fear.

Colorado similarly includes acts of animal abuse within its definition of elder abuse.

LINK JUSTIFIES PENNSYLVANIA “ANIMAL ABUSE AWARENESS WEEK”

The Pennsylvania General Assembly unanimously (202-0) adopted House Resolution 179, designating April 17-23 as Animal Abuse Awareness Week in the Commonwealth. The resolution was predicated upon the recognition that “where there is animal cruelty there is likely to be some other form of violence such as spousal abuse, child abuse or elder abuse, and people who abuse animals are far more likely to abuse other people.” The resolution’s 52 sponsors noted that “greater awareness of animal abuse and its causal relationship to abuse of humans helps to make neighborhoods safer places for animals and people alike.”

LINK, NATIONAL COALITION FEATURED IN THE NEWS



Toledo investigator Gene Boros removes four abandoned pets
(Toledo Blade Photo by Amy Voigt)

The Toledo Humane Society has one of the oldest cross-reporting/cross-training programs in the U.S., working with child welfare and domestic violence agencies on cruelty cases affecting multiple family members. There are lots of opportunities for interfacing: the cruelty hotline receives 20 calls a day. Toledo *Blade* reporter Claudia Boyd-Barrett followed humane investigator Gene Boros for a day and described not only the scope of animal abuse but also how it links to domestic violence and child abuse. [Read her story here...](#)

Meanwhile, National Link Coalition Steering Committee members Phil Arkow and Maya Gupta were interviewed in an [article about the impact of The Link in domestic violence cases](#) that appeared on CNN.com on July 18.

VETERINARIANS MULL CHANGES IN REPORTING CRUELTY

The American Veterinary Medical Association is considering [changes to its Model Veterinary Practice Act](#), last amended in 2007. One proposal would exempt veterinary technicians from civil and criminal liability for making a report to appropriate authorities in good faith of suspected animal cruelty; the current Act already offers this immunity for veterinarians. The Act also states that the confidentiality of client/patient records is waived and that records shall be provided to governmental animal welfare authorities who have a legal or regulatory interest in them for the protection of animal or public health. AVMA is reviewing the draft and a final version is expected to be voted upon in November.

OREGON ENACTS ANIMAL SEX ASSAULT LAW

 **Oregon House Bill 3239** was signed into law by the Governor on June 28. The new law requires persons convicted of sexual assault of an animal to register as a sex offender. The bill earlier passed the House by a vote of 59-1 and cleared the Senate by a vote of 29-1.

THE LINK IN THE LEGISLATURES:

Link Bills We're Watching

PET PROTECTION ORDERS:



MASSACHUSETTS - S682, which would include pets in protection orders, has been referred to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary. State Rep. Cory Atkins has also introduced **Budget Amendment 753** into debate. The measures would enable judges to order an alleged abuser to “refrain from abusing, threatening, taking, interfering with, transferring, encumbering, concealing, harming, or otherwise disposing of the animal.”



NEW JERSEY – A1633, which would allow judges to include pets in domestic violence protection orders, passed the Assembly Judiciary Committee on May 5 by a 7-0 vote.



OHIO - H25, which would include animals in domestic violence and anti-stalking protection orders, passed the House on June 21. The bill would also increase penalties for animal cruelty, and include provisions for psychological assessment and counseling for animal abusers.

OFFENDER REGISTRIES: *Six bills have been introduced that would include individuals convicted of animal cruelty in registries or databases:*



TEXAS – S779 would create a central, public database of certain persons who have been convicted of or received a grant of deferred adjudication for certain offenses involving animal cruelty. The database would be established and maintained only if funding is available for it. The bill passed the Senate but was left pending in the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee when the legislative session ended.



PENNSYLVANIA - Two bills address animal abuse offender registries. **H354** would require felony offenders to register with the county sheriff within 10 days of residence and annually thereafter for 15 years. Failure to register would be a Class 3 felony. The sheriff would be responsible for notifying every residence, business, school and animal shelter within a half-mile radius. The State Police would maintain a central registry. **S921** is more comprehensive and also addresses illegal use of registry database information; registration would be required for misdemeanor as well as felony offenders, and be required for 10 years. Registrants would pay a \$50 fee.



NEW YORK - A1766 would create a database of all animal cruelty and fighting crimes to be maintained in “a manner that facilitates analysis.” It would record names of all offenders convicted of cruelty or fighting, who pled guilty to another charge in satisfaction of the animal charge, or whose cruelty or fighting charges were not dismissed on the merits. The database would be available to law enforcement, prosecution, and humane officials. Two other bills – **A299** and **S2015** – would create an animal abuser registry of adults convicted of felony abuse in New York or other states. Abusers would register with county sheriffs within 10 days of residence and annually for 15 years thereafter. Failure to comply would be a Class E felony. Sheriffs would be responsible for notifying every residence, business, school and animal shelter within a half-mile radius. The state Division of Criminal Justice Services would maintain the central registry.

LINK TRAINING:

Coming Soon to a Venue Near You...

Philadelphia, PA – Aug. 4: Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on The Link for the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth & Family Services. For information contact the [Council](#).

Shawnee, KS – Aug. 18-19: Ken Shapiro will conduct two [training programs](#) for clinicians working with adults and children on the AniCare approach to interrupting the cycle between animal abuse and human violence.

Gurabo, Puerto Rico – Aug. 25-26: Maya Gupta and Nancy Bell will co-lead two training workshops on AniCare and AniCare Child for the Health and Wellness Initiative for Women Attending Universidad del Turabo. For details contact [Ursula Aragunde Kohl](#).

Las Cruces, NM – Sept. 9-11: Ken Shapiro, Tamara Ward, and others will present a three-day workshop on AniCare, AniCare Child and AniCare Training for Trainers. Through a grant from the NM Department of Public Safety, these workshops are free to psychologists, therapists, and social workers. For details visit [NM AniCare](#).

Christchurch, New Zealand – end of September: Dr. Nik Taylor will give a lecture on Animal Abuse and Social Violence at the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies at the University of Canterbury. For details contact [Annie Potts](#).

Saskatoon, SK, Canada – Sept. 23: Phil Arkow will conduct a workshop on The Link for the Saskatchewan SPCA's annual Animal Welfare Conference. For details contact [Sandra Anderson](#).

Medina & Summit Counties, OH – Sept. 30: Phil Arkow will present two trainings for the [Battered Women's Shelter of Summit and Medina Counties](#).

Chesapeake, VA – Oct. 5: Allie Phillips will present on the Link at The Family Violence Awareness Conference. For more information, contact Carter McKay at (757)668-6122.

South Bend, IN – Oct. 12: Phil Arkow will conduct a community Link training under the auspices of the [St. Joseph County Prosecuting Attorney's Office](#).

Baltimore, MD – Oct. 28-29: The Animals and Society Institute will conduct two [training programs](#) for clinicians working with adults and children on the AniCare approach to interrupting the cycle between animal abuse and human violence.

Philadelphia, PA – Nov. 8: Phil Arkow will conduct a training program on The Link for the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth & Family Services. For information contact the [Council](#).

Washington, DC – Nov. 16-19: Nuria Querol i Vinas will present a paper, "Implementation of the Multidisciplinary Program for Woman Victims of Domestic Violence and Their Companion Animals at the [American Society of Criminology](#) annual conference.

Calgary, AB, Canada – May 6-9, 2012: Phil Arkow will conduct a workshop on Kids, Critters and Sexual Abuse at the [Canadian Society for the Investigation of Child Abuse](#) biennial conference.

Link to the Link's LinkedIn Link!



The National Link Coalition has established a LinkedIn social network site. Join us and connect with your colleagues. Just control-click on the LinkedIn logo and it will take you to the site.

About the National Link Coalition

The [National Link Coalition](#) is an informal network of individuals and organizations addressing the intersections between animal abuse and other forms of violence through research, legislation, program implementation, and public awareness. Organized in 2008 at a historic summit in Portland, ME, the National Link Coalition's vision is:

The Link between violence against humans and violence against animals is widely known and understood. We believe that through the recognition and integration of this understanding into policies and practices nationwide, humans and animals will be measurably safer.

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee:

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