



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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**OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AWARENESS MONTH**



ANIMAL ABUSE AND... INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

National Plan to End Interpersonal Violence

Addresses Animal Abuse and The Link

The National Link Coalition has endorsed the [National Plan to End Interpersonal Violence Across the Lifespan](#), a 44-page report that has been five years in the making and that after a year's worth of discussions with us now includes significant references to animal abuse and the Link.



**A National Plan to End
Interpersonal Violence
Across the Lifespan**



The culmination of a year-long discussion with THE National Link Coalition, the National Plan now includes references to animal abuse as an indicator and predictor of interpersonal violence. It now includes animal welfare issues in 10 of the Plan's 22 overarching recommendations. These recommendations are aimed at improving the development and delivery of prevention initiatives, health and mental health responses, justice systems, public policy, public awareness, and work forces within a coordinated community public health model.

The Plan now widely integrates animal cruelty among the issues affecting child maltreatment, domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, and elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Plan calls for programs designed at

the local level by those closest to the situation and tailored to the unique dynamics of each community to be the most effective strategies for prevention. The Plan cited 10 significant Link sources in its extensive list of references.

The Plan's new recommendations include:

- Recognizing humane animal welfare advocates among the **stakeholders** who shape evidence-based violence prevention programs that meet the needs of making local communities safe.
- Adding animal cruelty investigators and forensic veterinarians to **Multi-Disciplinary Teams** to develop, maintain and evaluate violence prevention programs.
- Including professionals with expertise in animal abuse to **clearinghouses and online resources** for information about interpersonal violence, intervention programming and prevention initiatives.
- Requiring **accreditation standards of health care facilities** to include specialized training for all employees in violence recognition and response, including asking about the safety of pets as a One Health strategy to prevent family violence.
- Including corroborating evidence about animal abuse in the development and dissemination of national standards for police, prosecutors and judges in the **collection of evidence**.
- Developing a national initiative to improve undergraduate, graduate and continuing education **training for child and family services** to include violence prevention and trauma-informed care that recognizes that human-animal relationships are sentinel markers for potential child maltreatment, domestic violence or elder abuse.
- Training **criminal justice professionals** to routinely recognize and screen for polyvictimization, including animal abuse, and training **animal control officers and humane investigators** to consider whether interpersonal violence is occurring, to help end the cycle of violence for more perpetrators and victims.
- Implementing more prevention programs for education, social service, criminal justice, drug and alcohol, medical and mental health professionals similar to existing humane education programs in schools and animal-assisted therapeutic interventions with youth services agencies that **build interpersonal empathy by promoting kindness to animals**.
- Including university-based **instruction on public policy advocacy** to professionals working with perpetrators or victims, including those in the animal abuse field.
- **Ending corporal punishment**, which has been linked to higher rates of physical animal abuse, in schools.

NPEIV is a non-partisan group that embraces a national, multi-disciplinary and multicultural commitment to the prevention of all forms of interpersonal violence. A project of the Institute on Violence, Abuse & Trauma, the Plan addresses trauma occurring in childhood, schools and colleges, in the military, intimate partner violence, and in elder years. Recognizing that a child or adult abused in one way is often abused in multiple ways and that a pattern of victimization can extend throughout the life cycle, the Plan addresses the challenges of conducting prevention and intervention programs and services in diverse ethnic, racial and linguistic communities.

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ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Red Rover Increases Pet Housing Grants to \$20,000

RedRover's [Safe Housing grants](#) for capital construction to enable domestic violence shelters to build facilities for survivors' pets are being increased from \$6,000 to \$20,000. The application deadline for the next round of grants is Oct 15. Approximately 10 to 12 grants will be offered per year.



Pet-friendly shelters are now available in 41 states. Red Rover is partnering with [Sheltering Animals and Families Together \(SAF-T\)](#) to specifically target the nine remaining states with a goal of having at least one co-sheltering facility in every state. The states being targeted for outreach are: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawai'i, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and West Virginia.

Grants must be used for building materials and supplies to create on-site housing for pets and cannot be used for program costs. Shelters that have already received a Safe Housing grant may apply but only for construction to expand their pet facilities.

Veterinary School Safe Haven Program Continues to Grow



Sharon Grace, DVM

A pioneering program where veterinary students help provide foster care for the animal survivors of domestic violence continues to expand. Sharon Fooshee Grace, DVM, Clinical Professor in the Department of Clinical Sciences at the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine, tells *The LINK-Letter* that the Safe Haven outreach program with the Care Lodge Domestic Violence Shelter in Meridian has now sheltered 54 animals and provided 1,601 days of care.

The school and shelter crafted a Memorandum of Understanding through which the college provides cage space for the pets. MSU representatives pick up the pets, usually the same day, and transport them to the pet holding area. The shelter routinely screens calls to the crisis line for pet welfare issues (See the [January 2013 LINK-Letter](#)).

"Our little project just continues to chug along here at Mississippi State," she writes. "Our veterinary students graduate and go out into the world knowing that they can establish a pet sheltering program in their clinics."

Video, Website Hope to Speed Passage of PAWS Act

The federal Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act – H.R. 909 and S. 322, which would provide funds for shelters to build pet housing and enforce pet protection orders across state lines – has been languishing in Congress despite having 230 cosponsors in the House and 21 in the Senate. Bayer pharmaceuticals is hoping to speed the legislative process along with an [informative website](#) featuring an effective two-minute video (See the [November 2016 LINK-Letter](#)) that describes the painful choices women have to make between leaving an abusive relationship and ensuring the safety of their pets. *PAWS: Share the Story* is a campaign for domestic violence survivors and their pets and depicts the need for this legislation to protect both women and the animals who are threatened, injured or killed for revenge or control. The website includes materials to help constituents contact their Senators and Representatives to encourage support for this critical legislation.



A Centennial Look at The Link

One of the earliest references to animals being killed for revenge or control in a domestic violence situation is celebrating its centennial this year. “A Jury of Her Peers”, written in 1917, is a short story by playwright, novelist, journalist and actress Susan Glaspell (1876-1948). It was loosely based on a 1900 murder in Iowa. It was not only an early example of feminist literature – in which two female characters are able to solve a mystery that the male characters cannot – but also depicted how animals are pawns in the power-and-control mechanisms that mark intimate partner violence.



Susan Glaspell, circa 1915

The story involves a woman named Martha Hale who joins her husband Lewis, the sheriff and the sheriff's wife to investigate the death of a Mr. Wright, who had been strangled. His widow, Minnie, was in a delirious state.

The men are unable to find any evidence linking Minnie to her husband's death, but the women – with their knowledge of women's psychology – uncover a critical piece of evidence: a dead bird with a broken neck that Mr. Wright apparently killed because he knew Minnie enjoyed its singing. Understanding Minnie's suffering when the only living thing around her has died, the two women find justification in her actions and decline to share with the men what they found.

The story was originally written in 1916 as a one-act play entitled “Trifles”. It was adapted into a TV episode of Alfred Hitchcock Presents in the 1950s and an Academy Award-nominated short film in 1980.

THE LINK AND... CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

California Now Allows Support Dogs in Child Abuse Court Testimony

California has become the latest state to allow therapy or facility dogs to accompany children testifying in court cases. **AB411**, sponsored by Assemblyman Richard Bloom (D-50), was signed into law on Sept. 26.

Existing California law had authorized a prosecuting witness in specified cases to have up to two persons of his or her own choosing for support at the preliminary hearing and at trial, or at a juvenile court proceeding, during the testimony of the prosecuting witness, as specified.



Assemblyman Richard Bloom

This new law now authorizes these witnesses, as well as certain child witnesses, to be accompanied by a dog, trained in providing emotional support, while testifying. The measure sets minimum training requirements for these dogs and their handlers and will require a party requesting the use of such a dog to file a motion with the court, specifying the qualifications of and need for the dog.

The law now authorizes the court to allow the witness to be accompanied by the dog if certain conditions are met, but would require the court to remove or exclude the dog if the court finds the use of the dog would cause undue prejudice to the defendant or would be unduly disruptive to the court proceeding. The court can take appropriate measures to minimize the distraction created by the presence of the dog in the courtroom, including requiring the dog to be accompanied by a handler at all times. If the therapy or facility dog is used during a criminal jury trial, the court must issue, upon request, an appropriate jury instruction designed to prevent prejudice for or against any party.



Noelle Hollar

Literature Review of Children's Exposure to Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse

In a paper written for a graduate school course at Regis University, [Noelle Hollar](#) conducted an extensive review of Link literature from 2000-2015 to examine: incidence of pre-pubescent children witnessing domestic violence and engaging in animal cruelty; the effects of observing parental violence, particularly animal cruelty, on children's later development; and available interventions for children who are at risk for or who have already begun perpetrating violence

against animals. Hollar identified three recurring themes:

- Children raised in a violent household may suffer from physical abuse and/or neglect which may lend itself to feelings of neglect and rejection and displaced anger, which is then redirected at small and/or companion animals.
- Children who witness domestic violence are at an increased risk of abusing, harming or killing animals.
- Children who abuse animals may also demonstrate other concerning behaviors, such as bullying, emotional disorders, power-oriented criminal thinking, difficulty with taking perspective, and lack of empathy.

Hollar suggested four areas needing further development:

- Therapeutic interventions for child witnesses to domestic violence and animal abuse.
- Rehabilitation and counseling programs for at-risk youth.
- Training for law enforcement on animal cruelty investigations.
- Spreading awareness among involved professions for collaboration and cross-platform referrals.

Childhood Exposure to Animal Abuse Associated with Callousness

Another article has been published in the child abuse literature resulting from the five-year Colorado study of polyvictimization exploring the impact of animal abuse on children living in homes where domestic violence is also present. (See the [September 2017](#) and [July/August 2016 LINK-Letters](#)).

Shelby McDonald and her colleagues noted that despite emerging evidence that childhood exposure to pet abuse is associated with psychopathology in childhood and adulthood, and that children exposed to intimate partner violence are at increased risk for concomitant exposure to animal abuse, few studies have explored the developmental factors that might help to explain pathways from animal maltreatment exposure to children's maladjustment.

To close these gaps, the research team examined relations between children's exposure to animal maltreatment, callous/unemotional traits (i.e., callousness, uncaring traits, and unemotional traits), and externalizing and internalizing behavior problems. Working with 291 ethnically diverse children between the ages of 7 and 12 recruited from community domestic violence services, the researchers found that child exposure to animal abuse was associated with callousness, which in turn was linked to greater internalizing and externalizing problems. The effect of animal maltreatment exposure on externalizing problems was mediated through callousness. Results suggest that callous/unemotional traits are a potential mechanism through which childhood exposure to animal maltreatment influences subsequent behavior problems.

-- McDonald, S.E., Dmitrieva, J., Shin, S., Hitti, S.A., Graham-Bermann, S.A., & Ascione, F.R. et al. (2017). The role of callous/unemotional traits in mediating the association between animal abuse exposure and behavior problems among children exposed to intimate partner violence. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 72, 421-432.



Scott Turner

Ohio Charges Child Sex Predator in First Bestiality Case Under New Law

A man who spent more than 12 years in prison for three sex crimes involving children is believed to be the first person charged under Ohio's new bestiality law for allegedly performing oral sex on a dog. Scott Turner, 47, of Cleveland, was charged with the second-degree misdemeanor and is slated to appear Oct. 5 in Cleveland Municipal Court. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail.

The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) reported that Turner was taking care of a woman's dog, named "Athena," on May 13 when he gave the dog oral sex. Turner reportedly wrote a letter describing what he did, which was subsequently turned over to the Cleveland Animal Protection League for investigation.

Turner was released from prison in 2015. In 2003 he had been babysitting five boys between the ages of 6 and 12 when he paid a 9-year-old boy \$1 to fondle another boy while he watched. Police later learned that he had also performed a sex act on a 9-year-old boy while they watched a pornographic video in 2002, and repeatedly sexually assaulted a 12-year-old girl and had attacked her as many as 10 times.

Turner pleaded guilty to 41 counts, several of which included sentencing enhancements for being a violent sexual predator, including rape, disseminating matter harmful to juveniles, kidnapping with sexual motivation, and compelling prostitution.

Ohio became the 45th state to prohibit animal sexual abuse on March 21, 2017 (*See the [January 2017 LINK-Letter](#)*), thus enabling investigators like the Animal Protection League to have a case prosecuted without needing to prove cruelty. "This is an unspeakable act," said APL President Sharon Harvey. "But at least now we finally have something we can do about it."

"Animal sexual abuse is the number one indicator of someone who would sexually abuse a child," said HSUS animal cruelty policy director Leighann Lassiter. Citing studies showing that 40% of sex offenders whose victims are children have admitted at one point to engaging in bestiality, she added, "This is a very real way to protect children from people who could be sexual predators."

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... ANIMAL HOARDING

Is Animal Hoarding Disorder a New Psychopathology?

This study characterizes the socio-demographic profile of 33 animal hoarders in a southern city of Brazil and proposes classifying Animal Hoarding Disorder as a new disease category, distinct from Hoarding Disorder. The animal hoarders, 73% female and 60% elderly, with an average age of 61.39 years, hoarded or lived with a large number of animals for an average of 23.09 years. 56.7% of the sample hoarded other inanimate objects as well. The total number of hoarded animals was 1,357 and the average number of animals per hoarder was approximately 41. Significant differences between hoarding disorder and animal hoarding are discussed, including obstruction of living environments and the processes of disengaging from or donating hoarded animals and objects.

-- Ferreira, E.A., Paloski, L.H., Costa, D.B., Fiametti, V.S., & de Oliveira, C.R., et al. (2017). Animal hoarding disorder: A new psychopathology? *Psychiatry Research* (published online). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.08.030>

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... BULLYING

Study finds Link between Animal Abuse and Cyberbullying

While the association between animal abuse and physical and emotional forms of interpersonal violence, including bullying behaviors, is well documented, a new study is believed to be the first to explore connections between animal abuse and both traditional bullying and cyberbullying. The study also examined the role of beliefs about aggression in animal abuse and bullying.



Cheryl E. Sanders and Bill C. Henry of Metropolitan **Bill C. Henry and Cheryl E. Sanders**

State University of Denver, Colo. surveyed 267 females and 172 males in an undergraduate psychology course to measure their experiences with animals, their normative beliefs about aggression, and their histories of being victims or perpetrators of traditional or cyberbullying. Significant results include:

- 26% of men and 8% of women had engaged in animal abuse or used threats of harm to an animal as a method of intimidation against a person.
- Male animal abusers scored significantly higher on scales measuring general approval of aggression, and perpetration of cyberbullying and bullying. Female animal abusers scored higher on scales measuring approval of retaliation, and perpetration of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Approval of aggression was a significant predictor of animal abuse before bullying and cyberbullying variables were added, but was not significant after they were added.

The study not only confirmed other findings that animal abusers are more likely to be perpetrators of traditional bullying but also demonstrated a link between animal abuse and cyberbullying. Results also showed differences in genders: males are almost four times more likely to be identified as an animal abuser than females; males reported significantly more general approval of aggression and stronger endorsement of the use of aggression for retaliatory purposes compared to their female counterparts; and male perpetrators expressed significantly more general approval of aggression, while female abusers endorsed aggression for retaliation.

The authors extended their findings to suggest that “animal abuse can be construed as a particular manifestation of a more generalized antisocial tendency.” They noted that animal abuse should be seen as a “‘red flag’ for subsequent or co-occurring violent behavior, including bullying,” and recommended that “efforts to prevent or reduce aggressive behavior should consider the integration of attitude assessment and education into their programs.”

The links that the study identified between animal abuse, bullying, and beliefs about aggression also suggest that advocates who work to prevent animal abuse might consider partnering with organizations that aim stop bullying to spread their messages to a broader audience of people who more generally approve of the use of aggression.

-- Sanders, C.E., & Henry, B.C. (2017). The role of beliefs about aggression in cyberbullying and animal abuse. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 23(9), 827-840.

THE LINK AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE

One Health Collaboration to Help Saskatchewan People and Animals

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture is exploring a collaborative One Health approach to improve outcomes of animal cruelty investigations for humans and animals in the vast Canadian province.

Ministry officials are considering creating an interagency task force to use a One Health framework to address such complex species-spanning conditions as animal hoarding and domestic squalor where human mental and physical health has a direct impact on the outcome for all species involved.

The idea is part of a second proposal to review the province's Animal Protection Act of 1999. The Act is being reviewed by various stakeholders, including the Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association. Veterinary involvement is recognized as being crucial to the investigation and enforcement of animal cruelty cases.



Currently, animal abuse investigations are conducted by five primary agencies: the Saskatoon and Prince Albert SPCAs and Regina and Moose Jaw Humane Societies cover their respective metropolitan regions. All other areas of the province are under the authority of Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan, an agency funded by the Ministry for enforcement of the Act throughout the smaller communities and rural areas. Between April 2016 and March 2017, APSS investigated 570 cases involving dogs (307 cases), horses (125), cattle (106), and cats (69).

One Health is a collaborative program linking human and veterinary medicine in an overarching effort to protect people, animals and the environment. The Saskatchewan Veterinary Medical Association has embarked on a vibrant public awareness campaign, www.SaskVets.ca, as a source for animal health information. One part of this program is a slogan that “Veterinary care is about the whole family.”

Mandatory Reporting of Abuse May Extend to Other Professions

With the seminal publication in 1962 of “The Battered Child Syndrome” by C. Henry Kempe and his colleagues, describing features associated with non-accidental injuries in children, pediatricians and other medical professionals were called upon to report suspected child maltreatment based upon their medical expertise making them the most highly qualified such reporters. By the mid-1960s, all states had laws mandating that medical professionals report suspected child abuse (with immunity from civil and criminal liability) and mandated reporting soon spread to include other professionals, such as teachers and clergy. Today, 18 states require all residents to report suspected child abuse. In this article, Bill C. Henry argues that a similar pattern exists today in the movement for veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse and that if “past is prologue” we might see the mandatory reporting movement expand to other fields that work with animals, such as boarding kennels, groomers and trainers. He notes, however, that such broadening is premature.

-- Henry, B.C. (2016). What does the child protection movement teach us about the role of the mandated reporter of abuse? *Animal Sentience*, 6(4).

Veterinary Forensics Journal Seeking Submissions



JVFS

JOURNAL OF VETERINARY FORENSIC SCIENCES

The *Journal of Veterinary Forensic Sciences*, an online, open access, peer-reviewed journal focusing on the application of forensic science and medicine to the investigation of animal crime, is now accepting manuscript submissions for the first volume, anticipated to be published in January 2018. The

journal is seeking manuscripts in the areas of original research, case analysis, investigations, industry standards and guidelines, technical notes, short communications, book reviews, and opinion.

Prospective authors must register with the journal prior to submitting an article. [Guidelines for authors](#) and registration details are available online.

THE LINK AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Crime Scene Investigations May Also Reveal Animal Abuse

Law enforcement officers responding to any number of types of calls often do not think to also check to see if an animal crime might also be involved. Being observant for such animal crimes can serve as an additional tool or launching point for investigations and the potential for filing additional charges.

That's the basis for an article in the September/October 2017 issue of *Sheriff & Deputy* magazine by April Doherty, lead investigator of the Animal Abuse Unit of the Baltimore County, Md., State's Attorney's Office, and forensic veterinarian Martha Smith-Blackmore. They write that paying close attention to animal abuse cases can indicate the presence of other crimes.



Martha Smith-Blackmore

Officers and deputies responding to a scene may uncover animal cruelty even if it wasn't the primary reason for the call. Officers at an eviction scene may observe animals in crates filled with feces. An arson investigation may uncover a dog that was stabbed and burned by the suspect. Domestic violence victims might not wish to testify but their children might indicate that the abuser also attacked the family pets.



April Doherty

Because talking about pets is an easy way to build rapport, asking questions about them is an effective way for victims to provide key information to officers about other family dynamics. Neighbors might be more willing to provide statements about the animals' welfare than they would regarding the other crimes. Meanwhile, crimes against animals may be easier to prove, especially if a veterinarian trained in forensics is part of the investigation.

The article also describes basic principles of veterinary forensic photography, evidence collection and documentation, and strategies for collaborating with animal control officers and veterinarians.

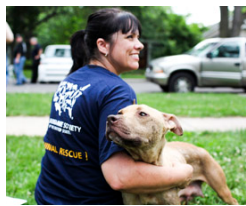
-- Doherty, A., & Smith-Blackmore, M. (2017, September/October). *Best practices in animal cruelty investigations: Investigators should pay close attention to animal abuse cases, since they can often indicate the presence of other crimes. Sheriff & Deputy, 74-76.*

Training Videos Available for Law Enforcement Agencies

The National Sheriffs Association has partnered with the Humane Society of the United States to produce a series of free, short training videos that can be used during police and sheriffs' offices roll calls to assist law enforcement officers with better responses to animal abuse, based upon its links with interpersonal violence.

"The link between people who abuse animals and who go on to abuse people is well-documented. The training you will receive will help you to recognize animal abuse and make your communities much safer," says John Thompson, Deputy Executive Director of the NSA and a member of the National Link Coalition's steering committee.

One 9-minute video describes **animal cruelty and neglect**, featuring April Doherty, lead investigator of the animal abuse unit at the Baltimore County, Md. State's Attorney's Office. She describes the standards of care concerning food, water and shelter that an officer might observe at a scene; the distinctions between felony and misdemeanor animal abuse and neglect; acts of commission and omission; the need for documentation; and enforcement options.



A 20-minute video covers **dog fighting**. Janette Reeve, [April Doherty](#), deputy manager of the HSUS animal fighting response unit, describes common terminology in animal fighting; tell-tale scars and injuries an officer might observe on fighting dogs; conditioning equipment and medications often found at training and fighting sites; suggestions for more effective prosecutions; and resources to aid in their investigations.

[Janette Reeve](#)

To gain access to the videos, please [e-mail Doherty](#).

THE LINK... IN THE LITERATURE

Animal Abuse Mediates between Psychopathy and Sadistic Actions

In an attempt to explain the relationship between psychopathy and severe violent behavior, this study associated previous animal abuse, psychopathy, and sadistic acting in forensic patients. The study addressed: (1) whether previous animal abuse can be identified by a patient's Psychopathy Checklist profile and (2) whether animal abuse statistically mediates between psychopathy and sadistic acting. 60 patients in a German forensic hospital were investigated. Animal abuse was assessed using face-to-face interviews and the Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version (PCL:SV), and sadistic acting was identified by file records. Discriminant analysis separated previous animal abuse (10/60) by high adolescent antisocial behavior, superficiality, lack of remorse, lack of empathy, and grandiosity. The mediation from psychopathy to sadistic acting (6/60) through animal abuse was found to be complete. Although sample size was limited and base rate of animal abuse and sadistic acting were low, the results fit with a model suggestive of animal abuse as a causal step toward sadistic crimes. Animal abuse correlates with callous, unemotional traits, and a development of sadistic crimes.

-- Stupperich, A., & Strack, M. (2016). Among a German sample of forensic patients, previous animal abuse mediates between psychopathy and sadistic actions. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 61(3), 699-705.

What Are the Motivations for Animal Cruelty?

Animal abuse, cruelty and neglect take many forms, with no consistent underlying origins or motivations. To gain a better understanding of the associations between specific motivations for animal cruelty, particular methods of animal cruelty and different facets of impulsivity, Michelle Newberry surveyed 130 undergraduate students. Newberry, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology, Sociology and Politics at Sheffield Hallam University in the U.S., used an adapted version of the Boat Inventory on Animal-Related Experiences (BIARE) which asked participants to state whether they had intentionally harmed or killed an animal, the species of animal(s) involved, their motivations for harming or killing the animal(s), and the method(s) used. Participants also completed the Impulsive Behavior scale (UPPS-P) which assesses five facets of impulsivity.



Michelle Newberry

Over half of the sample (55%) reported committing at least one act of animal cruelty; dogs were the most common targets. The most frequently reported motivations were Prejudice, Amusement, Control (of an animal), and Retaliation (against an animal). The most frequently reported methods were Beating/Kicking, Squashing, Throwing an object at an animal, Shooting, Drowning, and Burning. Significant associations were found between particular motivations and methods, as well as between particular methods of animal cruelty and facets of impulsivity. The findings have implications for theoretical models of animal cruelty perpetration as well as offender assessment and treatment.

-- Newberry, M. (2017, Sept. 4). [Associations between different motivations for animal cruelty, methods of animal cruelty and facets of impulsivity. *Psychology, Crime & Law*. Published online.](#)

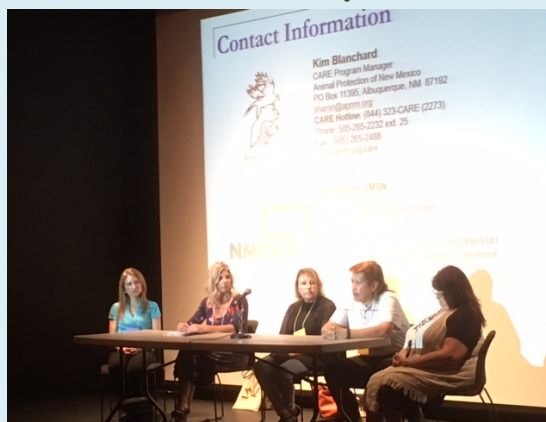
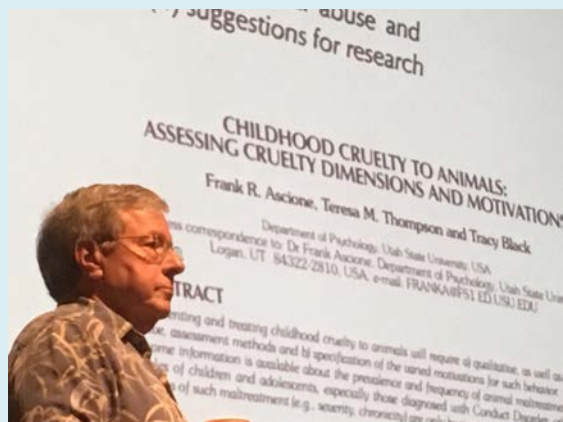
Controlling Behaviors Cited as Factor Resulting in Animal Shelter Intakes

Many factors underlie the reasons why pets are allowed to roam at large and wind up in animal shelters. This new report used GIS mapping, child maltreatment data, census records, and interviews to study a community with high numbers of stray animal intakes over a one-year period. The investigators found that residents in the target area experience multiple socioeconomic challenges secondary to poverty including: interpersonal violence; housing instability; and lack of access to reliable transportation and communication services. Significant numbers of interviewees revealed having experienced controlling or threatening behavior by their partners toward themselves and their pets: 8.6% reported that their pets had been threatened, injured, or that fearing for their pet's welfare influenced their decision whether to leave or stay with a partner. Such factors tend to lead residents to view dogs not only as pets but also as commodities that can add to household incomes and also as burdens that result in pet abandonment.

-- Spencer, T., Behar-Horenstein, L., Aufmuth, J., Hardt, N., & Applebaum, J.W., et al. (2017). [Factors that influence intake to one municipal animal control facility in Florida: A qualitative study. *Animals*, 7, 48.](#)

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

New Mexico Link Conference Marks 15th Anniversary



New Mexico's [Positive Links](#) coalition, founded in 2002, celebrated its 15th anniversary with a biennial conference that attracted 150 participants. Above left: Frank R. Ascione presented on "Animal Abuse, Intimate Partner Violence and Adverse Childhood Experiences." Above, a panel discussed issues affecting domestic violence shelters and clients who have animals. Left, Bernalillo County Sheriff's Sgt. Amy Dudewicz helped participants to understand what to look for when investigating animal crimes. Other programs featured an international perspective on The Link, therapy options for intervening and preventing animal abuse, veterinary forensics, prosecuting animal cruelty cases, and strategies for caregivers to combat burnout.

National Link Coalition Member Co-Authors Farm Animal Welfare Chapter

Emily Patterson-Kane, Ph.D., Animal Welfare Scientist in the American Veterinary Medical Association's Animal Welfare Division and a founding member of the National Link Coalition, has co-authored a chapter in a new book entitled *The Business of Farm Animal Welfare* (New York: Routledge, 2017).



Emily Patterson-Kane (left) & Cia Johnson

The book, edited by Nicky Amos and Rory Sullivan, describes how despite the scale of the food industry's impact, farm animal welfare remains a relatively immature management issue. There is a lack of consensus around corporate responsibilities for farm animal welfare. The book describes how companies have addressed farm animal welfare in their operations and supply chains, analyzes key barriers to companies adopting higher standards of farm animal welfare, and offers practical recommendations to companies, consumers and policy makers on raising farm animal welfare standards across the food industry.

Patterson-Kane, along with fellow AVMA Animal Welfare Division colleague Dr. Cia Johnson, co-authored Chapter 12, "The Human-Animal Bond: A Risk and Asset for Animal-Based Agriculture."

INTERVENTIONS FOR THE ABUSED AND AT-RISK

Project Second Chance – Michigan Pairs Youth with Shelter Dogs



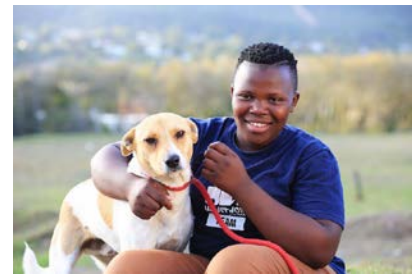
A rehabilitation program that pairs incarcerated adolescents at the Monroe County, Mich. Youth Center with homeless dogs from the Monroe County Animal Shelter is helping troubled youth to become more compassionate and responsible and to develop a better understanding of respect for self and others. [Project Second Chance Monroe](#) – modeled after the pioneering namesake program in New Mexico – trains, socializes and grooms abandoned dogs and gets them ready for placement in permanent homes.

Residents work with the animals over a six-week period and participate in weekly group therapy sessions to help them learn to take more responsibility for their behavior and recognize the importance of empathy, patience and emotional regulation.

The [Monroe County Youth Center](#), operated by the 38th Judicial District Circuit Court – Family Division, has 45 beds divided between residential treatment and secure detention. It houses male and female youthful offenders between 11 and 17 years of age who are awaiting court proceedings and youth who have not otherwise been successful in court-ordered interventions or who have demonstrated a serious risk to public safety.

Underdog Project is Hiring a Director

With violence a chronic issue in South Africa, Cape Town's Underdog Project (*See the [December 2016 LINK-Letter](#)*) provides animal-assisted therapy to pair abused shelter dogs with abused and at-risk youth in a program called "Building young lives, one dog at a time." Founded in 2011, the all-volunteer nonprofit is ready to take a big step forward and is accepting applications for an executive director, to be called the Social Entrepreneur/Social Enterprise Manager.



Ciara Louw tells The LINK-Letter, "With programs running five days a week and all that's going on, the Project has outgrown the abilities of our part-time volunteer-based Management Committee. We think it's time to get someone on board to manage the Project full-time."

A full description of expectations is on the [Underdog Project website](#). Louw notes that there are no immediate funds available for salary, but that as head of the organization the new director will set and raise his or her own salary.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Bills We're Watching... and Victories We're Celebrating

The National Link Coalition is encouraged by the increase in the number of violence-prevention bills being introduced that are based on Link principles. Join us as we follow these measures and salute our victories that will do a better job of protecting people and animals – and please let us know of new measures that are introduced in your state.

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



H.R. 909 and S.322 – the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act – was re-introduced and now has 230 bi-partisan co-sponsors in the House and 17 in the Senate. The PAWS Act would prohibit threats or acts of violence against a victim's pet in interstate stalking and interstate violation of protection orders. It would allocate \$3 million annually through 2021 in grants for shelter and housing assistance for victims with pets, support services to help victims secure safe housing that allows pets, and for pet-related services. Grants could also be used for training on The Link and for identifying best practices. Abusers would be required to make restitution to the victim for costs incurred for veterinary services. **H.R. 909** is in the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations. **S.322** is in the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.



Hawai'i HB 155 would have allowed either party to order the other to restrain from transferring, encumbering or disposing of pets during divorce, separation or annulment, particularly if one party poses a threat of physical harm to the animal. Courts could have ordered a party to pay for pet support, and consider the animals' well-being and whether future ownership should be individual or joint. The measure was approved by the House Agriculture Committee and was referred to the Judiciary Committee, **but no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned on May 4.**



Illinois SB 1261 amends the Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act to allow parties filing for divorce to file a joint petition for simplified dissolution if they have executed a written agreement allocating ownership and responsibility for their companion animals. The measure also allows the parties to petition for sole or joint ownership, contingent upon the court's consideration of what would be in the animals' best interests. **The bill was approved by Gov. Bruce Rauner on Aug. 25 and becomes effective Jan. 1, 2018.**



Indiana SB 323 allows a court to grant an order of protection to: (1) award possession and care of an animal to a petitioner; (2) prohibit a respondent from taking action against the animal; and (3) direct a law enforcement officer to accompany the petitioner to retrieve the animal. **The bill was signed into law on April 21** by Gov. Eric Holcomb and became effective on July 1.



Michigan HB 4026 would define "causing or attempting to cause physical harm" to a family member's animal as an act of domestic violence in addition to any animal cruelty charges that might pertain. It would allow domestic violence shelters that accept animals to receive state funding and to include veterinary care among the emergency health care services that they provide among the criteria for needing funding. The bill is in the Committee on Law and Justice.



Nevada law defines harming an animal to harass a spouse or partner as domestic violence. **SB62** would have increased the penalty for this act to a Category B felony if the abuser is convicted of a similar act. **No action was taken before the time limit for legislative action expired.**



Ohio HB1 would expand the ability of courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders that include the animals of domestic violence survivors to individuals seeking protection orders in cases of dating violence. It would allow a court order of protection to require that a respondent not remove, damage, hide, harm, or dispose of any companion animal owned or possessed by the petitioner alleging dating violence. It also would allow a court order to authorize the petitioner, alleging dating violence, to remove a companion animal owned by that petitioner from the possession of the respondent. The bill has passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania HB1652 would allow divorcing parties to enter into a custody agreement for the possession and/or care of a companion animal. Such agreements may specify the time during which each party will possess the pet and each party's financial responsibility regarding its care. The bill defines relevant factors which the court may consider. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Texas SB 339 and **HB 142** would have created a new offense of illegal sexual contact called "indecent assault" and allowed victims to obtain protective orders. Violations of these protective orders would have included harming, threatening, or interfering with the care, custody or control of a pet, companion animal or assistance animal belonging to the protected party. **No action was taken on either bill when the Legislature adjourned.**



Rhode Island H5556 would have required courts to consider the best interest of the animal in awarding possession of a domestic animal in a divorce or separation proceeding. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.**



Wyoming HB193 would have allowed courts to grant sole possession of any household pets to the petitioner in a protection order, and to order the respondent not have any contact with any household pet or abduct, remove, conceal, or dispose of the animal. **The bill died when the legislature adjourned.**

Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse



Washington HB 1153 addresses financial exploitation and physical neglect of seniors and people with disabilities by increasing penalties, reducing barriers to prosecution, and expanding the scope of protection for vulnerable persons. 1st-degree animal cruelty, including sexual contact with an animal, is listed as a crime which prosecutors may cite as reasons for filing charges. The measure was approved by both the House and Senate and **was signed into law on May 10** by Gov. Jay Inslee.

"CASA for Animals"



New Jersey A 2041 and its companion **S 433** would allow courts to issue "animal protection orders" forbidding persons convicted of animal cruelty from having contact with the abused animal or other animals, either permanently or for a specified period of time. **A 2041** passed the Assembly. Both bills are in the Senate Economic Growth Committee.



Rhode Island H5061 would have required courts to order the appointment of an animal care advocate wherever the custody or well-being of an animal is at issue. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended that the bill be held for further study.**

Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment



Alabama HB393/SB273 was signed into law on May 19. This new law allows for the use of a registered therapy dog in legal proceedings, when permitted by the judge, to assist a victim or witness in order to reduce unnecessary emotional distress and allow full and factual testimony. It authorizes a judge to use discretionary funds to offset the costs for a registered handler of a registered therapy dog used in a legal proceeding.



California AB411 allows child witnesses in any serious or violent felony cases to have a therapy or facility dog present during court testimony. Procedures will be established requiring the party seeking to have the dog present to attest to the training and credentials of the dog and its handler and facts necessitating the need for the dog. The court could reject the request if it finds the dog's presence would cause undue prejudice to the defendant or would be unduly disruptive to the court proceeding. The bill passed the House 79-0 and the Senate 39-0 and was **signed into law on Sept. 26**.



Idaho SB 1089 amends Idaho's procedures for witnesses in criminal proceedings to allow facility dogs to remain at the witness stand with a child during testimony. **The measure was signed into law** by Gov. Butch Otter on March 27 and took effect July 1.



Michigan HB 4025 would increase the penalties for animal abuse committed in the presence of a child to a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year's imprisonment, \$2,000 fine, and 300 hours of community service. The bill is in the Committee on Law and Justice.



New York S1432 and **A5048** criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. **S1432** passed the Senate and both bills are in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



New York S2470 and companion bill **A2140**, and **S728** and companion bill **A3845**, would increase penalties for aggravated animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child. **S2470** is in the Senate Agriculture Committee; **A2140** is in the Assembly Codes Committee. **S728** passed the Senate and joined and **A3845** in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



Texas HB 289 would have made it a violation to harm or threaten a pet or assistance animal belonging to a child under a protection-from-abuse order. The bill was in the House Human Services Committee, but **no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned**.

Animal Hoarding



New Jersey A3638 would establish animal hoarding as an animal cruelty offense and require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders. The bill was reported favorably out of the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.



New York A44 would create the crime of companion animal hoarding, defined as ownership, possession or custody of more than 25 companion animals living in conditions likely to jeopardize the health and well-being of the animals and/or people. Offenders would be required to undergo mental health evaluation and may be required to undergo counseling and be prohibited from owning animals. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



Rhode Island S390 would define animal hoarding and add it to the list of conduct that is considered cruelty to animals. The bill passed the Senate and was placed on the House consent calendar for Sept. 19.



Rhode Island HB5882 adds the hoarding of animals to the list of offenses defined as cruelty to animals and requires a mental health evaluation for a person convicted of animal cruelty involving hoarding. The bill cleared the House and the Senate on Sept. 19.

Psychological Evaluation of Offenders



Mississippi HB 575 would have defined malicious intent of a dog or cat as felony-level aggravated cruelty, mandated psychological evaluations for offenders, and mandated police and sheriffs to report all investigations of cruelty to a dog or cat into the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). **The bill died in committee on Jan. 31.**



New Jersey A2367 and **S529**, "Shyanne's Law," would require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders, and mental health counseling if warranted by the evaluation. Currently, mental health counseling is mandated only for juvenile offenders. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources and Senate Economic Growth Committees.



New Mexico HB 210 would have created a new category of "extreme cruelty to animals" and would have required persons convicted of this offense to undergo psychological counseling. **The bill was in committee when the regular Legislature session ended.**

Cross-Reporting



Iowa S.F. 129 would have required veterinarians who suspect animal abuse, neglect or torture to report the incident to law enforcement agencies with good-faith immunity from civil and criminal liability. Law enforcement officials would have been required to file a child endangerment alert report with the Department of Human Services if a minor child witnesses suspected animal abuse, neglect or torture. Courts could, and in some cases would have been required to, order psychological or psychiatric evaluation or treatment. The bill would have created seven new criminal offenses describing animal abuse, neglect, torture, abandonment, and endangerment. The bill was in the Senate Agriculture Committee but **no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**



Maine LD 157 would have required veterinarians who suspect an animal to be the subject of cruelty or neglect to report the case to the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Currently, Maine veterinarians are permitted to report cruelty or neglect, and are required to report only "aggravated" animal cruelty. **The bill died in the Senate.**



Gov. Larry Hogan **signed Maryland HB 1463 into law** on May 4. It requires a veterinarian who believes that an animal that she or he has treated has been subjected to cruelty or fighting to report the case to law enforcement or county animal control in a timely manner. Existing law only encouraged reporting and did not include animal fighting among the provisions. Practitioners will continue to have immunity from civil and criminal liability when reporting. The bill passed the House by a vote of 118-15 and was approved unanimously 47-0 in the Senate. **It took effect Oct. 1.**



Massachusetts S.295 would add domestic violence workers, animal control officers, and humane officers to the list of mandated reporters of suspected child sexual abuse. The bill is in the Education Committee.



Massachusetts S.1159 would require employees or contractors of the Department of Children & Families, Department of Elder Affairs investigators, and Disabled Persons Protection Commission investigators to report suspected animal abuse. The bill would add animal control officers as mandatory reporters of child abuse, elder abuse and abuse against disabled persons. The bill would also affect *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*. The bill is in the Committee on Municipal and Regional Government.



Three companion measures address cross-reporting in **Michigan**. **HB 4441** would amend the Child Protection Law to add animal control officers to the list of professions mandated to report suspected child abuse or child neglect. **HB 4442** would amend the Michigan Penal Code to require Child Protective Services employees to report suspected animal abuse or neglect to an animal control or law enforcement officer in the jurisdiction where the animal was found, with anonymity, the presumption of having acted in good faith, and immunity from civil or criminal liability. Failure to report, or making a false report, would be punishable offenses. **HB 4443** would amend the Code of Criminal Procedure to make the intentional false reporting of animal abuse a felony. The bills are in the House Judiciary Committee.



Minnesota HF 787 and **SF1167** would have given immunity from civil liability to veterinarians, who are mandated to report suspected animal cruelty, abuse and neglect to peace officers, humane agents or animal control officers. **The measures died in committee.**



New York S621 and companion bill **A4904** would require veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty to police, SPCAs, peace officers, district attorney's offices, animal control officers, the department of agriculture and markets, or other appropriate government agencies and to turn over necessary records. New York veterinarians are currently permitted to report but are not required to do so. The bills, sponsored by Sen. Phil Boyle and Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal, are in the respective Higher Education Committees.





Ohio HB147 would add agents of the Ohio Humane Society to the list of professionals who have a duty to report suspected child abuse to a public children's services agency or peace officer. It also would repeal a provision of the Humane Society Law that specifically requires humane society agents to remove a child from his or her parents when the agent deems it to be in the child's best interest. Current law designates agents of county humane societies as mandated reporters, but not agents of the Ohio Humane Society. Current law also requires public children's services agencies to prepare a memorandum of understanding to be signed by specified law enforcement and judicial officers in their jurisdiction, including the county humane society; the bill would allow the Ohio Humane Society to be a signatory as well. The bill is in the Civil Justice Committee.




Pennsylvania SB 176 would add animal control and humane society police officers to the list of individuals mandated to report possible child abuse, and social services employees to report possible cases of animal cruelty. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.





 **Pennsylvania HB 1238 (“Libre’s Law”)** was signed into law on June 28. It used Link premises to overhaul the state’s anti-cruelty statutes with enhanced penalties, and grants immunity from civil and criminal liability for veterinarians, technicians and assistants who report suspected animal abuse.


 **Rhode Island H5392** would have required all child protection and domestic violence caseworkers to report suspected animal abuse to animal control and humane agencies, and that animal control and humane officers be mandated to report suspected child abuse and domestic violence to child protection and domestic violence agencies. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended the bill be held for further study.**


Animal Abuse and Other Crimes


 **California AB 197** would add animal abuse, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, and other crimes to the list of “violent” felonies that could be prosecuted as a 3rd strike with additional years of imprisonment under the Three Strikes Law. The bill is in the Committee on Public Safety.


 **Indiana SB 306** would have increased the penalty for attending an animal fighting contest from a Class A misdemeanor to a Level 6 felony. The bill was in the Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law but **no action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**


 **Kentucky HB 135** would have redefined animal torture to include deliberate neglect or physical abuse that results in death or serious physical injury to a dog or cat, and barred offenders from owning dogs or cats. **The bill died in the Judiciary Committee.**


 **Massachusetts S.1159** would add the crimes of animal cruelty and fighting as specifically enumerated offenses which would allow the prosecution to ask for pre-trial detention on the grounds of the defendant’s dangerousness. The bill would also mandate *Cross-Training*. The bill is in the Committee on Municipal and Regional Government.


 **New Jersey A 2738** would expand the criminal and civil acts of animal cruelty to include the theft or release of an animal during the commission of a burglary. The bill is in the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.


 **New Mexico HJM 6** requested that the state Departments of Public Safety and Children, Youth & Families consider training on The Link between animal abuse and family violence in their training curricula for field workers and other appropriate staff. The measure passed the House by a vote of 67-0 **but no action had been taken by the Senate when the Legislative session ended.**

 **New York S1680** and companion bill **A3038** would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. **S1680** passed the Senate on Jan. 30 and was referred to the Assembly Agriculture Committee; **A3038** is in the Codes Committee.


 **New York S251** would expand animal fighting prohibitions to criminalize promoting, attending, facilitating, training, breeding or selling fighting animals, or selling, manufacturing or owning animal fighting paraphernalia. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.


 **Oregon HB 2026** would have appropriated money from the General Fund to the Department of Justice to fund a position dedicated exclusively to assisting local district attorneys and law enforcement with the prosecution of cases involving the “detriment or risk of detriment” to animals. **The bill was in committee when the Legislature adjourned.**


 **Rhode Island H5728** would have imposed further penalties for deliberate or unintentional harming of animals during the commission of any crime. Any sentence imposed would run consecutively to any sentence imposed for the underlying offense. **The House Judiciary Committee recommended the bill be held for further study.**


 **Texas HB 1357** would have defined as “family violence” coercive, controlling or punishing acts or threats of abuse directed against an animal owned by a member of the household or someone with whom the abuser has had a dating relationship. It also made technical corrections to assist prosecutors in animal cruelty cases. The bill had been approved unanimously by the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee but **no further action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**


Animal Sexual Abuse

 **H.R. 1494/S.654 -- the PACT (Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture) Act** – would amend and update 18 U.S. Code § 48 to expand the definition of “animal crushing,” as pertains to “crush videos,” to include any act in which animals are subjected to serious bodily injury or conduct that, if committed against a person, would be defined as sexual abuse or aggravated sexual abuse. The bills have 261 co-sponsors and are in the House and Senate Judiciary Committees.

 **Kentucky HB 143** would have made the sexual assault of a dog or cat a first-offense Class D felony, and a Class C felony if committed in the presence of a minor. Currently, bestiality is illegal in Kentucky only if it occurs in conjunction with prostitution. Offenders would have been barred from owning dogs or cats for 5 years for a first offense, and lifetime for subsequent convictions. **The bill died in the Judiciary Committee.**

 **Kentucky HB 480** would have created a new offense of sexual assault against an animal and allowed a peace officer to seize an animal. Accepted animal husbandry and veterinary medical practices would have been exempted. **The bill died in the Judiciary Committee.**

 **Massachusetts S.805** would amend Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. Ch. 272, § 34, which currently uses the archaic language prohibiting “the abominable and detestable crime against nature either with mankind or with any animal,” to prohibit “a sexual act on an animal, uses an object to sexually abuse an animal, or knowingly permits a sexual act with an animal on any premises under such person’s control.” The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.

 **Missouri HB 431** would have allowed persons convicted of having sex with an animal to petition to have their names removed from the state sex offenders registry. **The bill was in committee when the Legislature adjourned.**



Nevada AB 391 adds a new section to Nevada's Revised Statutes, Chapter 201 ("Crimes Against Public Decency and Good Morals") that now defines bestiality as a gross misdemeanor that can be upgraded to a Category D felony if the animal dies or suffers serious bodily injury as a result, or if the offender has a prior conviction for animal cruelty. Offenders will be required to permanently forfeit any animals in the home and can not work with or volunteer where animals are present. Courts can authorize offenders to undergo psychological evaluation and counseling and to pay costs for the care and medical expenses of the animals. The measure will also cover anyone who causes, aids, promotes or observes bestiality. Accepted animal husbandry, veterinary and conformation judging practices are excluded. The bill passed both the Assembly and the Senate unanimously and **was signed into law on May 23** by Gov. Brian Sandoval. Its provisions took effect Oct. 1.



Texas SB 1232 creates a new section 21.09 of the Penal Code, making it a felony to commit bestiality, obtain an animal for this purpose, or organize, promote, conduct or observe bestiality. The crime is considered a state jail felony unless it is committed in the presence of a child, results in serious bodily injury or death of the animal, or the offender has a prior conviction, in which case it is a 2nd-degree felony. Generally accepted veterinary and animal husbandry practices are exempted. Upon conviction, the court may order the defendant to relinquish custody of any animals and to participate in a psychological treatment or other appropriate program. The measure passed the Senate and the House unanimously and **was signed into law and took effect Sept. 1, 2017**.



Vermont H.62 adds a new category of sexual conduct to the various conditions defined as cruelty to animals. The measure amends 13 V.S.A. Chapter 8 to define sexual conduct as any act between a person and animal that involves contact or insertion between the mouth, sex organ or anus of a person and an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose. The definition extends to anyone possessing, selling, transferring, purchasing or obtaining an animal for sexual conduct; or organizing, promoting, aiding, abetting or participating as an observer; or permitting sexual conduct on his or her premises or advertising it. **The bill was signed into law on June 7 and took effect July 1.**



West Virginia HB 2664 would have added bestiality to the code of crimes against chastity, morality and decency. Individuals who engage in, abet, observe, permit, advertise, or promote bestiality, or induce a child to commit bestiality, would have been guilty of a misdemeanor, or a felony upon previous convictions or serious bodily injury or death to the animal. Courts would have been able to order offenders to surrender all their animals, prohibit ownership of animals for five or 15 years, and undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation or counseling. **No action had been taken when the Legislature adjourned.**

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Child and 15 Pets Removed from Home with Raw Sewage and Garbage



Renee Mobley

A Phelps, N.Y. woman is facing 15 counts of animal cruelty, child endangerment and contempt, and a house has been declared uninhabitable, after a girl, 13 cats and two dogs were found living in a home with animal feces, urine, garbage, and raw sewage. A joint investigation by the Ontario County Humane Society, the Phelps Police Department, and Ontario County Probation and Child Services found the scene, which neighbors told [WHEC-TV](#) had been deteriorating for a long time. Renee Mobley, 33, was charged. The [Rochester Democrat & Chronicle](#) reported that Mobley had been charged in 2016 with 18 counts of animal cruelty after a newborn miniature horse was found dead, and 11 other miniature horses and seven geese were found without adequate food or water. She was convicted in that case and was serving probation at the time of the latest incident.

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☒ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse



Matthew and Stormee Brown

Couple with Child Neglect and Drug Charges Re-arrested for Animal Cruelty and Stolen Vehicle

Police in Tulsa, Okla. arrested a couple and charged them with animal cruelty and possession of a stolen vehicle after allegedly observing a pickup truck dragging a puppy down an expressway. Matthew Brown, 31, of Claremore and Stormee Brown, 26, of Tulsa were charged, [KWTU](#) reported. The officer reported seeing something fly out of the back of the truck that turned out to be a puppy hanging by a rope tied to its collar. After stopping the vehicle, the officer reported that the bed of the pickup was covered in dry feces and that a registration check revealed that the truck had been stolen in Claremore.

The couple had also been arrested last January after their two children, aged 3 and 4, were found wandering in a Tulsa neighborhood without shoes or coats while the parents were passed out, surrounded by drug paraphernalia. The Browns were charged with child neglect and possession of drug paraphernalia in that incident.

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☒ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse

Animal Sex Abuser Seeks Chemical Castration

A man with a history of sexually abusing animals dating back to the early 1990s has asked a federal court to consider chemically castrating him and release him from prison rather than having him serve more time in jail. Michael Bessigano, 46, of Hobart, Ind. has been in jail since January for allegedly violating his parole by receiving obscene materials online, the [Chicago Tribune](#) reported. Bessigano pleaded guilty in 2009 to federal charges of downloading animal pornography. His attorney argued that Bessigano's traumatic childhood did not include affection from his parents, so he sought such affection from animals.



Michael Bessigano

☐ Animal Abuse ☒ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse



Ex-Con Gets Two Years for Arson that Killed Four Kittens

An ex-con with an extensive criminal history who pled guilty to arson and animal cruelty for burning four kittens to death was sentenced on Sept. 8 to two years in prison. Christopher Rainey, 27, of Great Falls, S. Car., was convicted of using gasoline to burn down a shed that had five kittens in it, plus illegal use of a vehicle and damage to the Chester County Jail after his arrest, the [Rock Hill Herald](#) reported. A fifth kitten survived. Rainey's criminal record stretches back at least a decade with two prison sentences for burglary, assaults and other charges. Rainey asked the court for mercy,

saying that he uses marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, and prescribed medications for mental health problems. "He does crazy stuff when he is off his medications," his mother told the court. Judge Dan Hall said that illegal drug use did not excuse his criminal acts.

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse

Buffalo Man Charged with Stabbing Dog, Weapons Offenses

A seasonal parks employee for the City of Buffalo, N.Y. was charged with animal cruelty, criminal possession of a weapon and menacing after he allegedly stabbed a dog that a woman was walking. James Craddock, 46, and another person reportedly left the scene and were later found in a city vehicle. The dog was taken to a veterinary clinic and is expected to recover, according to [Spectrum News](#).

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☒ Child Sexual Abuse



Husband Charged with Slitting Throats of Wife's Puppies

A man who allegedly slit the throats of four of his wife's puppies because he wanted to get back at her was charged with felony animal cruelty. Christopher Vandenberg, 38, of Mansfield, Ohio, was arrested after humane agents from the Humane Society of Richland County rescued the litter of six pit bull puppies; four had had their throats slit and a fifth had a leg injury, the [Mansfield News Journal](#) reported. The paper was told that Vandenberg had attempted suicide. His wife had been gone for two days and called police after she returned home and saw the dogs' condition.

The pups were all said to be recovering under the Humane Society's care.

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☒ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☐ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse



Man Sentenced to 5 Years for Animal Cruelty, Burglary

A Los Angeles man who was caught twice on video throwing his pit bull into a ravine, and who was later charged with an unrelated residential burglary, was sentenced to five years in a California state prison. Andres Spancky Raya, 21, pleaded no contest on Aug. 9 and received a two-year sentence for the animal abuse and five years for the burglary, to be served concurrently, [KTTV](#) reported. Surveillance video captured Raya dumping the dog, then known as "Mary Jane," into the ravine on Sept. 26, 2016, then returning to the site two days later and doing it again. The dog has since recovered and has been adopted.

Andres Raya

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse

Teen Charged with Killing Mother Who Wouldn't Let Him Keep His Puppy

A Michigan teenager has been charged with murder and felony firearms possession for allegedly shooting his mother in the head just hours after she told him he could not keep a puppy he had brought home. Ingham County Sheriff's deputies arrested Andrew David Willson, 19, of Wheatfield Township. The [Lansing State-Journal](#) reported that authorities said Willson admitted to getting a .22 Magnum rifle from a locked cabinet and shooting her in the back of the head as she slept.

☐ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse
☒ Other Crimes ☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse



Andrew David Willson

Man Charged with Assaulting Girlfriend and Killing Kitten and Rat



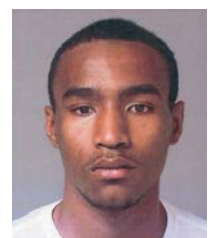
Corey McCall

A man accused of killing a kitten and a pet rat, severely injuring another kitten and assaulting his girlfriend, had his bond reduced from \$150,000 to \$75,000 while he awaits trial but also had a protective order issued against him on behalf of the girlfriend, who told news media that he really is a caring person. Corey McCall, 22, of West Hartford, Conn. was charged with cruelty to animals, disorderly conduct, unlawful discharge of a firearm, and possession of marijuana, the [Hartford Courant](#) reported. Police said McCall shot the rat with a BB gun and assaulted his girlfriend in an apartment. A few days later he allegedly killed one kitten by hitting it in the head with a TV remote and shot the other one with a BB gun. McCall was convicted in 2016 for disorderly conduct and has another case pending on charges of speeding and interfering with an officer. The girlfriend acknowledged that she is in a difficult situation.

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☒ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse

Man Facing Six Years for Stomping Puppies to Death in Front of Children

Donald Yearwood, 22, of Odenton, Md., faces as much as six years in prison after pleading guilty to 24 counts of animal cruelty and mutilation for stomping puppies to death in front of several children. The [Baltimore Sun](#) reported that Yearwood became upset when he was awakened from his sleep by the sound of children playing with the puppies. Prosecutors said he dumped the box of puppies on the floor and stomped on their heads while the children ran screaming from the house. Three of the puppies were killed and a fourth had to be euthanized. "The facts of this case are disturbing – first and foremost for its pure depravity, but secondly for performing such a deranged act in front of children," said Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby. Yearwood is slated to be sentenced on Oct. 19.



Donald Yearwood

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☐ Other Crimes
☒ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse

Man Gets One-Year Sentence for Torturing Dog

A man with a history of assault pleaded guilty to torturing and killing a dog in a plea bargain that saw two other charges of resisting and obstructing police dropped. Brandon Nickson, of Detroit, was sentenced to one year in jail on Sept. 25 in a St. Clair County, Mich. court, the [Port Huron Times-Herald](#) reported. Neighbors called police last April 4 to report Nickson had beaten and tortured a 4-year-old German shepherd mix with what a forensic veterinarian said may have been a taser or a stun gun. Nickson's attorney said that while his client may not be the greatest at raising dogs, he



Brandon Nickson

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse



Brian Reichardt

Convicted Animal Abuser Charged with Child Sexual Assault

A man whose parole on charges of strangulation and suffocation was revoked because he was subsequently convicted of repeatedly throwing a 1-year-old pit bull against a wall because he was angry with his girlfriend has pled not guilty to a charge that he sexually assaulted a 6-year-old girl back in 2009. Brian Reichardt, 34, formerly of Kenosha, Wis. allegedly locked his son out of the bedroom where he and the girl had been playing and then sexually assaulted her, promising her he would buy her a toy if she remained silent. The [Kenosha News](#) said that in 2009 Reichardt had been charged with two counts of sexual assault of another child, which were dismissed, and was convicted on one charge of sexual assault. His criminal history also includes convictions for armed robbery, burglary and battery. The girl, now 14, told investigators that the incident "had been eating her up for years and she finally needed to talk about it."

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☐ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☒ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☒ Child Sexual Abuse



Decarlos Jones

Man Charged with Decapitating Pup in Anger over Girlfriend

A Phoenix, Ariz. Man who was angry at his girlfriend because another man spoke to her at work and at her puppy for urinating in the house has been charged with animal cruelty for allegedly beheading the dog and placing the dog's head on the living room table for her to see. Decarlos Jones, 29, was charged with repeatedly hitting the head of "Bella," a six-month-old pup, against the bathtub and then stabbing her with a knife, according to [KSAZ-TV](#). Police say Jones told them he is bipolar and has PTSD.

☒ Animal Abuse ☐ Animal Sexual Abuse ☒ Domestic Violence ☐ Elder Abuse ☐ Other Crimes
☐ Child Abuse and Neglect ☐ Child Sexual Abuse

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

OCTOBER 1 – 31 (NATIONWIDE): DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH



Oct. 11 – Pittsfield, Mass.: The [HAVEN](#) (Human/Animal Violence Education Network) Network will kick off another season of meetings, presentations and collaboration at the Berkshire Humane Society classroom.

Oct. 11 (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on “Connecting the Dots: Animal Abuse’s Links to Other Family Violence in Military and Civilian Families” for the [National Victim Assistance Academy](#).

Oct. 13 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas LINK Coalition](#) will meet at the SPCA of Texas.

Oct. 14 – Redmond, Ore.: Phil Arkow will present on The Link at the [Pet Evacuation Team’s](#) Animal Welfare Conference.

Oct. 14 – Portland, Ore.: Allie Phillips and Diane Balkin will be on a panel regarding “Criminal Cruelty Cases: Integrating Animal Law into the Mainstream” at the [25th Annual Animal Law Conference](#).

Oct. 19 – Virginia Beach, Va.: Nancy Blaney, Michelle Welch and Glenna Tinney will discuss “Increasing Collaboration Among Animal Welfare and Domestic Violence Agencies” at the National Animal Care & Control Association/Virginia Animal Control Association [Training Conference](#). Also on the agenda: “NIBRS: The Critical Role of Animal Control and Humane Law Enforcement in Reporting Animal Cruelty to the FBI,” presented by Dan DeSousa and Mary Lou Randour.

Oct. 20 – Worcester, Mass.: The [HAVEN](#) (Human/Animal Violence Education Network) Network will conduct a Link training at YOU, Inc.

Oct. 23 – Plymouth, Mich.: Lisa Lunghofer will present “Animal Abuse and Children: What You Need to Know” and “Animal Abuse and Children: Tools You Can Use” at the 36th Annual [Michigan Statewide Conference](#) on Child Abuse and Neglect, Prevention, Assessment and Treatment.

Oct. 24 – Battle Creek, Mich.: Allie Phillips will present on “Working Effectively with Your Prosecutor’s Office” at the [Great Lakes Animal Welfare Conference](#).

Oct. 25 – West Palm Beach, Fla.: The [South Florida Link Coalition](#) will hold its quarterly meeting.

Oct. 25 – Casa Blanca, N. Mex.: Kristina Pacheco of the [Native America Humane Society](#) will present on “How Recognizing The Link Can Help Tribal Communities.”

Oct. 26 – Bartlett, N.H.: Phil Arkow and Jerilee Zezula will present on “The Cruelty Connection” at the [New Hampshire Attorney General’s Annual Conference](#).

Oct. 26 – (Online): Marissa Martino will lead a [webinar](#) for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection on “Enhance Your Communication with Your Feline Companion” to help SAF-T shelter personnel adjust to pets in their facilities. LINK-Letter readers can use the code CHANGE for one-time free access.

Oct. 27 (online): The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys will conduct a [webinar](#) on “Unusual Victims,” offering prosecutors legal frameworks for bringing charges of cruelty and neglect when the victims are unusual species such as birds, reptiles, rabbits, and small “pocket pets.”

Oct. 27 – Marlborough, Mass.: Lorna Grande and Martha Grace will present “The Connections between Animal Cruelty and Human Violence” at the Animal Control Officers of Massachusetts’ [Day of Training](#).

NOVEMBER 3 – ONE HEALTH DAY. [National and global events](#) are planned to celebrate the links between human and veterinary medicine and collaborative protection of people, animals and the environment.

Nov. 3 – Phoenix, Md.: Link topics will be featured prominently at the [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#), sponsored by the Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office’s Animal Abuse Unit and the Maryland State’s Attorneys’ Association.

Nov. 6-10 – Sanford, Fla.: “The Cycle of Violence” will be included in the week-long Module C classes offered in the National Animal Care & Control Association’s National Animal Control and Humane Officers (NACHO) [Training Academy](#).

Nov. 7 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: [The Oklahoma Link Coalition](#) will hold its Intersection Conference. Call-in capability will also be available. Speakers will include Randy Lockwood, Melinda Merck, Cynthia Armstrong, Kimberly Teachman, Mary Anne McCaffree, and Diana Webster.

Nov. 7 – Albany, N.Y.: Liz Murphy of the Native America Humane Society will present on “Providing Services for Victims of Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse in Tribal Communities” at the New York State Office of Victim Services’ [2017 Conference](#).

Nov. 9 – (Online): Marissa Martino will lead a [webinar](#) for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection on “Enhance Your Communication with Your Canine Companion” to help SAF-T shelter personnel adjust to pets in their facilities. LINK-Letter readers can use the code CHANGE for one-time free access.

Nov. 15-17 – Portland, Ore.: The [7th National Animal Cruelty Conference](#), sponsored by the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and the Animal Legal Defense Fund, will be held. Speakers will include Diane Balkin, Thomas A. Balmer, Madeline Bernstein, Don Cocek, Emily Davidson, Gillian Deegan, April Doherty, Laura Dunn, Sherwin Figueroa, Jeremy Hoffman, Jill Hollander, Jake Kamins, Mark Kumpf, David LaBahn, Howard Lawrence, Adam Lippe, Randy Lockwood, Martin Mack, Melinda Merck, David Rosengard, John Thompson, Michelle Welch, and Bunny Welsh.

Nov. 24 – Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Allie Phillips will present on Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)TM at the [International Fund for Animal Welfare](#) convention.

Dec. 4 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada: An Animal [Cruelty Pre-Conference for Crown Prosecutors](#) and allied professionals will be held by the National Centre for the Prosecution of Animal Cruelty, as the opening day for the Canadian Link Conference.

Dec. 4-6 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada: The inaugural Canadian Link Conference will be held, under the auspices of the [Canadian Federation of Humane Societies](#).

Dec. 14 – (Online): Allie Phillips will lead a [webinar](#) for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection on “Advances in Human-Animal Interaction Laws” including domestic violence pet protection, cross-reporting, pets in women’s shelters, and more. LINK-Letter readers can use the code CHANGE for one-time free access.

Jan. 11, 2018 – (Online): Phil Arkow and Amber Ahern will lead a webinar on “How to Build a Successful and Sustainable Link Coalition” as part of the Institute for Human-Animal Connection’s Interconnected Webinar Series. [Registration](#) is free for *LINK-Letter* readers: use Promo Code COSHELTER.

Jan. 18 – Philadelphia, Pa.: Phil Arkow will present on The Link to the Pennsylvania Bar Association’s [Animal Law Committee](#).

Feb. 15 – (Online): Allie Phillips will lead a [webinar](#) for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection on “Linked-Informed Response: Changing Agency Procedures” about how human and animal welfare agencies, prosecutors, law enforcement, and allied professionals are changing their policies and procedures. LINK-Letter readers can use the code CHANGE for one-time free access.

March 9 – Dallas, Texas: Phil Arkow will speak at the [North Texas Link Coalition](#)’s CEU Conference.

July 6 – Vancouver, B.C., Canada: Phil Arkow will present on The Link, Clinical and Diagnostic Indicators of Animal Abuse, and Addressing Practice Management Concerns in Responding to Suspected Abuse at the [Canadian Veterinary Medical Association](#) Convention.

To subscribe to The Link-Letter (*it’s free!*) – Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow (arkowpets@snip.net) Please 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,
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Lesley Ashworth

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