



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



www.nationallinkcoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... SOCIAL WORK

Online Toolkit Provides Social Workers with Resources to Help Pet Owners in Crisis

Social workers receive extensive training to help people work through a variety of crisis situations. But when clients' companion animals are involved, many social workers feel helpless, having neither the tools nor the training to address what can be highly complex issues that affect their clients deeply.

To resolve these situations, the Mayor's Alliance for New York City's Animals has published a comprehensive guide. The [Helping People and Pets in Crisis Toolkit](#) is a first-of-its-kind online resource for these front-line professionals.

Divided into six sections covering domestic violence, illness and hospitalization, homelessness, animal hoarding, pet relinquishment, and animal-assisted therapy, the Toolkit offers a comprehensive set of resources, assessment tools and promising interventions to address such situations as:

- A mentally challenged woman is evicted from her apartment but refuses to enter a shelter because it won't allow her three cats.
- An elderly man refuses urgent medical care because he has no one to look after his dog.
- A domestic violence victim returns to her abuser because he threatens to kill the family pet if she does not.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & PETS

AN ESTIMATED **1 MILLION** ANIMALS ARE ABUSED OR KILLED EACH YEAR IN CONNECTION WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

71% OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS REPORT THAT THEIR ABUSER ALSO TARGETED THEIR PET.



The Toolkit is an outgrowth of the Alliance's *Helping Pets and People in Crisis* program, spearheaded by Jenny Coffey, LMSW. Created in 2008, the program has helped in more than 1,000 individual cases in which New Yorkers faced life-challenging situations involving pets.

"Every year, the number of calls we get about pet owners in crisis has grown exponentially, and we don't foresee any let-up," said Jane Hoffman, President of the Alliance, a coalition of more than 150

non-profit animal shelters and rescue groups. “With the launch of the Toolkit, we’re able to share what we’ve learned, through our collaboration with dozens of dedicated animal and human services organizations, about how to help pet owners deal with difficult and often unforeseen circumstances.”

Each section identifies a problem, explains how to recognize it and suggests ways to address it:

- [Domestic Violence and Pets](#) – Describes the role pets play in such situations and how to extricate domestic violence victims and their pets from them. **Special Features:** How to help clients develop a pet-safety plan, request an order of protection, or petition to have a pet registered as a therapy animal.
- [Homelessness and Pets](#) – Explains how to assist homeless people with pets who are precluded from entering homeless shelters. **Special Features:** Links to helpful organizations, information on Americans with Disabilities Act regulations and on housing programs that allow pets.
- [Hospitalization, Illness and Pets](#) – Explains how to arrange temporary or permanent care of pets for infirm or elderly patients without family or friends. **Special Features:** Information about temporary care, re-homing and requesting help from Animal Care & Control.
- [Animal Hoarding](#) – Explains how to recognize and address animal hoarding. **Special Features:** Animal Hoarding Assessment tool.
- [Pet Relinquishment](#) – Explains how to help clients deal with life events that may require giving up a pet. **Special Features:** Tips on re-homing animals.
- [Animal-Assisted Therapy](#) – Explains how to identify situations in which pets might help clients to improve their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. **Special Features:** An explanation of the differences among Service, Assistance and Therapy Animals; links to animal-therapy organizations.
- [Resources](#) – Provides a recap of resources. **Special Features:** Hyperlinks and complete contact information.
- [Tips & Tools](#) – Provides suggestions for social workers preparing to meet with individuals and families with pets, including tips on how pets can be used to engage otherwise reluctant clients, and what can be learned about an owner’s situation based on the condition of her pets. **Special Features:** Colorful, easy-to-read charts; links to local pet services for every possible need.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Pet-Friendly Shelter Makes the News



The HOPE Center is pet-friendly not only to survivors’ animals, but also to staff’s pets.

The Alle-Kiski Area HOPE Center, in the Pittsburgh suburb of Tarentum, Penna., has been pet-friendly since the Fall of 2012. Since then 20 pets – mostly dogs – have accompanied their people fleeing intimate partner violence. The facility has what executive director Michelle Bond calls a “very small and humble” kennel with four cages for dogs and other cages for cats that cost only \$3,000 to build. In an extensive feature article in the [Frederick, Md. News-Post](#), Bond emphasized that “Many other shelters could do this with little cost and little effort.”

The kennels were constructed with guidance from Allie Phillips’ [SAF-T \(Sheltering Animals and Families Together\)](#) program and a grant from [RedRover](#).

Michigan Considers Pet Protection Order Legislation



The Michigan legislature has joined the group of states whose governing bodies are considering bills that would amend existing protection-from-abuse procedures in domestic violence and stalking cases to allow courts to include survivors' animals as well. Michigan **HB 4478**, part of a package of six bills relating to domestic violence protective orders, civil procedure and crimes against women and children, was aired on May 19 in the House Committee on Criminal Justice.

The measure would allow courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner's animals. It would apply to current or former spouses, individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or where has been a dating relationship, or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household.

Those who testified in support of the bill included Allie Phillips (above), with the National Link Coalition's steering committee and the National District Attorneys Association's National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse; and Bee Friedlander of the Animals and Society Institute.



Family Reunited as Pet-Friendly Shelter Opens

The emotional impact of separating a family from their animal companions was depicted vividly in a May 22 article in the [Huffington Post](#) that described what happened when Robert Pressler, 12, and his mother, Jennifer, were reunited after the Sojourner Center domestic violence shelter in Phoenix, Ariz., opened a facility for residents' pets.

When Robert and Jennifer arrived at the Center two months earlier, they did not want to leave their orange cat, named "Clark Kent," behind, and even considered leaving the shelter which did not accept pets at the time. But with funding assistance from PetSmart and [RedRover](#), the Sojourner Center found temporary housing at a local animal shelter.

Robert, Jennifer and Clark Kent were all smiles!

RedRover has been providing grant funding to the Center since 2008 to pay for such temporary care, and for the past 18 months the Center had been building petkeeping facilities on-site. Traumatized by even the temporary relocation of his cat, Robert pitched in on a daily basis and helped the contractors working on the new pet accommodations. When the pet facilities opened on May 19, Clark Kent moved right in – along with another cat and two dogs.

"It feels good to know that I'm here right here next to my cat, and he's here whenever I need someone to comfort me," Robert told local TV station Fox 10. The family was so pleased with the outcome that they agreed to go public with their story, RedRover's Esperanza Zúñiga tells *The LINK-Letter*.

For now, the Sojourner Center has space for eight cats, eight dogs, plus a few birds and fish. If the pilot phase of the program is successful, shelter officials hope to expand the facilities. Meanwhile, the response from residents – especially the children who make up half of the shelter's census – has been fantastic.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT

Courtroom Dog Consoles Pre-Teen Sexual Abuse Victim



A three-year-old Labrador-golden retriever mix named Avery sat calmly by the side of Chyna Glidden in an Akron, Ohio courtroom as the girl fought back tears while confronting the man who sexually assaulted her when she was 10 years old. “When you’re going into a courtroom, you’re like ready to throw up and when you have that dog, it’s kind of just, it’s an anxiety reliever,” she told [WEWS-TV](#).

Prior to the trial, Avery gave comfort to Glidden and two other victims, all of whom were children when the sex crimes occurred between 2001 and 2013. The offender, James Pistawka, was sentenced to 15 years in prison on 13 counts. “I’ve waited a long time for this moment, but for some reason I am lost for words,” Glidden, now 23 and who wanted her name to be made public, told Pistawka inside the Summit County courtroom.

Accused of Mutilating Cats, Teen Held Pending Dangerousness Hearing

A 17-year-old youth in the Dorchester section of Boston was arraigned on May 13 on animal cruelty and other charges and held without bail pending a hearing to determine his risk to the community after neighbors described a macabre scene. The young man was reportedly swaying to the beat of music in the backyard of an abandoned home, his arm rising and falling rhythmically as he allegedly chopped a cat to pieces. Witnesses said he wore a single black glove and cleaned the blade of his machete between each swipe.

The teen told police he killed stray cats because “he was bored,” the [Boston Globe](#) reported. The incident frightened neighbors who worried what — or who — could be the target of the young man’s alleged violence in the future. “It was really scary knowing someone does that to animals,” said one 12-year-old witness. “What if he did it to people?”



Officers from the Boston Police, Animal Rescue League, Animal Control, and MSPCA responded to the scene. Officers observed dismembered animal parts in the yard, as well as a machete, hand saw, folding knife, a right-hand rubber glove, bottle of Clorox bleach, and a black trash bag marked with the defendant’s first name, said [Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley](#).

“It’s a fairly disturbing case,” said police spokeswoman Officer Rachel McGuire. “We don’t like to see this type of behavior, not only because it is cruelty to animals, who are defenseless beings, but it’s disturbing to see this behavior from a juvenile, someone so young.”

The teen was charged as a juvenile with delinquency by reason of trespassing; possession of a dangerous weapon, the machete; and two counts of mutilation and cruelty killing of animals.

“It seems like it’s some kind of cry for help,” McGuire said. “The actual act itself is incredibly disturbing, but what’s more disturbing is the fact that this is a kid committing this crime. How can we help this child?”

BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK

Link and Bullying Awareness Foster Humane Education Programs

Humane education programs by animal care & control agencies traditionally focus on such topics as responsible pet care, safety around animals and careers with animals. With schools under increasing pressure to meet state core learning standards, humane educators have become more adaptive in tailoring programs to such goals as character-building. One way to do this is by presenting programs on The Link and animal abuse’s parallels with bullying behaviors.



Link Awareness Leads to Mandatory Humane Education in Argentina

As an example of how The Link may be a more effective and pragmatic strategy to convince educators to introduce humane education into their curricula, we would like to share with you an approach that has recently worked in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Dr. Núria Querol, founder of the Spanish Link group GEVHA, tells *The LINK-Letter* that demonstrating how animal abuse adversely impacts people, and children in particular, became the keystone of a legislative initiative in Argentina. Congresswoman Valeria Amendolara and the Organization Educación contra el Maltrato Animal invited Querol and Dr. Susana Dascalaky to provide expert testimony in Animal Law and The Link to support a bill that will make it mandatory for Buenos Aires schools to provide humane education as a means to enhance empathy and reduce violence.

As the Fredericton, New Brunswick SPCA says in its preface to its classroom offerings, “As experts have recognized the link between child abuse, animal abuse and violence against people, the value of humane education in schools is greater than ever. Our education programs include presentations and shelter tours that inform while inspiring respect, empathy, and compassion for all living beings.”

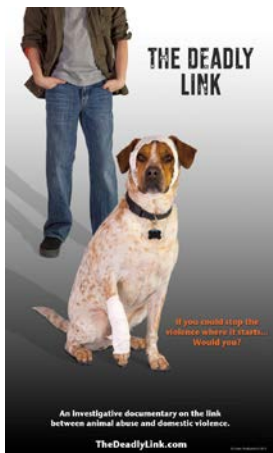
The National Link Coalition has identified a growing number of local animal protection agencies that have added Link and anti-bullying programming to their school-based presentations. The following programs are those we have been able to identify to date: if you know of any others that should be added, please [let us know!](#)

BULLYING AND ANIMAL ABUSE HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Organization	City	State	Program	Grades
San Diego Humane Society & SPCA	San Diego	California	Bullying	K-5
Animal Allies	Duluth	Minnesota	“Turn Off the Bully Channel! (Tune Into Respect)”	3
Wayside Waifs	Kansas City	Missouri	“No More Bullying”	3-5
Rhode Island SPCA	Riverside	Rhode Island	“Compassion and Empathy: Working Paw in Hand”	8-12
Houston SPCA	Houston	Texas	“Animals Get Bullied, Too: There’s No Excuse for Abuse”	
Calgary Humane Society	Calgary	Alberta, Canada	“Bullying – Pets and Peers”	4-6; 7-9
British Columbia SPCA	Vancouver	B.C., Canada	“Animal Welfare: A Key Component of Social Justice”	6

LINK HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Organization	City	State	Program	Grades
Humane Society of Southern Arizona	Tucson	Arizona	"Juvenile Animal Cruelty" "Animal Cruelty Academy" "Animal Cruelty Awareness"	3-8 9-12 Adults
spcaLA	Los Angeles	California	"Anti-Animal Cruelty"	6 & up
Denver Dumb Friends League	Denver	Colorado	"Animal Abuse and the Violence Connection"	9-12; Adults
Hawaiian Humane Society	Honolulu	Hawaii	"The Link and Animal Cruelty"	
Anti-Cruelty Society	Chicago	Illinois	"The Link"	High School; Adults
Naperville Area Humane Society	Naperville	Illinois	"Patterns of Abuse: Exploding the Cycle"	9-12
Leavenworth County Humane Society	Leavenworth	Kansas	"The Link between Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence"	
Animal Welfare Society	Kennebunk	Maine	"The Link between Human and Animal Violence"	
Snyder Foundation for Animals	Baltimore	Maryland	"Breaking the Cycles of Violence"	Staff development & in-service training for professionals
Animal Humane Society	Golden Valley	Minnesota	"The Circle of Compassion"	8-12
Animal Rescue League of Berks County	Reading	Pennsylvania	"Animal Abuse/Cruelty"	Middle/High School; Adults
Rhode Island SPCA	Riverside	Rhode Island	"Animal Cruelty Awareness" "Issues in Animal Cruelty: The Link Between Animal Abuse and Human Violence"	8-12 8-12
Wisconsin Humane Society	Milwaukee	Wisconsin	"Dog Fighting Awareness Workshop"	7-12
Calgary Humane Society	Calgary	Alberta, Canada	"The Link"	10-12
Red Deer Humane Society	Red Deer	Alberta, Canada	"The Link" Program	Age 16+
Ottawa Humane Society	Ottawa	Ontario, Canada	"Understanding Animal Cruelty & the Link to Interpersonal Violence"	High School

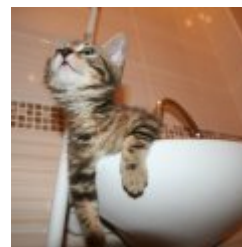


Work Progressing on Link Documentary

The long-awaited film documentary, [The Deadly Link](#), is getting closer to completion. Executive Producers Nina Knapp and Sheryl Brown tell *The LINK-Letter* that they are continuing to seek grants, corporate sponsorships and individual support to complete the project. The film already includes extensive interviews with Link experts who spoke at several New Mexico Conferences on The Link, plus a visit to the pet-friendly Rose Brooks domestic violence shelter in Kansas City. Principal photography has been completed and the next step is to write the script. A new poster (left) may become the cover for the DVD when it is finally released.

Getting the Link Message Out in Turkey

The National Link Coalition has expanded its global outreach through the first publication of materials in Turkey, thanks to the blogging enthusiasm of Burcu Emel. This blog, called “Bipolar Pisi” (Bipolar Kitty) addresses a range of animal welfare issues. Emel asked National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow to participate in an extended interview about his personal involvement in The Link and the various ways in which animal abuse manifests itself within other forms of family violence.



The “Bipolar Kitty”



The illustrated blog followed an earlier blog interview with Australian sociologist Nik Taylor about animal abuse and human-animal interactions. Both blogs are available in both [English](#) and [Turkish](#) versions, and the Turkish versions are also posted on the National Link Coalition website with our growing list of [multi-lingual Link resource materials](#) now available in Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish,

Dutch, French, and Bulgarian.

ANIMAL ABUSE and... HUMAN HEALTH

Are Hospitals Screening for Animal Abuse?

Hospital and other healthcare personnel are routinely expected to screen for, and in many cases report, suspected child maltreatment, domestic violence and elder abuse. But how many human healthcare workers treating patients for dog bites inquire as to whether these other forms of family violence are co-occurring? And are hospital personnel treating domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse cases inquiring as to whether any animal abuse may also be involved?



The National Link Coalition would like to know of any healthcare agencies that routinely include questions such as these in their intake or assessment protocols. The data are there to demonstrate such a need:

- As far back as 1983, researchers in New Jersey found that households marked by child abuse experienced 11 times more dog bites than the non-abusing population.
- A national study in 2013 reported that a history of animal abuse was present in 21.1% of fatal dog attacks over a 10-year period.
- A North Carolina study in 2014 reported that by the age of 10 a child has a 1-in-50 risk of a dog bite injury requiring a visit to an ER.
- Researchers in Ohio found that owners of “high-risk” dogs with vicious tendencies are 3 times more likely than the average pet owner to have been convicted for domestic violence and 9.1 times more likely to have been convicted for child abuse.

“Inquiring minds want to know”... and share this news with others! If you are aware of any such protocols, please let the [National Link Coalition](#) know.

THE LINK AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Educating New York Law Enforcement about The Link

The [New York State Humane Association](#) offers workshops to educate police and prosecutors in the state about investigating and prosecuting animal cruelty. Dr. Harry Hovel tells *The LINK-Letter* that his portion of the trainings – which include speakers discussing police investigation practices, veterinary issues and the rules of evidence – invariably begin with a presentation on the connection between violent crimes and animal cruelty. “We’ve been giving these workshops around NY State for about 15 years,” says Hovel, “and it’s had a significant impact.”



Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring meets “Saffron,” a therapy dog who visits a child abuse center with handler Dorothy Winn.

Virginia Attorney General Holds Statewide Domestic Violence/Animal Abuse Training

Virginia Attorney General Mark R. Herring – who made groundbreaking news by designating the nation’s first statewide Animal Law Unit ([See LINK-Letter February 2015](#)) – teamed up with the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance for a first-of-its-kind training conference on the Link between animal abuse and domestic violence.

The May 14 event in Richmond, called, “Making the Connection: Pet Abuse and Domestic Violence,” offered animal control specialists, law enforcement and advocates training and best practices on how to detect both domestic violence and pet abuse when responding to calls.

“We know that abuse of pets and animals can be a signifier of abuse against spouses, parents, siblings, and other family members,” said Herring. “If we can help more Virginia law enforcement and animal control specialists to recognize the connection between animal abuse and acts of domestic violence, they can intervene in a dangerous situation before it escalates. There is a strong network of resources and caring individuals, and connecting with that network can make all the difference.”

NEWS from LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

Oklahoma Link Coalition Welcomed at Conferences on Aging

The Oklahoma LINK Coalition got a rousing reception at the 40th Annual [Oklahoma Conference on Aging](#) in May. Coordinator Paul Needham tells *The LINK-Letter* that the coalition’s exhibit booth passed out over 700 flyers to participants. A workshop on “Link 101” presented by Needham, Julie Bank and Tina Harman attracted a nearly SRO crowd of adult protective services line staff, nurses, facility staff from the aging network, and ombudsmen. “This was my first experience training with animal advocates by my side training on the importance of working the LINK together for the benefit of our human clients in the aging network,” says Needham. “AWESOME! Julie and Tina absolutely nailed it!!!”

Later that month, the coalition had a booth at the [Engage OK Conference](#), a community engagement-centered conference with sessions on elder issues, domestic violence and human trafficking. The conference is a program of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Office of Community and Faith Engagement which oversees domestic violence, faith engagement and volunteerism programs.



Ottawa Coalition Holds Best Practices Seminar

The [SafePetOttawa](#) Link coalition in Canada's national capital held its semi-annual Best Practices Seminar on May 31. The sessions are orientation opportunities for new members and a chance for volunteers, veterinary clinics and Violence Against Women shelter workers to network, upgrade their skills and solve problems that arise. The day-long session featured local speakers discussing:

- the domestic abuse reporting process;
- how to introduce an abused dog into a home pack;
- how to manifest change;
- the oxytocin-based human-animal bond
- fostering cats; and
- compassion fatigue.

Holding an all-day session on a Sunday is testimony to the dedication of the coalition's participants, organizer [Ayala Sher](#) tells *The LINK-Letter*.

"We are happy to share our model or experiences with any other organization interested in a collaborative model for VAW shelter fostering," Sher adds. "A SafePetOttawa manual is being developed that will describe and outline procedures for vets, fosters and VAW shelter workers."

Sher is interested in connecting with Canadians in Ontario and other provinces who may be working on Link-related legislation.

Colorado Link Group Promotes Pet Safety Program on Public Radio



The [Mesa County Domestic Violence Task Force](#) in Grand Junction, Colo., has created a LINK sub-committee which is partnering with a local domestic violence shelter and animal control agency to offer safehousing for pets affected by family violence. Co-chair Teri Shecter, a victim services officer with the Probation Department, tells *The LINK-Letter* that the pet care program was initiated earlier this year.

Public radio station KAFM has generously offered the task force two months of 30-second public service announcements. The National Link Coalition is working with the group to help them craft their message. National Link Coalition Steering Committee member Jane Hunt spoke to the group in 2013 and provided training for local professionals working in the field of domestic and family violence.

Permission to Reprint

The news items and training opportunities contained in *The LINK-Letter* are intended to disseminate as widely and as freely as possible information about the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Permission is hereby granted to re-post these articles in other newsletters, websites, magazines, and electronic publications provided that appropriate credit is given to the National Link Coalition and with links to www.nationallinkcoalition.org.

Spanish Link Coalition Reaches Professional Audiences;



Our first Link Coalition in Spain – [GEVHA](#), Grupo para el Estudio de la Violencia Hacia Humanos y Animales – has had an extremely active Spring giving presentations to high-level professional organizations.



GEVHA organizer Dr. Núria Querol tells *The LINK-Letter* that she gave a workshop at the Spanish Society of Criminology about animal abuse and interpersonal violence, with a criminological perspective and special emphasis on risk assessment. She was invited by the prestigious Fundacio Vicki Bernadet to speak about how the child-animal bond can help children who have been sexually abused. On April 30, she spoke to top leaders of the military and national police at the Ministry of Defense on animal abuse and intimate partner violence, and was recognized for her efforts to fight all forms of violence. On May 5, she spoke at the 1st Conference on Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence in La Rioja, where she moderated a roundtable with government officials, social workers, attorneys, judges, police inspectors and forensic psychologists.



Meanwhile, thanks to the cooperative efforts of GEVHA, the Association of Police Officers for Animal Defense (APDA) and Al Perro Verde, law enforcement officers from several police departments are being trained on The Link and how to avoid the use of lethal force in dog encounters. APDA police officer Sònia Pujol later spoke about animal abuse and The Link at an animal rights conference in Zaragoza.



Querol is also teaching courses in The Link and animal crime scene investigation in six courses in criminal investigation, criminal profiling and investigative psychology at the University of Barcelona.

2nd Link Coalition Launched in Spain

Meanwhile, a second Spanish multidisciplinary coalition to investigate and respond to the Links between animal abuse and interpersonal violence has been formed. The Sociedad Española Contra Violencia (SECVI, or the Spanish Society Against Violence) is a non-governmental, nonprofit organization based in Albacete in the autonomous region of Castilla La Mancha. The organization, founded by President Marillanos Reolid Rodenas, includes an impressive list of 41 members of a Scientific Committee representing a broad range of academic, medical, criminological, veterinary, juvenile justice, and artistic backgrounds.



The society works through research, prevention and intervention to fight crime and violence against humans and animals and to protect victims in a multidisciplinary way through awareness of The Link. It is affiliated with numerous Spanish, Portuguese, European, American, and international criminology, victimology and pedagogy organizations.

The [SECVI website](#), which has a feature that translates each page into English, features a collection of research and resources on elder abuse, forensic science, criminology, social and humanitarian education, child abuse, dating violence, and The Link. The society will be publishing *Criminology and Justice*, a scholarly journal with a legal and scientific perspective, and has a blog.

The first Link coalition in Spain, [Grupo para el Estudio de la Violencia hacia Humanos y Animales \(GEVHA\)](#) was founded several years ago in the Barcelona region by Dr. Núria Querol i Viñas.

We welcome SECVI to the growing list of 11 foreign Link coalitions now working in Brazil, Canada, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

THE LINK... in the LITERATURE

(If you're having trouble finding any of these articles, please let us know. We may be able to help you track them down.)

Animal Hoarding: An Update

In this new article that updates the authors' classic and highly popular article from 2000, Randy Frost, Gary Patronek, Arnold Arluke and Gail Steketee revisit the world of animal hoarding to explore what has been learned in the past 15 years. Since then, hoarding disorder (but not animal hoarding) has become recognized as an official diagnosis in the DSM. The authors attempt to estimate the prevalence of animal hoarding, and describe its adverse effects on the animals, people and home environment. Three stereotypical types of animal hoarders are depicted. Case studies from the U.S., Canada, Australia, Spain, and Serbia are reviewed. The authors examine the demographics of hoarders, types of animals likely to be hoarded, and underlying psychopathologies with differences between animal and object hoarding noted. Possible neurobiological bases for animal hoarding are considered. Challenging legal issues, clinical evaluation and treatment protocols are also reviewed. The extensive list of references includes 37 articles published since the original report, testimony to the increased multidisciplinary interest in this challenging aspect of dysfunctional human-animal interactions.

-- Frost, R.O., Patronek, G., Arluke, A., & Steketee, G. (2015, April 30). *The hoarding of animals: An update*. [Psychiatric Times](#).

Developing a Proclivity Scale for Animal Abusers

There is a clear discrepancy in the reporting of animal cruelty complaints, prosecutions, and convictions suggesting that any prevalence figures of abuse are significantly under-represented. In the absence of a validated tool that assesses the proclivity or propensity of individuals to engage in animal abuse, this paper presents an Animal Abuse Proclivity Scale (AAPS) and some preliminary findings. These findings support that the AAPS, similar to other offending proclivity measures, is a tool that can be used to examine the factors most related to animal abuse propensity across genders and national patterns.

-- Alleyne, E., Tilston, L., Parfitt, C., & Butcher, R. (2015). *Adult-perpetrated animal abuse: Development of a proclivity scale*. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 21(6), 570-588.

Link Literature Reviewed for Hispanic Criminologists

What may be one of the first Link articles to appear in a Spanish-language criminology journal introduces The Link to professional audiences in Spain and Latin America. The article is a brief review of classic studies on animal abuse and interpersonal violence, as well as a taste of the latest institutional initiatives aimed at further protection for human and non-human victims of violence. The article emphasizes that regardless of its connection with crimes against people, animal abuse is outlawed at both criminal and administrative levels under Spanish law.

-- Querol, N. (2014). *Maltrato a animales y violencia interpersonal: Avances sociales, policiales y criminológicos. Criminología y Justicia, 3(7), 7-10.*

Pets as a Protective Factor for Community Sense of Safety

The presence or absence of pets may be contributors to community violence and residents' sense of safety. Given growing evidence for social isolation as a risk factor for mental health, and, conversely, friendships and social support as protective factors for individual and community well-being, pets may be an important factor in developing healthy neighborhoods. This telephone survey of randomly selected residents in Perth, Australia and San Diego, Portland, Ore., and Nashville in the U.S., investigated the indirect role of pets as facilitators for three dimensions of social relatedness; getting to know people, friendship formation and social support networks. Around 40% of pet owners reported receiving one or more types of social support (emotional, informational, appraisal, or instrumental) via people they met through their pet. Pet owners were significantly more likely to get to know people in their neighborhood than non-pet owners. Dog owners in the three U.S. cities were significantly more likely than owners of other types of pets to regard people whom they met through their pet as a friend.

-- Wood, L., Martin, K., Christian, H., Nathan, A., & Lauritsen, C., et al. (2015) *The pet factor: Companion animals as a conduit for getting to know people, friendship formation and social support. PLoS ONE 10(4): e0122085. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0122085*

Is There a Connection between Childhood Animal Cruelty and Later Violent Behavior?

This article explores the early history of the linkage between childhood animal abuse and subsequent violent adult behavior in contemporary research. It reviews the supposition first posited in the 1960s based on a few case studies from anecdotal presentations and varied observational reports that the presence of childhood abuse towards animals was likely a significant precursor or major predictive dynamic for later adult interpersonal violent behavior of violent murderers in particular. It examines the questions involved with whether or not there is a valid connection between the issues of childhood animal abuse and violent interpersonal adult criminal conduct.

-- McClellan, J. (2007). *Animal cruelty and violent behavior: Is there a connection? Journal of Security Education, 2(4), 29-45.*

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Bills We're Watching:

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



H.R. 1258 – the Pets And Women’s Safety (PAWS) Act – was re-introduced with a new number and 48 co-sponsors (12 Republican, 36 Democrat). The bill would expand existing federal domestic violence protections to include pets of domestic violence victims. It would prohibit crossing state lines to harm a domestic partner’s pet, and establish a federal grant program to provide assistance and housing to victims’ pets in need of emergency shelter. Supporters are seeking a few more Republican co-sponsors to help keep sponsorship bipartisan.



Alaska HB 147 would allow victims to petition the court for a protective order that the abuser may not remove, harm or dispose of any animals in the household, and to grant her exclusive care and custody of them. Peace officers investigating domestic violence cases must inform victims of this provision. The bill would also declare pets to be marital property and give courts authority to decide individual or joint custody when people divorce, with consideration of what would be best for the animal. The bill was held over in the House Judiciary Committee when the Legislature adjourned and will be revisited in January 2016.



Michigan SB 28 would make it a crime to knowingly kill, torture, mutilate, maim, disfigure, or poison an animal, or threaten to do so, with the intent of causing mental suffering or distress to a person or to exert control over a person. The bill passed the Judiciary Committee and is in the Committee of the Whole.



Michigan HB 4478 would allow courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner’s animals. It would apply to current or former spouses, individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or where has been a dating relationship, or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household. The bill has been referred to the Committee on Criminal Justice.



New Jersey A 494 would provide specific statutory authority to allow courts to include animals in domestic violence restraining orders. The bill affects animals belonging to either party or a minor child in the household. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.



New Mexico S 178 was approved. The measure will appropriate \$50,000 per year over six years to provide temporary safe havens for the animals of domestic violence survivors.





Pennsylvania SB 594 would increase penalties for killing, torturing, maiming or poisoning an animal belonging to someone who is protected by a protection-from-abuse order to a \$2,000 - \$15,000 fine and/or two years’ imprisonment.




Wisconsin companion bills AB 141 and SB 97 would add household pets under the provisions of temporary restraining orders or longer-lasting injunctions that can be issued by courts to protect victims of abuse, harassment or threats. The bills would also allow the petitioner or a designee to retrieve household pets. The Senate bill has passed the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety and the full Senate and is scheduled for a hearing in the Assembly.


Therapeutic Interventions for Child Abuse Victims

 **Connecticut HB6725** would cause the Dept. of Children & Families to develop and implement training for employees and mental health care providers on animal-assisted therapy and develop a protocol to use such programs to aid children and youth living with trauma and loss. The bill has passed the House and Senate.


 **New Jersey A2155** would establish a three-year pilot program within DCF to provide animal-assisted therapy to victims of childhood violence, trauma, or children with behavioral healthcare needs. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.


Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child


 **New York A534** defines “aggravated” animal cruelty as causing extreme physical pain or done in an especially depraved or sadistic manner, a Class E felony. It would make the commission of aggravated cruelty in the presence of a child a Class D felony. The bill is in the Codes Committee.

 **New York A944** and **S1795** would criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.


“CASA for Animals”


 **Connecticut HB 6187** would establish a process for appointing an advocate to investigate and advocate for the welfare or custody of animals that are subjects of civil or criminal court proceedings. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary and had a public hearing on April 1.

 **New York AB 3443** would authorize a guardian ad litem to be appointed by a court in tort causes of action for wrongful injury or death of a companion animal. It would also allow restraining orders and other injunctive relief for the wrongful injury or killing of a companion animal. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

 **Rhode Island H 5414** would require a court of competent jurisdiction to order the appointment of an animal advocate where the custody or well-being of an animal is at issue. The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.

Interventions for Animal Abuse Offenders

 **New Jersey S2449, “Shyanne’s Law,”** would require convicted adult animal abusers to receive mental health evaluations. Currently, only juvenile offenders receive mental health screenings. The bill is in the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee.

 **New York A1445** and **S1174** would increase penalties for animal fighting and aggravated cruelty to animals and would require a psychiatric evaluation for defendants convicted of aggravated cruelty. **A1673** and **S814** would require that juvenile offenders convicted of animal cruelty undergo psychiatric evaluation and treatment where necessary. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes



Arizona SB 1105 would define animal fighting and cockfighting as racketeering in the state's organized crime, fraud and terrorism statutes. The bill is in the Judiciary and Rules Committees.



Michigan HB 4353 would allow animal shelters to consider an individual's criminal history when determining whether or not to allow that individual to adopt an animal. Convicted animal abusers could not adopt for at least 5 years following conviction. **Senate Bill 219** would prohibit offenders convicted of animal fighting or bestiality from owning animals other than livestock for 5 years. The bills are in the Judiciary Committee.



After languishing in the Senate for over a year, **New Jersey SB 736** was approved by the Senate on May 18 by a 35-0 vote after a series of high-profile dogfighting raids brought the issue's urgency to lawmakers. The bill, and a newer version, **AB 3596** would create a new crime of "leader of a dog fighting network" which would be added to the list of offenses considered "racketeering activities" under New Jersey's anti-racketeering (RICO) law. The Assembly bill has not been acted upon.



New York A346 would create a statewide task force to study how to improve investigations of animal abuse and enforcement of anti-cruelty laws. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



New York A1596 and **S2936** would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.



Oregon HB 3468 and **HB 2844** would add threats to cause physical injury to an animal as a means to induce another person to commit unwanted acts to the definition of coercion, a Class C felony. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



The **Oregon** Veterinary Medical Examination Board has proposed Rule No. [875-030-1101](#) which would provide for a screening of applicants and licensees to determine if they have a history of criminal behavior that would preclude their fitness to practice as a veterinarian or certified veterinary technician.

Animal Hoarding



Arizona HB 2429 and **SB 1265** would make it illegal to intentionally, knowingly or recklessly hoard animals. The bills would also allow courts to require offenders to undergo psychiatric evaluation and counseling. **HB 2429** passed the House and was referred to the Senate Government and Rules Committees. **SB 1265** is in the Senate Judiciary, Natural Resources and Rules Committees. A third, similar bill, **HB2150**, passed both chambers but was vetoed by the Governor on March 30.



New York A1265 would create the crime of companion animal hoarding. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

Cross Reporting



New York A5082 would require anyone mandated to report suspected child abuse who also encounters suspected animal abuse in the course of their duties to make an immediate report to local police or SPCA agencies. Failure to report would be a Class A misdemeanor and civilly liable. An extensive list of medical, social work, therapy, education, camp, day care, counseling and law enforcement professionals are mandated reporters of child abuse. The bill is in the Social Services Committee.



Oregon HB 2694 would allow Department of Human Services regulated social workers to report suspected animal abuse or neglect, with immunity for good-faith reporting. The bill is in the Human Services & Housing Committee.



Rhode Island HR 5194 would initiate a mandatory child abuse/domestic violence and animal abuse cross-reporting system. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Animal Sexual Assault



Oregon HB 2693 would create a new misdemeanor crime of encouraging sexual assault of an animal, defined as possessing or controlling a visual recording of a person engaged in sexual conduct with an animal, and would increase the penalties for sexual assault of an animal. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS



Woman Charged with Having Sex with Dogs Charged with Having Sex with Underage Boy

A Holly Hill, Fla. woman who changed her name to hide her past history of having sex with dogs was arrested on May 4 on charges of having sex with a 15-year-old boy. Brittany Sonnier, 23, was charged with lewd and lascivious battery on a minor and was being held in the Volusia County Jail on \$15,000 bail. The [Daytona Beach News-Journal](#) reported that police said the boy's father encountered the pair having sex, smoking marijuana and drinking beer. Police learned that Sonnier had been arrested in Lake Havasu, Ariz. in November 2012 where she was charged with bestiality for having sex with dogs and changed her name and moved to Florida because of the incident.

Animal Cruelty Offender Gets Six Years for Sexual Abuse of a Minor

A man who had been convicted of aggravated animal cruelty in 2012 for using an axe to decapitate a cat has been sent to prison for violating the terms of his probation by having sexual contact with a minor. Sheldon R. Taulbee, of Sibley, Ill., was sentenced on May 12 to six years in prison for the parole violation and on a felony charge of aggravated criminal sexual abuse. He will be required to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life, the Champaign [News-Gazette](#) reported.

Man Accused of Elder Abuse and Killing Dogs Also Charged with Kidnapping



Juan Rositas

Juan Rositas, 49, of Waukegan, Ill., who was already facing felony charges for the alleged physical and psychological abuse of an adult family member and the torture and killing of three pit bulls, was indicted on May 20 on felony charges of aggravated kidnapping, unlawful restraint, intimidation and stalking in a domestic violence incident.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) reported that the most recent charges stem from a series of domestic violence actions against an unnamed family member between April 5-10. Authorities said the dogs were beaten with hammers and killed between last Thanksgiving and Jan. 1.

Landscaper Arrested for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Charged with Running Over Nine Ducklings with Lawnmower



Jason Falbo

A Palm Beach County, Fla. landscaper who had been arrested in March for domestic battery and aggravated child abuse after he was accused of beating his girlfriend was charged with nine counts of animal cruelty for allegedly running over nine ducklings with his lawnmower. The [Sun-Sentinel](#) reported that Jason Falbo, 24, was smiling and laughing as he backed up and ran over the ducklings again as the homeowners and their 7-year-old son watched in horror. The family had been feeding the ducks, who disappeared in a flurry of feathers, bones and small beaks under the whirling blades. The parents said their son had been traumatized by the event and had asked, "Is everybody out there like this?" Falbo, whose police report says that the nine baby ducks lost their lives "cruelly and viciously with extreme intent," was being held on \$27,000 bail on the animal cruelty charges.

Intruders Kill Kittens Before Brutal Attack and Robbery of Woman



Deborah Schofield-Plasse

Police in Deerfield Beach, Fla., are investigating a bizarre break-in in which two intruders, wearing hooded sweatshirts, Halloween masks and gloves, barged into the home of a 59-year-old woman with multiple sclerosis carrying a paper bag holding her two dead kittens. After they demanded that she hand over her jewelry, money and credit cards and threatened to kill her other pets, she threw her walker at them. They then attacked her with spray paint and cut her body repeatedly with broken glass.

"They cut me in the back. My arms, they stabbed. They cut my face all up. I have a broken cheekbone," Deborah Schofield-Plasse told the [Sun-Sentinel](#). "When they threw me on the floor, I decided to stop fighting them. I just didn't want any more of my animals killed. I had no control over what they were going to do to me, so I was more worried about my animals."

"What they did to the cats and what they did to her – that's demented," said a neighbor who helped her call the police. "What got me was the spray paint. That's a sick person."

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

June 15 (Various Locations): [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#).

June 15 – Red Deer, Alta., Canada: [Tim Battle](#) and Amy Corpe will present on the Alberta Alliance for the Safety of Animals and People at the Central Alberta Social Work Conference.

June 18– (Online): Phil Arkow will discuss “Putting the LINK Puzzle All Together: Building Community Partnerships to Protect Animals and People” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse.

June 20 – Long Beach, Calif.: Jennifer Woolf, DVM will present on “The Veterinarian’s Role in Animal Abuse Cases” at the [Pacific Veterinary Conference](#).

June 30 – Baltimore, Md.: The [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#) will hold a one-day conference on The Link.

July 8 – Saratoga Springs, N.Y.: Phil Arkow will give the keynote address on “The Link Across the Lifespan” at the Special Session on Vulnerable Populations and their Pets at the 2015 [International Society of Anthrozoology](#) conference.

July 23-24 – Orlando, Fla.: Allie Phillips will present at the [Florida Crimes Against Kids Conference](#) on “When Animal Abuse Co-occurs with Family Violence: Strategies & Policies for Keeping Families Safe” and co-present with Danielle Hughes of the Sarasota Child Protection Center on “Therapy Animals Supporting Children: Policy, Practice & Cases Supporting Your New Comfort Team Member.”

July 24 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: Paul Needham and Jeanene Lindsey will present on “Animal Abuse, Elder Abuse and Hoarding: Challenges and Strategies for Adult Protective Services” at the 25th Annual [Summer Geriatric Institute](#).

Aug. 18 – Addison, Texas: Phil Arkow and Esperanza Zúñiga will present on “The Link Across the Lifespan” at the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [41st NOVA Conference](#).

Aug. 20 – (Online): Belinda Lewis and Matt Lewis will discuss “Animal Cruelty Crime Scene Forensic Photography” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse.

Aug. 25 – Nashville, Tenn.: Paul Needham will present on “The Link between Animal Abuse and Other Forms of Family Violence” at the [American Association of Service Coordinators](#) conference.

Sept. 14 – Albuquerque, N. M.: “Positive Links” -- the New Mexico Conference on The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence – will hold an [all-day conference](#) featuring many Link authorities.

Sept. 19 – Irving, Texas: Phil Arkow will speak on “Breaking the Chain of Violence” at the [Texas Humane Legislation Network](#)’s Animal Advocacy Conference.

Sept. 22 – Fort Wayne, Ind.: Phil Arkow will conduct a Link training on behalf of [Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control](#).

Sept. 24 – Kitchener, Ont., Canada: Maya Gupta will speak on “Examining the Cruelty Link between Humans and Animals and Finding Solutions for Effective Intervention” at the HAV (Human-Animal Vulnerability) Coalition of Kitchener-Waterloo Region’s 2nd [Link Conference](#).

Sept. 26 – Blacksburg, Va.: Phil Arkow will discuss animal abuse as the “dark side” of the human-animal bond at the [CENTAUR](#) Human-Animal Bond Symposium.

Sept. 20 (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a [webinar](#) on “The Dark Side of the Human-Animal Bond: Animal Abuse as an Indicator and Predictor of Abuse of Vulnerable Populations” for the Humane Society of the U.S.

Oct. 1 – Baltimore, Md.: Randy Lockwood and Sharon Miller will present on building community responses to animal cruelty at the [National Animal Care & Control Association](#) conference.

Oct. 8 – Hamden, Conn.: Phil Arkow will participate in a panel discussion for the [Connecticut Bar Association’s Animal Law Section](#).

Oct. 15 – Charlottesville, Va.: Randy Lockwood and Sharon Miller will present on building community responses to animal cruelty at the [Virginia Animal Control Association](#) annual conference.

Nov. 4-5 – Knoxville, Tenn.: A post-conference workshop on The Link between Human and Animal Violence will be held following the [Veterinary Social Work](#)/Veterinary Health and Wellness Summits at the University of Tennessee. Speakers will include Maya Gupta discussing “Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adults Who Have Engaged In or Witnessed Animal Abuse” and Jenny Edwards speaking on “Bestiality: The Best Kept Secret in America.”

Nov. 16 – Phoenix, Md.: The Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office Animal Abuse Unit will hold an [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#).

To subscribe to The Link-Letter (*it’s free!*) – Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow (arkowpets@snip.net) and tell us what organization(s) you’re with and where you’re located.



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multi-disciplinary collaborative network of individuals and organizations in human services and animal welfare who address the intersections between animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse through research, public policy, programming and community awareness. We believe that human and animal well-being are inextricably intertwined and that the prevention of family and community violence can best be achieved through partnerships representing multi-species perspectives.

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

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Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,
The Latham Foundation
Stratford, N.J.

Lesley Ashworth

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