



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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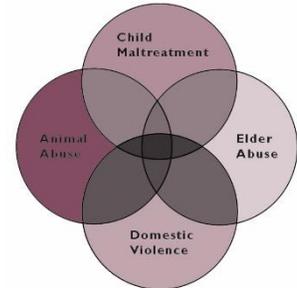
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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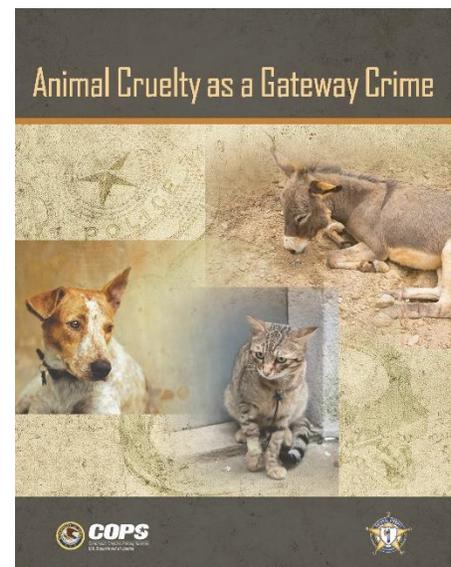
ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE

National Sheriffs Association Publishes White Paper, Videos

On Animal Abuse's Links with Other Crimes

The National Sheriffs' Association's National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse has released a white paper, [Animal Cruelty as a Gateway Crime](#), and a complementary mobile application. The goal of the Gateway Crime project is to build the capacity of law enforcement agencies to recognize that animal cruelty crimes can serve as a precursor to more violent crimes, as a co-occurring crime to other offenses, and as an interrelated crime to various offenses.

"Our research has shown if somebody is harming an animal, there is a good chance they also are hurting or will hurt a human. If we can see patterns of animal abuse, the odds are that something else is going on," said John Thompson, Deputy Executive Director of the National Sheriffs' Association and a member of the National Link Coalition's steering committee.



Armed with this knowledge, law enforcement officers and deputies assigned to patrol and investigative duties can take steps both to solve current crimes and to prevent future crimes from occurring.

Key issues identified in the White Paper include:

- Animal abuse and cruelty is serious and often a precursor to other crimes such as assaults, domestic violence, and homicide.
- Animal abuse is often a window into the home, and awareness of animal abuse may prevent other crimes.
- There is a lack of communication between animal control and law enforcement.
- There is an awareness and education gap between animal control and law enforcement.

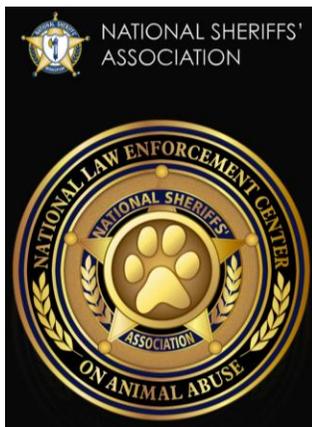
- Communities care about animal cruelty and often voice this concern to elected officials and community leaders through social media.

The advisory group also concluded that the law enforcement community’s awareness of animal crimes should increase, and at the same time, they should alleviate some of the issues surrounding the reporting, investigation and prosecution of animal crimes by first responders, investigators and prosecutors. In addition to training, there needs to be a cultural attitudinal change among mainstream law enforcement officers and deputies that animal crimes must be given the same attention and priorities as personal and property crimes.

In addition to the White Paper, three 4-minute mini-training videos on the nexus between animal cruelty and other crimes have been produced, targeted at patrol officers, deputies and investigators:

- [Animal Cruelty and Its Nexus with Other Crimes](#)
- [Recognizing Animal Abuse](#)
- [Animal Abuse by Children](#)

The project also developed a smartphone app that law enforcement officers can access when responding to incidents to help determine if animal cruelty offenses may be precursors or co-occurring with other criminal behaviors.



The 48-page report provides a comprehensive review of research into the Links between animal cruelty and domestic violence, child abuse, and bullying and at-risk behaviors. It summarizes common signs of animal maltreatment, animal-related interventions when entering a domestic violence scene, questions to ask adult and child abuse victims, and tactics for conducting an animal cruelty investigation. It also includes extensive English and Spanish-language resources.

The resources were developed with funding from a grant by the Department of Justice’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

“This publication discusses the fact that crimes of cruelty to animals are often precursors to crimes of violence and abuse against people. It outlines the ways in which law enforcement practitioners’ maintaining awareness of animal cruelty — including by bridging the communication gap with their colleagues in animal control — can expose warning signs in homes of the possibility or likelihood that other crimes are imminent and may help anticipate and prevent those crimes before they are committed,” said COPS Director Phil Keith.



Kendra Coulter

Ontario Exploring Collaborations to Prevent Animal Cruelty and Link Crimes

Citing how “more investigations into animal cruelty also open doors to related crimes including firearms, narcotics and, most often, domestic violence,” researchers in Ontario, Canada are exploring innovative ways to increase the capacity of the Ontario SPCA to investigate animal abuse.

Primary enforcement of federal and provincial animal cruelty statutes has long been legally mandated to the OSPCA and its affiliates. But the 70 humane law officers tasked with investigating 16,000 complaints a year in the huge province have had difficulty keeping up with the workload, and the OSPCA was forced to curtail investigations on farms and stables this fall.

Dr. Kendra Coulter, Chair of the Labour Studies Department at Brock University, and criminologist Amy Fitzgerald have been studying the OSPCA’s officers to learn more about their work, the effects of public funding, and what could be done to improve cruelty investigations. Their research is now expanding to examine examples from Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, and in particular New York City where the ASPCA has trained thousands of NYPD officers to investigate animal cruelty complaints ([See the December 2017 LINK-Letter](#)).

Their work is identifying strengths, best practices, challenge areas, and key lessons which offer helpful lessons for other jurisdictions. However, daunting challenges remain.

“It won’t be as simple as shifting all responsibility on to the plates of police departments,” Coulter wrote in an [Ottawa Citizen](#) op-ed. “Police do not have the appropriate resources or facilities to undertake such work on their own. Investigating and enforcing crimes against animals requires particular knowledge and skills. Doing so also creates the need for sheltering (and stabling), veterinary treatment (and forensics), daily care, and physical/psychological assessments of animals.”

Coulter and Fitzgerald are examining potential collaborative partnerships between the OSPCA and various law enforcement agencies based on American models in which cities have created animal crimes units incorporating police and prosecutors. The ASPCA/NYPD collaboration was singled out for its training, veterinary forensics, investigations capabilities, prosecutors, and community engagement. The collaboration has resulted in significant increases in the number of cruelty cases investigated “and the less quantifiable but no less important preventative successes which solve problems before animals are hurt,” Coulter wrote.

A Correction...

In the November LINK-Letter, we reported on an innovative program where the London Police Service is including the threat to family pets as one of four key warning signs of emotional abuse in domestic violence. We mistakenly attributed this program to the law enforcement agency in the United Kingdom when it is, in fact, in [London, Ontario, Canada](#). We apologize for any confusion, and salute our Canadian neighbors for their work in this vital area of The Link.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Social Work Assessments that Ignore Human-Animal Bond And Domestic Violence Link Called “Incomplete”



Peter Walker and Jenny Aimers

With growing interest and career options in the field of Veterinary Social Work, a few researchers are attempting to expand social work away from its traditional human-centered practice into a wider view that incorporates the human-animal bond – what these authors call “the most fundamental of daily-lived experiences” – into a wider perspective of social work practice. This review of literature and practice examines not only how the human-animal bond is utilized in rehabilitation and therapy, but also as an indicator of domestic violence in New Zealand.

The article traces the history of social work and its digression away from human and animal correlated interests into a pervasive anthropocentric focus. Citing evidence that those involved in animal cruelty or neglect have a predisposition to inflict the same upon people, and the development of collaborative initiatives in New Zealand for reciprocal reporting of animal and human abuse, the authors argue that domestic and companion animals constitute a significant part of the contextual system in which people are embedded and therefore should not be ignored.

“To not acknowledge the deep and abiding human relationships with domestic and companion animals seems a failure in the assessment process,” they write, arguing that any social work assessment that does not acknowledge all members of the household, including animals, is “incomplete.” They argue that social work practice, education, theory, ethics, and values should move from being “exclusively human centered to include animal rights and welfare and the role of family members within a holistic and comprehensive viewing of the ecological model.”

They encourage social work educators to incorporate the relationship between animal abuse and domestic violence, animals as members of the social environment, and the use of animal-assisted therapy into course curricula. They also urge social workers to recognize the role of the companion animal as a family member and its welfare as an important part of family and individual assessment.

-- Walker, P., Aimers, J., & Perry, C. (2015). *Animals and social work: An emerging field of practice for Aotearoa New Zealand. Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work, 27(1&2), 24-35.*

Pennsylvania Coalition Trains Attorneys on The Link



The [Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#) – the nation’s oldest state coalition – convened a workshop on The Link and animal abuse laws for 23 attorneys who work with domestic violence shelters across the Commonwealth. Presenters at the workshop were, from left: Danni Petyo, CLR Attorney for PCADV; Kristen Tullo, Pennsylvania State Director for the Humane Society of the U.S.; Phil Arkow, Coordinator of the National Link Coalition; and Amy Kaunas, Executive Director of the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area.

Ontario Shelters Publish Report Describing Options for Survivors with Pets

The [Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses](#) has published a 12-page report describing the Links between animal abuse, domestic violence and child abuse, the history of collaborative programs in the province to assist the pets of survivors, and a comprehensive survey of the types of pet care programs available in Ontario and the advantages, barriers and implementation action steps involved with each approach.



[*Pet Safety and Woman: Options for Women with Pets Leaving Abusive Relationships*](#) provides background on the SafePet Program, initiated in 2003 by the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association and updated in 2013 with input from OAITH to identify shelters across the province that partner with veterinarians who offer free medical treatment for pets belonging to women in shelters.

OAITH updated this information with a survey in 2017 of 84 women’s shelters. The survey reported that four allow pets to remain with women in the shelter; two have on-site kennels; 26 offer pet care with foster families; and 14 have agreements with animal shelters or veterinarians. The report describes the advantages, barriers and implementation action steps involved with each approach.

The report includes extensive research findings concerning The Link in Canada and the challenges faced by survivors with pets. “The complexities of this decision-making process are even more pronounced when considering the role that companion animals play in facilitating or impeding a woman’s decision to seek formal help when involved in abusive relationships,” it notes.



“Survivors of IPV engage in a continual cost-benefit analysis when deciding to seek help, and knowing where pets fit into this decision-making process is important, especially if we want to encourage help-seeking by ensuring that the available supports and services meet the actual needs of survivors.”

OAITH is a coalition of first stage emergency shelters, 2nd stage housing organizations and community-based organizations that work towards ending violence against all women through training, education, advocacy, public awareness, and government relations. “OAITH, our member shelters, and all women’s shelters in Ontario are aware that women who experience gender-based domestic violence are less likely to leave the violent situation if there is a pet or companion animal in the home,” the report states.

RedRover Guide Lists 8 Warning Signs of Domestic/Animal Abuse

RedRover – the Sacramento nonprofit that offers capital construction grants to shelters seeking to become pet-friendly and grants for pet boarding and veterinary expenses to survivors fleeing domestic violence – has produced a handy card listing eight warning signs of animal abuse that indicate an abusive relationship. The card is being shared on [social media](#), notes RedRover Outreach Manager Katie Campbell. The card also directs survivors to RedRover’s website of pet-friendly shelters, [SafePlaceForPets.org](#)



SAF-T Founder Honored for Co-Sheltering Work

Allie Phillips, who pioneered the protocols for the [Sheltering Animals and Families Together](#) (SAF-T™) program to enable domestic violence shelters to also house the animal survivors of intimate partner violence, has been recognized by the Urban Resource Institute (URI) in New York City. Phillips is a founding member of the National Link Coalition’s steering committee



Allie Phillips

URI presented Phillips with its Trailblazer Award in recognition for her work with making not only URI pet-friendly with its PALS (People and Animals Living Safely) program, but also for her pioneering work in bringing this concept to 139 shelters in 40 states and Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Netherlands.

The award celebration also commemorated URI’s merger this year with the Center Against Domestic Violence and the 5th anniversary of empowering people and pets through the PALS program. URI is believed to be the largest provider of domestic violence shelters and services in the U.S. and can shelter more than 1,000 survivors and their families a day. URIPALS is the only pet co-shelter in New York City.

“URI is constantly striving to expand our resources and reduce potential barriers to individuals and families seeking shelter and services,” said Nathaniel Fields, URI president/CEO in also announcing plans to open PALS Place, the first shelter of its size in the country specifically designed and outfitted for survivors and their pets to live and heal in the same apartment (*See the [June 2018 LINK-Letter](#)*).

Co-Sheltering Collaborative to Develop Best Practices for Homeless with Pets

Many individuals fleeing domestic violence become homeless, and they often take their pets with them for security and emotional support. A one-year pilot [Co-sheltering Collaborative](#) (July 2018 – June 2019) will create a roadmap for making co-sheltering a part of standard practice for agencies serving the homeless.



The Collaborative is a project of [My Dog Is My Home](#) that seeks to preserve the human-animal bond in the face of “no pets allowed” rules within social services. People experiencing homelessness are often asked to decide between their companion animals or shelter, an ultimatum no one should have to face.

The [Animals & Society Institute](#) has joined the Collaborative and will work with other nonprofits to end homelessness in the greater Los Angeles area as part of the pilot program. My Dog is My Home has outreach programs in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Toledo, and Bloomington, Ind., and four video testimonials about the impact of pets on homeless persons.

The collaborative will share expertise and showcase innovative programs that address human and animal sheltering needs. The project will assess pet-friendly homeless shelters’ approaches to handling animals accompanied by people experiencing homelessness, and document lessons learned and best practices. The goal is to inform development of animal-friendly policies and practices in homeless shelters nationwide, reducing the likelihood that animals will be relinquished simply because their caregivers are experiencing a period of homelessness.

ANIMAL ABUSE &... VETERINARY MEDICINE



\$10.1 Million Gift will Help Veterinary Forensics

A couple motivated by a desire to help abused and injured animals is donating \$10.1 million from their estates to fund programs at the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine.

The [Baton Rouge Advocate](#) reported that Herman C. Soong has committed \$8.1 million from his estate, and his wife Connie Soong has pledged \$2 million from hers. The gifts are the largest in the veterinary school's history. Herman Soong is an assistant professor of psychiatry and forensic neuropsychiatry at Tulane University School of Medicine. He works closely with LSU on animal abuse issues.

The gifts will be used to care for homeless and injured animals, pay for scholarships, support oncology research, and fund forensic training to help veterinarians and law enforcement identify animal abuse. [LSU noted](#) that the establishment of the Dr. Herman C. Soong Veterinary Forensic Sciences Program "will help veterinarians and law enforcement identify animal abuse, then leverage those insights in ways that could prevent violent crimes against people, too."

Dr. Soong works closely with the LSU Shelter Medicine Program, where he helps educate students, veterinarians, current and future attorneys, law enforcement, and other professionals who are positioned to recognize and address animal abuse as a crime and, in turn, protect the well-being of both animals and people.

British Study Examines Veterinarians' Reporting of Suspected Dogfighting

Although dog fighting has been illegal in the UK since 1835, it continues today although with an unknown prevalence. The researchers used an online questionnaire to: (1) determine the occurrence of dogs suspected of being fighting animals in UK veterinary practices; (2) explore the reporting of incidents to police, RSPCA or equivalent charities by registered veterinary nurses (RVN) and veterinarians; and (3) determine the factors influencing such reporting.

264 veterinarians and 159 RVNs completed the questionnaire. One or more cases of dogfighting were suspected by 14.4% of respondents; 182 cases were suspected in total. Proportionately, more RVNs suspected dogfighting than veterinarians. 32 respondents (7.6%) claimed to have reported their suspicions; 59 respondents (14.2%) had previously chosen not to.

Reasons not to report included: uncertainty of illegal activity (81.4%); fear of the client not returning to the practice (35.6%); and concerns regarding client confidentiality (22.0%). The authors encouraged further research to address under-reporting of dogfighting by veterinary professionals.

-- Milroy, K.E., Whiting, M., & Abeyesinghe, S. (2018). Reporting of suspected dog fighting to the police, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and equivalents by veterinary professionals in the UK. *Veterinary Record*, 183(18), 567.

Veterinary College Develops Cruelty Curriculum Unit

Although 33 states mandate or permit veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse, and both the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Animal Hospital Association support reporting, animal cruelty is not always emphasized in veterinary school curricula. As a result, not all veterinary students and graduates feel comfortable recognizing signs of animal cruelty and may not be aware of the resources that are available to them when considering reporting.



Ryane E. Englar

To enhance student comfort with these problematic diagnoses and responses, the Midwestern University College of Veterinary Medicine has developed a standardized client encounter titled “Grizabella’s Final Fight.”

“Animal cruelty is the antithesis of animal welfare,” notes Ryane E. Englar, DVM, Assistant Professor and Clinical Education Coordinator at Kansas State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. “Because veterinarians take an oath to protect animal welfare, they are professionally obligated to report animal cruelty.”

Writing in the [Journal of Veterinary Medical Education](#), she adds, “I hope that other colleges of veterinary medicine will adapt this teaching tool to allow students the opportunity to practice discussions surrounding animal cruelty reporting in the context of state-specific legislation that guides their code of professional conduct.”

AVMA suggests that practices develop their own protocols for identifying signs that patients may have been victims of cruelty and consulting on cases with senior colleagues with regard to when to report. The National Link Coalition has compiled several practice-management guidances from Minnesota, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, AVMA, and national veterinary associations in the U.K. and New Zealand that can assist practitioners in crafting such responses.

-- Englar, R.E. (2018). Using a standardized client encounter in the veterinary curriculum to practice veterinarian-employer discussions about animal cruelty reporting. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 45(4), 1-16.

Veterinary Social Work Pioneer Honored for Lifetime Achievements



Sandra Brackenridge

Sandra Brackenridge, LCSW, BCD, a pioneer in the Veterinary Social Work movement who commemorated Domestic Violence Awareness Month in 2017 with a blog that encouraged people to recognize that acts of domestic violence may include animal violence ([See the December 2017 LINK-Letter](#)), was recently honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the [Texas chapter](#) of the National Association of Social Workers. A clinical social worker in private practice and a field instructor at a veterinary specialty and emergency care facility, she is a retired associate professor from Texas Women’s University and has served as coordinator of counseling services at the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine. She serves on the affiliate faculty of the University of Tennessee’s Veterinary Social Work Certificate Program.



Veterinary Forensics Conference Calls for Abstracts

The International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association has issued a Call for Abstracts for presentations at the 12th Annual Veterinary Forensic Sciences Conference, May 7-10, 2019 in St. Petersburg Beach, Fla. Abstracts for either poster or podium presentations will be accepted until Jan. 1 from multi-disciplinary professionals and students. Abstracts should illustrate areas of research or case studies that enhance the body of knowledge relating to veterinary or wildlife forensics. Submit a 250-word abstract and CV to IVFSA Secretary [Patricia Norris](#) or via the [IVFSA website](#), where more details are available.

Veterinary Behaviorists Call for Abstracts

The [12th International Veterinary Behavior Meeting](#) has issued a call for papers describing finished scientific research or short communications about ongoing research or clinical case studies. The meeting will be held on July 30 – August 1 in Washington, D.C., preceding the AVMA Annual Convention. While clinical animal behavior remains the main focus of the meeting, the international symposium has always embraced multiple related disciplines including ethology, cognition, psychology, the human-animal bond, and animal abuse and human violence. Abstract submissions are due by Jan. 12.

Vets Urged to Consider Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence in the Diagnosis

An article in the current issue of the *Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association* is calling on veterinarians to be alert to recognize signs of animal abuse and to be aware of the connection between animal abuse and domestic violence.

Veterinarians Ira Roth, of the Department of Small Animal Medicine and Surgery at the University of Georgia, and Janet Martin, of the Athens, Ga. Area Humane Society, wrote up a case study describing a one-year-old shih tzu that was presented with injuries to his right rear leg and right eye. The dog was presented 20 days later with fractures to his left rear leg and pelvis, injuries that were attributed to a routine fall at home that were considered “plausible” according to radiographic interpretation.



Ira Roth and Janet Martin

However, “subsequent patient visits, evaluation of additional injuries, and interviews with the owner indicated that both animal and domestic abuse had occurred,” they wrote.

--Roth, I., & Martin, J. (2018). A case of animal and domestic abuse initially diagnosed as Legg-Calve-Perthes disease. *Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association*, 54(6).

Alberta Veterinarians Convene Forensics Workshop



The Alberta, Canada, Veterinary Medical Association convened its second Veterinary Forensics Workshop which acquainted 87 practitioners with The Link and issues in enforcing and prosecuting cruelty cases in the province. The National Link Coalition's Phil Arkow presented two workshops. Above, a panel of local authorities described details of Alberta's Animal Protection Act. From left were: Phil Buote (Alberta Veterinary Medical Association); Hussein Keshwani (Alberta Agriculture and Forestry); Ken dean (Alberta SPCA); Brad Nichols (Calgary Humane Society); and Karen Lange (Edmonton Animal Care & Control).

ANIMAL ABUSE &... CHILD MALTREATMENT

What Is the Impact of Pet Loss on Child Sexual Abuse Survivors?



S. Caroline Taylor (left) and Lauren J. Breen

While there is considerable research examining the psychosocial nexus between humans and animals, and anecdotal findings of how threats to cherished pets are weapons of power and control utilized by child sexual abusers, there is little published evidence on how the loss of a companion animal affects the healing identity and healing process of survivors of child sexual abuse. The authors draw on data from several Australian studies in which the threatened and real loss of pets experienced by child and adult survivors, and its effect in terms of non-disclosure of abuse, was raised across various forms of data collection. These studies exposed a hitherto uncharted terrain of trauma impact and recovery – pet loss for survivors of child sexual abuse – that is neither well-understood nor articulated in current literature. The paper highlights the need for a deeper and more sustained examination and understanding of this phenomenon in order to assist the recovery of survivors and enhance mental health professionals' understanding of the ongoing effects of pet loss and its relation to recovery.

-- Taylor, S.C., & Breen, L.J. (2014). Exploring pet loss for survivors of child sexual abuse: A hitherto uncharted terrain of trauma impact and recovery. *Child Abuse Review*, 23(5), 353-360.

ANIMAL-ASSISTED INTERVENTIONS FOR CRIME VICTIMS

Australian Program Builds Empathy Among Abused, Homeless Children

In 2005, an Animal Assisted Education and Therapy (AAET) group was developed in Australia to offer therapeutic interventions to help children traumatized by family violence and homelessness develop empathy and reducing their fears. AAET is run by WAYSS, Ltd., a youth support services agency in the Melbourne region.



“It takes me a little longer to get angry now”
ANIMAL ASSISTED EDUCATION AND THERAPY GROUP
A Preliminary Evaluation

An [independent evaluation](#) of the program by Child Abuse Prevention Research Australia (CAPRA) at Monash University sought feedback from participants. Results found the children, who had previously described themselves as angry, scared, quiet or shy, gained more confidence, independence, sociability, and empathy from comforting scared, frightened guinea pigs, rabbits, and other animals. Many transferred this learned empathy into other familial and social relationships and into more socially acceptable behaviors. Participation helped them reconnect with peers and society and resume more beneficial development.



“When women and children are forced into homelessness because of family violence, they lose more than the immediate roof over their heads,” the report noted. “They are often taking the first steps into a poverty trap that may see them spiral into a lengthy period of homelessness, where family and social supports deteriorate and access to secure and safe long-term housing is elusive. For children living with, and then fleeing from, family violence, enduring the loss of home, possessions, pets, neighborhood, school, and friends, has powerful and resounding traumatic effects.”

Using small animals in a group setting, AAET conveys a sense of safety, empowerment and trust that have been missing from their lives and that are prerequisites for moving on from trauma. Education about animal health, husbandry and welfare facilitates children’s bonding with the animals and helps them reconnect with their caring and affectionate qualities.

The study quoted extensive interviews of 11 children, all of whom had been subjected to violence from their biological father, their mother’s partner, or older siblings. The abuses they experienced included: threats to kill and actual killing of pets; direct physical and/or sexual abuse; threats to kill or hurt their mothers; threats to burn their house down; sleep deprivation; road rage; and being held hostage.

Many participants demonstrated a growth in empathy. Several described the warm feelings they experienced in nurturing, comforting and caring for vulnerable animals and especially in reducing the animals’ fear and making them safe.

The study recommended further research into the effectiveness of animal-assisted interventions with traumatized children to provide concrete evidence of changes in children’s trauma symptoms, their ability to regulate their emotions and their behavioral responses to anger and fear. “One of the fundamental aims of the group is to break the cycle of violence and reduce the use of violence by traumatized children in the future,” it concluded.

Mudaly, N. (2015). “It Takes Me a Little Longer to Get Angry Now”: Animal-Assisted Education and Therapy Group: A Preliminary Evaluation. Notting Hill, Vic., Australia: Child Abuse Prevention Research Australia.

University Seeks Ph.D. Social Work Candidate Focusing on Link Interactions

A competitive position is available for an individual seeking a Ph.D. in Social Work, with a focus on human-animal interaction and/or childhood and adolescent adversity. The position will work with noted Link researcher Shelby McDonald in the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Social Work and conduct research with the Children, Families, and Animals Research Group. The applicant will also have opportunities to collaborate with the VCU School of Medicine Center for Human Animal Interaction and Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development in the VCU Department of Psychology.



Shelby E. McDonald

The research program will focus on human-animal interactions among populations experiencing adversity, including: children with adverse childhood events; families experiencing intimate partner violence; and/or LGBTQ+ youth and young adults. The position includes a graduate research assistant stipend of \$25,000 and tuition waiver for four years. The priority deadline for applicants is Jan. 15. Full [details are available online](#).

THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

Article Cites Link in Calling for Study of Animal Maltreatment

Despite the widespread belief among the public and law enforcement personnel that individuals who harm animals often harm other people, the subject of animal maltreatment has received little attention from behavioral scientists. Advances in comparative neuroanatomy have highlighted the ability of animals to feel physical and emotional pain, including complex psychological reactions to traumatic events. These advances, and recent studies that support the notion that perpetrators of crimes against animals often commit other crimes, have arguably created an ethical and practical imperative for behavioral scientists to undertake a serious examination of animal maltreatment and potential mechanisms for responding to it. In addition, the close and complex relationships many Americans have with animals and the advancements in animal protection law in the past two decades necessitate expertise on the part of forensic psychologists and psychiatrists, who will increasingly be called upon to evaluate animal maltreatment offenders and consult on related policy and legislation.

-- Levitt, L. (2018). **Animal maltreatment: Implications for behavioral sciences professionals.** *Behavioral Sciences & The Law*, 1-20.



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– 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.

Study Explores Veterinary Students' Histories of ACEs

Numerous Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have been identified, including child abuse and neglect, which contribute to physiological and psychological health risks in adulthood. A survey of 1,118 veterinary medical students explored their histories of ACEs and their relationship with depression, stress, and desire to become a veterinarian. 61% of respondents reported having at least one ACE. The most prevalent ACE reported was living with a household member with a mental illness (31%). Students who had experienced four or more ACEs had an approximately threefold increase in signs of clinical depression and higher than average stress when compared to students who had experienced no ACEs. The number of ACEs showed an overall graded relationship to signs of clinical depression and higher than average stress. There was no statistically significant relationship between age at which a student wanted to become a veterinarian and exposure to ACEs. Veterinary students reported being exposed to ACEs at a rate similar to that of other population-based studies. The findings do not suggest that veterinary students enter the veterinary medical education system more at risk for poor mental health due to ACEs than the general population.

-- Strand, E.B., Brandt, J., Rogers, K., Fonken, L., & Chun, R., et al. (2017). Adverse childhood experiences among veterinary medical students: A multi-site study. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 44(2), 260-267.

Article Reviews Bestiality for Legal and Mental Health Professionals

A new article provides an overview of the terminology and research pertaining to bestiality, summarizes the legal and ethical considerations of animal sexual abuse, and describes clinically relevant information for the evaluation, management and treatment of individuals who engage in sex with animals. The article also defines common terms, examines bestiality in history and popular culture, and summarizes legislation in five states and several foreign countries, such as Hungary, Finland and Romania, where sex with animals is still legal. It reviews the challenges to conducting bestiality investigations and the medical and mental health complications of working with individuals engaged in bestiality.

-- Holoyda, B., Sorrentino, R., Friedman, S.H., & Allgire, J. (2018). Bestiality: An introduction for legal and mental health professionals. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2368>

Interdisciplinary Response to Animal Hoarding Needed in Germany

The need for interdisciplinary responses to resolve the chronically intractable issues associated with animal hoarding was highlighted in what is believed to be one of the first research studies on the subject in Germany. Researchers analyzed 120 cases of animal hoarding, involving 9,174 animals (an average of 76 per case), from 2012-2015. Cats were most commonly hoarded animals, followed by dogs and small mammals. Most hoarders were middle-aged females. "Animal hoarding is a current and serious animal welfare problem for which a stronger interdisciplinary approach is needed. Responsible institutions such as veterinary, legal, and health departments need to improve cooperation and provide continuous help for hoarders and animals," they concluded.

-- Arnold, A., Mackensen, H., Ofensberger, E., & Rusche, B. (2018). Assessment of recent cases of animal hoarding in Germany: The challenge for animal shelters and public authorities. *People and Animals: The International Journal of Research and Practice*, 1(1), 7.

BUILDING LINK AWARENESS



Link Training Video Available on YouTube

Lollypop Farm – the Humane Society of Greater Rochester, N.Y., has produced a 95-minute video of National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow’s training at their 2nd Annual Animal Crimes Conference in October. The video includes his slides and presentation on “Breaking the Cycles of Violence: A Species-Spanning Approach to Safer Families and Communities” and is available on [YouTube](#).



Link Awareness Continues to Expand “Down Under”

Link awareness continues to make progress in the Southern Hemisphere. Australia’s [Pet Welfare Foundation](#) led off its November newsletter with a case study of a woman whose husband was undergoing multiple stressors – unemployment, the death of his mother – and became increasingly controlling and verbally abusive. When she came home late one day he accused her of cheating on him and began strangling their dogs. She knew it was time to leave, and the national domestic violence hotline helped her and her pets escape.

Meanwhile, in New Zealand, Ian Robertson’s [International Animal Law website](#) spotlighted The Link and the National Link Coalition. Noting that the human-animal bond is a mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between people and animals, “the sad reality is that the relationship is not always ‘beneficial’ – to animals or people. Does it make sense to you that if a person is capable of abuse of animals, they might also be capable of abuse of other people as well? And vice versa?”



Robertson, a barrister, solicitor and veterinarian, offered hyperlinks to Link resources available from the [International Association of human-Animal Interaction Organizations](#), the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#), and the National Link Coalition. “The NLC is particularly good in terms of the information it provides, and the initiatives it will make you aware of. Those initiatives include attempts to advance the law in this less than ‘beneficial’ aspect of the human-animal relationship.”



Link Featured in Seminar at Oklahoma University

[Beth Bowin](#), a psychology instructor at Northeastern State University in Tallequah, Okla., taught the first seminars ever held at the university on the Link between animal abuse and domestic violence. The seminars, held on Nov. 2 and 3, attracted 30 students. The National Link Coalition assisted her with resource materials for the curriculum. Bowin is also conducting research on the impact of pets on homeless persons, many of whom became homeless as a result of domestic violence or sexual abuse. At left, Bowin shares information with a student.

NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS



New Mexico Link Coalition Expands Outreach and Advocacy

Our Link coalition in New Mexico, [Positive Links](#), is concluding a highly successful year. President Tammy Fiebelkorn shared with *The LINK-Letter* some highlights from 2018:

Community outreach was expanded with the inaugural Mutt Strutt, a successful fundraiser that showed the public how animals are members of the family, too. Coalition members also appeared regularly on KRQE's Morning Show.

The **Domestic Violence & Animals Project** is working with a local domestic violence shelter to help it open its doors to animals. The project involves a partnership with an animal shelter and a veterinarian to ensure that incoming animals

receive proper care, to develop policies and procedures to keep everyone safe, and to construct an indoor-outdoor housing unit for the animals.

The **Animal-Human Bond Project** worked with Bernalillo County Youth Services Center to design a program that trains residents of the short-term detention facility to teach homeless dogs manners and behaviors that will enhance their ability to be adopted.

House Joint Memorial 3 was bipartisan legislation that would have encouraged the state Children, Youth & Families and Public Safety Departments to train their field agents about The Link between animal and family abuse. The measure passed the House unanimously, but unfortunately time ran out before the Senate could act on it. However, Positive Links has received confirmation from both agencies that they want to develop and deliver Link training in the future.

Several **Link trainings** were conducted for Gallup law enforcement and mental health professionals, as well as for trial lawyers, crime prevention and youth services officials. More trainings are planned for 2019 including the biennial state Link conference on Sept. 18-19 in Albuquerque.



What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

Knowledge...

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

North Texas Link Coalition Continues to Expand



Our affiliate Link coalition in the Dallas Metroplex region has announced two new developments which will expand awareness and training opportunities. Beginning in 2019, the [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will offer quarterly, 3-hour mini-events that will offer CEUs. The events will be held on Fridays, January 11, April 12, July 12, and October 11. Details of the programs will be forthcoming.

General meeting dates will be held on the second Friday of the month between the quarterly mini-events: Feb. 8, March 8, May 10, June 14, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, and Nov. 8.

Coordinator Linda Yarbrough tells *The LINK-Letter* that awareness is improving through the [Dallas Domestic Violence Task Force](#), of which the North Texas Link Coalition is an invited member. The Coalition pushed for inclusion of Link education in routine Family Violence Unit training, as well as routine involvement of animal cruelty investigation officers in domestic violence casework.



Progress is being made, says Yarbrough. The Task Force added “Unable to take pets” in an infographic about Major Barriers to Shelter. The Task Force’s 74-page 2018 Annual Report identified several pet issues in a survey of 17 member agencies:

“Another barrier to accessing services that respondents identified is lack of pet-friendly human shelters and other safe housing options for victims and survivors and their pets. Policy recommendations included including pets in protective orders, promoting education of family violence units about the link between animal cruelty and human violence, and promoting participation of commissioned or certified animal cruelty investigators in the Domestic Violence Task Force.”



Link Italia Produces Awareness Video

Our Link affiliate in Italy has created a graphic, dramatic, 51-second [video on YouTube](#) introducing Italian viewers to how animal abuse is Linked to violent crime, domestic violence and stalking, child abuse, and organized crime.

Link Coalition Forming in Uganda

We have received word that the first Link coalition on the African continent may be organizing. Dr. David Balondemu of the Bam Animal Clinics is creating the [Uganda Link Coalition](#). Bam Vet Clinics, based in the town of Iganga, are unifying with Arise and Shine Children’s Orphanage. The partnership aims to not only treat abuse and neutering of Uganda’s numerous homeless animals but also to rescue children who are abandoned on the streets, sold at street markets and exposed to the regular abuse of the animals. Operating within a Christian framework, the coalition aims to restore depleted empathy and assure child and animal welfare.



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 have added the costs of pet deposits and additional rent fees if the victim has a pet to the list of expenses which may be reimbursable. **Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed the bill**.



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 took effect Nov. 1.



Illinois HB5668 would have amended the Domestic Violence Shelters Act to 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 **died when the legislature adjourned**.



Kentucky BR 66, prefiled for the 2019 legislative session, would: prohibit pretrial diversion for a person charged with torture of a dog or cat; make torture of a dog or cat a Class D felony; and prohibit early release for those who torture a dog or cat as a way to threaten, intimidate, coerce, harass, or terrorize a family member or member of a dating relationship.



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 passed the House 90-15, was 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 have allowed allow divorcing parties to enter into a custody agreement for the possession and/or care of a companion animal. Such agreements would have specified the time during which each party will possess the pet and each party’s financial responsibility regarding its care. The bill defined relevant factors which the court may consider. **The bill died in the House Judiciary Committee when the legislative session ended.**



Pennsylvania SB 480 would have increased 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 have increased these to \$2,000 and \$15,000. **The bill died when the legislative session ended.**

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.

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 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 have addressed 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 have prohibited sexual contact with any animal punishable as a misdemeanor; such animals could be seized. Veterinarians would have been 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 but **died 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.**

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 passed the House and is in the Senate Agriculture 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 House and is in the Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee.

 **Pennsylvania SB 176** would have added 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 and **died when the legislature adjourned.**



 **Rhode Island H 7986** extends veterinarians' existing immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting of suspected animal abuse, neglect or abandonment to veterinary technicians and animal shelter and kennel employees. 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.**

Elder/Disabled Adult Abuse

 **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.**

Psychological Evaluation of Offenders

 **California SB 1024** would have required individuals convicted of any of several animal cruelty offenses to complete and pass a 5-hour course on responsible animal owner education and would have allowed 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 but **died when the legislature adjourned.**

 **New Jersey** currently requires juveniles (but not adults) convicted of animal cruelty to undergo mental health counseling. Five bills would expand that to include adults as well. **A3049** and **S1636 ("Shyanne's Law")** 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. **S2749** would likewise require mental health counseling for all persons convicted of animal cruelty; it is in the Senate Environment and Energy 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 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.



An **Ohio administrative regulation 109:2-1-13** by the Attorney General's Office would require basic peace officer training to include at least 1 hour on companion animal encounters and behavior, 6 hours on child abuse, 1 hour on crisis intervention, 6 hours on domestic violence, and 6 hours on human trafficking.



Pennsylvania HB 1197 would have made animal fighting an indictable offense under existing racketeering provisions addressing offenses committed by corrupt organizations. The crime would have specifically pertained to individuals who are directly involved in the animal fighting rather than spectators or individuals wagering on the outcome. **The bill died in the Senate Judiciary Committee when the legislative session ended.**

Permission to Reprint

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

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Altoona Police Charge Trio with Child and Animal Abuse Offenses

Police in Altoona, Penna. responding to an animal cruelty incident charged a man with multiple counts, and two women living in the home with child endangerment, after the suspect allegedly punched the officer in the face. The [Altoona Mirror](#) reported that police found a 1-1/2-month-old Chihuahua puppy with a severe head injury and covered in fleas, plus five other flea-infested dogs and cats. Richard Jukes, Jr., 25, was charged with aggravated animal cruelty, aggravated assault of a police officer, resisting arrest, obstruction of justice and other charges for allegedly stomping the puppy to death and punching the investigating officers. Three children under the age of nine were living in the home and Stacy Friday and Stephanie Obsstutch were arrested and charged with endangering the welfare of a child and animal cruelty.



Richard Jukes, Jr.

Man Charged with Dognapping, Stabbing in Retaliation

A man who allegedly wanted to retaliate after a failed relationship by killing a dog belonging to its owner was charged with burglary, aggravated animal cruelty and theft. [WPMT-TV](#) reported that Christopher Roberts, 19, of Swatara Twp., Penna., was arrested and charged in connection with the kidnapping and death of "Bella," an 8-year-old Boston terrier/Jack Russell mix. Police said Roberts broke into the home of Damien Malfara, stole the dog, and took it to another location where it was stabbed to death.



Christopher Roberts

Boyfriend Charged with Cruelty and Defying Protection Order

Alphonso Johnson, 31, of Panama City, Fla., was arrested on Thanksgiving night and charged with three offenses, including animal cruelty, for allegedly throwing a puppy off a second-floor balcony during an argument with his girlfriend. [WJHG-TV](#) reported that police said that Johnson was staying at a hotel and threw the three-month-old dog off the balcony, causing severe and potentially fatal injuries. According to arrest records, Johnson is not allowed to be near the woman, who has a protection order against him.



Alphonso Johnson



Heidi Lueders

Pit Bull Rescuer Charged with Cruelty, Other Crimes

Police in Fairfield, Conn., issued a warrant for the arrest of Heidi Lueders, 31, on six charges of animal cruelty and criminal damage to her landlord's property after police found the skeletal remains of five dogs, accumulated feces and refuse inside her rented home. The *Greenwich Free Press* reported that Lueders, president of a pit bull rescue group, has a criminal history. In 2015 she was charged with disorderly conduct, assault and reckless endangerment for letting a 70-pound dog bite a person she was trying to collect a debt from. She was later charged with criminal mischief and disorderly conduct and had two guns seized by police for hitting the tires of a car at a party at the home of her boyfriend's ex-wife, with whom she got into a fight.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Dec. 12 – 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.

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. 11, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will offer a 3-hour CE & CEU training event.

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.”

Jan. 19, 2019 – Genoa, Italy: [Link Italia](#) will hold a training course on “The Zooanthropology of Deviance: Maltreatment and Killing of Animals, Interpersonal Violence, and Other Antisocial and Criminal Behavior.”

Jan. 23, 2019 – Pittsfield, Mass.: [HAVEN](#) – the Human-Animal Violence Education Network – will meet.

Feb. 5, 2019 and ongoing (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on how educating students about The Link helps make humane education more relevant in the 21st Century for the Humane Education Coalition’s [Humane Summit](#).

Feb. 8, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting. The program will feature the Texas Dept. of Family Services Adult Protective Services, DFW region.

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 4, 2019 – Sewell, N.J.: Phil Arkow will train on the Link for the [Center for Family Services](#).

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

March 8, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

March 18-19, 2019 – Hartford, Conn.: Phil Arkow and Aubrey Fine will discuss cross-reporting between child and animal protection agencies and therapeutic interventions for child abuse victims at the [Paws for Kids](#) conference.

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 10, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

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

Apr. 12, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will offer a 3-hour CE & CEU training event.

June 14, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

July 12, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will offer a 3-hour CE & CEU training event.

Aug. 9, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

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.”

Sept. 13, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

Sept. 18-19, 2019 – Albuquerque, N. Mex.: Positive Links’ biennial [New Mexico Conference on The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence](#) will be held.

Oct. 11, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: Chelsea Rider will present at a 3-hour CE & CEU training event hosted by the [North Texas Link Coalition](#).

Nov. 8, 2019 – Dallas, Texas: The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

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.

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

Phil Arkow, Coordinator

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

Lesley Ashworth

Founder/President, American Veterinary Charitable Fund
Consultant, Ohio Domestic Violence Network
Former Director, Domestic Violence/Stalking Program,
Columbus City Attorney's Office/Prosecution Division
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Jane A. Hunt

Community Volunteer
Loveland, Colo.

Mark Kumpf, CAWA

President, Ohio County Dog Wardens Association
Director, Montgomery County Animal Resource Center
Dayton, Ohio

Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President, Anti-Cruelty Special Projects
ASPCA
Falls Church, Va.

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Alexandria, Va.