

Animal Cruelty as a Gateway Crime



COPS
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Director's Letter

Colleagues:

In a time when our local police departments and sheriffs' offices are constantly trying to do more with less, we can all appreciate and welcome any help the community can offer them in their efforts to keep us safe. And while apprehending criminals and bringing them to justice is an important function of local law enforcement, communities are still safer when those crimes are prevented in the first place—especially when the crimes in question are violent or even deadly.

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

The National Sheriffs' Association and the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals have collaborated on a COPS Office cooperative agreement to increase awareness of the dangers to the community of animal cruelty and abuse. Addressing and preventing this type of crime will make the whole community safer in the long run.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Keith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the "K".

Phil Keith
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

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Executive Summary

The specific outcome for the *Animal Cruelty as a Gateway to Serious Crimes* project is to build the capacity of all participating law enforcement agencies to recognize that animal cruelty crimes can serve as a precursor to more violent crimes, as a co-occurring crime to other types of offenses, and as an interrelated crime to offenses such as domestic violence and elder abuse. Armed with this knowledge, law enforcement officers and deputies assigned to patrol and investigative duties can take steps both to solve current crimes and to prevent future crimes from occurring.

To achieve the primary project outcome, the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) facilitated a series of meetings during its 2015 Winter Conference in Washington, D.C., between law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and animal welfare advocates to deal with the feasibility and issues involved with the establishment of a process to create greater law enforcement awareness of the dangers of animal abuse and its role as an indicator of other criminal behavior.

This NSA Animal Cruelty Advisory Group was composed of individuals who represented the largest animal advocacy groups in the country and experts on animal abuse and cruelty. The primary message expressed by the group included the following basic components:

- Animal abuse and cruelty are serious and often precursors to other crimes such as assault, domestic violence, and homicide.
- Animal abuse is often a window into the home, and awareness of animal abuse may prevent other crimes.
- There is a lack of communication between animal control and law enforcement.
- There is an awareness and education gap between animal control and law enforcement.
- Communities care about animal cruelty and often voice this concern to elected officials and community leaders through social media.

The advisory group also concluded that the law enforcement community's awareness of animal crimes should increase, and at the same time, they should alleviate some of the issues surrounding the reporting, investigation, and prosecution of animal crimes by first responders, investigators, and prosecutors. In addition to training, there needs to be a cultural and attitudinal change among mainstream law enforcement officers and deputies that animal crimes must be given the same attention and priorities as personal and property crimes. To meet the goals of the *Animal Cruelty as a Gateway Crime* project and foster the establishment of a collaborative relationship between law enforcement, prosecutors and judges, and animal welfare advocates, the NSA and its partner organization the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals (NCOVAA) developed the following educational and information items for law enforcement personnel:

- This document, which is designed to raise awareness among the law enforcement community
- A series of informational videos targeted at patrol officers, deputies, and investigators on the nexus between animal cruelty and other crimes¹

- The assembly of various tools from project partners and others which might be helpful to officers and deputies
- A free smartphone application (known as an app) for both Android and iOS devices that law enforcement officers can access when responding to calls for service and which can be useful in determining if animal cruelty offenses may be precursors or co-occurring with other types of criminal behavior or crimes

The *Animal Cruelty as a Gateway Crime* project addresses community policing concepts related to recognizing the signs of animal cruelty and its links to other criminal activity.

1. National Sheriffs' Association, "Recognizing Animal Abuse," YouTube, last updated October 19, 2017, <https://youtu.be/vWo7RL0TyZw>.

Focus Group Findings and Recommendations



DURING ITS 2015 WINTER CONFERENCE HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C., the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) convened an expert panel on animal abuse and cruelty, the NSA Animal Cruelty Advisory Group. This focus group was composed of individuals who represented the largest animal advocacy groups in the country, including the National Link Coalition, Animal Welfare Institute, Humane Society of the United States, Animal Cruelty Task Force of Southern Arizona, Animal Abuse Commission, Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, Animal Legal Defense Fund, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Animals and Society Institute, American Psychological Association, National District Attorneys Association, and American Humane Association. Throughout the session, members participated in an interactive discussion. See appendix A for a complete list of attendees.

Primary messages from focus group

The focus group wished to convey an extensive amount of information to their counterparts in the law enforcement community, but the primary message included the following basic components:

- Animal abuse and cruelty are serious and often precursors to other crimes such as assault, domestic violence, and homicide.
- Animal abuse is often a window into the home, and awareness of animal abuse may prevent other crimes.
- There is a lack of communication between animal control and law enforcement.
- There is an awareness and education gap between animal control and law enforcement.
- Communities care about animal cruelty and often voice this concern to elected officials and community leaders through social media.

Target groups

The focus group wished to convey its message of awareness of the link between animal abuse and other criminal offenses to the following groups: law enforcement-patrol, investigation, leadership, dispatchers, and Public Safety Training Academy staff.

Focus group discussion

Animal abuse and animal cruelty crimes need to be taken seriously by law enforcement officials for two primary reasons:

Animal cruelty crimes and statutes need to be enforced and prosecuted

First, every state has statutes addressing animal crimes, and those statutes should be enforced and prosecuted as vigorously as any other crime. State law requires enforcement, and community members, as animal lovers, demand the protection of animals. The general public often has difficulty relating to even common criminal offenses like assault and burglary because they have never experienced such crimes, but because so many people are pet owners the emotions associated with animal cruelty calls are often more intense and extremely personal. Perhaps community members are more compassionate to animal crimes because they can relate to the animals' pain and suffering or feel that they must advocate for the animals because they have no voice in the criminal justice system.

While many community members believe that police and prosecutors will "do the right thing" when it comes to criminal offenses against people, they may not have the same level of confidence when it comes to animal crimes. This doubt in the criminal justice system is particularly acute when it concerns local law enforcement, prosecutors, and district attorneys. Animal welfare and animal rights groups and individual advocates often

express concerns that crimes against animals are seen as less significant than crimes against people, and because prosecution caseloads are so high and the types of offenses against people so violent, animal crimes are often classified as a lower priority.

Though most prosecutors rebuff this notion of "picking and choosing" easy prosecutorial cases, there is little disagreement among criminal justice professionals and animal welfare and animal rights groups that animal abuse and cruelty cases presented for prosecution are usually weaker than cases involving their human counterparts. There are probably several reasons for these inadequately investigated and prepared cases, including the facts that (1) the field of veterinary forensics is a fairly new field of forensic investigation and few animal control officers are experienced with these techniques and that (2) patrol officers and deputy first responders are provided minimal training in animal crimes and their relationship to other offenses.

Animal cruelty crimes co-occur with other offenses

The second major reason animal abuse crimes need to be taken seriously by all levels of the criminal system is that these types of offenses are often co-occurring crimes with other offenses such as domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, or sexual abuse or serve as precursors to other more violent offenses up to and including homicide. Officers and deputies responding to animal abuse calls should be aware that often these types of offenses are a "window into the home," providing insight to possible other offenses that may have been or be occurring. Studies of serial killers, mass killers, and school shooters have demonstrated that animal abuse is often a precursor to these more heinous crimes. Animal control or responding officers and deputies may want to coordinate with other officers or investigators to fully investigate these calls for service.

Training and the need for increased awareness

One way to increase the awareness of animal crimes and alleviate some of the issues surrounding the reporting, investigation, and prosecution is additional training for animal control officers, first responders, investigators, and prosecutors. Although several animal care and control groups have trainers throughout the country and provide free training for law enforcement, often the time commitment necessary and cost involved in taking an officer from his or her designated assignment prohibits many agencies from taking advantage of these courses. Additional obstacles to large-scale training of law enforcement officers across the United States are the variety of jurisdictional requirements, the diversity of services offered, organizational policies and procedures, and the previously mentioned low priority with which animal cruelty crimes are often perceived by law enforcement agencies.

Because of the wide variety of situations and offenses faced by both animal control and first responders, comprehensive and systematic training of officers and deputies is needed. Some training academy directors have included a short module of instruction on animal crimes, but like their in-service training counterparts, most academies are too busy providing state- and agency-mandated courses and cannot afford to include animal crimes in their standard recruit curriculum. It has been reported that even in jurisdictions where trained animal control officers perform professional in-depth investigations, local law enforcement patrol and investigation divisions do not consider animal crimes to be on

the same level as human crimes, so the follow-up to these offenses is not always as complete and thorough as for other crimes. Therefore, in addition to training which can be accomplished rather easily, there needs to be a cultural and attitudinal change among mainstream law enforcement officers.

Animal crimes must be given the same attention and priorities as non-animal offenses.

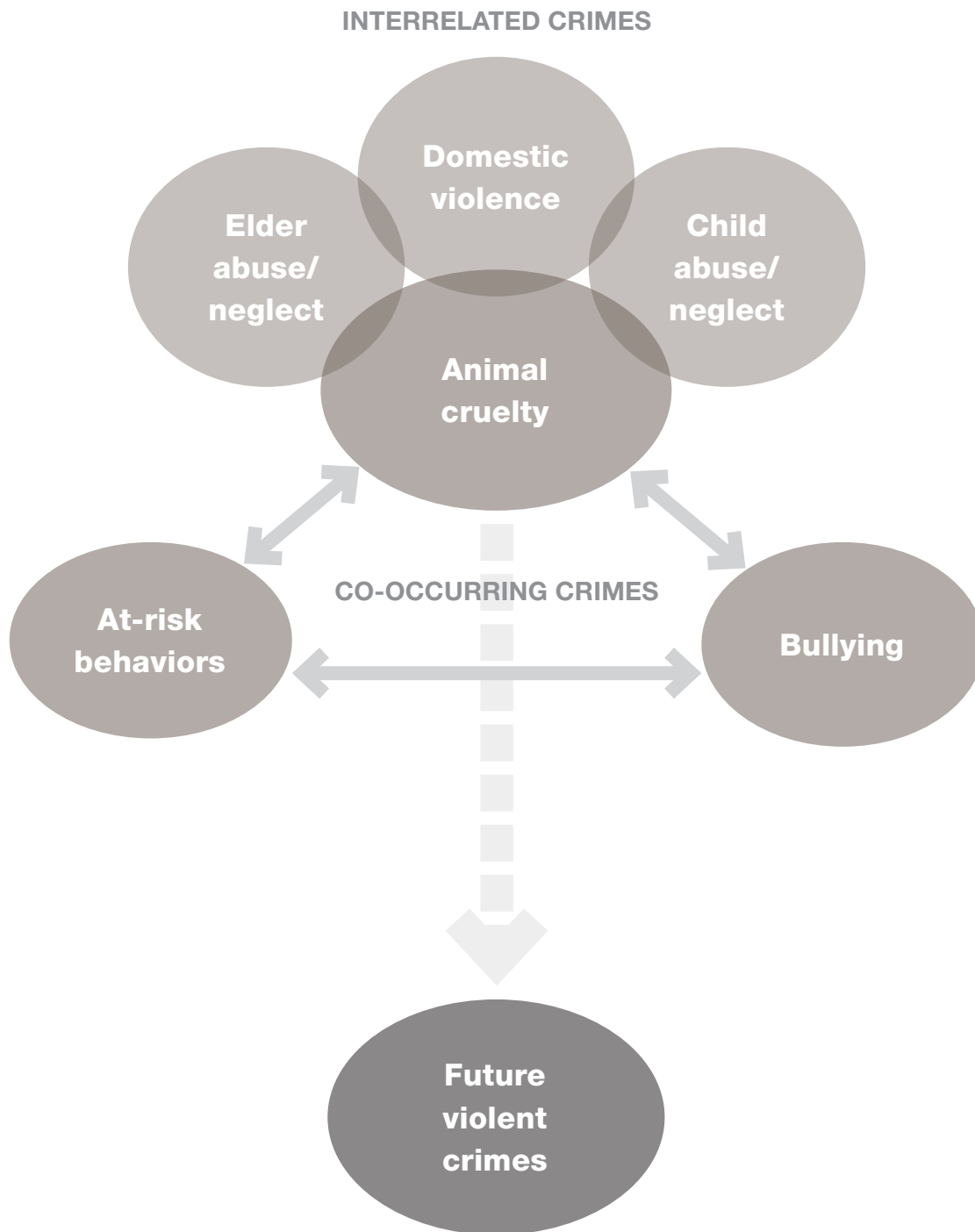
The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) formerly grouped animal abuse under the label “Other” along with a variety of lesser crimes, making cruelty hard to find, hard to count, and hard to track. There has been a sea change in the recognition of animal cruelty as a serious crime. Not only do all 50 states now define some form of animal maltreatment as a felony-level offense, but in late 2014 the FBI announced that it would upgrade animal cruelty crimes to class A, putting them in the same category as felony crimes such as homicide and assault.² Beginning in 2016, the FBI also began collecting data on animal cruelty. Law enforcement agencies must report incidents and arrests in four areas: (1) simple or gross neglect; (2) intentional abuse and torture; (3) organized abuse, including dogfighting and cockfighting; and (4) animal sexual abuse. This will enable the bureau to learn more about the correlation between animal cruelty and other crimes.³

Adding animal crimes to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report is a major step forward, but more work needs to be done. Currently there is no national tracking of training or certification program recognized across jurisdictional lines.

2. Noel Brinkerhoff, “FBI Upgrades Animal Cruelty to Class A Felony,” *allgov.com*, last updated October 16, 2014, <http://www.allgov.com/news/controversies/fbi-upgrades-animal-cruelty-to-class-a-felony-141016?news=854546>.

3. Sue Manning, “FBI Makes Animal Cruelty a Top-Tier Felony to Help Track Abuse,” *Huffington Post*, October 1, 2014, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/fbi-animal-abuse-tracking_us_568fd1d9e4b0cad15e6468c8.

FIGURE 1. Animal cruelty and related criminal offenses



The Nexus of Animal Cruelty and Serious Crime

Problem description

ANIMAL ABUSE has long been linked with other forms of antisocial behaviors and criminal violence. It is estimated that animal abusers are five times more likely than non-animal abusers to commit violent crimes against people, four times more likely to commit property crimes, and three times more likely to have a record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses.⁴ Stephan Otto, director of legislative affairs with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, has said, “It’s not that animal abuse is more prevalent. What has changed over the past few years is the recognition that animal abuse is often a warning sign for other types of violence. . . .”⁵

In the following section, specific links between animal abuse and other types of offenses will be presented. Animal abuse can manifest itself as an interrelated crime with other criminal offenses such as domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse. Animal cruelty is also often a co-occurring offense with a multitude of at-risk behaviors and bullying. Finally, animal cruelty can be an indicator of future violent crimes—as noted in the next section relating animal abuse to sexual assaults, school shootings, and serial killers.

It is important for patrol officers, deputies, and investigators to be aware of the nexus of these offenses if they are going to be able to properly investigate past crimes and prevent future ones. Animal cruelty and its nexus of criminal offenses is illustrated in figure 1 on page 4.

Why should animal abuse or cruelty be taken seriously?

Animal abuse can identify individuals who are engaging in other criminal activities. Acts of animal cruelty are linked to other types of crimes, including crimes of violence against humans, property crimes, and drug or disorderly conduct offenses. Animal fighting in particular has been linked to gang, weapons, human trafficking, gambling, and narcotics offenses.

4. Arnold Arluke, Jack Levin, Carter Luke, and Frank Ascione, “The Relationship of Animal Violence and Other Forms of Antisocial Behavior,” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 14, no. 9 (1999), 963–975, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/088626099014009004>.

5. Ian Urbina, “Animal Abuse as Clue to Additional Cruelties,” *The New York Times*, March 18, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/18/us/18animal.html?_r=0.

Therefore, reporting, investigating and prosecuting animal cruelty can help remove dangerous criminals from the street.

Animal abuse can expose family violence.

If an animal is being abused in a family, it is likely that a child, partner, or other resident is also being hurt or threatened.

Investigation of animal neglect or cruelty can provide access to a troubled family.

Animal abuse is not only frequently the most visible sign of family violence; it also does not accord families the same privacy protection. Concerned neighbors are more likely to report suspected animal abuse than they are to report other forms of family violence. Consequently, animal control officers have much easier access to homes than do other law enforcement and social services agents.

Concerned neighbors are more likely to report suspected animal abuse than they are to report other forms of family violence.

Animal cruelty is often an indicator that children pose a risk to themselves as well as to others.

Chronic physical aggression by boys during the elementary school years increases their risk for continued physical violence as well as other nonviolent forms of delinquency during adolescence. Animal cruelty is an important form of physical aggression. Increased rates of animal abuse have been noted not only among youths

who bully but also among youths who have been bullied. According to the National School Safety Council, the U.S. Department of Education, the American Psychological Association, and the National Crime Prevention Council, animal cruelty is a warning sign for at-risk youth.

Witnesses or victims of both animal and human violence are often more comfortable talking about the animal abuse.

A woman afraid to admit to her partner's abusive behavior may feel less threatened in reporting that he is cruel to animals. Likewise, a neighbor of an abusive family is more likely to report animal abuse first. This starts a dialogue with officials, which can lead to the uncovering of the perpetrator's human-directed violence.

Animal cruelty often begins in early childhood, providing opportunities for timely, more effective interventions.

Programs focusing on prevention and early treatment of conduct problems are crucial. Some researchers suggest that the most strategic intervention point is in the pre-school and early elementary school years.⁶

The nexus between animal cruelty and other criminal offenses

Since the 1960s, criminologists, psychiatrists, and other investigators have focused on animal cruelty as symptomatic of individuals' later tendency to violence in general and to extreme violence in particular.⁷ The FBI and other law enforcement agencies have recognized the high incidence of repeated animal abuse in the adolescence of the most violent offenders including serial killers, serial rapists, and sexual homicide perpetrators.

6. *The Violence Connection: An Examination of the Link Between Animal Abuse and Other Violent Crimes* (Los Angeles: Doris Day Animal Foundation, 2004).

7. Arnold Arluke and Eric Madfis, "Animal Abuse as a Warning Sign of School Massacres: A Critique and Refinement," *Homicide Studies* 18, no. 1 (2014), 7–22, <http://hsx.sagepub.com/content/18/1/7>.

Indicator of future violent crimes

FBI analysis of the lives of notorious killers suggested that many, if not most, had killed or tortured animals as children. Examples include the following:

- Serial killer Henry Lee Lucas killed at least 11 people between 1960 and 1983. “As a young teenager . . . Lucas reported having sex with . . . the animals whose throats [he and his half-brother] would cut open before performing bestiality. He often caught small animals and skinned them alive for pleasure.”⁸
- Albert DeSalvo, the “Boston Strangler” who killed 13 women between 1962 and 1964, trapped dogs and cats in orange crates and then released them to attack each other.⁹
- Between 1964 and 1973, serial killer Edmund Kemper committed at least 8 murders. As a teen, he killed both grandparents and beheaded his own mother. “From a broken home, [Kemper] showed all the ‘early warning signs’ of violence to come . . . playing death games with his sister, beheading her dolls, and later cutting the family cat into pieces.”¹⁰
- David Berkowitz, the “Son of Sam” killer who killed six and wounded several others in New York City in the mid-1970s, poisoned his mother’s parakeet.¹¹
- Dennis Rader, the BTK killer (“Bind, Torture, Kill” was his signature on letters to the authorities), killed 10 in Kansas between 1974 and 1991. It’s reported that he used to hang stray animals as a child.¹²
- Jeffrey Dahmer, who raped, murdered, and dismembered 17 men and boys between the years 1978 and 1991, reportedly would kill and skin animals and then soak their bones and mount them on stakes in his backyard.¹³
- Patrick Sherrill, who in 1986 killed 14 coworkers at an Oklahoma post office and then shot himself, had a history of stealing local pets and tying them to a fence with baling wire.¹⁴
- In 1997 outside Jackson, Mississippi, Pearl High School student Luke Woodham stabbed his mother to death and then opened fire on classmates with a rifle, killing two and wounding seven others. Woodham had written of the torture and killing of his pet dog, calling it his “first kill.”¹⁵
- In May 1998, 15-year-old Kip Kinkel shot his parents to death before emptying three guns at his classmates in Thurston High School in Oregon, leaving one dead and 26 injured. Kip had often bragged to others at school about how he tortured animals.¹⁶

8. Joel Norris, *Serial Killers* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 112.

9. Robert J. Anglin, “DeSalvo is ‘Boston Strangler,’” *The Boston Globe*, January 13, 1967, <http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/1967/01/13/albert-desalvo-boston-strangler/siouY1ueoTLx3F3hwhqJDP/story.html>.

10. Colin Wilson and Donald Seaman, *The Serial Killers: A Study in the Psychology of Violence* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 2011).

11. Manning, “FBI Makes Animal Cruelty a Top-Tier Felony” (see note 3).

12. “Dennis Rader: Biography,” A&E Television Networks, accessed July 27, 2018, <https://www.biography.com/people/dennis-rader-241487>.

13. Jack Levin and Arnold Arluke, “Can the FBI Catch Future Serial Killers Using This Test?” *New York Post*, February 27, 2016, <https://nypost.com/2016/02/27/fbi-will-start-tracking-cases-of-animal-cruelty-will-it-catch-the-next-serial-killer/>.

14. Mara Bovsun, “Mailman Massacre: 14 Die after Patrick Sherrill ‘Goes Postal’ in 1986 Shootings,” *New York Daily News*, August 15, 2010, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/mailman-massacre-14-die-patrick-sherrill-postal-1986-shootings-article-1.204101>.

15. Gail F. Melson, “Do Mass Killers Start Out by Harming Pets?” *Psychology Today*, last modified February 20, 2013, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/why-the-wild-things-are/201302/do-mass-killers-start-out-harming-pets>.

16. Melson, “Do Mass Killers Start Out by Harming Pets?” (see note 15).

An analysis of nine young men who perpetrated deadly school shootings in the late 1990s reveals that six of them were known to have abused animals.¹⁷ Lee Boyd Malvo, one of the snipers who killed 10 and injured three in the Washington, D.C., area in 2002, was described as a “strikingly obedient child”—except that as a child, he hunted and killed cats with a slingshot. When he saw a stray cat, he would become angry and shoot the animal.¹⁸ The link between animal abuse and violent behavior goes beyond notorious violent crimes that made national headlines. A three-year, three-part study by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA) and Northeastern University involved the identification of animal abusers (individuals who had been criminally charged with intentional physical harm to animals) and tracing their other criminal behavior. The criminal records of 153 individuals prosecuted by the MSPCA between 1975 and 1986 for intentional physical cruelty to animals were tracked for 20 years—10 years before the abuse and 10 years after. Seventy percent of the people who committed violent crimes against animals also had criminal records for violent, property, drug, or disorder crimes. When compared to the control group (of identical age and gender and residing in the same neighborhoods as the offenders), the animal abusers were five times more likely to commit violent crimes against people, four times more likely to commit property crimes, and three times more likely to have a record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses.¹⁹

Interrelatedness to other crimes

Child abuse and domestic violence

Domestic violence has come to be understood as “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner” rather than a series of individual violent incidents.²⁰ There is a strong consensus among researchers and policymakers that child neglect and abuse, spousal abuse, and animal abuse are all elements of a family violence system. Perpetrators of violence seldom limit themselves to victimizing only one member of the family.²¹

Whether it is inflicted upon a partner, a child, another family member, or an animal, abuse is about power and control.²² Abusers target the powerless. If an animal is being abused, it is likely that some person in the household is also being abused. Some argue that this link may be due to the fact that historically women, children, and animals have shared a similar legal status: They were significantly subordinate to men, to the point of being considered property without equal rights or significant legal protection.²³ Although over the years there have been fundamental changes in the legal status and rights of women and children, animals often continue to be viewed primarily as property.

A six-year “gold standard” study conducted in 11 metropolitan cities found that pet abuse is one of four predictors of men who would engage in abusive behaviors and

17. Nancy B. Miner, “1997–1999 School Shootings Roundup,” *Latham Letter* XX, no. 4 (1999), 11, 14, http://www.latham.org/Issues/LL_99_FA.pdf.

18. *The Violence Connection* (see note 6).

19. Carter Luke, Arnold Arluke, and Jack Levin, *Cruelty to Animals and Other Crimes: A Study by the MSPCA and Northeastern University* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1997).

20. Luke, Arluke, and Levin, *Cruelty to Animals and Other Crimes* (see note 19).

21. Mary Lou Randour and Howard Davidson, *A Common Bond: Maltreated Children and Animals in the Home* (Washington, DC: American Humane, 2008), http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/abuse/common_bond_08.pdf.

22. Michele Lerner, “From Safety to Healing: Representing Battered Women with Companion Animals,” *Domestic Violence Report* 4, no. 2 (1999), 17–21, http://www.civresearchinstitute.com/online/article_abstract.php?pid=18&iid=1008&aid=6595.

23. Vivek Upadhyia, “The Abuse of Animals as a Method of Domestic Violence: The Need for Criminalization,” *Emory Law Journal* 63, no. 5 (2014), 1163–1209, <http://law.emory.edu/elj/content/volume-63/issue-5/comments/animal-abuse-domestic-violence.html>.

tactics in future intimate partner relationships.²⁴ Perpetrators of domestic violence often use pets as a way to demonstrate dominance and control of their victims. Abuse of the pet—the “lowest” or weakest member of the family—is also often used to manipulate a partner or child into compliance with the abuser’s demands.²⁵ Pet abuse can also be used to frighten, intimidate, punish, or retaliate against a partner or child. If an animal misbehaves, the child or partner may be the recipient of the violence rather than the pet.²⁶ Finally, following through on threats to injure or kill a pet shows the victim that the abuser is willing to kill an animal and that he may also kill the human victim.

Killing a cherished pet can also be a way of removing a major source of comfort and love, an act that further isolates the abused family member.²⁷ The National Link Coalition reports that more than 70 percent of abused women report that their abusers threatened, hurt, or killed pets as a means of control and intimidation.²⁸

“...their male partner had threatened to hurt or kill and/or had actually hurt or killed one or more of their pets. Examples of the former included threats to put a kitten in a blender, bury a cat up to its head and ‘mow’ it, starve a dog, and shoot or kill a cat. Actual harm or killing of animals was reported by 57% of the women with pets and included acts of omission (e.g., neglecting to feed or allow veterinary care) but most often acts of

violence. Examples reported included slapping, shaking, throwing, or shooting dogs and cats, drowning a cat in a bathtub, and pouring lighter fluid on a kitten and igniting it.”²⁹

This type of control is especially potent since so many victims of domestic abuse have a deep emotional attachment to their pets. In interviews, abused women have described their companion animal as “baby,” “child,” “a part of the family,” and similar terms. Animals often serve as an emotional surrogate, especially to a woman who has few other sources of emotional support.

Where animal abuse is used as a means to an end (whether of control, intimidation, or coercion), the animal may be vulnerable to horrific acts such as being skinned alive, beaten, punched, kicked, shot, fed poisonous substances, hanged, thrown across the room, or subjected to acts of bestiality. Animals may expose themselves to physical harm by rushing to protect their guardians during an abusive episode. They may also suffer anxiety or distress at witnessing the abuse of their guardian.³⁰

In the 1980s, a team of investigators from New Jersey’s Division of Youth and Family Services looked into the treatment of animals in middle-class households that had been identified as having issues of child abuse. They interviewed all members of each family as well as the social workers assigned to them. They found that among those families there was a much higher rate of pet

24. Benita J. Walton-Moss, Jennifer Manganello, Victoria Frye, and Jacquelyn C. Campbell, “Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Violence and Associated Injury among Urban Women,” *Journal of Community Health* 30, no. 5 (2005), 377–389, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10900-005-5518-x>.

25. “Animal Cruelty and Human Violence: A Documented Connection,” The Humane Society of the United States, accessed July 27, 2018, http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/abuse_neglect/qa/cruelty_violence_connection_faq.html.

26. “Animal Cruelty/Domestic Violence: The Link,” PetCoach, accessed July 27, 2018, <https://www.petcoach.co/article/animal-cruelty-domestic-violence-the-link/>.

27. *The Violence Connection* (see note 6).

28. Caitlin Gibson, “Loudoun Program Underscores the Link between Domestic Violence, Animal Abuse,” *The Washington Post*, September 24, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/loudoun-program-underscores-the-link-between-domestic-violence-animal-abuse/2014/09/23/9c4f9512-432a-11e4-b47c-f5889e061e5f_story.html.

29. Frank R. Ascione, “Battered Women’s Reports of Their Partners’ and Their Children’s Cruelty to Animals,” *Journal of Emotional Abuse* 1, no. 1 (1997), 119–133, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J135v01n01_06.

30. Upadhyia, *The Abuse of Animals* (see note 23).

ownership than other households in the same community, but few of the animals were older than two years of age. Randall Lockwood, an American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) senior vice president who worked with that team, said,

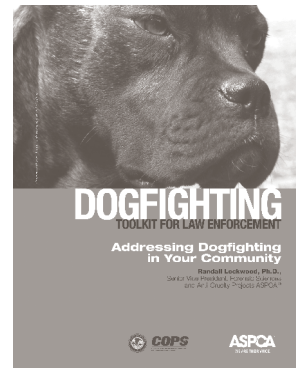
“There was a very high turnover of pets in these families. Pets dying or being discarded or running away. We discovered that in homes where there was domestic violence or physical abuse of children, the incidence of animal cruelty was close to 90 percent. The most common pattern was that the abusive parent had used animal cruelty as a way of controlling the behaviors of others in the home. I’ve spent a lot of time looking at what links things like animal cruelty and child abuse and domestic violence. And one of the things is the need for power and control. Animal abuse is basically a power-and-control crime.”³¹

The domestic abuse victim in these types of situations is faced with the difficult decision to either leave the pet with the abuser, stay with the abuser to protect the pet, or abandon the pet. Multiple studies have found reports of battered women delaying seeking shelter because of concern for the welfare of their pets.³² In fact, it has been reported that as many as 48 percent of battered women delay leaving a dangerous situation out of concern for their pets’ safety.³³ A 2007 study found that women abused by their intimate partner were 10 times more

likely to report that their partner had hurt or killed one or more of their pets than women who were not abused.³⁴ At a national conference of the Animal Welfare Institute, a seminar entitled “Animal Cruelty: Predictor and Early Intervention for Families and Youth” included discussion on the fact that witnessing violence—including violence to animals—is a traumatic event with biological, psychological, and social consequences.³⁵

Sergeant David Hunt, a dogfighting expert with the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office in Columbus, Ohio, has said that for years law enforcers felt that animal abuse was not their concern, because “the attitude has been that we have enough stuff on our plate. . . . You have to sell it to them in such a way that . . . it’s part of a larger nexus of crimes and the psyche behind them.”³⁶

When law enforcers encounter those who have engaged in dogfighting, it should serve as a hint that those involved may also be perpetrators of domestic violence. The *Dogfighting Toolkit for Law Enforcement*, published by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, notes that “Animal cruelty and dogfighting often involve participants who have been or will be involved in many other serious crimes, including interpersonal violence.”³⁷ It is therefore important for law enforcers to be alert for such situations.



31. Charles Siebert, “The Animal-Cruelty Syndrome,” *The New York Times Magazine*, June 11, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/13/magazine/13dogfighting-t.html>.

32. *Annotated Bibliography: Animal Abuse and Violence Against Women* (Ann Arbor, MI: Animals and Society Institute, n.d.), <http://www.animalsandsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ASI-AniCare-Bibliography-Animal-Abuse-and-Violence-Against-Women.pdf>.

33. Sherry Ramsey, Mary Lou Randour, Nancy Blaney, and Maya Gupta, “Protecting Domestic Violence Victims by Protecting Their Pets,” *Juvenile and Family Justice Today* (spring 2010), 16–20, <http://nationallinkcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/NCJFCJ-article.pdf>.

34. Urbina, “Animal Abuse as Clue to Additional Cruelties” (see note 5).

35. “AWI Courts Awareness About Animal Cruelty at National Judges’ Conference,” *AWI Quarterly* (fall 2014), <https://awionline.org/awi-quarterly/2014-fall/awi-courts-awareness-about-animal-cruelty-national-judges-conference>.

36. Siebert, “The Animal-Cruelty Syndrome,” 2, (see note 31).

37. Randall Lockwood, *Dogfighting Toolkit for Law Enforcement* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2011), Because of the sensitive nature of the material in this publication, we will not be able to provide it for download on the web. If you would like to obtain a copy, please request a hard copy by calling 800-421-6770 or emailing askcopsr@usdoj.gov.

Elder Abuse

As noted previously, abuse involves power and control. Because abusers target the powerless, crimes against animals, spouses, children, and the elderly often go hand in hand.³⁸ Abuse of the elderly is not only physical but can also be emotional or financial abuse. Abuse of a cherished pet can accomplish the same end as abuse of an intimate partner: intimidation or compliance with the abuser's demands. And just as seen in cases of domestic violence connected with animal abuse, the abuse of an elderly person's pets may result in the person's declining offers of assistance if it might mean separating them from their pet.³⁹

Co-occurring with other offenses

Animal abuse by children

Animal cruelty⁴⁰ starts very early, appearing at a mean abuser age of 6.75 years, and “red flags” those children and adolescents who are at greatest risk for continued antisocial behavior.⁴¹ Although the immature child

may never progress to the commission of human violence . . . the malicious youngster rehearses his sadistic attacks—perhaps on animals, perhaps on other people, perhaps on both—and continues into his adult years to perpetrate the same sorts of sadistic acts on human beings.⁴²

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), in its definition of the symptoms linked to conduct disorder (CD), refers to “aggression to people and animals.” Various studies support the contention that cruelty to animals may be one of the first CD symptoms to appear in young children. In fact, animal cruelty appears earlier than bullying, cruelty to people, vandalism, or setting fires.⁴³

More than 70 percent of U.S. households with minor children have pets, and children often feel a natural connection with animals. When asked to list the 10 most important individuals in their lives, 7- and 10-year-old children included pets in their list, and 42 percent of 5-year-olds spontaneously mentioned their pets when asked, “Whom do you turn to when you are feeling sad, angry, happy, or wanting to share a secret?”⁴⁴

Why, then, do children abuse animals? Children who abuse animals might be repeating a lesson that they learned at home. They learn from their parents to react to anger or frustration with violence, which is often directed at the only individuals in the family who are more vulnerable than they are: their animal companions. One expert said, “Children in violent homes are characterized by . . . frequently participating in pecking-order battering, in which they might maim or kill an animal.”⁴⁵

38. “Animal Abuse and Human Abuse: Partners in Crime,” People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, accessed July 27, 2018, <http://www.peta.org/issues/companion-animal-issues/cruel-practices/human-animal-abuse/animal-family-violence/>.

39. *Animal Abuse & Interpersonal Violence*, a presentation of the Escambia County, Florida, Domestic Violence Coalition, April 13–14, 2015.

40. Cruelty to animals as referenced in this report does not include developmentally immature teasing such as a child pulling a kitten along by the tail but rather serious torture such as setting pets on fire.

41. Mary Lou Randour, “Juvenile Crime and Animal Cruelty: Understanding the Link as a Tool to Early, More Effective Interventions,” *Deputy and Court Officer Magazine* 5, no. 3 (2013).

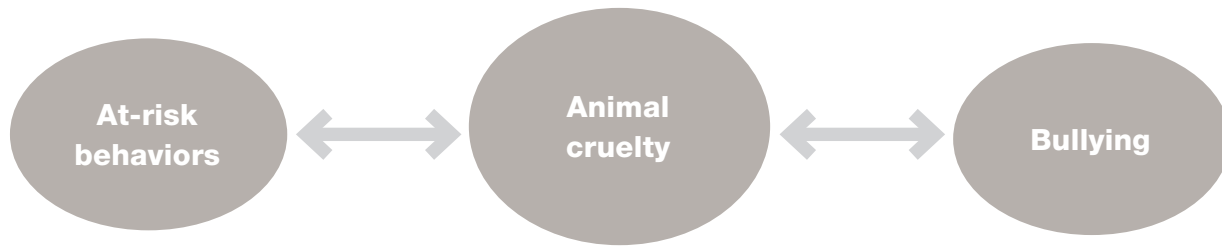
42. Mark R. Dadds, Cynthia M. Turner, and John McAloon, “Developmental Links between Cruelty to Animals and Human Violence,” *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 35, no. 3 (2002), <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1375/acri.35.3.363>.

43. Frank R. Ascione, “Animal Abuse and Youth Violence,” *OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin* September 2001, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/188677.pdf>.

44. Randour and Davidson, *A Common Bond* (see note 21).

45. “Cruelty to Animals and Family Violence,” People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, accessed July 27, 2018, <http://www.peta.org/issues/companion-animal-issues/cruel-practices/human-animal-abuse/animal-family-violence/>.

FIGURE 2. Co-occurrence with other offenses



Researchers have also connected children’s acts of animal abuse with bullying, corporal punishment, school shootings, sexual abuse, and developmental psychopathic behaviors—situations wherein children feel powerless and seek their own victims in order to exert control and gain a sense of power.⁴⁶ Figure 2 shows the co-occurrence between animal cruelty and other behaviors.

When families are challenged by child maltreatment and domestic violence, there is increased opportunity for children to be exposed to the abuse of animals. Even if the adults in the family do not abuse animals, children sometimes express the pain of their own victimization or stress by abusing family pets.⁴⁷ A 1997 youth interview study by Utah State University Psychology Professor Frank R. Ascione and colleagues suggested several developmentally related motivations for animal abuse by children and adolescents:

- **Curiosity or exploration** (i.e., the animal is injured or killed in the process of being examined, usually by a young or developmentally delayed child)
- **Peer pressure** (e.g., peers may encourage animal abuse or require it as part of an initiation rite)
- **Mood enhancement** (e.g., animal abuse is used to relieve boredom or depression)

- **Sexual gratification** (i.e., bestiality)
- **Forced abuse** (i.e., the child is coerced into animal abuse by a more powerful individual)
- **Attachment to an animal** (e.g., the child kills an animal to prevent its torture by another individual)
- **Animal phobias** (that cause a pre-emptive attack on a feared animal)
- **Identification with the child’s abuser** (e.g., a victimized child may try to regain a sense of power by victimizing a more vulnerable creature)
- **Post-traumatic play** (i.e., re-enacting violent episodes with an animal victim)
- **Imitation** (i.e., copying a parent’s or other adult’s abusive “discipline” of animals)
- **Self-injury** (i.e., using an animal to inflict injuries on the child’s own body)
- **Rehearsal for interpersonal violence** (i.e., “practicing” violence on stray animals or pets before engaging in violent acts against other people)
- **Vehicle for emotional abuse** (e.g., injuring a sibling’s pet to frighten the sibling)⁴⁸

46. “Children Abusing Animals,” National Link Coalition, accessed July 27, 2018, <http://nationallinkcoalition.org/faqs/children-abusing-animals>.

47. Ascione, “Animal Abuse and Youth Violence” (see note 43).

48. Ascione, “Animal Abuse and Youth Violence” (see note 43).

Childhood abuse of animals can have long-term effects. A study conducted over a 10-year period found that children between the ages of six and 12 who were described as being cruel to animals were more than twice as likely as other children in the study to be reported to juvenile authorities for a violent offense.⁴⁹

Further evidence of long-term effects is indicated in a survey of college sophomores that revealed a link between childhood cruelty to animals and a tolerance for interpersonal violence as adults. Those students who admitted to engaging in animal cruelty as young people were more likely than the nonabusers to respond with “yes” to a question about whether it was permissible to slap your wife.⁵⁰ In addition, a 1985 report indicated significantly more animal cruelty in the childhoods of aggressive criminals than in the childhoods of non-aggressive criminals or non-criminals.⁵¹

A four-year study by the Chicago (Illinois) Police Department “revealed a startling propensity for offenders charged with crimes against animals to commit other violent offenses toward human victims”—with 65 percent of people arrested for animal cruelty also having a criminal record for battery against a human.⁵² When counselors at several federal penitentiaries evaluated inmates for levels of aggression, 70 percent of the most

violent prisoners had serious and repeated animal abuse in their childhood histories, as compared to 6 percent of nonaggressive prisoners in the same facilities.⁵³

In 1997, Miller and Knutson examined self-reports of animal abuse by 299 inmates incarcerated for various felony offenses and 308 introductory psychology class undergraduates. The percentages of each reporting animal abuse were as shown in table 1:⁵⁴

TABLE 1. Animal abuse among felons and undergraduates

Type of abuse	Percentage of inmates self-reporting	Percentage of undergrads self-reporting
Hurt an animal	16.4	9.7
Killed a stray	32.8	14.3
Killed a pet	12	3.2

An examination of the distorted minds of several serial killers found that

“In his childhood, the serial killer acquires many of the scars he will later inflict on his future victims. . . . This child will also be at high risk of confrontations with the juvenile justice system. He will display extreme cruelty to animals, excessive violence toward younger children and his younger siblings.”⁵⁵

49. Kimberly D. Becker, Jeffrey Stuewig, Veronica M. Herrera, and Laura A. McCloskey, “A Study of Firesetting and Animal Cruelty in Children: Family Influences and Adolescent Outcomes,” *Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 43, no. 7 (2004), 905–912, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15213592>.

50. Clifton P. Flynn, “Why Family Professionals Can No Longer Ignore Violence toward Animals,” *Family Relations* 49, no. 1 (2000), 87–95, https://www.jstor.org/stable/585705?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

51. Stephen R. Kellert, Alan R. Felthous, “Childhood Cruelty toward Animals among Criminals and Noncriminals,” *Human Relations* 38, no. 12 (1985), 1113–1129, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/001872678503801202>.

52. Brian Degenhardt, *Statistical Summary of Offenders Charged with Crimes against Companion Animals July 2001–July 2005* (Chicago, IL: Chicago Police Department, 2006).

53. Melson, *Do Mass Killers Start Out by Harming Pets?* (see note 15).

54. Ascione, “Animal Abuse and Youth Violence” (see note 43).

55. Norris, *Serial Killers*, 83 (see note 8).

John Douglas, a former FBI agent considered an expert on criminal personality profiling and the pioneer of modern criminal investigative analysis, wrote regarding violent criminals in his book, *The Anatomy of Motive*:

“Unlike better-adapted men . . . the male who is going to grow into a violent or predator personality becomes aggressive to his peers. He gets involved in antisocial acts such as burglary, arson, theft from his parents or other family members, mistreating animals . . .”⁵⁶

Bullying and at-risk behaviors

In examining the abuse of animals by children, it is important to recognize the correlation between bullying and animal abuse. There is significant research indicating that kids who engage in bullying hold positive attitudes toward violence, and in many cases that violence involves animals. A 2005 research study involving more than 500 children found that schoolyard bullies were “twice as likely to have committed some form of animal abuse when compared to their non-bullying peers.”⁵⁷

One woman recalled being a victim of her older brother’s abuse when they were children. She said that he bullied her daily by punching, pinching, and choking her and that he also abused her verbally and emotionally. She noted that when he tired of mistreating her,

“he would turn his attention to one of our many animals. I can remember my brother twisting the cows’ tails until they bawled in pain. This

happened if a cow wouldn’t step over quickly enough when he was trying to go between two of them with the milking machine . . . if the cow wasn’t letting down her milk my brother would punch her like a punching bag in the belly or kick her in the udder. . . . My brother would bat [his banty rooster] around and laugh at him as he flew back at him trying to peck or rake him with his inch and a half long spurs. The rooster got so that he would fly across the barnyard at [him] even at the mere sight of him.”⁵⁸

Researchers have found that physical violence and other forms of marital aggression were associated with acting out problems in children, and cruelty to animals is often included as a component of such acting out.⁵⁹ One study examined the theory that children’s abuse of animals may be predictive of aggression toward humans. In assessing concurrent engagement in animal abuse and bullying behavior in 241 adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16, it was found that more than 20 percent of the youths reported abusing animals at least “sometimes,” and nearly 18 percent reported bullying others on at least one occasion in the past year. Multiple analyses revealed that witnessing animal abuse was a common predictive factor for both animal abuse and bullying.⁶⁰

56. John E. Douglas and Mark Olshaker, *The Anatomy of Motive* (New York: Scribner, 1999), 39.

57. Kris Lecakes Haley, “Cruelty to Animals = Bullying: A Contemporary Equation,” *People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals*, March 2011, <https://prime.peta.org/2011/03/bully>.

58. Glori Phillips, “Animal Abuse and Bullying,” *Overcome Bullying*, accessed July 27, 2018, <http://www.overcomebullying.org/animal-abuse.html>.

59. Frank R. Ascione, Claudia Weber, and David S. Wood, “The Abuse of Animals and Domestic Violence: A National Survey of Shelters for Women Who Are Battered,” *Society and Animals* 5, no. 3 (1997), 205–218, <http://www.animalsandsociety.org/human-animal-studies/society-and-animals-journal/articles-on-children/the-abuse-of-animals-and-domestic-violence-a-national-survey-of-shelters-for-women-who-are-battered/>.

60. Eleonora Gullone and Nerida Robertson, “The Relationship between Bullying and Animal Abuse Behaviors in Adolescents: The Importance of Witnessing Animal Abuse,” *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* 29, no. 5 (2008), 371–379, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0193397308000518>.

Recognizing and Addressing the Problem

LAW ENFORCERS ARE INCREASINGLY AWARE of the connection between animal abuse and other criminal behavior and of the necessity of treating it as a serious crime⁶¹ and documenting cases as thoroughly as possible. All 50 states have made animal abuse illegal, and every state can now punish the worst cases of animal cruelty as felonies.⁶² A growing number of jurisdictions have established cross-training for social service and animal control agencies on how to recognize the signs of abuse and possible indicators of other abusive behaviors.

Dealing aggressively with animal cruelty is an effective way to better protect communities. An important reason is that animal cruelty crimes could very well be the first indication that a juvenile is at risk and engaged in antisocial behavior. One study identified aggression toward people and animals in childhood as one of four factors associated with persistence in antisocial, aggressive behavior into adolescence and adulthood.⁶³

Animal cruelty is a serious and often violent crime that involves victims—whether they are the animals themselves or their human caregivers. Further, given the strong correlation between animal abuse and future violent behavior, preserving a record of these crimes is necessary to alert judges, prosecutors, police, and probation officers as well as other agencies involved in overseeing a defendant or helping a victim.

Intervention programs and actions

With the increased understanding of the link between animal abuse and other types of criminal behavior, it is imperative that police officers and deputies understand the importance of being alert to indicators of animal abuse as they interact with the community. However, education and awareness are crucial. Even among those working in shelters for women, who on a daily basis see the result of domestic violence, for many years it was not common practice to

61. Randour, “Juvenile Crime and Animal Cruelty” (see note 41).

62. Melissa Cronin, “All 50 U.S. States Now Have Felony Charge for Animal Cruelty” The Dodo, last modified March 14, 2014, <https://www.thedodo.com/all-50-us-states-now-have-felo-465803412.html>.

63. Mary Lou Randour, *What Every Clinician Should Know About the Link Between Pet Abuse and Family Violence* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, n.d.), <https://www.apa.org/education/ce/pet-abuse-family-violence.pdf>.

systematically ask about pet maltreatment in intake interviews. Yet women fleeing violence at home often have stories like Francine, a domestic violence victim who was charged with the death by fire of her husband Mickey, as she described hearing her daughter Nicky scream:

“. . . Nicky was crying to hard she couldn't talk. I'd never heard a child cry like that. I . . . held her in my arms until she calmed down enough to tell me what had happened. Mickey had warned her that if he found the cat on the porch he'd wring its neck. When he caught her with it the second time he took it out of her arms and just broke its neck in his two hands.”⁶⁴

When those who work with victims of domestic violence every day do not always realize the prevalence of animal abuse as connected to domestic abuse, it is even more understandable that the patrol officer on the job would not be aware of the connection. However as we have seen, more and more research indicates that animal cruelty often goes hand in hand with family violence and other types of crimes. Whether they are on patrol in a squad car, walking a beat in a densely populated inner city, or responding to a call, officers can learn to recognize clues that might indicate possible animal abuse:

- **Poor body condition or visible trauma.** Signs include severe fur matting, filthy coat, open sores or obvious wounds; flea or tick infestation; underweight with visible bones. The animal may be limping or unable to walk normally or have congested eyes or ears. The animal may be in obvious physical distress and in need of veterinary care.
- **Lack of food or water.** The animal has no obvious sources or food or water. It may be aggressive because of starvation or thirst, or it may be lethargic for the same reasons.



Photo: Paulette Raef Photography

- **Lack of adequate shelter.** The animal may be contained in an area that is exposed to inclement weather or constant sun or left unattended in a vehicle during warm or hot weather.
- **Lack of sanitation.** Feces or debris covers the animal's living area.
- **Abandoned.** The animal is left in a house or yard that appears empty. A dog howling or barking for several hours may be giving a signal that it needs immediate life-saving care.
- **Caged or tied.** The animal is restrained with little room to move or is unable to stand or turn around.
- **Chains or padlocks around or embedded into the animal's neck.** This can include regular collars as well.
- **Evidence of being trained for or having been used to fight.** Evidence of training implements such as treadmills or spring poles. Obvious signs of trauma such as scars, open wounds, infections, or missing body parts (ears, eyes, partial tails).
- **Abnormal behavior.** The animal may be severely aggressive. In the alternative, the animal may be abnormally shy, cowering, hiding, or fear-biting, even with its owner.

64. Ascione, Weber, and Wood, "The Abuse of Animals and Domestic Violence" (see note 59).

- **Too many animals on one property.** This can be a sign of using animals to fight, but it can also be a sign of hoarding. In either case is important to note the condition of the animals.
- **Owner observed committing violence against the animal.** The owner may be witnessed striking, kicking, or otherwise physically abusing the animal(s).⁶⁵

In animal cruelty cases, the primary victims are not able to tell authorities what happened. Officers must understand that animal cruelty can be a component of domestic violence offense when it is committed with the purpose of harming or coercing a human victim. In fact, seven states (Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, and Tennessee)⁶⁶ have defined coercive acts of animal abuse as domestic violence. However, as pointed out in a presentation on Animal Abuse by Merced County, California, Animal Control, what seems like neglect may not fall within the legal definition of animal abuse, so officers need to be familiar with local laws in that regard.⁶⁷

When an officer responds to a domestic violence call and finds reason to believe that there are one or more animals present in the home, he or she should always keep in mind the possibility that there may be animal abuse occurring in addition to the domestic violence. The officer might ask if there are pets in the home and if the officer might see them. The officer's personal observation of household pets might reveal untreated injuries, protruding bones, scaly or patchy fur, or listlessness. The pet may be fearful of or cower around the suspected abuser. There might be no visible food or water available for the animal.

Questions for the adult abuse victim might include the following:

- Is your pet healthy?
- Is your pet kept chained up?
- Does your pet seem relaxed around all family members, or do they seem to avoid any particular family member?
- Has your partner/children/anyone in the home ever hurt or killed a family pet? If yes, describe.
- Have you ever hurt or killed a family pet? If yes, describe.
- If a pet was injured or killed, whose pet was it considered to be – yours, your child's, or the family's?
- Has your concern for a pet's welfare kept you from going to a shelter? If yes, explain.
- Have you ever left your abusive partner because of the abuse of a pet? If yes, explain.
- Has an Animal Control report ever been made about a pet in your home? If yes, explain.

If children are present, the questions to them (out of the presence of the parents) might include:

- What is your pet's name? Who takes care of your pet?
- What happens if your pet misbehaves?
- Has anyone in the home or anyone you know threatened or tried to hurt your pet, or threatened your pet?
- Has anyone you know killed a pet?
- Has anyone you know made you do something or else they would hurt your pet?
- Have you ever been punished for something your pet did, like getting into the trash?

65. The Wet Nose Blog, "11 Signs of Animal Cruelty and How You Can Help Animals in Need," Pets for Patriots, last modified April 10, 2012, <https://petsforpatriots.org/11-signs-of-animal-cruelty-and-how-you-can-help/>.

66. Statistics courtesy of Phil Arkow, Coordinator, National Link Coalition, Stratford, NJ.

67. Art Ferrario, "Animal Abuse," *Family Violence Protocol: Integrated Training for Law Enforcement, Social Services, and Advocates*, module 6, presentation by Merced County, California, Animal Control, 2008, <https://slideplayer.com/slide/2557303/>.

- Have you ever been worried about something bad happening to your pet?
- Has your pet ever been punished for something YOU did, like not cleaning up your room?
- Have you ever lost a pet that you cared about? What happened?⁶⁸

NOTE: Depending on the answers to these questions, the officer might need to contact Child Protective Services since the situation might also be child endangerment (witnessing violence).

If a child has witnessed animal abuse or was threatened with animal abuse, supplementary questions could include:

- What is the relationship of the child to the animal abuser?
- What is the relationship of the child to the animal?
- What happened to the abused animal? How many times did it occur?
- How did the child respond? What were the responses of the perpetrator/other witnesses?
- What was the child's role in witnessing the animal cruelty – passive, encouraging, or coerced? Ask the child, "How did you feel about being involved in what happened?"
- What was the child's immediate and long-term response to being a witness?
- Does the child exhibit symptoms of anxiety, trauma, or depression?
- Does the child feel remorse, shame, or guilt? Does he/she fear reprisal?
- Did the child tell anyone about the abuse? If so, what was the response of the person told?

Officers on patrol might see dogs chained up, dogs with clipped or scarred ears, emaciated animals, or dog fighting equipment. Instances of what appear to be animal cruelty can be documented with photos or videos and by interviewing witnesses.

In conjunction with the Humane Society of Southern Arizona, the Animal Cruelty Taskforce (ACT) of Southern Arizona was instrumental in furthering a nine-week program at a juvenile correctional facility to educate young men on a variety of animal welfare issues including the ethical treatment of animals and the links between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence.⁶⁹

Depending on the circumstances, an animal cruelty investigation should involve

- photographing or videotaping the scene, including location (inside and outside);
- photos or videos of animal victims showing any injuries and behavioral conditions;
- calling for animal crime scene processing if necessary;
- calling for a veterinarian (preferably a forensic vet) to come to the scene during evidence collection;
- seizing appropriate items at the scene, including any deceased animals and buried or burned animal remains;
- documenting food and water bowls (or lack thereof);
- documenting housing conditions;
- notifying Animal Control;
- interviews—suspect, other residents, eyewitnesses; tape recorded if possible, and written statement obtained as soon as possible;

68. "Animal Cruelty/Domestic Violence Fact Sheet," Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter, accessed July 27, 2018, http://www.scanimalshelter.org/violence_fact_sheet.

69. Humane Society of Southern Arizona, "Animal Cruelty Taskforce Description," Petfinder, accessed July 27, 2018, <https://www.petfinder.com/helping-pets/animal-cruelty/animal-cruelty-taskforce/>.

- interviewing any veterinarian who had contact with the animal victim(s) and obtaining records of veterinary care, especially any records that document animal's condition;
- if a seized animal has injuries or is emaciated, documenting the animal's improvement over time to defeat anticipated defenses.

Prevention initiatives

Understanding the nexus of crimes associated with animal cruelty can assist law enforcement officers and public safety officials in preventing future crimes from occurring. The enlightened officer who responds to a domestic violence call and notices food and water bowls for animals may want to inquire about the status of the

animals and past conduct of residents in an effort to determine if animal cruelty crimes may also be taking place. If warranted, this type of preventive investigation and follow-up by animal control officers may mitigate the possibility of future animal abuse crimes from occurring at the residence.

Conversely, inquisitive officers responding to animal abuse offenses at a location may also want to inquire about the possibility of other co-occurring or associated crimes such as child abuse or bullying that may be taking place at the residence. By taking the few extra steps necessary to fully investigate a situation, law enforcement officers will be empowered not only to solve current crimes but perhaps also to prevent future crimes from occurring.

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Tools

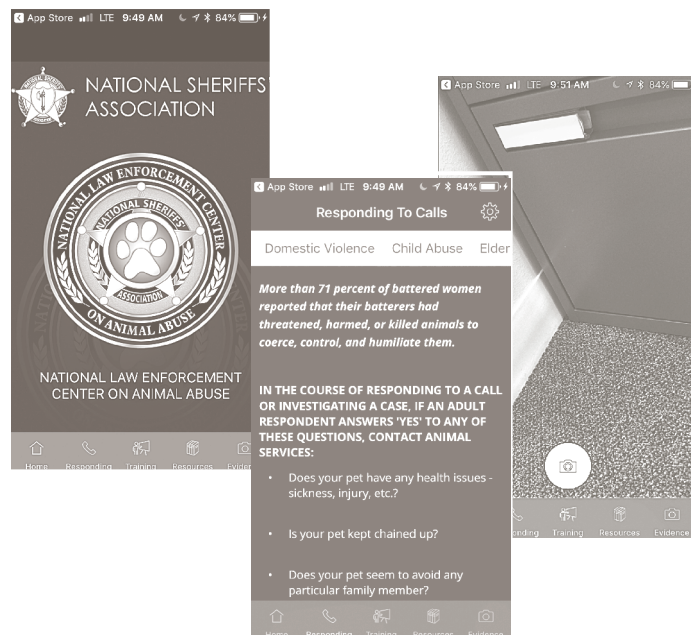
App for smartphones

DEVELOPED AS A PRIMARY COMPONENT OF THIS PROJECT, the smartphone application (known as an app) is designed as an informational and awareness tool for law enforcement officers, deputies, and investigators. The app contains a “Response” section on what questions to ask when responding to calls for service and recognizing the interrelationship between animal cruelty calls and other criminal offenses and behaviors; a “Training” section that contains a series of mini-training videos; a “Resources” section with links to valuable resources compiled by relevant subtopics, as well as links to national animal welfare groups; and an “Evidence” tab as a reminder to law enforcement officers to take photos or videos of the evidence while responding to these cases. The tab opens the officer’s camera and stores the images and videos on the officer’s phone.

Responding to calls

In this section of the app, officers can click on a desired area of information and receive a series of questions which may assist them in determining if an animal cruelty crime has occurred and if other related crimes or at-risk behaviors might be important elements of other offenses occurring in the home or with family members or others:

- Domestic violence
- Elder abuse
- Child abuse
- Dogfighting

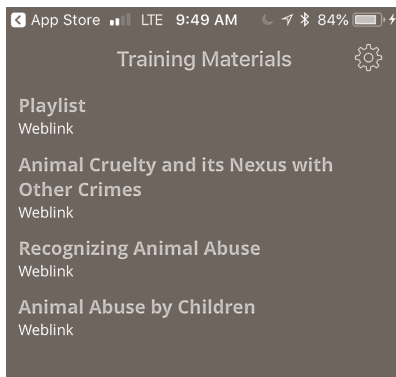


Training materials

A series of training mini-presentations has been included in the smartphone app. Each one of these mini-learning sessions has been created for patrol officers and investigators and can assist them with recognizing animal abuse and its related offenses:

Animal cruelty and its nexus with other crimes.⁷⁰ This mini-presentation on animal cruelty and the nexus with other crimes will help law enforcement officers and deputies to understand the relationship between animal cruelty and other crimes. Understanding this nexus between often violent offenses will assist the responding officers in identifying and solving current crimes and preventing future offenses from occurring.

Recognizing animal abuse.⁷¹ This mini-presentation is designed as an awareness and informational training for law enforcement officers, deputies, and investigators.



Recognizing the basic signs of animal abuse can assist the officers in referring cases to animal control officers for prosecution as well as aid in recognizing other co-occurring offenses and the potential for future crimes associated with animal abuse.

Animal abuse by children.⁷² This mini-presentation on animal abuse by children will help law enforcement officers and deputies to understand the dynamics of animal cruelty crimes committed by youthful offenders. Understanding the dynamics of animal abuse by children will assist the responding officers and deputies in identifying and solving current crimes and through referral and related services hopefully prevent future offenses from occurring.

See appendix B for the full slides and text for each mini-presentation.

Partner resources

See appendix C for a list of national, multidisciplinary organizations that deal with issues involved in animal welfare and animal cruelty and abuse issues. The organizations include representation from various professional fields such as law enforcement, legal, medical, and veterinary.

See appendix D for a specific list of resources available online covering a broad spectrum of issues as discussed in this project. Appendix E lists resources available in Spanish.

70. "Animal Cruelty and its Nexus with Other Crimes," National Sheriffs' Association, accessed July 27, 2018, <https://www.sheriffs.org/animal-cruelty-and-its-nexus-other-crimes>.

71. "Recognizing Animal Abuse," National Sheriffs' Association, accessed July 27, 2018, <https://www.sheriffs.org/recognizing-animal-abuse>.

72. "Animal Abuse by Children," National Sheriffs' Association, accessed July 27, 2018, <https://www.sheriffs.org/animal-abuse-children>.

Appendix A.

Roundtable Participants in Alphabetical Order

Kaema Akpan

National Sheriffs' Association

Phil Arkow

National Link Coalition

Diane Balkin

Animal Legal Defense Fund

Nancy Blaney

Animal Welfare Institute

John Bolin

American Society for
the Prevention of Cruelty
to Animals

Chris Brosan

The Humane Society
of the United States

Naomi Charboneau

The Humane Society
of the United States

Daniel DeSousa

Department of Animal Services,
County of San Diego

Kathryn Destreza

American Society for
the Prevention of Cruelty
to Animals

April Doherty

Baltimore County
State's Attorney's Office

Michael Duffey

Humane Society of Southern
Arizona; Animal Cruelty
Taskforce of Southern Arizona

Robert Fyock

Indiana County (Pennsylvania)
Sheriff's Office

Mark Kumpf

Certified Animal
Welfare Administrator

Adam Leath

American Society for the
Prevention of Cruelty
to Animals

Randall Lockwood

American Society for the
Prevention of Cruelty
to Animals

John Matthews

Community Safety Institute

Vonda Matthews

Policy Analyst,
Office of Community
Oriented Policing Services

Allie Phillips

National District
Attorneys Association

Nuria Querol

Grupo para el Estudio
de la Violencia Hacia Humanos
y Animales

Eric Sakach

The Humane Society
of the United States

Justin Scally

American Humane Association

Joan Schaffner

George Washington University

Martha Smith-Blackmore

Forensic Veterinary
Investigations, LLC

Daniel Sorrells

St. John's County (Florida)
Sheriff's Office

Claudia Swing

San Bernardino County
District Attorney's Office

Jonathan Thompson

National Sheriffs' Association

Tracey Thompson

Animal Advocate

Jessica Vanderpool

Director of Special Projects,
National Sheriffs' Association

Michelle Welch

Office of the Attorney General

Appendix B.

App Training Videos

Animal cruelty and its nexus with other crimes mini-presentation

Antisocial Behaviors and Criminal Violence

- Animal Abusers are:
 - 5 times more likely to commit violent crimes against people
 - 4 times more likely to commit property crimes
 - 3 times more likely to commit drug or disorderly offenses

0:23 / 4:12



[0:00 – 0:21]

This mini presentation on animal cruelty and its nexus with other crimes will help law enforcement officers to understand the relationship between animal cruelty and other violent offenses.

[0:22 – 0:44]

Animal abuse has long been linked with other forms of antisocial behaviors and criminal violence.

It is estimated that animal abusers are five times more likely to commit violent crimes against people, four times more

likely to commit property crimes, and three times more likely to have a record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses.

[0:45 – 1:14]

The FBI and other law enforcement agencies have recognized the high incidence of repeated animal abuse in the adolescence of the most violent offenders, including serial killers, serial rapists, and sexual homicide perpetrators.

It is important for patrol officers, deputies, and investigators to be aware of the nexus of these offenses if they are going to be able to properly investigate past crimes and prevent future crimes from occurring.

[1:15 – 1:30]

A representative of the Animal Legal Defense Fund stated, “It’s not that animal abuse is more prevalent. What has changed over the past few years is the recognition that animal abuse is often a warning sign for other types of violence.”

[1:31 – 2:18]

Animal abuse can identify individuals who are engaging in other criminal activities.

Reporting, investigating, and prosecuting animal cruelty can help remove dangerous criminals from the street.

Animal abuse can expose family violence.

If an animal is being abused in a family, it is likely that a child, partner, or other resident is also being hurt or threatened.

Investigation of animal neglect or cruelty can provide access to a troubled family.

Animal abuse is frequently the most visible sign of family violence and not accorded the same privacy protection to families. Thus animal control officers have much easier access to homes than do other law enforcement and social service agencies.

[2:19 – 2:38]

There is a strong consensus among researchers and policy makers that child neglect and abuse, spousal abuse, and animal abuse are all elements of a family violence system.

Perpetrators of violence seldom limit themselves to victimizing only one member of the family.

[2:39 – 3:14]

Perpetrators of domestic violence often use pets as a way to demonstrate dominance and control of their victim.

Abuse of the pet, the lowest or weakest member of the family, is also often used to manipulate a partner or child into compliance with the abuser's demands.

Pet abuse can also be used to frighten, intimidate, punish, or retaliate against a partner or child.

Finally, following through on threats to injure or kill a pet shows the victim that the abuser is willing to kill an animal, and that he may also kill the victim.

[3:15 – 3:40]

Since animal abusers target the powerless, crimes against animals, spouses, children, and the elderly often go hand-in-hand.

Abuse of the elderly is not only physical; it can also be emotional or financial abuse.

Abuse of a cherished pet can accomplish the same goal as abuse of an intimate partner—intimidation or compliance with the abuser's demands.

[3:41 – 4:12]

Law enforcers should be aware of the connection between animal abuse and other criminal behavior, and of the need to treat it as a serious crime.

All 50 states have made animal abuse illegal and every state can now punish the worst cases of animal cruelty as a felony.

Many jurisdictions have established cross-training for social service and animal control agencies on how to recognize the signs of abuse and possible indicators of other abusive behaviors.

Recognizing animal abuse mini-presentation

[0:00 – 0:28]

This mini presentation is designed as an awareness and informational training for law enforcement officers and investigators.

Recognizing the basic signs of animal abuse can assist the law enforcement officials in referring cases to animal control officers for prosecution, as well as recognizing other co-occurring offenses and the potential for future crimes associated with animal abuse.

[0:29 – 0:57]

With the increased understanding of the link between animal abuse and other types of criminal behavior, it is imperative that police officers understand the importance of being alert to indicators of animal abuse as they interact with the community.

Being aware of animal abuse crimes and their associated offenses will assist officers both in solving current crimes and preventing future offenses from occurring.

[0:58 – 1:52]

Whether they are on patrol in a squad car or walking a beat in a densely populated inner city or responding to a call, officers can learn to recognize clues that might indicate possible animal abuse, including:

- Poor body condition or visible trauma. This could be severely matted or filthy fur, open sores or obvious wounds, flea or tick infestation, underweight with visible bones, limping or unable to walk normally, or any obvious physical distress.
- Lack of any obvious source of food or water.
- Lack of adequate shelter, such as left in constant sun with no shade or exposed to inclement weather with no shelter.
- Lack of sanitation, where feces or debris covers the animal's living area.

[1:53 – 2:37]

Additional signs of animal abuse include:

- Abandoned, left in a house or yard that appears empty or howling or barking for hours at a stretch;
- Caged or tied;
- Restrained with little room to move, and/or unable to stand or turn around;
- Chains or padlocks around, or embedded into, the animal's neck. This can include regular collars as well;
- Evidence of being trained for or having been used to fight. There might be evidence of training implements such as treadmills, or obvious signs of trauma, such as scars, open wounds, infections, or missing body parts such as ears, eyes, or partial tails.

[2:38 – 3:07]

- Abnormal behavior. The animal may be either severely aggressive or abnormally shy, cowering, hiding, or fear biting, even with its owner;
- Too many animals on one property. This can be a sign of using animals to fight, but it can also be a sign of hoarding. In either case it is important to note the condition of the animals;

- Owner observed committing violence against the animal. The owner may be witnessed striking, kicking, or otherwise physically abusing the animal.

[3:08 – 3:25]

In animal cruelty cases, the victims are not able to tell authorities what happened.

Officers who are following up on animal abuse offenses should be alert to interrelated crimes such as domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse.

[3:26 – 3:43]

Law enforcement officers must also be cognizant of animal cruelty co-occurring crimes such as bullying and antisocial behaviors. Often officers will observe or learn of multiple offenses being committed by the same person, most often a juvenile.

[3:44 – 4:14]

Finally patrol officers and investigators must be aware of the correlation between animal abuse and future violence such as school shootings, sexual assaults, homicide, and serial killings.

Armed with this knowledge of interrelated crimes, co-occurring offenses, and animal cruelty as a possible indicator of other violent crimes, officers will be better prepared to address the entire system of violence surrounding animal abuse cases.

Animal abuse by children mini-presentation

[0:00 – 0:24]

This mini presentation on animal abuse by children will help law enforcement officers understand the dynamics of animal cruelty crimes as committed by youthful offenders.

Understanding this nexus will assist the responding officers in identifying and solving current crimes.

In addition, it is hoped that through referral and related services, we can prevent future offenses from occurring.

[0:25 – 0:51]

Animal cruelty starts very early, appearing in a mean age of 6.75 years and red flags those children and adolescents who are at greatest risk for continued anti-social behavior.

It should be noted that cruelty to animals as referenced here does not include developmentally immature teasing, such as a child pulling a kitten along by the tail, but rather serious torture, such as setting pets on fire.

[0:52 – 1:17]

An article on developmental links between cruelty to animals and human violence notes that although the immature child may never progress to the commission of human violence, the malicious youngster rehearses his sadistic attacks, perhaps on animals, perhaps on other people, perhaps on both, and continues into his adult years to perpetrate the same sorts of sadistic acts on human beings.

[1:18 – 1:36]

Why do children abuse animals?

They might be repeating a lesson that they learned at home.

They learn from their parents to react to anger or frustration with violence, which is often directed at the only individuals in the family who are more vulnerable than they are: their animal companions.

[1:37 – 1:57]

Researchers have also connected children's acts of animal abuse with bullying, corporal punishment, school shootings, sexual abuse, and developmental psychopathic behaviors; situations wherein children feel powerless and seek their own victims in order to exert control and gain a sense of power.

[1:58 – 2:35]

Some motivations for animal abuse may include:

- Curiosity or exploration: The animal is injured or killed in the process of being examined, usually by a young or developmentally-delayed child.

- Peer pressure: Peers may encourage animal abuse or require it as part of an initiation rite.
- Mood enhancement: where animal abuse is used to relieve boredom or depression.
- Sexual gratification: bestiality.
- Forced abuse: when the child is coerced into animal abuse by a more powerful individual.

[2:36 – 2:54]

Childhood abuse of animals can have long-term effects.

One ten-year study found that children between the ages of 6 and 12 who were described as being cruel to animals were more than twice as likely as other children in the study to be reported to juvenile authorities for a violent offense.

[2:55 – 3:34]

A four-year study by the Chicago Police Department revealed a startling propensity for offenders charged with crimes against animals to commit other violent offenses toward human victims, with 65% of people arrested for animal cruelty also having a criminal record for battery against a human.

When counselors at several federal penitentiaries evaluated inmates for levels of aggression, seventy percent of the most violent prisoners had serious and repeated animal abuse in their childhood histories, as compared to six percent of non-aggressive prisoners in the same facilities

[3:35 – 3:57]

It is important for law enforcement officers to recognize youthful offenders who commit animal abuse, and to take the appropriate action to prevent future crimes from occurring.

Officers can notify family services, animal control officers, or juvenile and family violence investigators, so they can be aware of potential criminal activity.

Appendix C. Animal Welfare Organizations

The following list of animal welfare organizations is included to provide law enforcement professionals with an additional source of assistance in dealing with animal cruelty crimes within their communities. Many of these organizations work closely with law enforcement and can provide valuable help during the investigation of a cruelty case.

The American Humane Association

www.americanhumane.org

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASCPA)

<https://www.asPCA.org/>

Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF)

<https://www.aldf.org>

Animal Welfare Institute (AWI)

www.awionline.org/

Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' Animal Abuse Prosecution Project

www.apainc.org/animal-cruelty/

Forensic Veterinary Investigations, LLC

www.vetinvestigator.com

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

www.humanesociety.org

Maples Center for Forensic Medicine, University of Florida

maples-center.ufl.edu/

Michigan State University Animal Legal and Historical Center

<https://www.animallaw.info/>

National Animal Care and Control Association (NACA)

www.nacanet.org

NACA in partnership with Code 3 Associates offers the **National Animal Control and Humane Officers (NACHO) Training Academy**, which is accredited by the Colorado State University School of Veterinary Medicine.

www.nacanet.org/?page=NACA100 for more information.

National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA)

www.naiaonline.org

National Canine Research Council (NCRC)

www.nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com/

National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC)

www.nationalcac.org

National Coalition on Violence against Animals

<https://www.ncovaa.org>

National Link Coalition (The Link)

nationallinkcoalition.org/

Native American Humane Society

www.nativeamericahumane.org/index.html

Appendix D. Sampling of Online and Printed/ Printable Resources

The following list of resources is aimed at providing law enforcement professionals with additional information regarding the link between animal cruelty and human violence, including domestic violence cases, child abuse, and dogfighting.

Animal Cruelty: Hidden Crimes, Voiceless Victims

Deputy and Court Officer Magazine. Vol. 5, No. 3, 2013. This special edition issue contains several articles relating to animal cruelty and law enforcement.
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/Animal-Cruelty-Issue.pdf>

Animals and Family Violence

The Animal Welfare Institute's program offers a variety of resources, which may be accessed through their webpage.
<https://awionline.org/content/animals-family-violence>

Combating Dogfighting

An online course developed by the USDOJ COPS Office in partnership with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, is a free resource open to all law enforcement and animal welfare professionals.
<https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/disaster-cruelty-animal-cruelty-animal-fighting/combating-dogfighting-online-course>

The course is part of the **Dogfighting Toolkit for Law Enforcement**, available via PDF and printed copy. If you would like to obtain a copy of the toolkit, please request a hard copy by calling 800-421-6770 or emailing askcopsrc@usdoj.gov.

"A Common Bond: Maltreated Children and Animals in the Home"

American Humane, the Humane Society of the United States, the American Bar Association, and ACTION for Child Protection
www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/abuse/common_bond_08.pdf

“Animal Cruelty/Domestic Violence Fact Sheet”

Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/AC-DV-Factsheet.pdf>

“Animal Cruelty Investigation Reference Guide”

California Penal Code Sections Relating to Animal Cruelty and Checklist; Special Order No. 6 of LAPD Chief of Police – Los Angeles City Animal Cruelty Task Force
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/LAPD-ACTF.pdf>

“Detecting Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence”

Quick reference card created by the Virginia Attorney General’s Office
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/VAGO-Card.pdf>

Dogfighting Quick Reference Card

Resource from the **Dogfighting Toolkit**, produced by the COPS Office and the ASPCA
<https://ric-zai-inc.com/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P229>

“First Strike: The Violence Connection”

Brochure from The Humane Society of the U.S.
https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/first_strike.pdf

“The “Link” and Law Enforcement”

Resource from the National Link Coalition
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/Link-LE-Summary.pdf>

“Pets and Domestic Violence”

A factsheet from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/NCADV-Pets-DV.pdf>

“Polyvictimization/Trauma Symptom Checklist”

A checklist and resource guide for attorneys and other court-appointed advocates, developed by Safe Start Center, the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, and Child & Family Policy Associates
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/IdentifyingPolyvictimization.pdf>

“Protocol for Assessing Animal Welfare and Elder Adult Abuse and Neglect”

A project funded by Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust to assist in cases of elder adult crimes where animal welfare issues may also be present.
<http://www.napsa-now.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Protocol1.pdf>

“Toolkit for Starting a Link Coalition in Your Community”

National Link Coalition
<http://nationallinkcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/TOOLKIT.pdf>

Understanding the Link between Violence to Animals and People

A guidebook for criminal justice professionals
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/NDAA-Link-Monograph.pdf>

“You Can Help Stop the Hurt!”

A brochure from Leavenworth County (Kansas) Link Coalition
<https://www.sheriffs.org/publications/Coalition-Leavenworth.pdf>

Appendix E.

Spanish Language Resources Online

Maltrato a Animales y Violencia Interpersonal

Avances Sociales, Policiales y Criminológicos. (Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence: Social, Police and Criminological Progress).

This article is a brief review of the classic studies on animal abuse and interpersonal violence, as well as a taste of the latest institutional initiatives aimed at further protection for victims of violence, including animals. (See page 7).

www.criminologos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Revista-n%C3%BAmero-7-06-12-14.pdf

General material: <http://obsviolenciaanimal.org/recursos/material-2/>

Intimate Partner Violence

www.obsviolenciaanimal.org/recursos/material-2/material-3/

Law Enforcement

Basic Handbook for Police-Dog Encounters.

<http://obsviolenciaanimal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Manual-basico-intervenciones-policiales-perros.pdf>

The Link (National Link Coalition)

Spanish translation of the program and of the connection between animal abuse and interpersonal violence.

www.obsviolenciaanimal.org/recursos/material-2/material-2/

Research Studies

Posters, infographics, etc.

www.obsviolenciaanimal.org/recursos/material-2/material-3-2/

About the National Sheriffs' Association

The **National Sheriffs' Association (NSA)** is a professional association, chartered in 1940, dedicated to serving the Office of Sheriff and its affiliates through police education, police training, and general law enforcement information resources. The NSA represents thousands of sheriffs, deputies, and other law enforcement agents, public safety professionals, and concerned citizens nationwide.

Through the years, the NSA has provided programs for sheriffs, their deputies, chiefs of police, and others in the field of criminal justice to perform their jobs in the best possible manner and to better serve the people of their cities, counties, or jurisdictions.

The National Sheriffs' Association headquarters is located in Alexandria, Virginia, and offers police training, police information, court security training, jail information, and other law enforcement services to sheriffs, deputies, and others throughout the nation. The NSA has worked to forge cooperative relationships with local, state, and federal criminal justice professionals across the nation to network and share information about homeland security programs and projects.

The NSA serves as the center of a vast network of law enforcement information, filling requests for information daily and enabling criminal justice professionals—including police officers, sheriffs, and deputies—to locate the information and programs they need. The NSA recognizes the need to seek information from the membership, particularly the sheriff and the state sheriffs' associations, in order to meet the needs and concerns of individual NSA members. While working on the national level, the NSA has continued to seek grass-roots guidance, ever striving to work with and for its members, its clients, and citizens of the nation.

The NSA has through the years assisted sheriffs' offices, sheriffs' departments, and state sheriffs' associations in locating and preparing applications for state and federal homeland security grant funding. The NSA record and reputation for integrity and dependability in such public safety programs among government agencies is well recognized and has led to continuing opportunities to apply for grants on the national, state, and local levels as well as management of service contracts.

To learn more, visit the NSA online at www.sheriffs.org.

About the National Coalition on Violence Against Animals

The **National Coalition on Violence Against Animals (NCOVAA)** was established as an independent collective of local, state, and national organizations that focus on animal cruelty and its relationship to other forms of violence. NCOVAA builds upon the hard work of each individual member and member organization, accelerating their momentum by bringing together all the elements to achieve a national multidisciplinary coordination of efforts.

NCOVAA facilitates cooperation across organizations in ongoing and new efforts both to end animal abuse and to increase understanding that it occurs in the general context of violence in society. NCOVAA provides a forum for key national, state and local organizations and professionals to positively promote national policies, strategies, practices and guidelines.

While members and member organizations may have differing perspectives and differing opinions on the specifics of implementing national initiatives, the group aspires to finding consensus on major goals to end animal cruelty in our nation.

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$14 billion to provide training and technical assistance, enhance crime fighting technology, and add more than 130,000 officers to our nation's streets. COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, www.cops.usdoj.gov.

Animal abuse has long been linked with other forms of antisocial behaviors and criminal violence. It is estimated that animal abusers are five times more likely to commit violent crimes against people, four times more likely to commit property crimes, and three times more likely to have a record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses. This project was designed to build the capacity of all participating law enforcement agencies to recognize that animal cruelty crimes can serve as precursors to more violent crimes, as a co-occurring crime to other types of offenses, and as an interrelated crime to other offenses such as domestic violence and elder abuse. Armed with this knowledge, law enforcement officers (both those assigned to patrol and investigative duties) can take steps both to solve current crimes and to prevent future crimes from occurring.



COPS

Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS Office programs, call
the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at www.cops.usdoj.gov



National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

To obtain details about NSA programs, call
the National Sheriffs' Association at 800-424-7827

Visit the NSA online at www.sheriffs.org