



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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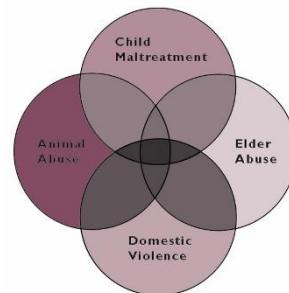
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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Phil Arkow, Coordinator and Editor

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OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

JAVMA Article Explores DVMs' Role in Preventing Domestic Violence



A recent incident in Deland, Fla., in which an abused woman snuck a note to her veterinary clinic's staff that she was being held at gunpoint (*See the June 2018 LINK-Letter*) prompted an article in the September 15 issue of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* regarding practitioners' options and opportunities when a case of domestic violence is presented.

Veterinarians and their staff have the potential to play a lifesaving role in preventing and responding to domestic violence, wrote Malinda Larkin. Although their primary responsibility is to the animal, they also have an opportunity to be both educators and witnesses "when domestic violence arrives at the clinic door."

Larkin cited Michele Laaksonen, Executive Director of Madeline's House, a Virginia facility for families experiencing domestic and sexual abuse, who presented at AVMA's 2018 national conference. "Judges and juries do not like when Fido is hurt," she said. "While it's a little easier for people to question why a person didn't leave or acted the way they did, animals are innocent, and people get emotional when someone is cruel to an animal. Those cases often got the victim away from the perpetrator more successfully than a sexual assault case."

Because felony animal cruelty provisions exist in all 50 states, and many states mandate psychology assessment and treatment for animal cruelty offenders, animal abuse charges may be prosecuted more effectively than domestic violence cases, she said.

Laaksonen suggested that veterinarians can prevent and address domestic violence by making screening a part of their everyday work, beginning with intake and letting new clients know that this is a subject you can talk about.

"When you ask, make sure it's face-to-face in a confidential space. Be direct and nonjudgmental. Give resources and referrals to other agencies that can help," she said. "There is no patient-doctor confidentiality. The pet is the patient, not the client. Your role is basically with the pet. You go as far as you can preparing the human and animal to leave the situation and hope other systems come into play with whatever human services are available."

Laaksonen encourages veterinarians to distribute information about intimate partner violence and local resources that can help victims and their pets. They can reach out to domestic violence shelters to form a collaborative relationship. Veterinary professionals can train shelter staff on screenings for pet safety, putting together safety plans for pets, and how to spot signs of pet abuse.

The current article follows a 2017 JAVMA article by Molly Allison ([See the February 2017 LINK-Letter](#)) calling for veterinarians to be more responsive to domestic violence issues. National veterinary associations in Scotland and New Zealand have already taken similar stances, based in part upon the premise that veterinarians, dentists and hairdressers are the three professions most likely to encounter women who have been physically beaten ([See the October 2015 LINK-Letter](#)).

Michele Laaksonen offers the following guide for veterinarians and other practice staff asking questions related to domestic violence:

When to ask questions:

- Intake of new clients.
- Routine history or health assessment.
- When abuse is suspected.

What to ask:

- What are family members' attitudes toward the pet?
- Is there an order of protection?
- Are there any safety concerns you have?
- Are there any obstacles in providing care for the pet?
- Questions about signs of abuse and interpersonal violence, using the Power and Control Wheel.

How to ask:

- Face-to-face in a confidential space.
- Directly and nonjudgmentally.
- With resources or referrals.
- With appropriate responses:
 - "I believe you."
 - "No one deserves to be hurt."
 - "There are resources available."



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(arkowpets@snip.net)

Please tell us what organization(s) you're with
and where you're located.

Connecticut Gets Its First Pet-Friendly Shelter

Connecticut has become the 40th state to offer domestic violence survivors a pet-friendly shelter with the opening of pet facilities at [Safe Futures](#) in New London County. The facility, only the second in New England, is the only member of the [Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#) that allows survivors seeking shelter to bring with them their pets.

The program is a result of a \$15,000 grant from [RedRover](#), which offers capital construction grants to shelters and individual grants to persons needing help paying veterinary and boarding expenses so they can leave abusive situations. This grant will help improve Safe Futures' facilities' fencing so that dogs can play off-leash, create kennels for cats, and cover veterinary bills and other pet supplies.

Clients are staying longer because they have the emotional support of their pets and don't have to worry about what will happen to pets left behind.

Safe Futures personnel say that the new program has already seen promising trends: survivors are staying at the shelter longer and are less likely to return to their abusers, due to the emotional support offered by the pets and because they are not worrying about a pet left behind.

In addition to welcoming survivors' pets, three canine and feline staff members are improving residents' quality of life. Luna, a white boxer pup, and Jack and Jill, two Russian blue cats, are providing comfort. Residents are also helping to train Luna as a licensed therapy dog.

The program was featured in [The Day](#) newspaper and described one resident, Madison, who left her two dogs behind when she realized that she would be killed if she stayed. It was like ripping out her heart, she said. Her former partner also was abusive to the dogs, including a tiny one that he considered "his" pet but still would throw against a wall to assert his control in the household. Madison is now at least getting emotional support from Luna.

In light of Safe Futures' success, CCADV is working with shelters across the state to help develop similar programs that work for their communities, including Companions in Crisis, where veterinarians help find placements for survivors' pets. Another resource is [Sheltering Animals and Families Together \(SAF-T\)](#)TM, which has model construction plans, programs, and a resource bank of 122 American and nine foreign domestic violence shelters with pet co-sheltering programs that are either operational or being set up.

The only other known SAF-T shelter in New England is believed to be the Clarina Howard Nichols Center in Morrisville, Vermont.

“Paws for a Cause” to Raise Awareness

The Sanctuary domestic violence shelter in Hopkinsville, Ky., is celebrating Domestic Violence Awareness Month on Oct. 13 with “[Paws for a Cause](#),” a fundraising walk and picnic for people and their pets to benefit the Pet Protection Program. Participating pooches will receive a free purple bandanna. The Sanctuary serves domestic violence survivors in Caldwell, Christian, Crittenden, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Muhlenberg, Todd, and Trigg Counties.



Formerly the Women's Center of SE CT



Corporations, Nonprofits Push for Passage of PAWS Act

The federal [Pet and Women Safety \(PAWS\) Act of 2017](#), which would allow domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders that include pets and livestock to be enforced across state lines and make up to \$3,000,000 in federal funding available to help shelters build petkeeping facilities ([See the November 2017 LINK-Letter](#)), has gained the support of several key corporate and nonprofit entities seeking to promote its passage. The bill is the first piece of federal legislation designed to protect pets of domestic violence survivors, as 32 state legislatures have already done.

The [Veterinarian's Money Digest](#), noting that as many as [85% of women](#) in shelters report that their pet was also harmed by their abuser and that many survivors delay seeking help because they don't want to leave their pet behind, reported that a coalition has been formed to help see the PAWS Act get passed.

Coalition members include:

- Nestle Purina PetCare
- Bayer Corporation
- Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI)
- Noah's Animal House
- Pet Partners
- Urban Research Institute (URI)

The PAWS Act was reintroduced in 2017 after earlier versions of the bill failed to pass in the 114th Congress. Congress has yet to hold an official vote, however its provisions have been added as Section 12503 of H.R. 2 – the Farm Bill.



Claire Ponder Selib

NOVA Promotes Greater Link Awareness

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) published an [alert on its website](#) encouraging victim advocates, adult protective services caseworkers, animal control officers, and other first responders to raise awareness and develop multidisciplinary teams to prevent and respond to all forms of family violence. NOVA Deputy Director Claire Ponder Selib wrote "Animal Cruelty and Interpersonal Violence: Making the Connection" citing data from the National Link Coalition and other organizations in calling for greater inter-agency collaboration to stop all forms of family violence. Thank you, Claire!!!



Animal & Domestic Violence Correlated with Social Disorganization

Breaking away from a focus on the influence of individual characteristics on animal cruelty and guided by social disorganization theory, a recent study has investigated the occurrence of animal cruelty violations in a suburban community in Virginia. The authors discovered that block groups with higher levels of social disorganization, measured by economic disadvantage, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and family disruption, had higher levels of animal cruelty violations and reports of aggravated and simple domestic violence. The rates of animal cruelty violations were significantly correlated with aggravated domestic violence but not reports of simple domestic violence.

-- White, G., & Quick, L.D. (2018, March 9). Animal cruelty, domestic violence, and social disorganization in a suburban setting. *Deviant Behavior*.

Canadian Study Examines Types of Animal Abuse and Women's Decisions to Leave Violent Relationships

A growing body of research has highlighted the significant co-occurrence of violence against women and companion animals in abusive households. Collectively, this work has also documented that sizable proportions of women with pets sampled report that they delayed leaving their partner due to fear for their pets' safety. Using data from 86 residents of 16 battered women's shelters in Canada, this study begins to tease apart the relationship between five types of animal maltreatment (emotional abuse, threats to harm, neglect, physical abuse, and severe physical abuse) and women's deliberations to leave violent relationships. The findings indicate that while the specific types of animal maltreatment are significant motivators for leaving an abusive partner, the length of the relationship and the physical abuse experienced by the woman better explain the degree to which concern for the well-being of the pet kept them from leaving their abuser earlier.

-- Barrett, B. J., Fitzgerald, A., Peirone, A., Stevenson, R., & Cheung, C. H. (2018). Help-seeking among abused women with pets: Evidence from a Canadian sample. *Violence and Victims*, 33(4), 604-626.

California Becomes 3rd State to Award Pet Custody in Animals' Best Interests

California, the nation's most populous state with an estimated 39,540,000 people, 7,118,000 cats and 6,687,000 dogs, has become the third state to allow courts to award custody of pets in the animals' best interests in divorce settlements. The provision helps to avoid the acrimonious custody and property disputes that often mark marriage dissolutions particularly when domestic violence has been alleged, and models long-standing provisions that allow courts to award child custody based on the children's best interests.



Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law [AB 2274](#) on Sept. 27, which adds a new Sec. 2605 to the Family Code. The law authorizes a court, upon request of a party to proceedings for dissolution of marriage or for legal separation of the parties and notwithstanding other requirements for dividing the community estate of the parties, to assign sole or joint ownership of a community property pet animal taking into consideration the care of the pet animal.



The new provision also allows courts to require a party to pay for the care of pet animals prior to the final determination of ownership. Care is defined as including, but not limited to, the prevention of acts of harm or cruelty as defined by statutes and by the provision of food, water, veterinary care, and safe and protected shelter. The law applies to animals that are community property and kept as household pets.

An estimated 205,500 people are divorced annually in California. While it is not known how many such breakups involve pets, it is estimated that 52.9% of California households have pets.

The law follows similar groundbreaking provisions in Alaska in 2016 and Illinois in 2017 ([See the November 2016 and September 2017 LINK-Letters](#)).

ANIMAL ABUSE &... CHILD MALTREATMENT

Connecticut is Bringing Paws for Kids

A major Link initiative is under way in Connecticut, where Paws for Kids is a partnership between 18 members of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the animal advocacy community to advance animal-assisted interventions for DCF children and to support related advocacy initiatives.



Diane Rosell, Program Manager for DCF, tells *The LINK-Letter* that the group held a kickoff meeting on June 21 and its first steering committee meeting on Aug. 21. Momentum is building that will soon translate to program development, education/training, marketing/communications plans, expansion of Connecticut's child and animal abuse cross-reporting, and evaluations for all focus areas.

Paws for Kids has an overarching goal of increasing child and animal well-being through education, cross-reporting, marketing, and animal-supported therapeutic services for children with trauma.

The Paws for Kids steering committee will focus on five core areas:

- Educating DCF Staff and community providers on cross-reporting and animal-assisted therapy
- Seeking opportunities to expand cross-reporting between DCF and the Department of Agriculture's animal control officers
- Program development to create a DCF Credentialed Service category for animal-assisted interventions
- Marketing and communication for existing and new services
- Evaluation to measuring the impact of the work



Kayden Mancuso

Advocates Seek Law Protecting Children from Parents Who Abuse Animals and People

Advocates in Pennsylvania are asking Gov. Tom Wolf to enact what would be dubbed "Kayden's Law" in memory of a young girl who died at the hands of an abusive father with a history of also abusing animals and people. Kayden Mancuso was only 7 when she was fatally beaten in her Philadelphia home by her father in an apparent murder-suicide. Such a law, Kayden's mother told the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), would better protect children from parents with documented histories of abusive behavior.

Kayden was staying with her father, Jeffrey Mancuso, 41, during a bi-weekly visit when authorities said he killed her and then hanged himself. Mancuso had been known to punch the family's dog and had been aggressive to Kayden's mother and stepfather and Mancuso's own mother. He had punched a gym teacher in high school, and bit off part of a man's ear in a 2012 barroom brawl that led to an aggravated assault conviction.

Advocates are pushing for a law that would prohibit a parent who has exhibited violent behavior from having unsupervised visits with a child in custody battles even if the parent had not previously abused the child.

Does Childhood Animal Cruelty Predict Later Interpersonal Violence?

Conventional wisdom and philosophical thought for centuries have argued that children who abuse animals often go on to become aggressive in adulthood. But is this an oversimplification? Using data collected from 257 anonymous self-reports by male inmates at a medium-security prison, investigators examined the predictive ability of various retrospectively identified childhood animal cruelty methods for later violent crimes toward humans. When exploring whether specific types of animal cruelty were predictive (i.e., drowning, hitting/beating, hitting with rocks, shooting, kicking, choking, burning, stabbing, having sex with animals, and starving/neglecting), the researchers found that recurrent childhood animal cruelty (i.e., committed more than once) and stabbing animals were the only statistically significant variables that predicted recurrent interpersonal violence in adulthood.

-- Hensley, C., & Ketron, J.B. (2018, Sept. 6). The predictive ability of childhood animal cruelty methods for later interpersonal crimes. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 1-9. DOI: 10.1002/bls.2369

ANIMAL ABUSE &... ABUSE OF THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED

Elder/Animal Abuse Link Spotlighted on Website



PetsEmpower

The Links between elder and animal abuse are becoming more widely known, thanks to the work of our friends at Pets Empower, a Boston-based organization that provides information, advocacy and access to pet care resources for domestic violence survivors and training for professionals in the field.

National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow was invited to write a blog on “The Link Between Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse” for the [Pets Empower website](#). The article describes seven issues Linking the welfare of animals, the elderly and the disabled:

1. **Animal neglect:** Seniors who love their pets, but who are on fixed income or who have mobility, transportation or memory issues, may inadvertently neglect their animals.
2. **Self-neglect:** Other seniors may spend their limited funds on their animals and neglect their own needs as a result.
3. **Animal hoarders:** A disproportionate number of animal hoarders, who often live in unhealthy and unsafe environments, are elders.
4. **Deprivation of services:** Seniors may not receive a full range of social and medical services because home health aides, caseworkers and caregivers may be reluctant to enter residences due to the overwhelming stench and presence of vermin, excessive numbers of animals, or dangerous pets threatening their safety.
5. **Pet loss and grief:** The death of a beloved pet can be especially painful to a senior for whom the animal represents either a last link to a deceased spouse, or a prime opportunity for social interaction and physical exercise.
6. **Financial exploitation:** Children have been known to hold their parents' pets hostage to extort money from them.
7. **Service animals:** Elders and disabled individuals who depend on service animals may find spouses or caretakers jealous of the affection shown to these important animals and ill-equipped to respond to their needs.

The article also describes some of the legislative and programmatic responses to these issues, recommendations for Adult Protective Services personnel, and a list of resources for further information.

Illinois APS Addresses The Link

The Link between animal and elder abuse was front-and-center at the 6th Annual Adult Protection & Advocacy Conference sponsored by the Illinois Department on Aging on Sept. 18-20 in Itasca. One of the conference's three goals was to increase caseworkers' skill in understanding the relationship between animal abuse and family violence. The training on this topic had four objectives:



- Demonstrating how the complex motivations behind animal cruelty and animal hoarding impact vulnerable adults.
- Demonstrating how pets can improve the mental and physiological health, resilience, well-being and functioning of seniors.
- Providing strategies that APS and other agencies can incorporate in intakes, referrals, interventions, prevention, prosecution, and treatment.
- Addressing issues of housing, health and safety affecting elders with pets.

National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow presented on "Animal Abuse, Animal Hoarding and Elder Abuse: Challenges and Strategies for APS." The program helped attendees cope with the challenges they face on a daily basis and learn strategies by which they can collaborate with other agencies to protect all victims of family violence.

The other two conference goals were to improve APS personnel's skills when intervening on behalf of adults with disabilities who have experienced domestic and sexual violence, and to increase their understanding of in- and out-patient therapeutic mental health treatment. Illinois' elderly population has increased 31% since 2000 and is expected to increase another 44% by 2030, at which point elders will represent 24% of the state's population.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE **Law Enforcement Challenges of Animal Hoarding Cases Explored**

Animal hoarding has been considered a significant problem by animal welfare and law enforcement professionals for over a century. However, it has only been recognized as an indication of a mental disorder in the last decade. In a [newly published paper](#), Randall Lockwood of the ASPCA (and a member of the National Link Coalition's steering committee) reviews the different forms that animal hoarding can take and the current understanding of the prevalence, demographics and possible etiology of this disorder.



He concludes that conventional animal cruelty laws have often been inadequate to respond to animal hoarding cases until they reach levels that may involve serious harm to animals and people. He documents how prosecution of such cases can be difficult and often does not adequately consider the mental health issues underlying the problem or the high likelihood of recidivism. Attempts to solve these problems by enacting new laws specifically addressing animal hoarding have been controversial and ineffective. He explores new approaches that coordinate a variety of community resources in response to hoarding cases that offer the best opportunity to respond to both the human and animal problems associated with animal hoarding.

-- Lockwood, R. (2018). *Animal hoarding: The challenge for mental health, law enforcement, and animal welfare professionals*. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 1-19. DOI: 10.1002/bls.2373



“CASA for Animals” in Connecticut Examined

Connecticut's pioneering system of appointing special court advocates to represent animals' interests in cruelty cases, similar to long-established CASA programs for abused children (*See the July 2017 LINK-Letter*), was featured in the August issue of *Veterinary Practice News*. The program involves established pro bono attorneys as well as law school students, causing one critic to note that the animals may not benefit as much from an inexperienced student as they would from an experienced lawyer. Others noted that legal representatives need to be objective about the cases in order to not jeopardize the success of animal cruelty prosecutions.

The advocates' roles can include: ensuring that animals are placed in good situations as their cases evolve; pushing for restitution covering their care needs; explaining the intricacies of animal cruelty to juries; and suggesting that defendants be barred from possessing animals in the future. The article noted that the effectiveness of advocates in securing convictions in criminal cases is unknown. Rhode Island has implemented a similar program, utilizing veterinarians rather than attorneys.

THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

Article Reviews Link Implications in Forensic Assessments

The confluence of developments in the assessment of animal abuse, the evolution of classifying the indicators of conduct disorder, legislative changes involving crimes against animals, and the recent inclusion of crimes against animals in the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System, highlights the critical need for examining the forensic dimensions of animal abuse cases. This recent article provides an overview of the literature to give forensic evaluators an evidence-based framework for assessing cases that include perpetration of violence against animals.

The study includes: the evolution of animal abuse within the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders; the links between animal abuse and psychological disorders; and the Link between animal abuse and numerous crimes, including school shootings, community violence, interpersonal and domestic violence, and children's exposure to these issues. It traces developments in the forensic assessment of animal abuse.

-- Ascione, F.R., McDonald, S.E., Tedeschi, P., & Williams, J.H. (2018, September 12). The relations among animal abuse, psychological disorders, and crime: Implications for forensic assessment. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 1-13.



What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

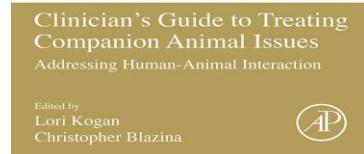
Knowledge...

...to protect **ALL** vulnerable
members of the family

Clinicians' Guidebook Addresses Link Issues in Therapy

Two chapters in a new guidebook to help mental health professionals treat clients with animal companion issues address The Link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. The 598-page textbook is a compilation of 28 chapters authored by world-renowned experts in such topics as human-animal interactions, pet loss and compassion fatigue, cultural competency, clinical practice, and the human-animal bond across the lifespan.

National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow's chapter on "The 'Dark Side' of the Human-Animal Bond" provides an overview of the emotional impacts that pets have upon people and how species-spanning attachments are points of vulnerability which may be exploited by abusers as coercive control and "emotional extortion." He describes The Link within a One Health framework and specific issues in child maltreatment, domestic violence, elder abuse, animal sexual abuse, animal hoarding, animal fighting, and in building or diminishing social capital.



Maya Gupta, a member of the National Link Coalition's steering committee, contributed a chapter on "Animal Abuse Issues in Psychotherapy." She continues this theme, arguing that the complex relationships between people and animals dictate that therapists consider both the "bright side" and the "dark side" of clients' interactions with animals. Animal abuse may come to light during the course of therapy, either incidentally or because an offender has been referred for treatment or evaluation. She describes numerous scenarios in which animal abuse may be revealed, but calls it a mistake to rely on waiting for a client to report animal abuse. Proactively asking about positive and negative encounters with animals is "a valuable assessment and rapport-building tool and ought to be standard practice," she writes. She offers guidance on how therapists can inquire about animal abuse, potential intervention paths, and the ethical and legal considerations of reporting animal abuse.

-- Arkow, P. (2018). The 'dark side' of the human-animal bond. In, L. Kogan & C. Blazina (Eds.). *Clinician's Guide to Treating Companion Animal Issues: Addressing Human-Animal Interaction*. San Diego: Academic Press, pp. 319-346.

-- Gupta, M. (2018). Animal abuse issues in psychotherapy. In, L. Kogan & C. Blazina (Eds.). *Clinician's Guide to Treating Companion Animal Issues: Addressing Human-Animal Interaction*. San Diego: Academic Press, pp. 347-363.

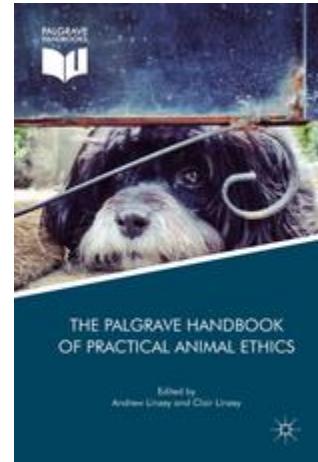
Study Examines Butcher Education on Adolescent Development

Limited research has examined the desensitization to violence that may occur among slaughterhouse workers. In new research from Slovenia, Maša Blaznik has noted that the job of butcher requires the routinized mass killing of nonhuman animals and has damaging mental health consequences for individuals and negative impacts on society. However, vocational training for butchers is part of many educational systems in the European Union where teenagers can start training from the age of 15. The article explores the effects of the violent content of this training on young people and its relation to the context of their adolescent development. It examines society's paradoxical stance on violence where it is both abhorred and sanctioned as well as normalized in various employment contexts.

-- Blaznik, M. (2018). Training young killers: How butcher education might be damaging young people. *Journal of Animal Ethics*, 8(2), 199-215.

Dogfighting's Impact on Human Welfare Examined

A new academic book series on the subject of animal ethics, which complements earlier series on such topics as animal law, animal welfare/rights, and society and animals, is being published by Palgrave Macmillan. The series' goal is to help us understand, both conceptually and practically, the many social, legal, cultural, religious, and political influences that legitimize animal abuse.



In the first book in this series, the ASPCA's Randall Lockwood (who serves on the National Link Coalition's steering committee) explores the ethics of dogfighting and its deleterious impact on human safety. He argues that dogfighters' producing animals with a predisposition to engage in self-destructive behaviors is augmented by a series of rationalizations, "ethical gymnastics" that justify and perpetuate such activities. The ethical concerns of dogfighting include not only the inherent cruelty and selection for canine behaviors that are inherently unnatural, but also The Link – the association with other crimes against people and property, especially illegal guns, drugs and gambling.

He traces a 3,000-year-old, global history of dogs fighting their own and other species, including the first law enforcement action against dogfighting in the U.S. in 1868 by the nascent ASPCA. Citing statistics that 86% of dogfighters in Chicago had prior arrests, 86% had committed felonies, and 59% were members of street gangs, Lockwood argues that dogfighting harms humans as well as dogs. He describes the risks that fighting dogs, created through intensive breeding and selection, abusive treatment, or both, pose for humans.

He describes the defense of dogfighting as a "neutralization theory of delinquency" in which individuals learn techniques that serve as a rationalization for engaging in deviance, crime and violence. These include:

- denial of harm (believing the animals are well cared for, enjoy fighting and don't necessarily all die);
- denial of responsibility (claiming the dogs are just doing what comes naturally);
- denial of personal responsibility (treating it as a professional sport which should make it acceptable);
- seeing themselves as victims (blaming the humane movement for depriving them of fame and fortune);
- and appeal to cultural norms and masculinity (recognizing that success in dogfighting embodies ideals of power, control, status, and respect).

"None of these rationalizations counter the very real pain and suffering inflicted on animals used in this 'sport,'" he concludes, "nor the serious impact on human safety and security."

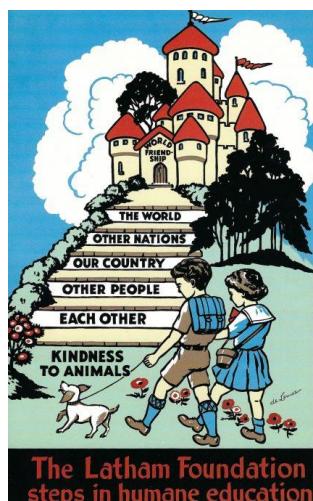
-- Lockwood, R. (2018). *The dog that is willing to die: The "ethics" of animal fighting*. In, A. Linzey & C. Linzey (Eds.). *The Palgrave Handbook of Practical Animal Ethics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 545-567.

Literature Review Explores Animal Abuse among Youth

A new systematic literature review of the relationship between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence examines 32 studies published between 1995-2017. The results show that episodes of animal cruelty during childhood and adolescence tend to co-occur alongside other forms of violent and antisocial behaviors. Cruelty to animals was associated with bullying, behavioral problems, experiences of emotional, physical and sexual abuse, and juvenile delinquency. Recurrent animal cruelty during childhood and adolescence was a significant predictor of future adult perpetration of interpersonal violence. Specifically, drowning animals or committing sexual acts with them predicted future adult violence directed against other humans. The findings lend empirical support to both the progression, or graduation, hypothesis and the deviance generalization hypothesis regarding the evolution of animal abuse and interpersonal violence. The implications of these results for clinical practice and future research are discussed.

-- Longobardi, C., & Badenes-Ribera, L. (2018, Sept. 14). The relationship between animal cruelty in children and adolescent and interpersonal violence: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*.

BUILDING LINK AWARENESS



Grant Funds Available for Educational Outreach

The Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education is inviting nonprofit and other organizations to apply for its first round of grants which will support either humane education outreach programs or research into the efficacy of humane education. The awards, which will be from \$5,000 - \$10,000 for a one-year grant and up to \$15,000 for a two-year grant, will support Latham's goals of promoting kindness to animals as the first step in encouraging kindness to one another, our country, other nations, and the world.

Grants may not be used for capital campaigns, and Latham cautions against applying for funds for salaries as there is no guarantee that grants will continue past the initial award period. There are no geographical restrictions and groups outside the U.S. may apply. Nonprofits will be given first priority but grants are not limited to those with 501c3 status.

The Latham Foundation's redesigned [website](#) includes information about the grantmaking process, deadlines, and an application form. The deadline for applying is Dec. 28.

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Pilot Program in U.K. Would Enhance Cross-Reporting

An ongoing barrier to effective cross-reporting among child, animal and adult protection agencies is investigators' reluctance to make a referral if they do not feel certain that what they have observed is a form of family violence with which they are unfamiliar. Link trainings emphasize that investigators need not be certain, that they are merely the victims' first line of defense and more trained agencies will vet the report, and that the concept is as simple as "if you see something, say something." Still, investigators relying on rigorous training and institutional protocols have been wary of "thinking outside the box."



Our colleagues in the United Kingdom are working on a solution to this chronic issue. In the U.K., RSPCA first responders to animal abuse have previously referred child protection concerns to the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children who has then referred such cases to the appropriate local government Child Safeguarding unit. 86% of these referrals were previously unknown to these authorities (*See the January 2018 LINK-Letter*), but there is feeling that more such cases should be reported.

Mal Plant of the [European Link Coalition](#) tells *The LINK-Letter* that after discussions with the RSPCA, it was determined that because first responders are reluctant to make value judgments in domains in which they have limited expertise, a Risk Assessment Checklist should be introduced. This mirrors the experiences of the College of Policing that created the DASH Risk Assessment to equip police officers with a tool to identify domestic violence.

However, first responders have a limited opportunity to identify many of the nuances of an abusive environment, and therefore a 2nd-tier closer investigation is necessary to respond to situations which suggest "Danger". Advanced discussions are now taking place between Durham County Council Adult and Child Safeguarding Units, the RSPCA and the Police Commission to create a pilot program. RSPCA investigators would complete a Risk Assessment Checklist with any responses meeting a "Danger" criterion to be referred to the Safeguarding Authority for initiation of further investigations.



Animal
Law
Source

Georgia Law Symposium Features The Link

The Link was featured prominently at the 20th annual [Animal Law, Enforcement, Veterinary, and Shelter Symposium](#), held Oct. 3-4 in Atlanta, Ga. The symposium, organized by Animal Law Source,

highlights the importance of collaboration among agencies for success in investigating and prosecuting animal cruelty cases in Georgia.

Atlanta Senior Patrol Officer Amy Soeldner of the Atlanta Police Department presented on "The Link Between Animal Cruelty and Other Types of Crimes: The Importance of Police/Animal Control Involvement in Animal Cases." Taylor Johnson, Victim Services Coordinator for Ahimsa House, presented on "The Link between Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty." Other related workshops discussed creating animal hoarding task forces and animal cruelty task forces, and the role of veterinarians and technicians in responding to animal abuse and domestic violence.

Australian Broadcasts Spotlight The Link

Eleonora Gullone, an Australian developmental psychologist who has done extensive research on the origins of animal cruelty and aggression, particularly in children (*See the November-December 2014 and September 2012 LINK-Letters*), was recently featured in a [14-minute interview](#) on the Australian Broadcasting Co. radio station in Brisbane. In the interview, Gullone emphasized that childhood animal cruelty is a strong marker of problematic behaviors, and that by understanding The Link we can prevent future violence.



Eleonora Gullone

She noted that children who are aggressive toward animals have lower levels of empathy. While there may be some biological predispositions to such behaviors, the research is stronger that children who are aggressive to animals have likely had aggression directed at them or have witnessed cruelty to animals. She cited studies showing that childhood animal abuse increases in families where there is also domestic violence.

The most important thing parents can do is to model kindness to animals in their own actions. "Children are very strongly influenced by the people who mean a lot in their lives," she noted. Teachers can prevent these aggressive acts by implementing humane education in schools

She noted that the foundations of aggression toward animals and toward humans is essentially the same: the only difference is the outlets. "People who cruel to animals are very likely to be engaged in aggressive behaviors toward others. In addition to aggression and violence there is also an antisocial Link. These are people who have trouble adhering to the values and laws of society."

Gullone also was interviewed by SkyNews-Australia where she discussed the [graduation hypothesis](#) by which aggressive offenders escalate from animals to human victims; how recognizing The Link can [persuade courts](#) to treat animal cruelty cases more seriously; and the [established Link](#) between animal cruelty, antisocial behavior and violence against humans.



Bulgarian TV to Produce Link Documentary

From our colleagues at the European Link Coalition comes word of a breakthrough in Link awareness in Bulgaria. Karina Karajatova, a reporter for БНТ Bulgarian National TV, has gotten the go-ahead to create a documentary about the Link. Production is expected to start in early 2019. The network's producer has suggested that the emphasis be placed on the Link between animal abuse and domestic violence with a focus on how this applies in Bulgaria.

"Appreciation and enactment of the Link not only provide the possibility of discovering hidden abuse," says European Link Coalition Coordinator Mal Plant, "but also elevate public awareness of the importance of reacting to animal abuse with an understanding that this is no longer ONLY about animals."

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

Canadian Link Violence Coalition Organized

The inaugural Canadian Link Conference held last December in Ottawa (*See the February 2018 and April 2018 LINK-Letters*) has given rise to the formation of the Canadian Violence Link Coalition. The Coalition was formed as a result of issues brought forward at [conference](#) and brings together professionals working to prevent and address violence against people and animals in more than 10 Canadian sectors. The coalition is committed to advancing awareness, education and training about the link between violence against humans and violence against animals. Its goal is to introduce violence prevention and intervention strategies across the country and to establish policies and practices that make Canadian communities safer.



A number of projects are already under way, including:

- Violence Link Training for police officers across the country
- [An amendment to section 160 of the Criminal Code of Canada \(bestiality\)](#)
- Amending ViCLAS book to add animal abuse questions
- Amending threat assessment questionnaires to add animal abuse questions
- [The National Centre for the Prosecution of Animal Cruelty's 2018 Crown prosecutor training](#)
- Hosting the 2nd Canadian Violence Link Conference in Toronto, Nov. 21-22, 2019
- Judicial training on the Violence Link, spearheaded by The Hon. Justice Michael A. Kelen (retired)
- Having animal abuse police statistics recorded by Statistics Canada

Members of the coalition's coordinating committee include:

- Tracy Porteous – Ending Violence Association of BC
- Marcie Moriarty – BC SPCA
- Dallas Mack – Ontario Crown Counsel
- Carolyn Johnston – Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women
- Destiny Bedwell – Ontario 211 Service
- Brenda Bedford – Immigrant Women Services Ottawa
- Barbara Cartwright – Humane Canada
- Pierre Sadik – National Centre for the Prosecution of Animal Cruelty
- Teena Stoddart – Ottawa Police Service
- Andrew Sparling, DVM – Ontario Veterinary Medical Association
- Christine Hartig – By-law and Regulatory Services, City of Ottawa
- Kaitlin Bardwick – Women's Shelters Canada
- Dayna Rose-Desmarais – SafePet Ottawa
- Frances Wach – Saskatchewan SPCA
- Melinda Mennie – BC SPCA

The Links Group UK Announces New Developments

Our British affiliate, The Links Group UK, tells us about some exciting new developments on the other side of “the pond.” Freda Scott-Park has announced that she will be stepping down as Chair of the group, and Paula Boyden will be stepping in. We join all of our British colleagues in congratulating Freda, who has been with The Links Group UK since its inception, for her fabulous work in steering the organization on its pioneering course of progress.



Drs. Freda Scott-Park (left) and Paula Boyden

The group is developing an [online course](#), “Understanding Animal Welfare in Violent Homes,” to make its training more widely available, and is working with the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) to add two additional days of training in 2019. To help veterinary teams respond to cases of suspected abuse, the group offered two free continuing veterinary education programs in June for BSAVA members and others. The sessions provided guidance on setting up a practice protocol and identifying an “abuse advisor” who can aid practice staff in suspected cases of abuse. Through the abuse advisor, effective relationships with RSPCA Officers, police domestic abuse officers and aid agencies can be set up so that staff have expert support when they suspect animal or human abuse.

The Links Group UK will also have a presence at the next London Vet Show.



Link Italia Preparing Book, Launching Project

Our Link affiliate in Italy, [Link Italia](#), is about to publish what is believed to be the first Italian-language book about the intersections of animal and human violence. The book will describe The Link in the context of the mandate of the World Health Organization, and trace the history of Link work in Italy from 1997 to the present including the publication of several major academic papers ([See the January 2018 and June 2017 LINK-Letters](#)). A series of chapters by contributing authors will

discuss such issues as the context and issues of gender violence, animal cruelty and interpersonal psychological violence, the “zooanthropology of violence,” erotic zoophilia and bestiality, the impact on children who witness animal cruelty, and pilot projects under way in Italy. A series of appendices will review international Link activities.

Meanwhile, what is believed to be the first publicly-funded Link project in Italy to be carried out by a law enforcement agency will be unveiled on Oct. 30. The police force in Cento, in the province of Ferrara, will launch the DO.MIN.A PROJECT – Women, Children and Animals: Giving a Voice to Silent Violence. The project traces its roots to a Link Italia conference in 2014 where two Cento police officials chose to be on the front line to prevent and fight the intersecting forms of family violence. Link Italia President Francesca Sorcinelli says, “We are writing the history of The Link in Italy thanks to the first heroic professionals who have been brave enough to challenge the dangerous, outdated but still widespread mentality that ‘after all, they are just animals.’”



THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

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

Only a handful of state legislatures are still in session, and with campaign season hard upon us many legislators are out in their districts rather than in their respective capitols, but there are still many Link-related bills that we're following. We're shortening our list to focus on just those bills still awaiting action while celebrating the victories we've already seen in 2018. We are encouraged by this progress and hope to see even more LINK legislation passed in legislatures that are still in session!

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



After languishing in both the 114th and 115th Congresses despite having over 280 co-sponsors in the House and Senate, **H.R. 909** and **S.322 – the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act** – was tacked on as Subtitle E, Section 12503 of **H.R. 2 – the Farm Bill**. The measure 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 2023 in grants for shelter and housing assistance for victims with pets, support services to help victims secure safe housing that allows pets, for pet-related services, and for training on The Link between domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and pet abuse. **H.R. 2** has passed both the House and Senate and is in a conference committee attempting to resolve differences between the two versions.



California AB 2274 allows courts to assign sole or joint ownership of a community property pet in divorce and separation agreements by taking into consideration the well-being of the pet. The bill was approved by the House and Senate and **was signed into law on Sept. 27**.



California Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed AB 1939 which would have expanded the California Victim Compensation program to allow the costs of temporary housing for the pets of domestic violence victims to be reimbursable as part of relocation expenses.



Existing **California** law provides for the compensation of victims of specified crimes, including sexual assault, by the California Victim Compensation Board for losses incurred in relocating as a result of those crimes, if such expenses are deemed necessary by law enforcement for the victim's personal safety or by a mental health treatment provider for the victim's emotional well-being. **SB1005** would add the costs of pet deposits and additional rent fees if the victim has a pet to the list of expenses which may be reimbursable. The bill was sent to the Governor on Sept. 5.



Colorado law included animals among the property that can be included in a protective order. **Colorado SB 18-060** now will specifically allow courts to issue a protective order prohibiting the taking, transferring, concealing, harming, disposing of, or threatening to harm an animal owned, possessed, leased, kept, or held by the alleged victim or witness. **The bill was signed into law** by Gov. John Hickenlooper on March 22 and will take effect Nov. 1.



Illinois HB5668 would amend the Domestic Violence Shelters Act and require the Department of Human Services to prioritize funding to domestic violence shelters and service programs that provide shelter assistance to victims' pets. The bill is in the Rules Committee.



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.



Michigan HB 4332 would make it a 1st, 2nd or 3rd-degree offense, depending on severity, to knowingly torture or kill an animal with the intent to cause mental distress or exert control over a person. The bill was passed the House 90-15, approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee and sent to the full Senate.



Ohio HB1 expands the ability of courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders that include animals to individuals seeking protection orders in cases of dating violence. It would allow a court order 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 to remove a companion animal owned by that petitioner from the possession of the respondent. **The bill was signed into law by Gov. John Kasich on April 5.**



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.



Pennsylvania SB 480 would increase the penalties for a person committing cruelty to an animal belonging to a spouse or partner who is under either a protection from abuse, sexual violence or intimidation order. Current penalties range from \$1,000 to \$10,000; the bill would increase these to \$2,000 and \$15,000. The bill was laid on the table in the Senate.

Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment



Louisiana HB 292 will require courts to allow witnesses who are either under age 18 or developmentally disabled to be accompanied by a facility dog while testifying. Courts will be permitted to allow such facility dogs for any other witnesses. The bill establishes procedures defining facility dogs and their presence in the courtroom. The bill was approved 91-0 by the House and 31-0 by the Senate and **was signed into law** and took effect Aug. 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.



Michigan HB 5645 will now allow witnesses of child abuse, child sexual abuse and elder abuse to be accompanied by a trained and evaluated “courtroom support dog.” The bill passed the House by a vote of 107-1 and the Senate 36-0 and **took effect immediately on Aug. 15.**



New Jersey A3729 would allow assistance dogs to be used to help facilitate the taking of testimony of victims or witnesses in open court in criminal prosecutions. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

Animal Sexual Abuse



H.R. 1494/S.654 -- the PACT (Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture) Act – would amend 18 U.S. Code § 48 to expand the definition of “animal crushing” (“crush videos”) to include acts 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 Senate version passed unanimously and headed to the House Judiciary Committee where it has 281 co-sponsors.



California AB 3040 would address the state’s bestiality law. Existing law makes it a misdemeanor to sexually assault certain animals to gratify a person’s sexual desires. The bill would prohibit sexual contact with any animal punishable as a misdemeanor; such animals could be seized. Veterinarians would be mandated to report suspected animal sexual abuse with immunity from civil liability, as they currently are for reporting animal abuse. The bill was approved 73-0 by the Assembly and is in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.



Louisiana SB 236 updates the current statute, replacing what was called a “crime against nature” with the new crime of “sexual abuse of an animal” with enhanced penalties and provisions for removal of the animal, psychological evaluation for sex offenders, and prohibitions against living, working or volunteering with animals for five years or more. **The bill was signed into law** on May 25 by Gov. John Bel Edwards and became effective immediately.



Massachusetts S.2646 updates the archaic terminology of “the abominable and detestable crime against nature” to now prohibit “sexual contact with animals,” the promotion or facilitation of sexual contact with an animal, and forcing a child to engage in sexual contact with an animal. Conviction will result in forfeiture of the animal and prohibition against working or volunteering with, owning or living with animals for at least five years. Accepted veterinary, animal husbandry and conformation judging practices are exempted. The law also establishes *Cross-Reporting* among child, elder and animal abuse personnel. **The bill was signed into law on Aug. 9 by Gov. Charlie Baker.**



California AB 1865 would have allowed a person to be charged with a misdemeanor for injuring or killing a guide, service or signal dog even if the dog. Convicted offenders would have been required to pay the dog’s owner for any medical or medical-related expenses or for loss of wages or income. **The bill was vetoed by the Governor on Sept. 27.**

Animal Hoarding



New Jersey S 2242 and **A3762** would define animal hoarding as possessing too many animals with inadequate care which leads to death, bodily injury or other serious adverse health consequences, a 4th-degree crime. Courts would be required to order psychological evaluation and counseling for convicted offenders. The bills are in the Senate Environment & Energy Committee and the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

“CASA for Animals”



Michigan HB 6029 would allow courts to appoint an advocate to represent the interests of an animal in criminal proceedings. The bill is in the House Agriculture Committee.

Cross-Reporting



Indiana SB 431 gives APS and CPS workers who observe suspected animal cruelty, abandonment or abuse while conducting an assessment or investigation immunity from civil and criminal liability if they report it to law enforcement or animal control. **The law became effective July 1.**

Massachusetts S.295 in the Education Committee would make domestic violence workers, animal control officers and humane officers mandated reporters of child sexual abuse. The bill is in the Senate Education Committee where it accompanied a Study Order.



Massachusetts S.2646 permits 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 to a police officer or special state police officer. The law mandates animal control officers to report suspected child abuse, elder abuse and abuse against disabled persons. Individuals who report in good faith are immune from civil and criminal liability; confidentiality provisions will not prohibit an individual from making a report. A special commission will be appointed to study the feasibility of mandating these cross-reports. The law also affects *Animal Sexual Abuse*. **The bill was signed into law on Aug. 9 by Gov. Charlie Baker.**

Michigan HB 4441 would amend the Child Protection Law to add animal control officers as mandated reporters of 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, 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 intentional false reporting of animal abuse a felony. The bills are in the Judiciary Committee.

Ohio HB147 would add agents of the Ohio Humane Society to professionals mandated to report child abuse. 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.

Ohio HB 523 would mandate veterinarians, child protective services, and counselors, social workers and marriage and family therapists to report suspected animal abuse, with immunity from liability for good-faith reporting, if a child or older adult resides with the alleged violator. Dog wardens and animal control officers would be required to report suspected child abuse. Military family advocacy programs would have to be notified when military personnel are investigated for child maltreatment or domestic violence. Fines collected from civil penalties for violating pet protective orders would be used to fund shelter and support programs for the animals belonging to victims of domestic violence. The bill was approved by the Community & Family Advancement Committee.

Pennsylvania SB 176 would add animal control and humane society police officers as mandated reporters of child abuse, and social services employees to report animal cruelty. The bill was laid on the table in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Rhode Island veterinarians have immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting of suspected animal abuse, neglect or abandonment. **H 7986** extends this immunity to include veterinary technicians and animal shelter and kennel employees. Reports are to be made to local or state police, animal control officers or humane organizations. Failure to report is punishable by a fine of up to \$500. The reporter is not obligated to further investigate the alleged abuse. **The bill was signed into law by Gov. Gina Raimondo on July 2.**



Psychological Evaluation of Offenders

California SB 1024 would require individuals convicted of any of several animal cruelty offenses to complete and pass a 5-hour course on responsible animal owner education and would allow courts to consider ordering mandatory mental health evaluations for such offenders. The bill's authors noted that current sentencing options for animal abuse crimes are limited and are not particularly well suited to "addressing the underlying causes behind animal abuse as observed by law enforcement, mental health and animal welfare experts. The link between animal abuse and violence towards humans is well documented," they wrote. Citing the Parkland, Fla. school shootings and cases of child abuse and domestic violence, they added that "mental health intervention early is the key to stopping this progression and escalation of violent behavior." The bill was approved by the Senate and was sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.



New Jersey law currently requires juveniles (but not adults) convicted of animal cruelty to undergo mental health counseling. **A3049** and **S 1636** would require a mental health evaluation for juvenile and adult animal cruelty offenders, to be followed by mental health counseling if warranted by the evaluation. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Health, Human Services & Senior Citizens Committee. **A3856** and **S2165** would require both juveniles and adults to undergo mental health counseling; those bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Economic Growth Committee.



Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

H.R. 6278, the AVERT (Animal Abuse Exposes Real Threat) Future Gun Violence Act, would bar individuals convicted of misdemeanor animal cruelty from owning firearms, similar to existing prohibitions for persons convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence. The bill has seven co-sponsors and is in the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.



New Jersey A3693 and **S2239** would add individuals convicted of animal cruelty to the list of offenders of other crimes who are prohibited from possessing a firearm and obtaining a permit to purchase a handgun. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Law & Public Safety Committees.



Pennsylvania HB 1197 would make animal fighting an indictable offense under existing racketeering provisions addressing offenses committed by corrupt organizations. The crime would specifically pertain to individuals who are directly involved in the animal fighting rather than spectators or individuals wagering on the outcome. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS



Wakeen Best

Auto Burglar Gets Three Years in Break-In That Killed Dog

A woman with a history of car break-ins was sentenced on Sept. 6 to three years in jail on felony animal cruelty, auto burglary and vandalism charges for breaking into a car in a San Francisco parking garage and killing a Chihuahua named "Dunk" inside the car by tossing it off the 7th floor of the Chinatown building.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) reported that Wakeen "La La" Best, 34, lashed out at Superior Court Judge Charles Crompton, calling him an "idiot" during the sentencing. Best has a criminal history that includes several smash-and-grab car break-ins and has been on probation 13 times. Prosecutors played dash-cam audio and video that showed the break-in, Best walking in front of the car, and saying "shut yo ass up!" and "bitch."

Guilty Pleas in Bestiality Case Involving Jealous Lovers' Triangle

A couple in Aurora, Colo. who were their dog ([See the May 2018 LINK](#)-guilty to animal cruelty charges. 49, and Frederick Manzanares, 51, respectively, for having 2



Frederick Manzanares

home for The animal sex triggered by a to the Aurora Police Department; Solano told police that she was jealous of her boyfriend's relationship with Bubba and that they had gotten into an argument after she refused to have sex with the dog. Manzanares reportedly used hormone spray to arouse Bubba and took pictures of the sex acts. Sentencing of the couple



"Bubba"

involved in a jealous love triangle that included [Letter](#)) have entered plea agreements are pled The [Denver Post](#) reported that Janette Solano, pled guilty to one and two counts of animal "sex chamber" in the backyard of their trailer "Bubba," a male Akita mix. abuse discovery was report of domestic violence

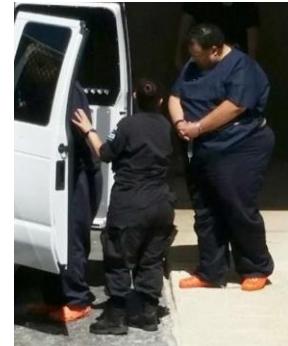


Janette Solano

will follow and Manzanares has given up ownership rights to Bubba, who is in the care of the Aurora Animal Shelter. Animal sex abuse has been illegal in Colorado since 2007.

Ex-Teacher Charged with Possessing Child Porn and Bestiality Images

A former teacher indicted on federal charges of having 4,700 images and 380 videos of child pornography and bestiality lost his bid for bail on Aug. 29. Mark Anthony Rodriguez, 52, had resigned from his teaching position in a San Antonio-area intermediate school after agents served a search warrant at his home, the [San Antonio Express-News](#) reported. No images were found on his school computers, but Assistant U.S. Attorney Tracy Thompson said there was great danger "in a man who views child porn at night and then went into a classroom full of children roughly the same age as those he told others he wanted to have sex with." Rodriguez, who said he had gone through a rough period after his wife died of brain cancer, also said jail was not a suitable place for him since he has back problems and weighs more than 400 pounds. The judge denied his request to be placed on house arrest with electronic monitoring.



Rodriguez is loaded into a van

Man Charged with Stabbing Cat and Blaming It On Boy Who Fired an AK-47

Police in Galveston, Texas responding to a domestic violence disturbance charged Mario Salinas, 27, with animal cruelty, tampering with evidence and terroristic threat to a family member for allegedly stabbing a family cat to death and threatening to kill his girlfriend, and then blaming the incident on a 4-year-old boy who fired an AK-47 rifle in their house. The [Galveston County Daily News](#) reported that Salinas allegedly threatened to chop her up, kill the family's cat and dog, and take their two children after she said she wanted to leave him. Police said they found Salinas covered in blood and said his son had shot "Snowflake," the family's cat, although a veterinarian said the cat had been stabbed 12 times.



Mario Salinas

Drug Raid Nets 1,300 Dogs and Cocks in Suspected Fighting Ring

Sheriff's deputies in Pierce County, Wis., investigating an alleged drug operation found a suspected dog-and cock-fighting ring and marijuana growing operation, resulting in the seizure of more than 1,300 animals, four pounds of meth and a pound of dried marijuana. [WEAU-TV](#) reported that Houa Dia Yang and Senyen Vang, of Spring Valley, were taken into custody. The ASPCA was called in to help remove and care for the animals.

ARSON AND ANIMAL ABUSE

Dog, Cat Killed in Arson Following Domestic Violence Assault



Suzanne Demo

A woman who allegedly set a bed on fire, after stabbing another person with three different items, during a domestic dispute, was charged with arson, animal cruelty and several assault charges in the incident which also killed a pet cat and dog. [NJ101.5-FM](#) reported that police said that Suzanne Demo, 20, of Marlboro, N.J. slashed the wrists and arms of an unnamed person with box cutters, a pair of scissors and a knife before setting the bed on fire. She is being held in the Monmouth County Jail.

Woman Charged with Arson in Revenge Against Estranged Husband

A Lutz, Fla. woman has been charged with arson and possession of narcotics, but as of this writing not with animal cruelty, for allegedly setting fire to her home and leaving eight dogs inside. The [Lutz Patch](#) reported that Pasco County authorities rescued the eight dogs, one of which, an American Staffordshire terrier named "Denali," was severely burned due to what arson investigators said was an accelerant that had been poured on her head and back. Authorities said the owner of the dogs, Brandi Corrigan, 40, removed her personal items from the home – but not the dogs – before painting graffiti on the walls, dumping paint throughout the house and setting it on fire as an act of revenge against her husband, who may have favored Denali. The husband is reportedly a contractor working in Iraq and the couple are seeking a divorce.



Brandi Corrigan

Man Charged with Beating Girlfriend's Dog to Death

Steven Severino, 31, of Everett, Mass., was charged with animal cruelty for allegedly beating his girlfriend's dog to death. Police told [WHDH-TV](#) that the small dog suffered a broken jaw and other injuries. Prosecutors said neighbors heard a dog yelping and what they believed was a dog being thrown against a structure. "Behavior like this will not be tolerated in this city and will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," said Mayor Carlo DeMaria.



Steven Severino

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Oct. 10 (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on "Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence" for the [National Organization for Victim Assistance Academy](#).

Oct. 11 – Windsor, Ont., Canada: The University of Windsor Animal and Interpersonal Abuse Research Group, the Windsor-Essex County Humane Society, and Hiatus House will hold an all-day pre-conference [Institute](#) on research, theory and practice specific to the intersection of violence against animals and women within the context of domestic violence.

Oct. 11 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: The [Oklahoma Link Coalition](#) will meet at OKC Animal Welfare.

Oct. 12 – Rochester, N.Y.: Phil Arkow and Lisa Lunghofer will conduct a multi-disciplinary Link training on behalf of the [Humane Society of Greater Rochester](#).

Oct. 12 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will meet at Catholic Charities Dallas.

Oct. 12 – Denver, Colo.: Chris Schindler will present "Breaking the Sickest Link: Conducting Effective Bestiality Investigations" at the National Animal Care & Control Association's [Training Conference](#).

Oct. 17-19 – Plano, Texas: The [Collin County Council on Family Violence](#) will hold its 16th Annual North Texas Families Facing Violence conference.

Oct. 18 – Guelph, Ont., Canada: Phil Arkow will present on "Making the Cruelty Connection: A Species-Spanning Approach to Safer Families and Communities" to the [Association of Animal Shelter Administrators of Ontario](#).

Oct. 22-23 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: The Kirkpatrick Foundation will sponsor the [Oklahoma Animal Conference](#) as part of its Safe & Humane initiative.

Oct. 26 – Houston, Texas: Allie Phillips will speak about Sheltering Animals & Families Together (SAF-T)TM at a conference hosted by Mercy House Organization on co-housing families and pets of domestic violence.

Oct. 27 – Adelaide, SA, Australia: Featured speakers will showcase the work of [Safe Pets Safe Families](#) and describe plans for the future at a special Gala Night.

Oct. 30 – Cento, Ferrara, Italy: [Link Italia](#) and the local police force will launch the DO.MIN.A PROJECT – Women, Children and Animals: Giving a Voice to Silent Violence at the Town Hall.

Oct. 31 – (online): Mary Lou Randour and Dan DeSousa will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse webinar](#) on “Animal Cruelty Reporting: What Law Enforcement and Justice Professionals Need to Know” on behalf of the National Sheriffs Association.

Nov. 2 – Phoenix, Md.: Jenny Edwards, Adam Lippe, Jim Crosby, Nikki Caferri, and John Thompson will be among the speakers at the [2018 Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#), whose theme this year is animal sexual abuse.

Nov. 3 – (worldwide): [One Health Day](#) celebrates the Links between human and veterinary medicine.

Nov. 5 – London, U.K.: [The Links Group UK](#) will hold its Annual General Meeting at Dogs Trust.

Nov. 7 – Newton, N.J.: Phil Arkow will speak on The Link between animal abuse and domestic violence at the [Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Intervention Services](#) conference and help launch the Sussex County Coalition to Stop Violence Against People and Animals.

Nov. 7-9 – Louisville, Ky.: Randy Lockwood, Maya Gupta, Martha Smith-Blackmore, Gale Rasin, and Mary Lou Randour will be among the Link speakers at the 8th [National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference](#), hosted by the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys in partnership with the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Nov. 9 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) meeting will feature presentations by Texas Adult Protective Services.

Nov. 15 – Anchorage, Alaska: Allie Phillips will speak at the [2018 Alaska Conference on Child Maltreatment](#) on “The Co-occurrence of Animal Abuse and Violence to Humans,” “Detecting and Reporting Animal Abuse,” “Incorporating Therapy Animals with Crime Victims,” and a session on natural self-care for child protection workers

Nov. 16-17 – Atlanta, Ga.: Nuria Querol will present on “Innovative Uses of Police Data: First Year’s NIBRS Data of Animal cruelty Crimes” and on “Violent Crime and Animal Abuse: Scientific Framework and Practical Approaches” at the [American Society of Criminology](#) conference.

Nov. 19-20 – Banff, Alberta, Canada: The National Centre for the Prosecution of Animal Cruelty will hold its 4th annual [Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference](#).

Nov. 23 – Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Phil Arkow will speak at the [Alberta Veterinary Medical Association](#)’s Veterinary Forensics Workshop.

Nov. 27 – Harrisburg, Pa.: Phil Arkow will conduct a training on domestic violence and animal abuse for the [PCADV](#)’s Domestic Violence Attorneys Network.

Nov. 28 (online): Michelle Welch will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “Combating Cock Fighting: What Investigators and Prosecutors Need to Know.”

Nov. 29 – Westminster, Colo.: [Animal Control Training Services](#) will conduct an all-day training on “Understanding the ‘Link’ in Animal Abuse hosted by Westminster Animal Management.

Dec. 3-7 – San Antonio, Texas: “The Relationship of Animal Abuse and Family Violence” will be included in the [National Animal Cruelty Investigations School](#)’s Level III training for Expert investigators.

Dec. 13 (online): Jessica Rock will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on “Animal Cruelty Investigations and Prosecutions” on behalf of the National Sheriffs’ Association.

Jan. 15, 2019 (online): Michelle Welch will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “The Link Between Animal Abuse and Human Abuse: Understanding the Link to Help Investigate and Prosecute Your Cases.”

Feb. 21, 2019 (online): Jessica Rock will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on “Dog Fighting Investigations and Prosecutions” on behalf of the National Sheriffs’ Association.

March 5, 2019 (online): Michelle Welch will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “Creating an Animal Abuse & Cruelty Unit for Your Agency.”

March 26, 2019: Cleveland, Ohio: Phil Arkow will headline a [Link seminar](#) at Fairhill Partners.

March 27, 2019: Toledo, Ohio: Phil Arkow will headline a [Link seminar](#) at the University of Toledo.

March 29, 2019: Columbus, Ohio: Phil Arkow will headliner a [Link seminar](#) at COAAA.

May 23-24, 2019 – João Pessoa, Paraiba, Brazil: John Thompson will be the featured speaker on The Link at the [9th International Conference of Collective Veterinary Medicine](#) sponsored by the Education and Animal Control Technical Institute and Veterinary Council of Paraiba State.

Sept. 9, 2019 – Edinburgh, Scotland: Phil Arkow will be the keynote speaker at the [Scottish SPCA](#) and University of Edinburgh conference on “Animal Guardians – Promoting Positive Child and Animal Relationships and The Link with ACEs.”

Nov. 21-22, 2019 – Toronto, Ont., Canada: The [Canadian Violence Link Conference](#) will examine the Link between violence to humans and animals, look at the vulnerabilities among both populations, and explore how various sectors can learn from each other and gather the necessary tools to stop the cycle of violence.



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.

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