



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter Vol. 14, No. 12 December 2021

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



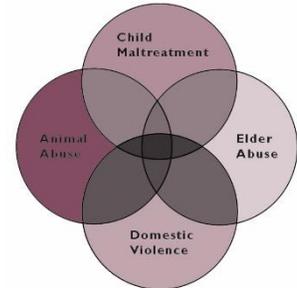
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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LEGISLATION... and The LINK

AVERT Act Would Study The Link, Offer Grants for Link Programs

A game-changing bill with the potential to be the most widespread federal recognition of how animal abuse is Linked with human violence is about to be introduced in Congress. U.S. Rep. Katherine Clark (D-Mass.), who co-authored the pioneering **PAWS (Pet And Women Safety) Act** and shepherded it through a tortuous six-year struggle through three Congressional sessions (*See the [January 2019 LINK-Letter](#)*), is sponsoring the **AVERT (Animal Violence Exposes Real Threat of Future Violence) Act** of 2021.



U.S. Rep. Katherine Clark

The measure, as-yet unnumbered, would direct the U.S. Attorney General to order the National Institute of Justice to conduct a **\$2,000,000 study** on the underlying factors that contribute to people committing acts of animal cruelty and an analysis of animal cruelty as a predictor of future violence against humans. The study would examine evidence-based risk factors associated with individuals who commit animal cruelty and whether certain such acts demonstrate a tendency or likelihood to commit future acts of violence against humans. The study would make recommendations on areas of needed additional research and develop best practices for interventions that prevent animal cruelty and subsequent acts of violence. The study would result in a report recommending legislative and regulatory action at the federal, state and local levels addressing both adult and juvenile offenders.

The measure would also authorize **\$15,000,000 for the Stop Future Violence Grant Program** to assist local governments and tribes, courts, and organizations in “identifying, intervening in, preventing, reducing, or responding to animal cruelty or animal cruelty as related to interpersonal violence.” Such organizations could include: animal shelters; animal welfare organizations; mental health services for perpetrators and survivors of crimes; training programs for law enforcement, judges, prosecutors, veterinarians or mental health professionals; domestic violence and sexual assault service providers and coalitions; child abuse or elder abuse service providers; family services departments; community-based and culturally-specific organizations; and other nonprofit organizations.

As of this writing, numerous Link-related organizations have indicated their support for the bill, including the Animal Legal Defense Fund, the Animal Welfare Institute, ASPCA, Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, Humane Society Legislative Fund, the National Link Coalition, NOVA (National Organization for Victim Assistance), RedRover, SAF-T (Sheltering Animals and Families Together), and the Small & Rural Law Enforcement Executives Association. Other supporters are being sought.*

Federal recognition of The Link has been increasing in recent years. In 2014, the FBI added four types of animal cruelty to its **National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)**, giving state legislators and law enforcement officials the first opportunity to identify the nature, incidence and prevalence of animal cruelty and its co-occurrence with other crimes (*See the [October 2014 LINK-Letter](#)*). The **PAWS Act** enabled pet-inclusive domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders to be enforced across state lines and made more than \$2,000,000 per year available to fund pet-friendly domestic violence shelters.

The FBI, Homeland Security, and the National Counterterrorism Center published a First Responders' Toolbox in 2018 warning that animal abuse poses a potential **warning sign for terrorism**. The FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit in 2018 published an **extensive study** of "affective" and "predatory" animal abusers (*See the [August 2018 LINK-Letter](#)*).

Earlier this year, **U.S. H.R. 1016**, the **Animal Cruelty Enforcement (ACE) Act** was introduced citing Links between animal cruelty and violence against humans; it would enhance enforcement of federal anti-cruelty laws, such as interstate trafficking of fighting animals, by creating an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section at the U.S. Department of Justice. **U.S. H.R. 763**, the **Child and Animal Abuse Detection and Reporting Act**, would amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to require that data collected by the federal government from state child protection agencies include information about animal abuse as a risk factor for child abuse.

The U.S. Department of Justice has published research on The Link. Frank Ascione's groundbreaking "**Animal Abuse and Youth Violence**" was published in the September, 2001 issue of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. The National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, published **two reports** on a multi-state survey about meeting domestic violence survivors' pet needs in 2008 and 2011. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, published the 2012 Pilnik & Kendall report of **polyvictimization** and trauma among court-involved children and youth.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) in 2012 published Randy Lockwood's "**Dogfighting: A Guide for Community Action**" and in 2018 the National Sheriffs Association's "**Animal Cruelty as a Gateway Crime**".

***If your organization is interested in supporting the AVERT Act, please contact Phil Arkow, National Link Coalition Coordinator at arkowpets@snip.net.**

LAW ENFORCEMENT... and THE LINK

Louisville Passes Groundbreaking Law Mandating Animal Control and Law Enforcement Officers' Link Training and Programs

The city of Louisville, Ky., has enacted what may be the first municipal ordinance in the United States mandating law enforcement and animal control officers to be trained on The Link between animal abuse and human violence. The [Kentucky Link Coalition](#) announced that the Louisville Metro Council passed [bill 0-401-21](#) on Oct. 28 to address the Link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence.

The groundbreaking measure defines The Link as “the multiple correlations between animal abuse and crimes against people, particularly interpersonal violence such as child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, and sexual assault.” The ordinance covers several different areas by requiring:

- All current and future officers serving with the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) and Metro Animal Services (MAS) to attend 4-8 hours of training on the Link and to incorporate the Link into bi-annual domestic violence training required under state law.
- LMPD and MAS to expand initial animal abuse calls for service to determine if there is reasonable suspicion of interpersonal violence and to report such suspicions to the appropriate agencies per state law.
- MAS to provide free-of-charge shelter for 30 days for pets belonging to victims of interpersonal violence or to facilitate the adoption of the pet upon request. It further requires both LMPD and MAS to provide transportation of a pet to a safe location, if requested.
- LMPD and MAS to create a collaborative information brochure of government and community-based resources for the pets of victims of interpersonal violence. The brochure will also be provided to the Jefferson County Attorney’s Office to facilitate and ensure that persons applying for domestic violence protective orders are made aware of all available resources for their pets.
- LMPD to create a Risk Assessment form to determine the potential risk that the suspected violator poses to other persons and to include the assessment in cross-reporting to Child or Adult Protective Services. LMPD risk assessment reports to APS or CPS will include details about suspected animal abuse and indications of interpersonal violence.

Finally, the ordinance makes it a civil offense with a penalty up to \$500 for anyone to knowingly commit an act of animal abuse in the presence of a child.



Councilmembers McCraney (left) & Parker

The ordinance, which passed by an 18-0 vote, was sponsored by Councilmembers Paula McCraney and Marilyn Parker, with endorsement from Kentucky State Representative Tina Bojanowski. The preamble to the proposal cited 15 Link research findings from numerous Link authorities and the FBI demonstrating how child abuse and domestic violence abusers use threats of violence against family pets to maintain control over their victims and how animal abuse often predicts or co-occurs with other family violence.

The Louisville Metro Government enacted the ordinance “to require training, reporting, risk assessment, and enhance criminal penalties to ensure the safety of vulnerable citizens.” It will take effect on Feb. 28, 2022.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE... and THE LINK

Minnesota Judges' Benchbook Includes Animal Cruelty and The Link

The [newest edition of the Criminal Benchbook](#) for judges in Minnesota includes a new chapter on animal cruelty and its Link to human violence. The 7th edition of the *Minnesota Judges Criminal Benchbook*, published in April by Minnesota Continuing Legal Education, a division of the Minnesota State Bar Association, contains 28 chapters designed to keep criminal law practitioners informed and current on all changes affecting their practice.



The chapter on Animal Cruelty covers the state's statutes on definitions, charging statutes, penalties, special crimes, reporting animal cruelty, ordering an investigation, issuing search warrants, disposal of animals in possession, and pre-trial and sentencing issues. Other chapters cover sexual assault and abuse, and domestic abuse issues.

The chapter was co-written by Ann Olson and Marianne Settano of Animal Folks, Renee Frederickson of the Pine County Attorney's Office, and retired Judge Gordon Shumaker of the Minnesota Court of Appeals. Olson also recently presented on The Link to the Continuing Legal Education (CLE) conference and to the Animal Law Section of the Minnesota State Bar Association.

Florida has also included animal abuse and Link issues in its benchbook for judges. That benchbook was produced by the Office of the State Courts Administrator in 2017 to address domestic violence issues and includes a Fact Sheet on Violence Toward Family Pets, significant references to the impact of animal abuse within the context of intimate partner violence, and how such incidents can be included in judicial decisions ([See the April 2020 LINK-Letter](#)).

Florida's legislature considered the issue so serious that a provision in the domestic violence injunction statute § 741.30(6)(b)(4) reads:

"In determining whether a petitioner has reasonable cause to believe he or she is in imminent danger of becoming a victim of domestic violence, the court shall consider and evaluate all relevant factors alleged in the petition, including, but not limited to... whether the respondent has intentionally injured or killed a family pet."

Grant Funds Available to Investigate and Prosecute Dog Cruelty Cases

The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) and the Stanton Foundation are partnering to promote the welfare of dogs and strengthen the human/dog bond by holding animal abusers fully accountable for their actions. Because cruelty against dogs is a crime of violence which requires a prosecutor's full attention, the foundation is awarding grants to hold offenders accountable. The grants will provide prosecutors with resources to ensure that canine cruelty and dogfighting cases are thoroughly investigated and properly adjudicated by addressing some of the financial barriers that exist for law enforcement and prosecutors.

APA is now accepting requests for funding to cover appropriate costs related to dog abuse cases that can include, but are not limited to: costs of care; necropsies and forensic evidence analysis; and expert witness fees. APA and the Stanton Foundation will not have access, influence, or control over how a case is investigated, prosecuted, or sentenced. For more information, contact [Rebecca Neville at APA](#).

NCJFCJ Webinar Brings Veterinary Forensics and The Link to Judges



Diane Balkin (left) & Melinda Merck

Diane Balkin and Melinda Merck collaborated on a webinar on Nov. 18 to introduce family court judges to the basics of veterinary forensics and the presentation of animal abuse-related evidence in court as part of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' [continuing webinar series](#) on The Link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence.

Balkin, a former prosecutor and contract attorney for the Animal Legal Defense Fund, and Merck, a forensic veterinarian, presented the webinar to help judges further understand The Link so that they can respond appropriately to cases that involve co-occurring harms against humans and animals.

Participants learned about the similarities and differences between the presentation of injury, pain and suffering in animals and humans, and how this information is useful for judges in cases involving domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, juvenile offenses, and elder abuse. While primarily oriented to judicial officers, the webinar provided participants with practical information on recognizing and responding to maltreatment of animals and humans in juvenile and family law cases.

Merck noted the commonalities and differences between human and animal medicine and the forensics employed in court proceedings. Veterinary pathologists do not receive the same degree of training as medical examiners, and the field of veterinary forensics is much newer and offered only in post-graduate training rather than in veterinary colleges. Veterinary professionals must deal with multiple species, each of which presents different physical responses to injury, illness, fear, and stress.

“Suffering may look different between a puppy, a turtle or a horse,” she said, noting that animals may not vocalize pain and there may not be visible injury or bruising. Stress may bring out a wide range of behavioral responses including anxiety, fear, shutting down, aggression, destruction, or learned helplessness.

Co-occurring interpersonal violence can also impact animals' health through delayed medical care, physical and emotional abuse, and animals being systematically killed. There are physical traumas in dogs and cats that are distinctly non-accidental injuries as opposed to those occurring from motor vehicle accidents, she said. The most common injuries include being kicked or thrown into a wall, blunt-force trauma, neglect, and sexual abuse. Veterinary forensics is “a blend from the veterinary world and human services world where we're learning from each other.”



What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

Knowledge...

...to protect ALL vulnerable members of the family

Prosecution Conference Addresses The Link and Cockfighting



Herman Soong

The 10th National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference, sponsored by the [Association of Prosecuting Attorneys](#) and [Animal Legal Defense Fund](#), brought together prosecutors, veterinarians, crime experts and animal advocates at the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine in an effort to reduce violent crime by cross-pollinating their fields of study. Dr. Herman Soong, forensic neuropsychology expert and professor at Tulane University in New Orleans, was one of several speakers who discussed The Link between violence against animals and violence against humans.

“People who abuse animals lack a certain amount of empathy that allows them to be violent in other ways,” Soong said. “There is a well-established connection between animal abuse and violent crime. Violence is violence, and violent people don’t stop at a single species.” Soong said prosecutors reach out to forensic psychiatrists to build their cases against animal abusers. “Animals can’t testify,” he said. “So we are their voices.”

He said there are three types of animal abusers: serious intentional abusers, immature abusers and unwitting abusers. Soong and others can identify which category a defendant falls into, and that helps determine whether prosecutors should pursue incarceration, education or therapy for the accused.

The human crimes associated with cockfighting, particularly in a state like Louisiana, were the subject of several programs. “Animal fights are a swap-meet for crime,” said David Rosengard, attorney with the Animal Defense Fund. “You find drugs, illegal guns and even human trafficking at these fights.”

Senior Assistant Attorney General Michelle Welch and investigator Amy Katherine Taylor from Virginia said undercover operations and subsequent cockfighting raids are “exceptionally dangerous” because of the prevalence of drugs and firearms at animal fights. “It’s a money-making scheme, and you can guarantee these people will have guns — and shoot them — to protect their money,” Taylor said. “You have to be ready to run.

“People take pride in their cockfights,” Taylor added. “One guy accused of running a cockfighting ring came into court wearing a cap that had ‘cockfighter’ embroidered on it. Most of them won’t admit they’ve done anything wrong.”

To further animal cruelty education and conviction efforts, Soong and his wife gave LSU’s veterinary school a \$3.1 million endowment for a forensic veterinary clinic that will help law enforcement and prosecutors build cases against animal abusers (See the December 2018 LINK-Letter).

DOMESTIC ABUSE... and THE LINK



Crystal Giesbrecht

Two Studies Examine Link Issues with Livestock, in Rural Areas, and IPV Impact on Children

In the [July 2021 LINK-Letter](#), we reported on a Saskatchewan survey of 171 human and animal service providers about how concern for the welfare of livestock as well as pets, and factors unique to rural communities, create additional challenges for survivors fleeing Intimate Partner Violence. In the second and third journal articles emerging from this research project, Crystal Giesbrecht surveyed 60 animal-owning urban and rural survivors, the majority of whom had not received domestic violence agencies' services, and examined

the general public's awareness of The Link between IPV and animal abuse and the need for animal safekeeping.

The survivors' study explored their experiences with pets and livestock, their animal safekeeping issues, the impact on children in homes marked by IPV, and connections between different types of IPV and animal abuse. The findings included:

- **95%** of respondents said they were no longer in the relationship in which they had experienced IPV after having left that relationship an average of five times.
- **34.5%** and **27.3%** of survivors said that care for their pets or livestock, respectively, including the inability to find pet-friendly rental housing and fear that their partner would harm an animal had prevented them from seeking assistance. Victims whose animals were murdered in front of them understood that this was a message that they could be killed next.
- **58.3%** of respondents had children; of this group, **97%** had pets. **32.4%** said their children had witnessed pets being abused, threatened or harmed.
- **22.9%** of respondents with children had livestock; of this group, **37.5%** said their children had witnessed livestock being abused, threatened or harmed.
- **28.6%** reported they felt their children had been affected by witnessing abuse of animals.

Giesbrecht, Research and Communication Director at the Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS), notes that the province's rate of IPV (655 victims per 100,000 population) is twice Canada's national average and that IPV is much more prevalent in rural areas. The province's demographics – with its largely farm and small-town populations, First Nations reserves, and remote northern communities accessible only by air, plus geographic distance to service agencies, transportation challenges and winter weather exacerbations, make women especially vulnerable to IPV.

Noting that less than half of respondents had reported IPV to police, and that many of those who did did not receive a helpful or supportive response, Giesbrecht recommends that police and medical personnel be educated on the dynamics of IPV and the Link between IPV and animal abuse and its intersection with child abuse. Coercive control is currently not a criminal offense in Canada. She also identified a need for a network of individuals who can assist with the care and safekeeping of horses and livestock.

"These findings demonstrate the need to work toward increasing awareness of the connection between IPV, animal abuse, and concern for animal safekeeping. It is necessary to assess risk to people when indicators of animal abuse are present and to assess risk to animals when indicators of IPV are present," Giesbrecht concludes. "Victims are at risk both because someone who harms animals is especially

dangerous to people and because ownership of animals is a barrier to escape. Safety planning with victims/survivors must also consider safety for animals.”

The third study, involving interviews with 176 Saskatchewan residents, reported that 42% of respondents knew people who had experienced intimate partner violence where their animals were also abused. 19% of respondents had assisted survivors in planning for temporary animal safekeeping. The results demonstrated the importance of “natural supports”, such as family, friends and neighbors, for assisting with animal safekeeping especially in rural and remote communities where there are no domestic violence and animal welfare agencies.

92.6% of respondents agreed with the Link maxim that “When animals are abused, people are at risk; when people are abused, animals are at risk.” Over 80% believed that the safety and safekeeping of animals could impact a survivor’s decision to leave and serve as a barrier preventing her escape. Many respondents recounted Link experiences from their own lives involving abuse of pets and livestock.

Giesbrecht noted that caution is necessary when friends or neighbors care for pets or livestock of domestic violence survivors, especially if they take pets into their own home or go onto the survivor’s property to feed and water livestock. Because the perpetrator might be dangerous, “Collaboration between law enforcement, animal welfare professionals and IPV professionals is necessary for assessing risk and providing support for safety planning and risk management,” she wrote.

-- **Giesbrecht, C.J. (2021). Intimate partner violence, animal maltreatment, and concern for animal safekeeping: A survey of survivors who owned pets and livestock. *Violence Against Women* <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012211034215>**

-- **Giesbrecht, C.J. (2021). Intimate partner violence, animal maltreatment, and animal safekeeping: Findings from a public survey. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211056899>**

Link Group UK Members Report Research, Conduct Webinar

As the United Kingdom’s [Dog Trust Freedom Project](#) reaches a milestone of fostering 2,000 pet survivors of domestic violence, a research report by members of The Links Group UK is reporting new details about the extent and scope of coercive control over pets in the UK.

Mary Wakeham, Service Manager at [Refuge4Pets](#), surveyed 107 victim-

survivors of domestic abuse across the country, to better understand the Link between domestic abuse and animal abuse. Her study, which will be published soon, reported that almost 90% of households who experienced domestic abuse have said that animals were also abused by the perpetrators.

Wakeham also found that in 12% of domestic abuse cases the animal - and often multiple animals - had been killed. Furthermore, in 94% of households where an animal had been given as a “gift”, the animals were then abused and, in some cases, killed by the perpetrator - demonstrating that pets are used as tools by perpetrators of domestic abuse to control and coerce.



Dogs Trust had earlier reported in a 2019 study that 97% of professionals working in the domestic abuse sector said that animals are often used as a means of controlling someone experiencing domestic abuse.

Dogs Trust launched its Freedom Project in 2004, offering vital support for dog owners escaping from domestic abuse. The project works alongside Cats Protection Paws Protect, Endeavour and Refuge4Pets providing foster homes for pets and enabling survivors to access safe accommodation without the fear of what may happen to their pet if left behind. As many British refuges are unable to accept pets, these services give survivors the opportunity to escape abuse, safe in the knowledge that their pets will also be safe and well cared for. The pet fostering organizations are members of the [Links Group UK](#), which raises awareness of the Links between abuse of animals and humans.

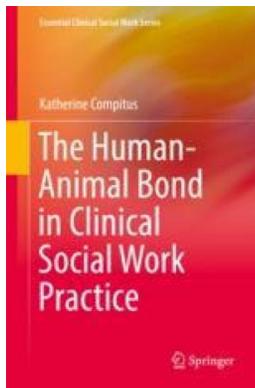
The Freedom Project operates across all of Scotland and in 30 counties across England. During the pandemic, incidents of domestic abuse soared and the program fostered 64% more dogs in 2020 and 2021, compared to the previous two years.

The project partners presented an extensive three-hour Zoom webinar on Dec. 2 to give British viewers a comprehensive look at how companion animals are often used as tools within domestic abuse to coerce and control. The Dogs Trust Freedom Project hosted “Exploring the Connection between Pets and Domestic Abuse” to explore behavior toward pets within the context of domestic violence and to introduce specialized pet fostering services that are available to UK domestic violence survivors.

Presenters included Jill Caldwell, Paula Boyden, Mary Wakeham, Rose Abram, and Amy Hyde. They described how specialist pet fostering services can support victim-survivors by providing a safe haven for their pets while they get to safety and caring for them until they can be safely reunited.

SOCIAL WORK and THE LINK

Link, Human-Animal Bond Presented in Book for Social Workers



A new textbook describes both the positive and negative aspects of human-animal relationships, including several Link issues, as they pertain to the traditionally exclusively human-focused field of social work. Katherine Compitus, DSW, LCSW, MEd, MA, has recently published *The Human-Animal Bond in Clinical Social Work Practice* (2021; Springer).



Katherine Compitus

The book begins with an introduction that attempts to answer why human-animal interactions are so often overlooked in social work practice. The book includes a history of the human-animal bond; the biopsychosocial model for understanding why the bond is so powerful; ways to incorporate animal assisted therapy into social work practice; veterinary social work; animal-assisted crisis intervention; and current research and future directions. The chapters include such topics as domestic violence, homelessness, and animal hoarding

Compitus is the cofounder and chair of Surrey Hills Sanctuary, a nonprofit that provides veterinary social work services to trauma and abuse survivors in New York State. She is also a lecturer in the graduate social work schools at Columbia, Fordham and New York Universities.

ANIMAL SEXUAL ABUSE... and THE LINK

Bestiality Compared to Advocates of Sex Robots

Link literature about how early sexual abuse of animals may manifest as part of the progression hypothesis into later more violent and serious crimes was cited in a provocative article discussing the ethical implications of a possible future where people engage in sex with robots. Kelly Kate Evans, in the Baylor University Department of Philosophy, writes that owners of sex dolls engage in many behaviors similar to hobbyists, “not unlike pet owners.” They do not reduce the dolls to mere sex toys but create rich textual and photographic narratives about their dolls’ personalities, backstories and experiences, integrating domestic life, outdoor trips and sexual encounters.



Kelly Kate Evans

Sex doll owners create embodied intimate fictions with the dolls, writes Evans. They often praise their idealized bodily attributes and supernatural feminine beauty. Lively discussions in online forums illustrate that doll owners not only bond with their dolls but also with other members of the doll owner community. “As hobbyists, not unlike pet owners, they share tips and tricks around doll purchase, doll care and doll photography.”

Similar to bestiality, most people currently view sex dolls unfavorably, with 68% of people unable to understand how anyone could think of having sex with a doll. Evans likens this phenomenon to The Link, noting that “the Link between animal cruelty [including bestiality] and other crimes has been the driving force behind many legislative efforts to protect human and animal victims of domestic violence” and that “extensive research has identified acts of animal cruelty, abuse, and neglect as crimes that may be indicators and/or predictors of crimes of interpersonal violence and public health problems.”

Evans admits that there is less consensus when it comes to the link between sexual violence and violent internet pornography, so it is unknown whether sex robots will increase or quicken a sexual offender in their pursuit of human victims. Nor are sex dolls completely similar to internet pornography, committing bestiality is not perfectly analogous to sex with a robot, and sex dolls are not sophisticated robots. However, widespread use and interaction with sex robots is a possible future, she concludes.

-- Evans, K.K. (2021). *Sex robots and views from nowhere: A commentary on Jecker, Howard and Sparrow, and Wang.* In R. Fan & M.J. Cherry (Eds.). *Sex Robots. Philosophical Studies in Contemporary Culture*, 28. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82280-4_10

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For Additional Information

Just click on the blue underlined hyperlinks in these articles and it will take you to other websites with additional information about that topic.

VETERINARY MEDICINE... and THE LINK

“Gold Standard” Law Now Requires New York DVMs to Report Animal Abuse

Veterinarians in New York State are now required to report suspected animal cruelty to the police, duly incorporated Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, peace officers, district attorneys’ offices, animal control officers, the state Department of Agriculture and Markets, or other appropriate government agencies. Previously, veterinary reporting of suspected animal abuse was permitted but not specifically required.



Assemblymember Rosenthal & Sen. Gianaris

A 5823A and its companion measure **S 5023A** were signed into law on Oct. 30 by Gov. Kathy Hochul. To accommodate veterinarians’ fears of violating confidentiality requirements or client retaliation, the new law protects the identity of the veterinarian making a report. It will take effect on Feb. 27, 2022.

The bills, sponsored by Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (D-Manhattan) and Sen. Michael Gianaris (D – Queens), were designed to adopt “the gold standard in prevention of animal abuse” by mandating that veterinarians report suspected abuse to authorities. The Assembly bill passed the Higher Education, Codes and Rules Committees all unanimously, and the full Assembly by a 143-6 margin.

“Frequently, cases of animal abuse go unaddressed because they are not brought to the attention of authorities,” explained the legislative memo supporting the measure. “In some instances, a veterinarian treating an abused or neglected animal might be the only person who witnesses the results of the abuse or neglect. If a veterinarian reasonably and in good faith suspects that a companion animal’s injury, illness or condition is the result of animal cruelty, the veterinarian should be required to report the incident and be able to disclose records concerning the companion animal’s condition and treatment to the police or other appropriate government agency.”

By changing the prior law which “allows” veterinarians to report suspected abuse, to “requiring” veterinarians to report suspected cases of abuse and neglect, the memo affirmed that “Veterinarians are medical professionals with a duty to care and protect animals. When, in their professional judgment, they suspect cases of abuse or neglect, they should be required to report it.”

With the new law, 21 states now require veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse, and 19 states permit them to make such reports. 33 of those states, including New York, offer immunity from civil and/or criminal liability and/or administrative sanctions for making reports.

Irish Study Explores Responses to Human and Animal Welfare Issues in Large-Animal Practice

While much Link work has focused on the responsibilities and challenges facing veterinarians addressing possible abuse of humans and companion animals, little has been written regarding how Link issues affect large-animal practitioners working with isolated rural clients who are experiencing social problems and whose herds face neglect. An Irish research study examined the challenges facing veterinarians in responding to the human element of farm animal welfare incidents by building a multi-agency approach involving veterinary and human support services.

The authors considered how social, health, mental health, and attitudinal factors contribute to farm animal welfare incidents. While an “early warning system,” comprised of the Department of Agriculture, the Irish Farmers’ Association and the Irish SPCA, is already in place to identify and prevent farm animal welfare problems before they become critical, farm animal neglect continues to occur. The study explored challenges to veterinarians and farmers accessing available social support services to resolve farm animal welfare cases where herd owners face social, health, and/or mental health difficulties.

Interviews revealed age-related difficulties, the availability of farm help, differing perceptions of acceptable standards of animal welfare, prevailing levels of stress, physical and social isolation, depression, and addiction as ongoing issues. Herd owners were often reluctant to ask for assistance because of a feeling they should show resilience, an inability to talk openly about their problems, and a fear of stigma, particularly in areas of rural decline and social isolation,

Veterinarians reported three primary areas in which they faced dilemmas when responding professionally to farm animal welfare cases that involved problematic human factors:

- defining the professional parameters of their role;
- determining the appropriate response; and
- balancing involvement versus detachment.

Citing the multi-agency approach to hoarding cases developed by the [Hoarding of Animals Research Consortium](#), the authors wrote that animal welfare, human health, mental health, housing support, law enforcement, sanitation, and environmental protection agencies should be involved. “A multi-agency approach makes early intervention and short- and long-term change for animal owners easier, reducing the potential for repeated animal welfare offenses and providing ongoing monitoring and support. Links between such groups must be set up before a crisis occurs,” they wrote.

In rural areas, neighbors, family and rural groups trained to identify at-risk individuals and work within a coordinated multi-agency framework can serve as a “carrot” rather than a “stick” to support the animal owner in overcoming the welfare crisis rather than punishing him or her after the event, they added.

Challenges to a multi-agency approach include an inability of some veterinary professionals to recognize their responsibility to join with support services or their legal obligation to report deliberate animal abuse. They may also be wary of calling in other organizations because of worries about litigation or driving the client away, or a fear for client safety. “Conflicting roles and a lack of agreement about policies and actions can undermine cooperation,” they emphasized. “In implementing a coordinated approach, effective and clear guidelines, education, tolerance, planning, and relationship-building between agencies are all essential.”

Other challenges to a multi-agency approach include:

- the lack of a proper structure for providing advice and cross-reporting between government and private veterinarians, and between veterinarians and support services;
- perceived financial risks by private veterinarians;
- inconsistent involvement from health and social support professionals;
- a lack of professional confidence, related to an absence of information, guidance or direction on how to respond appropriately to farm animal welfare issues that involve the mental health, social or physical health problems of the herd owner.

Two key areas that are central to providing a multi-agency approach to farm animal welfare, when the problems and issues of the herd owner add to the difficulties, are:

- provision of tailored information and guidelines targeting government and private veterinarians and support services; and
- a comprehensive structure for planning, building relationships and confidential cross-reporting between relevant agencies.

“Veterinarians are often in ideal positions to advise on animal welfare, due to their relationship with their clients and animals, and their position of trust in the community. Animal abuse often occurs as an extension of other sorts of abuse (such as domestic violence, child abuse, etc.). As a result, increasing emphasis is being placed on veterinarians combining with support services as a means of addressing animal and human welfare,” they concluded.

-- Devitt, C., Kelly, P., Blake, M., Hanlon, A., & More, S.J. (2013). *Veterinarian challenges to providing a multi-agency response to farm animal welfare problems in Ireland: Responding to the human factor. Revue Scientifique et Technique (International Office of Epizootics), 32(3), 657-668.*

Canadian Veterinary Technician Students Learn About The Link

Steps that veterinary technicians can take to address overlapping forms of family violence are being offered in a unique program at Algonquin Collage in Ottawa, Ont. The college is believed to have the only veterinary technician program in Canada to offer training in The Link.

For the past three years, Dr. Nora Nixon, Veterinary & Program Assistant Coordinator at the college, has been leading the charge to equip her veterinary technician students with education about animal welfare issues. On November 10th, Teena Stoddart, former Ottawa police investigator, returned to the campus for what has been an annual 90-minute Violence Link training. Topics discussed were:

- Definition of the Violence Link
- Legal obligations
- Violence Link evidence-based research
- Intervention options for the veterinary sector
- Detecting abuse through scientific signs of stress in animals
- How to overcome resistance to report animal abuse



Teena Stoddart

“I liked that we were provided practical examples,” said one student. “It made concepts easier to visualize and gave me a better understanding of what I would do in a real-life scenario.”

COVID-19 and The LINK

Study Explores “Pet Food Anxiety” in “Covidian Times”

While several studies have examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the behaviors of companion animals and their owners, and even how work-from-home employees are now reluctant to return to an office environment because it would mean separation from their pets, one hitherto unexplored area has been how supply chain shortages and panic buying impacted purchases of pet food. In an intriguing new study describing “Covidian times,” New Zealand researchers are reporting that food insecurity and anxiety is an important topic. They propose a model that investigates the impact of pet owners’ perceptions of their pet, their engagement with their pet, sociodemographic factors, and the frequency of incidences where pet owners could not provide sufficient food for their pet.

Their model confirms previous findings that the sociodemographic backgrounds of pet owners are not as relevant as owners’ attitudes, experiences and care for the pet. They note that pets are present across all social strata and that the entire nation has had to cope with the anxiety, stress and disruption of COVID-19 which have led to behavioral changes in shopping and feeding.

They note that regardless of whether pet owners perceive their pet as family or as an animal, they are equally likely to experience pet food anxiety. Unsurprisingly, pet owners who are actively engaged with their pets were more likely to suffer from pet food anxiety. Physical distancing, staying at home, shortages of staple food items including pet food, and unpleasant shopping experiences where pet owners were exposed to panic and competitive buying may have resulted in pet food anxiety. Meanwhile, the behavioral changes in feeding and shopping can be considered as a strategy to cope with anxiety in challenging “Covidian” times.

-- **Rombach, M., & Dean, D.L. (2021, Oct. 30). Just love me, feed me, never leave me: Understanding pet food anxiety, feeding and shopping behavior of U.S. pet owners in Covidian times. *Animals*, 11(11), 3101. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani11113101>**

THE LINK in the LITERATURE

Child Abuse Model Helps Forensic Anthropologists To Aid Veterinary Investigation of Animal Cruelty Cases

Animal abuse cases present challenges to investigators including: a wide array of physical and sexual circumstances; a multitude of state and local laws affecting different species; varying societal views regarding the treatment of animals; and cases are under-reported because owners typically have exclusive access and control over the animal and may fabricate stories to explain the animal’s injury or death. A new study, citing how the investigation of companion animals’ Non-Accidental Injuries closely models the experience in child abuse investigations, recommends that forensic anthropologists can aid in the recovery of remains, assessment of commingling, the biological profile, and trauma analysis. However, because forensic anthropologists are not typically trained in non-human osteology or veterinary medicine, collaboration with veterinary pathologists is critical. This report uses a case study approach to demonstrate the value of collaboration between forensic anthropologists and veterinary pathologists in trauma assessments relating to suspected NAI in animal abuse investigations.

-- **Bartelink, E.J., Clinkinbeard, S., Spessard, C., Kilmartin, A., & Spangler, W.L. (2021). Documenting non-accidental injury patterns in a dog abuse investigation: A collaborative approach between forensic anthropology and veterinary pathology. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 00:1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.14948>**

Humane Education Enhances Juvenile Offenders' Motivation

Students educated in the juvenile justice system face acute challenges such as lack of motivation and negative attitudes toward school. Schools in the system are expected to provide rigorous, Common Core-standards-aligned instruction. Humane education lessons that nurture kindness and empathy towards humans, animals, and the environment has been shown to motivate students and encourage their pro-social sentiments. A study involving a randomized control trial of 192 12- and 13-year-old students from New Jersey asked students to complete five standards-aligned reading passages with text-based questions. The experimental-group assessments contained humane education themes; the control-group assessments had non-animal related high interest topics. The passages were equated in reading level, word count, etc.

Analyses of the results showed that not only did students who received humane education passages do better overall, but also did much better on questions addressing specific Common Core Reading for Information standards. The authors call the study a starting point for applying and researching the effectiveness of humane education on the juvenile justice population, specifically, because they are expected to learn standards-aligned curricula and are in particular need of academic motivation and pro-social encouragement.

-- O'Connor, J., & Samuels, W.E. (2021, Oct. 8). Humane education's effect on middle school student motivation and standards-based reading assessment. *Social Sciences, 10(10), 376*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10100376>



Animal Hoarders Found to Exhibit Cognitive Deficits

One of the newest research studies on the phenomenon of animal hoarding is reporting that individuals with histories of animal hoarding have high rates of cognitive deficits related to verbal concept formation, abstract verbal reasoning, and general intellectual skills. In an effort to characterize the cognitive performance of animal hoarders, four researchers from Brazil and Spain conducted a neurocognitive battery including measures of general cognitive functioning, visual memory and organization, verbal fluency, and verbal reasoning among 33 individuals between the ages of 29 and 84. 73% of the participants were female and 27% male; 90% were single and 51% lived on their own. The number of animals per home ranged from 3 to 101, totaling 1,357 animals.

Luis Henrique Paloski

The researchers concluded that the hoarders' perception, visuoconstructional, visual memory, planning, organization skills, and problem-solving strategies were also compromised. Therefore, they inferred that they have cognitive deficits related primarily to executive functions.

They cited other studies suggesting that attention deficit disorders are found in hoarding disorders. In addition to attention, other cognitive functions are compromised in hoarding disorders, such as memory, executive functions, information processing and categorization, and decision-making skills. They noted that animal hoarding differs from object hoarding because animals require more interaction and attention than objects. Also, the majority of individuals who hoard animals do not present the behavior of hoarding objects.

-- Paloski, L.H., Ferreira, E.A., Costa, D.B., de Oliveira, C.R., Moret-Tatay, C., & Irigaray, T.Q. (2020). Cognitive performance of individuals with animal hoarding. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes, 18(40)*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-020-01288-1>.

Study Explores Factors Affecting Childhood Animal Cruelty



Laura Wauthier (left, & JoAnne Williams

Several perspectives inform research on childhood animal cruelty, but these perspectives have historically been poorly integrated with each other and there is little dialogue with the rest of the literature on children’s interactions with animals. This study reviews 69 publications exploring the current empirical and theoretical literature on childhood animal cruelty and thematically classifies empirical study findings in five areas:

- (1) Environmental factors that predict children’s animal cruelty include exposure to childhood adversity, especially experiences of violence and witnessing animal cruelty;
- (2) Childhood animal cruelty is recurrent or has extreme links to later interpersonal violence;
- (3) Psychological risk factors linked to childhood animal cruelty include externalizing disorders, lower empathy, lower self-esteem, poorer family functioning, and attitudes accepting of cruelty;
- (4) Witnessing animal cruelty is a serious risk factor for a range of internalizing and externalizing behaviors; and
- (5) A range of psychosocial barriers exist in measuring and reporting childhood animal cruelty, including measures, population selection and definitions focusing only on more severe forms of childhood animal cruelty are factors which potentially constrain the generalizability of results.

The authors highlight the need for developmentally appropriate definitions of childhood animal cruelty and methods of measurement and argue that the literature in this area is not well aligned with animal welfare legislation. They propose that childhood animal cruelty should be integrated into a broader spectrum of childhood behaviors toward animals.

-- Wauthier, L.M., & Williams, J.M. (2021, Oct. 21). **Understanding and conceptualizing childhood animal harm: A meta-narrative systematic review.** *Anthrozoös*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2021.1986262>

Call for Articles on “Frontiers of Animal Protection”

Guest editor Kendra Coulter has a call out for a Special Issue of the journal *Animals* covering “Frontiers of Animal Protection.” This Special Issue will assemble high-quality social science research that considers the social, legal, political, and employment dimensions of animal protection. Despite its importance for protecting diverse kinds of animals from human harm and the complementary benefits for vulnerable people and public safety, Coulter emphasizes that the animal protection landscape remains underexamined. The deadline for [manuscript submissions](#) is March 31, 2022.

RAISING LINK AWARENESS

Canadian Survey Identifies Professions' Awareness of the Link

The first national survey to be conducted in Canada to assess various professions' awareness of Link issues and the challenges they face to implementing policies and procedures addressing interspecies violence is reporting that the animal welfare and gender-based violence sectors are already well aware of The Link, but common barriers include a lack of awareness among other professionals, lack of resources and time to implement programs, and the need for additional research data.

Those were some of the conclusions presented at the 2021 [Canadian Violence Link Conference](#) by three noted researchers. Their *2021 National Violence Link Awareness Survey: Identifying and Raising Awareness Among Professionals* collected responses from 296 participants in 10 professional sectors in an effort to identify sector-specific issues and messaging and communications campaigns which would resonate best with each group, said Louise Lathey, Violence Prevention Outreach Specialist for the B.C. SPCA.



Louise Lathey



Kendra Coulter

Kendra Coulter, from the Brock University Department of Labor Studies, described the responses received from the 10 sectors: animal care and veterinary medicine; animal enforcement; animal welfare; the legal system/prosecutors; education; gender-based violence; human healthcare; police; social services; and victim services. In what she called “a surprise to no one,” the majority of respondents in all fields except the police were women.

The survey found that one-half of respondents said they had a list of cross-sector contacts they could reach out to, and 27% said they had had some Violence Link training. Healthcare workers and prosecutors, in particular, said they had no Link resources available, and most of those who had any resources said they were unsatisfied with them. E-learning, written materials, and additional collaborative support were identified as the resources that would be most useful. There was strong agreement across all 10 sectors – and particularly in the gender-based violence and animal welfare groups -- that the Canadian federal government should dedicate resources to address The Link.

University of Windsor criminologist Amy Fitzgerald reported that 37% of respondents had not previously heard of The Link or had heard something about it but didn't fully understand what it is; 2% thought it was limited to animal abuse among serial killers. The animal welfare and gender-based violence sectors were more familiar with The Link, and tended to see many more instances of the animal abuse-human violence connections in their work.



Amy Fitzgerald

“We can't expect the mobilization of knowledge about the Violence Link in each sector to emerge from the ground up,” said Fitzgerald, emphasizing that national efforts by the federal government and Humane Canada, the parent organization for the Violence Link Coalition, would be necessary.

Hannah Brown, manager of Humane Canada's Criminal Justice System Reform Program, said three initiatives in 2022 will address these issues. Online training webinars and sector-specific campaigns will be forthcoming “on what the Violence Link is and why people should take notice of it,” she said. Humane Canada will also be publishing the survey results.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Link Bills We're Watching

Many state legislatures sessions have ended, but we're still anticipating another record year for bills addressing animal abuse and its Links to other forms of family and community violence. **132 bills** that we know of were introduced this year; these are the ones that have been enacted or are still pending. [Please let us know](#) of any others that we may have missed.

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



Canada Bill C-3 requires Canadian judges to receive training on the Violence Link between animal abuse and sexual and domestic violence as part of their continuing legal education. The bill passed Parliament's Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs and **was enacted by Royal Assent** on May 6 as 2021 Annual Statute c.8.



Arkansas HB 1724 cites the lockdown pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic as "a worst-case scenario for victims experiencing domestic violence" and the rationale to expand existing provisions that allow courts to include pets in domestic violence orders of protection. The measure also allows courts to issue protection orders based on a respondent's "course of control" or "disturbing the peace." The premise for the measure states that the COVID-19 shelter-in-place and other restrictions are being used "as a scare tactic to keep victims isolated from their children or support systems. **It became law on April 30 as Act 1068.**



California AB 258 would require emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for the homeless to allow residents to keep pets. The Assembly Judiciary Committee approved it and sent it to the Appropriations Committee. **SB 344** would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to develop and administer a program to award grants to shelters for the homeless to provide shelter, food and basic veterinary services for residents' pets. It passed the Senate and the Assembly Committee on Housing & Community Development and was sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. (It is not clear whether these bills would cover homeless persons who are fleeing domestic violence.)



California SB 320 codifies what had been inconsistent inter-agency communications and enforcement of provisions prohibiting individuals under domestic violence restraining orders (which may include pet protection provisions) to surrender ammunition as well as any firearms. It passed the Senate and the Assembly and **was signed into law** by the Governor on Oct. 8.



District of Columbia B23-0181, the Intrafamilial Offenses and Anti-Stalking Orders Amendment Act of 2020, was signed into law on Jan. 13 as **D.C. Act 23-571**. It clarifies procedures by which victims of intrafamily offense, sexual assault, child sex trafficking, or individuals whose animals are victims of an intrafamily offense, to petition for a civil protection order. "Intrafamily offense" is defined as a criminal offense against an intimate partner or family/household member, or cruelty to animals owned by an intimate partner, or family/household member. Courts may also issue an anti-stalking order if the petitioner fears a household animal is endangered by the respondent. **It took effect May 18.**





Florida HB 121 would define the 3rd-degree felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing great bodily harm, permanent disability or death to an animal while perpetrating sexual battery, domestic violence, aggravated stalking, aggravated child abuse, or aggravated abuse of an elderly or disabled person. Aggravated animal cruelty would also pertain to the unlawful killing an animal belonging to another family or household member and “evincing a depraved mind.” The bill is in the House Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee.



Illinois HB 1907 would require the Department of Human Services to establish a grant program, incorporating third-party funding and services, for counties with populations greater than 200,000 to support domestic violence shelters and service programs that assist domestic violence survivors’ pets. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.



Maine LD 535 requires courts adjudicating the dissolution of marriages to consider the well-being of companion animals in the disposition of property. The bill became law in June without the Governor’s signature and **went into effect in October.**



Maryland SB 159/HB 281 requires new humane society and animal control officers to undergo 80 hours of training, and existing personnel to receive six hours of continuing education annually, on topics including the association between animal abuse and abuse of the elderly or domestic violence. The bills passed both houses and **were signed into law on May 18.**



Massachusetts S.939/H.1820 would expand existing provisions that prevent respondents in a domestic violence protection order from harming, taking or disposing of household animals to also include protective orders issued in sexual assault harassment cases. The bills are in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



Missouri SB 71 allows adult protection orders and child protection orders, full or ex parte, to restrain or enjoin an individual from committing or threatening to commit abuse against a pet. A protection order may include an order of custody of the pet where appropriate, as well as any funds needed to cover the medical costs resulting from abuse of the pet. The bill passed the Senate and the House and **was signed into law** by Gov. Mike Parson on June 29. It took effect on Aug. 28.



New Jersey A 4880 and S 3168 would expand the statutory definition of domestic violence to include acts of animal cruelty against animals owned or possessed by the persons affected by these types of abuse. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.



New Jersey S 930 would allow courts to designate ownership or protective custody for a pet in an animal cruelty violation, domestic violence, matrimonial action, action for dissolution of a civil union, or judgment of divorce or dissolution or maintenance giving primary consideration to the well-being of the animal. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



New York A1353 would make it a crime to unjustifiably injure or kill a companion animal to threaten, intimidate or harass another family member. The penalty would be increased if the act occurs in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



New York A510/S3039 would expand existing domestic violence pet protection orders to allow courts to grant petitioners exclusive care, custody and control of animals and to order respondents to stay away from the animals or take, transfer, harm, or conceal the animals. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Children & Families Committees.



New York A5775/S4248 requires courts to consider the best interest of a companion animal when awarding possession in a divorce or separation proceeding. The bills passed both the Senate and the Assembly and **were signed into law on Oct. 25.**



New York A3985 (“Bella’s Law”) would require the Office of Children & Family Services to investigate possible domestic violence or abuse for persons who have been accused of animal abuse. The bills passed the Senate and Assembly and are back in the Senate.



The Ohio Supreme Court on April 15 **closed a gap** in its inclusion of pets in domestic violence prevention orders by finally including a prohibition against respondents removing, damaging, hiding, or disposing of companion animals in the standard protection order form. Although these provisions were first enacted in 2014, they were not specifically included in the standardized form until this year.



Pennsylvania HB1031 would amend the Protection from Abuse Act to allow courts to grant temporary ownership rights over pets in protection orders and direct defendants from possessing, contacting, attempting to contact, transferring, or relocating them or entering the property of anyone sheltering the animal. Courts could direct defendants to not abuse, harass, stalk, threaten or use physical force against the animal. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 1903 would allow courts to issue an Extreme Risk Protection Order barring an individual from possessing a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a substantial risk of suicide or death or serious bodily injury to another person; factors which may determine the individual’s risk include a history of domestic violence or animal cruelty. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment



U.S. H.R. 763, the Child and Animal Abuse Detection and Reporting Act, would amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to require that data collected by the federal government from state child protection agencies include information about animal abuse as a risk factor for child abuse. The bill is in the House Education and Labor Committee.



Arkansas HB 1497 expands the permitted use of certified facility dogs for child witnesses to also include vulnerable witnesses (e.g., with intellectual or developmental disabilities), and expands the areas where these dogs may assist witnesses from courthouses to also include law enforcement investigations, children’s advocacy centers, prosecutors’ offices, and offices of court-appointed special advocates and guardians ad litem. **The bill was signed into law on April 21.**





Florida SB 96 / HB 7039 requires reporting and cross-reporting protocols between child protective and animal services personnel based on The Link between the welfare of family animals and child safety and protection. It requires child protective investigators to report known or suspected animal cruelty and grants them criminal, civil and administrative immunity for such reports. It similarly requires animal control officers to report suspected child abuse to the state hotline. The Florida Department of Children and Families and the Florida Animal Control Association will jointly develop a one-hour training module on The Link and on timely cross-reporting procedures. It also redefines bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal” and bans animal pornography. **SB 96** passed the Senate 40-0 and the House 116-0 and **was signed into law** on June 29. It took effect on July 1.



Florida HB 121, filed for 2022 would define the 3rd-degree felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing great bodily harm, permanent disability or death to an animal while perpetrating aggravated child abuse, sexual battery, domestic violence, aggravated stalking, or aggravated abuse of an elderly or disabled person. Aggravated animal cruelty would also pertain to the unlawful killing an animal belonging to another family or household member and “evinced a depraved mind.” The bill is in the House Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee.



Florida HB 435, filed for 2022 would make it a 3rd-degree felony to cause or allow a minor under age 18 to attend an animal fight. The bill is in the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee.



Maryland HB 186/SB7 expands the existing “Court Dog and Child Witness Program,” which allows facility dogs or therapy dogs to accompany child witnesses in court proceedings and other court processes, to now include such dogs in Veterans Treatment Courts. The program is also renamed as the “Court Dog Program.” The measure was **signed into law on May 18**.



Massachusetts H.1716/S. 943 would expand the power of Department of Children & Families employees and contractors to report suspected animal abuse over a longer period of time. Current law allows such cross-reporting only during their specific 10-15 day investigation or evaluation timeframe. The bills are in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



Missouri SB 71 allows adult protection orders and child protection orders, full or ex parte, to restrain or enjoin an individual from committing or threatening to commit abuse against a pet. A protection order may include an order of custody of the pet where appropriate, as well as any funds needed to cover the medical costs resulting from abuse of the pet. The bill passed the Senate and the House and **was signed into law** by Gov. Mike Parson on June 29. It takes effect on Aug. 28.



New Jersey A 4880 and S 3168 would expand the definition of child abuse to include acts of animal cruelty against their animals. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.



New York A1353 would make it a crime to unjustifiably injure or kill a companion animal to threaten, intimidate or harass another family member. The penalty would be increased if the act occurs in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



New York A474 and A3726 would increase prison terms for aggravated animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child in order to minimize psychological damage to a still-developing minor’s sense of judgment and ethical conduct. **A474** is in the Agriculture Committee and **A3726** is in the Codes Committee.



New York A748 and S 4130 would define the releasing or failure to control an animal so as to prohibit an agent of a residential facility operated by children and family services as second-degree assault. The bill is in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



New York A1816, recognizing the adverse impact animal fighting can have on a child’s emotional development and potential for antisocial behavior, would make it a misdemeanor to knowingly cause a minor child to attend an animal fight. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



North Carolina H 544 would make it a felony to permit a person under age 18 to attend or participate in any dog- or cock-fighting. The bill passed the House and is in the Senate Committee on Rules and Operations.



Pennsylvania SB 78 (Kayden’s Law – Preventing Abuse in Child Custody Proceedings), in noting that domestic abuse against a partner, spouse, child or pet can be part of a pattern of emotional and psychological abuse, would allow courts to include a person’s prior conviction for animal cruelty or animal fighting to be considered in determining custody of the child and whether the person posed a threat of harm to the child. The bill passed the Senate and is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 1836 would add to the Crimes Code a new crime of “child torture,” to include “terrorizing or threatening death or harm to the child, a loved one of the child or a pet or loved object of the child for the purpose of causing significant emotional distress.” It was laid on the table in the House Judiciary Committee.



Texas HB 1071 allows courts to permit qualified facility dogs and therapy animals and their trained handlers to accompany witnesses if the presence of the dogs would assist the witness in testifying. **It was signed into law on June 3 and took effect on Sept. 1.**



Animal Sexual Abuse



Colorado Ballot Initiative 16, proposed for 2022, “Protect Animals from Unnecessary Suffering and Exploitation” (PAUSE), would amend bestiality statutes to criminalize safe and common artificial insemination of dogs, horses and livestock as a “sexual act with an animal.” Colorado veterinarians and animal welfare groups are opposed to the proposal.



Florida SB 96/HB 7039 redefines bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal” and bans animal pornography. It also establishes a legislative intent to require reporting and cross-reporting protocols between child protective and animal services personnel based on The Link between the welfare of family animals and child safety and protection. The new law raises bestiality from a 1st-degree misdemeanor to a 3rd-degree felony. **SB 96** passed the Senate and House unanimously and **was signed into law** on June 29 and took effect on July 1.





Florida HB 341/SB 692 would amend the definition of “sexual bestiality” to replace “vagina” with “genitals” when describing illegal sexual contact with an animal. The bills are in the House Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee and the Senate Criminal Justice, Rules, and Children, Families & Elder Affairs Committees. **SB 878** would replace “vagina” with “female genitals.” **SB 420** would increase the penalty for sexual activities involving animals from a 1st-degree misdemeanor to a 3rd-degree felony. It is in the Judiciary, Criminal Justice and Rules Committees. **HB 435** would further expand the definition of “sexual contact with an animal” to include actions for the purpose of abuse or financial gain as well as sexual gratification and prohibit the filming, distribution or possession of pornography with an animal; convicted offenders could be barred from being around animals for 5 years following conviction. It is in the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee.



Hawai’i SB 343/HB1085 establishes the crime of sexual assault of an animal as a Class C felony, or Class B felony if committed in the presence of a minor. Because animal sexual assault is strongly linked to child sexual abuse, interpersonal violence and other animal cruelty, convicted offenders will now be required to surrender all sexually abused animal(s), reimburse animal services agencies for the animals’ care and medical treatment, attend psychiatric or psychological counseling, make restitution to animals’ owners, and be prohibited from owning any animals, residing in any household where animals are present, and working or volunteering with animal establishments for at least five years after release from incarceration. **The measure was signed into law on June 7 and took effect immediately,**



New York A614 would make sexual contact with animals a felony if serious injury or death of the animal occurs, require offenders to relinquish all animals, bar them from future possession of animals, and undergo psychological evaluation. It is in the Agriculture Committee.



Oregon Ballot Initiative 13, proposed for 2022, would add breeding domestic, livestock and equine animals to the definition of sexual assault of an animal.



Wyoming HB46 defines and creates the misdemeanor crime of bestiality; The bill passed the House 60-0 and the Senate 30-0. On March 30 it **was signed into law and took effect on July 1.**



Animal Abuse and Elder/Disabled Abuse



Florida HB 121 filed for 2022 would define the 3rd-degree felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing great bodily harm, permanent disability or death to an animal while perpetrating aggravated abuse of an elderly or disabled person, sexual battery, domestic violence, aggravated stalking, or aggravated child abuse. Aggravated animal cruelty would also pertain to the unlawful killing an animal belonging to another family or household member and “evincing a depraved mind.” The bill is in the House Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee.



Maryland SB 159/HB 281 requires new humane society and animal control officers to undergo 80 hours of training, and existing personnel to receive six hours of continuing education annually, on a variety of topics including the association between animal abuse and abuse of the elderly or domestic violence. The bills were **signed into law on May 18.**





Maryland HB 234/SB 607 prohibits the willful and malicious killing, injuring, or interfering with a service animal. Offenders face up to two years in prison and/or a \$2,500 fine and may have to pay restitution for all damages. **The bill was signed into law and takes effect Oct. 1.**



New Jersey A 4880 and **S 3168** would expand the statutory definition of elder abuse and abuse of the developmentally disabled to include acts of animal cruelty against animals owned or possessed by the persons affected by these types of abuse. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.



Pennsylvania HB 1681 would impose a 25-year ban on offenders convicted of sexual intercourse with an animal from employment working with care-dependent adults. Facilities covered by the employment ban would include residential care homes, long-term nursing homes, home health care agencies, hospices, adult daily living centers, personal care homes, assisted living residences, and any other public or private organization that uses public funds to provide care to care-dependent individuals. The bill is in the House Committee on Aging and Older Adult Services.

Animal Hoarding



New Hampshire HB 366 defines animal hoarding and sets forth a provision for a person charged with animal hoarding to be given a psychiatric evaluation. The bill has been retained in the House Environment and Agriculture Committee **for action in the 2nd year of the session.**



New Jersey S 1760 establishes the crime of animal hoarding and requires mental health counseling for all adult and juvenile animal cruelty and hoarding offenders. The bill is in the Senate Energy & Environment Committee.



New York A1229 would create a violation of companion animal hoarding and allow courts to order mental health evaluations and prohibit possession of animals as penalties to give law enforcement needed tools for early intervention before a situation becomes a full-blown cruelty case. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes



U.S. H.R. 1016, the Animal Cruelty Enforcement (ACE) Act, introduced because of cited Links between animal cruelty and violence against humans, would enhance enforcement of federal anti-cruelty laws, such as interstate trafficking of fighting animals, by creating an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section at the U.S. Department of Justice's Environmental and Natural Resources Division. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law.



Illinois HB 3531 would expand the state's criminal code prohibitions of violent video games to include games in which a character kills or causes serious physical or psychological harm to an animal. Psychological harm would be defined as including depictions of child abuse, sexual abuse, animal abuse, domestic violence, and violence against women. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.



New Jersey A 1572/S 746 would bar animal abusers from possessing a firearm. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Law & Public Safety Committees.



New York S197/A1633 (“Kirby and Quigley’s Law”) would expand aggravated animal cruelty to include harm to a pet during the commission of a felony. The bills are in the Senate Agriculture and Assembly Codes Committees.



New York A99 would make the release of or failure to restrain an animal so as to prevent a police officer or peace officer from performing his or her duties an assault in the second degree on a police officer. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee,



New York A558 would prohibit individuals convicted of serious felony offenses against animals from possessing firearms. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.



New York A2661/S6112 would define animal fighting as a criminal act when referring to enterprise corruption. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



New York A7267 would require the prosecutor in each county to appoint an assistant district attorney to oversee the prosecution of crimes against animals. The bill is in the Local Governments Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 1570 (“Cash’s Law”) would allow courts to add a sentencing enhancement in cases of burglary or criminal trespass where a domestic animal is harmed or killed in the course of that crime. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 1903 would allow courts to issue an Extreme Risk Protection Order prohibiting persons from owning or controlling a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a substantial risk of suicide or death or serious bodily injury to another person. A history of animal cruelty and/or domestic abuse are among the factors the court may consider in determining whether to issue an ERPO. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Cross-Reporting



Hawai’I HB1086/SB609 requires veterinarians to report animal injury, death or abuse to law enforcement where there is reasonable cause to believe that the animal is a victim of dogfighting or animal abuse. The measures give veterinarians immunity for civil liability for making the reports. **HB1086 was signed into law on June 28 and took effect immediately.**



Massachusetts H.1716/S.943 would remove the 10-day time limit within which social services workers may report suspected animal abuse and allow them to report at any time. The bills are in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



New Jersey A 2734 would require employees of the Department of Children & Families to report suspected abuse of a companion animal to the Chief County Humane Law Enforcement Officer or State Police, and of a livestock animal to the Chief County Humane Law Enforcement Officer and the Department of Agriculture. The bill is in the Assembly Women and Children Committee.



New Jersey A 2426/S 1980 would allow certified animal control officers to enforce municipal animal control ordinances and require them to report suspected animal cruelty to notify the municipal humane law enforcement officer. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment & Energy Committees.



New Jersey A 4880 and S 3168 would require veterinarians, veterinary technicians, investigators of domestic violence and abuse, employees of the Department of Children and Families and Divisions of Aging and Developmental Disabilities, police officers, and caregivers at residential health care facilities, police officers, or any person who has reasonable cause to believe an animal has been subjected to an act of animal cruelty to report the suspected violation to the appropriate law enforcement officer, with immunity from civil and criminal liability. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.



New York A 5823-A/S 5023-A requires veterinarians who reasonably and in good faith suspect that a companion animal’s injury, illness or condition is the result of animal cruelty to report the incident and allows the disclosure of records concerning the animal’s condition and treatment. (Existing law allows voluntary reporting.) The bills were signed into law on Oct. 30.



New York A 5780 and S 7401 would permit mandated reporters of child abuse to report suspected animal cruelty, with immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reports. The bills are in the Assembly Committee on Children and Families and the Senate Rules Committee.



Oregon HB 3071 adds all elected officials of the state, state agencies, boards, commissions or departments, and all elected city and county elected officials, to those mandated to report suspected child and elder abuse. **The bill was signed into law on June 11.**



Psychological Evaluation of Offenders



New Jersey S 1760 establishes the animal cruelty crime of animal hoarding and requires mental health counseling for all adult and juvenile animal cruelty offenders, including animal hoarders. The bill is in the Senate Energy & Environment Committee. **S 2179 (“Shyanne’s Law”)** would require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders; that bill is in the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.



New York S230 would require courts to order psychiatric analysis and evaluation of animal abusers and to unseal the records of juvenile animal abuse offenders. **S229** would require courts to impose psychiatric evaluations for defendants convicted of aggravated animal cruelty. **A 8443** would require courts to order a mental health evaluation for persons convicted of animal fighting or aggravated cruelty to animals. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.



New York A524, S1257 and S1259 would prohibit persons convicted of “Buster’s Law” (aggravated cruelty to animals) from owning pets unless authorized by a court order after appropriate psychiatric or psychological testing determined the person showed clear and convincing evidence of capable and sound mental capacity and ability to properly care for the animal. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Agriculture Committees.



Texas SB 48 allows courts to require defendants convicted of certain animal cruelty and animal fighting crimes to undergo psychological counseling or other appropriate treatment programs. **The measure was signed into law on June 14 and takes effect on Sept. 1.**



“CASA for Animals”



Florida S 172, pre-filed for 2022, would allow appointment of an advocate for “the interests of an animal” in civil and criminal court proceedings regarding the welfare, care or custody of an animal. Advocates could be appointed upon the court’s initiative or upon request from a list of designated attorneys and certified legal interns provided by the Animal Law Section of the Florida Bar Association. The bill has been referred to the Agriculture, Judiciary and Rules Committees.



Illinois SB 153 would allow courts to appoint attorneys or law students as special advocates to assist the court in prosecution of cases involving the injury, health or safety of a cat or dog and represent the interests of justice. Advocates could monitor the case and attend hearings; consult with persons and review records relevant to the conditions of the cat or dog or the defendant’s actions; and present information and recommendations to the court. The bill is in the Senate Rules Committee.



New Jersey A 4533/S 2868 would allow courts to appoint a pro bono attorney or law student special advocate to represent the interests of animals in cruelty cases. **S 2868** passed the Senate 34-0 and joined **A 4533** in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



New York A 5315/S 3525-A would allow courts to appoint volunteer lawyers and law students to advocate for animals’ interests and to help ensure the well-being of living animal victims in civil and criminal animal welfare proceedings. The bills are in the Senate and Assembly Judiciary Committees.



**To subscribe to The Link-Letter (it’s free!)
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(arkowpets@snip.net)
Please tell us what organization(s) you’re with
and where you’re located.**

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Youth Director Gets 37 Years for Child Sexual Abuse and Drowning Kittens



Benjamin Nagle

The former director of the Rappahannock, Va., Office on Youth was convicted on 11 counts of child sexual abuse and one count of animal cruelty for sexually exploiting two boys and drowning their cats in front of them. [CBS-19 News](#) reported that Benjamin Nagle, 41, of Spotsylvania, Va., will serve 37 years in prison on the charges which included forcible sodomy of a child, indecent liberties with a child, aggravated sexual battery, and production of child pornography. Nagle, who had served as the agency's youth director for many years, regularly came into contact with multiple at-risk minors. The two boys told investigators Nagle gave them money, alcohol, video games, and drugs. The case was prosecuted by the Louisa Commonwealth Attorney's Office because of Nagle's close relationship with the court system in Spotsylvania.

K-9 Officer Gets 20 Years in Prison for Bestiality and Child Pornography



Terry Yetman

A former Bossier City, La. K-9 cop was sentenced to at least 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to six of the 71 counts of bestiality and possession of child pornography with which he had been charged (*See the [May 2019 LINK-Letter](#)*). Terry Yetman, 42, had been charged in 2018 on 40 counts of animal sexual abuse and again in 2019 on 31 counts of child pornography, [BossierNow](#) reported. Louisiana Judicial District Judge Michael Craig sentenced Yetman on Nov. 23 to four years on each of five counts of sexually abusing animals, to be served consecutively, plus a 20-year sentence on one count of possession of child pornography, to be served concurrently. He also has to register as a sex offender.

Under the terms of a plea bargain, the remaining 65 charges were dropped. He had been held in jail since the 2018 arrest. At least one of the bestiality charges involved Yetman having sex with a retired police K-9 named "Boss." Yetman had served with the Bossier City Police Department from 2014 until his arrest in 2018. Ironically, shortly before his arrest, Yetman had been honored with a parish sheriff's office award for outstanding efforts to champion the protective rights of domestic violence victims and their families, according to the [Bossier Press-Tribune](#).

Dogfighter Gets 6+ Years in Prison on Fighting and Weapons Offenses



Delontay Moore

A North Carolina dogfighter was sentenced to more than six years in prison on dogfighting and illegal weapons offenses. Delontay Moore, 26, of Concord, had pled guilty to conspiracy to commit dogfighting offenses and being a felon in possession of a firearm – an AR-15 assault rifle. The [Charlotte Observer](#) reported that Moore had been arrested in 2018 by Cabarrus County Sheriff's officers who seized 14 rottweilers and pit bull-type dogs along with dogfighting training equipment; an additional 25 dogs were seized at another of Moore's residences in Rowan County in 2021. Federal prosecutors said one had died on the drive home after an hour-long fight in South Carolina in 2019, and that most of the dogs seized in the more recent raid were in "dire condition" with severe scarring, infected and untreated bite wounds, broken bones, and internal injuries. Law enforcement officers stumbled onto the dogfighting operation accidentally while they were investigating the convicted felon for drug and weapons violations. Concord police also found videos and conversations with other dogfighters on Moore's cellphone. U.S. District Judge Loretta Biggs in Winston-Salem sentenced Moore on Nov. 17 to the maximum 75 months on the various charges.

Alleged Cockfighter Gets Prison Term for Assaulting Investigators

A man suspected of running an illegal cockfighting operation in southern Ohio was convicted on several felony and misdemeanor counts and sentenced to four-to-six years in the state penitentiary and a \$5,000 fine. James V. “Bub” Newcomb II, 54, of Waterloo, Ohio, was sentenced on Nov. 10 for assaulting animal rights investigators Steve Hindi and Adam Fahnestock who were attempting to use a drone camera to photograph an alleged cockfight taking place.



Newcomb was convicted for using his pickup truck to ram

Fahnestock’s car and running it off the road into a ditch, destroying the James Newcomb (left) & Shannon Clark drone and its controller, and beating Hindi repeatedly. There was no indication that charges were filed against the alleged cockfighting. A second defendant in the attack, Shannon Clark, rejected a plea bargain and was slated to stand trial a few weeks later. [Animals 24-7](#) reported that Newcomb, who raised gamecocks, has prior convictions related to marijuana trafficking, and that Clark has multiple priors including assaulting a former police officer.

Son Charged with Torching Parents’ Home, Killing Dog

New York State Police arrested Brett Bayo, 29, of Greenville, N.Y., on felony charges of arson and aggravated animal cruelty for allegedly setting his parents’ house on fire which resulted in the death of the family’s dog. His parents were not at home at the time, but pets were inside. Bayo was taken in for a mental health evaluation pending a court appearance, according to the [Hudson Valley Post](#).

Florida Trio Charged with Robbery, Burglary & Animal Cruelty in Puppy Thefts



From left: Ronnie Baker, Quantavious Williams & Bobby Rivera

as part of what he called an “underground puppy chop shop,” the [Orlando Sentinel](#) reported.

Sheriff’s deputies in Orange County, Fla., have arrested three men for running an alleged dog trafficking operation that stole puppies and dogs from individuals and pet stores. Ronnie Baker, 34, Quantavious Williams, 22, and Bobby “Dogman” Rivera were arrested for armed robbery and numerous pet store burglaries. Sheriff John Mina said the dogs’ microchips were removed and the stolen dogs were sold for cash or used for breeding

The investigation started in March when a dog owner was robbed at gunpoint in Orlando and had his French bulldog named “Bugsy” stolen. In their quest to find Bugsy, officers stumbled into the dog trafficking operation. Bugsy and his owner were reunited six months later. Meanwhile, deputies said the suspects had stolen 12 dogs from a store in Largo, smashing open the front door and stuffing the dogs into backpacks. A similar burglary took six puppies worth \$35,000 from a store in Manatee County.

Investigators said Rivera would not only wound and infect dogs in removing microchips but also illegally crop dogs’ ears and perform other veterinary procedures. Nine dogs, including one that was dead, were reportedly found on his property without access to food or water. Baker and Williams were charged with armed robbery, grand theft, and firearm possession by a convicted felon; Rivera was convicted on 11 counts of animal neglect and is facing a charge of aggravated animal cruelty.

Parents Fearing Son’s “Progression of Violence” Have Him Charged in Slashing Death of Dog

The parents of a 17-year-old Clermont, Fla. teenager who had shown “a progression of violence” which caused them to fear for their safety and that of other children and animals in the home filed charges to have the youth arrested for allegedly tying the family’s dog to a tree and slashing it to death with a sword. The [Orlando Sentinel](#) reported that Lake County deputies recovered a sword, covered in dried blood and apparent animal fur, from the boy’s bedroom and that the youth had confessed to the killing. The teen, who was not identified due to his age, was charged with felony aggravated animal cruelty.

Kentucky Man Charged with Trashing Trailer, Animal Cruelty

Charles Eric Skaggs, 50, of Elizabethtown, Ky., was booked into the Hardin County Detention Center on a felony charge of destroying a trailer he was renting and a misdemeanor charge of neglecting multiple animals to the point of death. Arrest documents said the residence was beyond repair and covered in mounds of garbage and animal feces; Skaggs allegedly left multiple cats and dogs in their dirty cages, leaving them to die in their own feces, the [Elizabethtown News-Enterprise](#) reported. It was unclear why criminal mischief is a felony in Kentucky but animal cruelty is only a misdemeanor.



Charles Skaggs



Otis Anderson Jr. (left) and Anderson Sr.

Football Star Shot and Killed Over a Dog Bite

University of Central Florida and Los Angeles Rams running back Otis Anderson Jr., 23, was killed Nov. 29. His father, Otis Anderson Sr., 52, was charged with murder and attempted murder following the father reportedly being bitten by the son’s girlfriend’s dog. [First Coast News](#) reported that the son was at his parents’ house in Jacksonville, Fla.

Denise Anderson, Anderson Jr.’s mother, told police that her husband was bitten, which led to an argument. Denise Anderson reported that after she heard a gunshot and her son saying “You shot me!” she began hitting her husband with a floor cleaning device, at which point he turned and fired more rounds at her. Anderson Jr. suffered a gunshot wound to the chest and back, according to the police report, and was pronounced dead at the hospital. Denise Anderson was treated for multiple graze wounds and released. There was no word on the status of the dog.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

NOTE: The pandemic has caused most in-person trainings to be canceled, rescheduled or converted into virtual formats. Click on the underlined hyperlinks for more detailed information.

Dec. 22 – Harrisburg, Pa. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Jan. 11, 2022 – Reno, Nev. (online): Maureen MacNamara and Rosa Figarola will present “Child Abuse and Animal Abuse: Child Welfare Professionals as Partners in a LINK-Informed Judicial Response” as part of the webinar series, “What Judges Need to know about Animal Cruelty Issues in Juvenile and Family Law Cases” for the [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#).

Jan. 13, 2022 – Sacramento, Calif. (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a Link workshop for the [California Animal Welfare Association](#).

Jan. 20, 2022 (online): Linda Fielder and Emily Lewis will present “Partners in Investigating Animal Crimes” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.

Jan. 25, 2022 (online): Phil Arkow will present “Connecting the Dots in Criminal Justice: Preventing Crimes Against People by Focusing on Animal Abuse” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.

Jan. 26, 2022 – Harrisburg, Pa. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Feb. 1, 2022 – Reno, Nev. (online): Judge Katherine Tennyson, Stephanie MacDonald and Amy Buchanon will present “Animal-Related Relief in Protection from Domestic Abuse Orders” as part of the webinar series, “What Judges Need to know about Animal Cruelty Issues in Juvenile and Family Law Cases” for the [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#).

Feb. 11, 2022 -- (online): Jennifer Woolf will present on “Introduction to The Link and Identifying Animal Abuse,” Jim Crosby will present on “Dog Bite Injuries and Behavioral Projections,” and Kathie Nurena & Linda Randall will discuss helping people and animals move beyond trauma at the IAABC Foundation and the Fenzi Dog Sports Academy’s [Lemonade Conference](#).

Feb. 17-18, 2022 – Columbus, Ohio: Phil Arkow will present “Recognizing, Recording and Reporting Suspected Animal Abuse and Neglect” and “All in This Together: Pooling Limited Shelter Resources to Help People and Animals,” and Anna Garrett will present on “Animal Cruelty and Violent Crime in Ohio” for the [Midwest Veterinary Conference](#). Several additional programs will train veterinarians, their staffs, and humane agents on recognition of equine and farm animal cruelty.

March 3, 2022 – Myrtle Beach, S.C.: A panel discussion will discuss “A Case Study: Animal cruelty and Violent Offenders” at the [Carolinas Unite](#) Animal Welfare Professionals Conference.

March 4-5, 2022 – Orlando, Fla.: The Florida Department of Children & Families will review procedures under Florida’s new cross-reporting law in a presentation on “Cross Reporting: New ACO Required Training.” and Mary Lou Randour will present on the FBI’s National Incident-Based Reporting System. Daniel Ettinger will present on “The Relationship between Animal Abuse and Family Violence.” Amina Chardhry will present on “Family Violence and Animal cruelty: How Shelters Can Help Survivors of Family Violence by Providing a Safe Haven for Pets.” All of these are at the [Florida Animal Control Association Conference](#).

April 6, 2022 – Pullman, Wash. & Ft. Collins, Colo. (online): Phil Arkow will lecture on animal abuse’s Link to human violence for the [Human Animal Interaction Research course](#) co-taught by Washington State and Colorado State Universities.

April 21, 2022 – Wilmington, Del.: Phil Arkow, Diane Balkin and Rosa Figarola will join a multidisciplinary team in an all-day, multidisciplinary Link training for the [Delaware Family Courts system](#).

May 3, 2022 (online): Phil Arkow will present “The Forgotten Partner in Responding to Animal Abuse: The Veterinarian” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.

July 19, 2022 (online): Emily Lewis will present “The Complexities of Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse: for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multidisciplinary 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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