The Links Between Animal Abuse and Other Forms Of Family Violence: Species-Spanning Medicine



Phil Arkow, Coordinator, National Link Coalition ASPCA - Animals & Society Institute The Latham Foundation - AAH-ABV arkowpets@snip.net

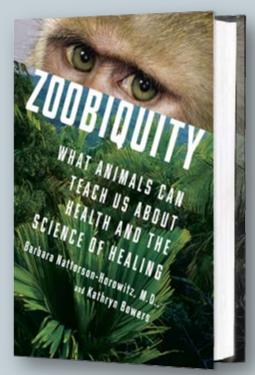
Child Maltreatment

Elder

Animal

Abuse

"Species-Spanning Medicine": The "One Health" Approach to Animal Abuse







"Serious challenges require integrative solutions and collaborative initiatives."

-- Roger K. Mahr, DVM CEO, One Health Commission Past President, AVMA

"ONE HEALTH"

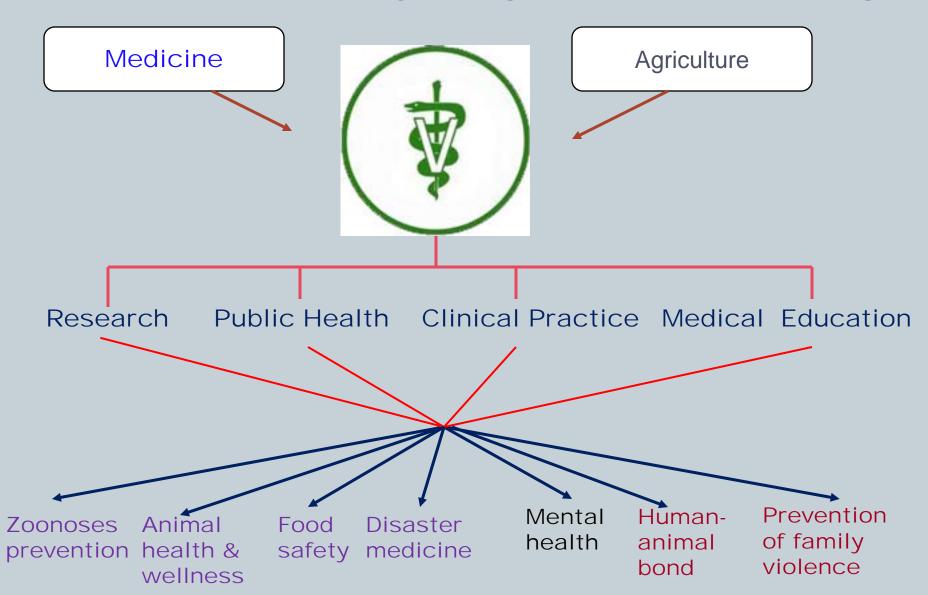
One Health initiative

- Initiated by AVMA 2007
- Aims: optimal health for people, animals, plants and environment



- Transcend institutional and disciplinary boundaries
- Endorsed by National League of Cities, 2011
- Builds upon prior experiences in:
 - Comparative medical research
 - Disease surveillance
 - Zoonotic disease prevention
 - Food safety
 - Disaster medicine
 - Veterinary medicine's unique heritage....

VETERINARY MEDICINE'S TWIN PARENTAGE



Medical Issues of Pets & People

Particular implications for...













Nursing

Pediatrics

OB/GYN

Family practice

Behavioral health

Dentistry

- Zoonoses
- Trauma
 - Animal bites
 - The Link
- Allergies

- Behavioral Health
 - Conduct disorder
 - Hoarding
 - Grief management

Medical Issues of Pets & People

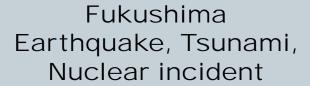
- Alternative Therapies
 - AAT/AAA (Healing Hounds)
 - Therapeutic riding
 - OT, PT, Speech
 - PTSD/ADHD
 - Service animals
 - Reading interventions

- Wellness
 - CV functioning
 - Neurochemistry of HAI
 - Obesity control
 - Epilepsy alerts
 - Social capital
 - Disaster medicine...

The human-animal bond in a disaster...



Hurricane Katrina









Pets -- ALL IN THE FAMILY!



- More homes have pets than children
- More dogs in US than people in most European countries
- More cats than dogs
- More \$\$ on pet food than baby food
- 7th largest economic sector
- Children more likely to grow up with pets than with a father

PETS: PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR PHYSIOLOGIC & MENTAL HEALTH



- "Social lubricant"
- Catalysts for communication
- Emotional and social support
- Positive power of play
- Lower risk factors for CV disease



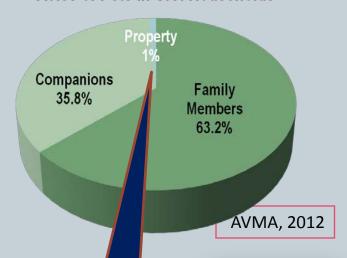
The "Dark Side" of the Bond: Why is Animal Cruelty an Issue for Healthcare Professionals?



- A serious, alarming behavior: INDICATOR AND PREDICTOR of polyvictimization (Arkow, 2003)
- Early manifestation of conduct disorder, low empathy, callous disregard, and need for intervention (Dadds, Whiting & Hawes, 2006)
- Illegal in every state, felony in 48
- Strong correlations with antisocial behaviors (Gullone, 2012)
- A form of emotional battering in domestic violence (Faver & Strand, 2007)
- Barrier to women and children escaping domestic violence (Ascione, 2007)
- Cycle of violence intergenerational (Ascione, Weber & Wood, 1997; Quinlisk, 1999)
- Causes pain and suffering to animals and people

ANIMAL ABUSE = FAMILY VIOLENCE





Disconnect..



Who cares for these pets? Your patients! FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

67.7% of households with children < 6

74.6% of households with children > 6

Female primary pet caregiver: 80.7% of pet-owning households



--Veterinarians and physicians will see the primary populations at risk for family violence

FAMILY VIOLENCE: A PUBLIC HEALTH SOLUTION

"Regarding violence in our society as purely a sociologic matter, or one of law enforcement, has led to unmitigated failure. It is time to test whether violence can be amenable to medical/public health interventions."



C. Everett Koop, MD George D. Lundberg, MD (Editor, JAMA), 1992



"Physicians and other health professionals are firsthand witnesses to the consequences of violence. We see, diagnose, treat, mend, patch, console, and care for the victims of violence and their families thousands of times each day. Violence in the United States is a public health emergency."

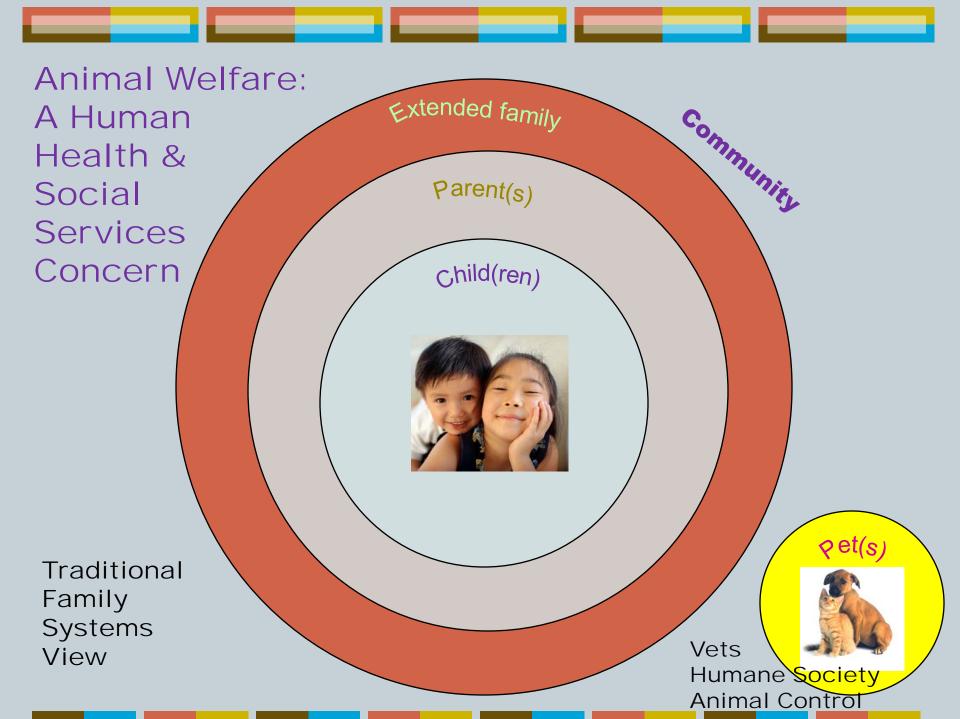
Antonia C. Novello, MD, MPH, 1992

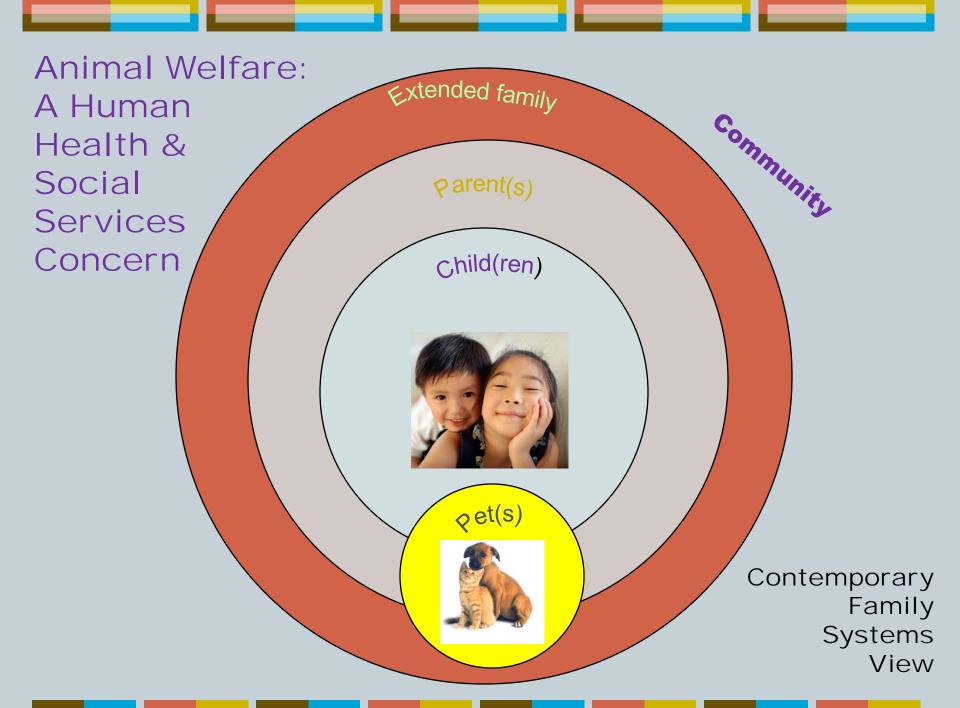
"At the more extreme end of the antisocial behaviors continuum is violence, one of the leading <u>public</u> <u>health</u> problems worldwide."

-- Eleonora Gullone (2012)



Animal Cruelty, Antisocial Behaviour and Aggression: More Than a Link





WHAT IS THE LINK?

"When animals are abused, people are at risk;

When people are abused, animals are at risk."

Child Abuse & Neglect



Animal Abuse



- Emotional impact
- Family violence
- Animal fighting
- Social capital

Elder Abuse

eglect pet eglect self parding





Domestic Violence

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Child abuse & neglect

(Admin. For Children & Families/NCANDS, 2011)

• Reports: 47,242 (129/day) Substantiated: 29,780

Child abuse rate: 58.8/1,000 children



- Domestic Violence (ccadv/nnedv, 2011)
- Survivors sheltered (18 agencies): Adults: 1,364 Children: 1,038
- Crisis services: 21,986
- One day census: 262 survivors in shelters; 204 crisis line calls (8/hour)
- Animal abuse, cruelty and neglect
- Dogs: 507,000 (28.3% of HHs) Cats: 796,000 (31.9%) (AVMA, 2012)
- Cruelty Cases: 373 (2012) (Conn. Gen. Assembly Research Report)

RESEARCH: ANIMAL/CHILD ABUSE

Strong relationships between childhood animal cruelty and future interpersonal aggression. (Kellert & Felthous, 1985; Hensley & Tallichet, 2005; Merz-Perez, Heide & Silverman, 2001; Becker & French, 2004)

62-76% of animal cruelty in home occurs in presence of child. (Faver & Strand, 2003)

Sexually abused children 5X more likely to abuse animals. (Ascione et al., 2003)

Histories of sexual abuse, exposure to DV and witnessing of animal abuse are robust correlates – and possible precursors – of children & adolescents perpetrating animal abuse. "Need for professionals in school, medical and mental health settings to assess for exposure to family violence when presented with a child who is reporting a history of witnessing or perpetrating animal cruelty." (DeGue & DeLillo, 2009)

RESEARCH: ANIMAL/DOMESTIC ABUSE

History of pet abuse one of 4 greatest risk factors for becoming a DV batterer. (Walton-Moss, 2005)

Batterers who also abuse pets are more dangerous and use more violent and controlling behaviors. (Simmons & Lehmann, 2007)

12 studies: 18 – 48% of battered women, and their children, delay leaving. Women who seek safety 11X more likely to report partner hurt or killed animals than non-DV women. (Ascione, 2007)

68% of battered women revealed animal abuse: > 75% in presence of women/children to intimidate and control. (Quinlisk, 1998)

Children exposed to DV 3X more likely to be cruel to animals. (Currie, 2006)

30% of dogfighting and animal abuse arrests had DV priors. (Chicago Crime Commission, 2004)

ANIMAL AWARENESS = OPPORTUNITIES

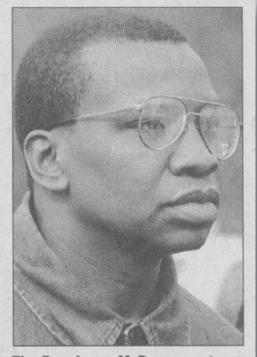
- ♣ If you don't include the pets in the ecosystems of your patients, you're missing a big part of the puzzle and an opportunity to build trust
 - Child welfare
 - Domestic violence
 - Adult protection
 - Human services
 - Health care



Case Study #1: Animal welfare investigators are often the first responders...

"A 4-year-old is beaten to death; a pastor and family vanish"

-- Philadelphia Inquirer, Jan. 11, 1999



The Rev. Javan McBurrows of
Third Christian Church in the city



Authorities yesterday condemned the Rev. Javan McBurrows' home in North Hills, Upper Dublin Twp.

Case Study #2 -

Animals are harmed to control battered women



Family violence often begins with pet abuse

Area agencies

are homing in

on the link

between the

two types of

abuse.

By Sandy Bauers INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

As Sandra Ruotolo explained to the judge, she was thinking of her dogs when she pulled the trigger.

For 13 years, she said, her husband had battered her. But on a March night in 1991 in their Juniata Park home, he not only whipped her with a vacuum-cleaner cord, he

also punched one of her four German shepherds. If Ruotolo left him, he warned, he would find her and slit their throats in front of her.

Later, as her husband slept, she loaded 38-caliber pistol and pointed it at herself. A

moment away from suicide, however, she saw her eldest female dog and was seized by the thought that "if I die, Duchess, what's going to happen to you?"

So, she told the judge, she "walked into the bedroom and shot him."

Ruotolo is serving 10 to 20 years for third-degree murder.

Diane Hall, counseling director at Women Against Abuse in Philadel-

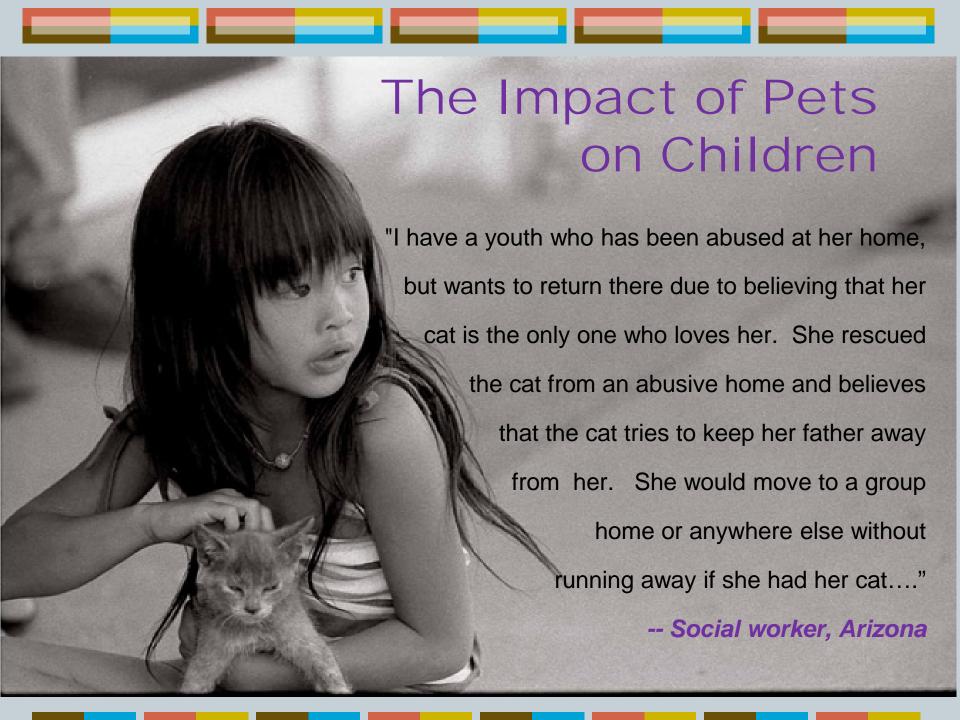
phia, remembers the case with regret. Ruotolo had contacted the agency about going into a shelter. But Ruotolo would not leave her dogs, and the shelter could not take them.

That tragic scenario might play out differently today, as social-welfare experts home in on a link between family violence and animal

abuse. A batterer's first target, researchers have found, often is a pet, which then may be systematically threatened, tortured or killed in order to control human victims—to keep a wife from fleeing or to enforce a child's silence.

Recognition of an animal's precarious place in what is called the "cycle of violence" already has led to changes in the way police and protective agencies — for people and animals — deal with domestic rows. This month, for instance, the Pennsylvania SPCA in Juniata Park inaugurated a program, PetNet, that provides foster care for the pets of

See ABUSE on A24



The Consequences of NOT

Being Aware





"This was a tragedy waiting to happen," said Mr. Risher, 50. He said the boy's family had lived in the apartment for three years and had several other pets, including other dogs, a parrot, turtles and fish.

Mr. Risher said the boyfriend was often seen with a protective guard on his arm, training the dogs to bite in front of the building. "Everybody would run when he came out," Mr. Risher said.

He said that one of the dogs killed the family's pet rabbit a few months ago. "He killed the rabbit and left everything on the floor," he said. "It was like the Bronx Zoo in there."

A law enforcement official said that someone from the city's child welfare agency had gone to the home for "something minor" in the past, but "nothing involving the dog." A spokesman for the agency, the Administration for Children's Services, did not return a telephone call or e-mail.

Boy, 4, Is Mauled to Death By Dog in Brooklyn Home

and TIM STELLOH

A 4-year-old boy was mauled to death by a family dog as he and his two brothers played in a bed-

he boy, Javelin Graham, suffered "multiple bite wounds" on his head, his neck and other parts of his body, said a law enforcement official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the investigation was continuing.

The attack occurred about 9:20 p.m. Friday in the family's firstfloor apartment, at 2169 Pacific Street, in Brownsville, the police said. The Brooklyn district attorney's office and the city's health department were investi-

Detectives and a spokesman for Animal Care and Control of New York City could not say what caused the dog, a male Cane Corso who is 7 or 8 years old, to attack.

The boy's mother, Saquina Jubeark, told investigators the attack occurred after she and her children had returned home after a shopping trip. Jayelin and two of his brothers, ages 2 and 5, had one into a bedroom.

Jubeark, who had a 10ughter in her arms.

noticed it was very quiet and opened the bedroom door and noticed the dog standing over Jayelin and biting him."

The other children were hiding

Ms. Jubeark tried to pull the dog off, but "the dog resists and turns on her a little," the official

nounced dead, the police said.

Emergency workers arrived quickly, said Kenneth Risher, the superintendent of the three-story building, but he added it took them about 20 minutes to remove the have from the apartment. the boy from the apartment.

variety. Both the Cane Corso and Muscl Mr. Roer 2 O er a second dog, a Husky mixed May we Zarrested 2 O er a

breed, were taken to a shelter on 110th Street, off First Avenue, on Saturday, said Richard P. Gentles, the spokesman for the animal care agency.

"This was a tragedy waiting to happen," said Mr. Risher, 50. He said the boy's family had lived in the apartment for three years and had several other pets, including other dogs, a parrot, tur-

He said Ms. Jubeark had run from her apartment screaming. "She was saying: 'Help me! Help me! The dog bit my baby!" Mr.

Another neighbor, who would provide only his first name, Jah, said he had gotten up from a domino game and had ran into the woman's apartment, where he saw the Cane Corso holding the baby by the throat. Jah yelled at the dog, he said, but it crouched down as if it were going to attack, so he retreated. When he returned a few minutes later. he said, the child was lying on the

"The right part of his neck was ripped open," said Jah, 29. "There was blood all the way from his neck to his abdomen." He said several firefighters entered the apartment, pinned the dog and

Ameer Jamaal-Uddin, 59, who is Jayelin's great-grandfather, said the dogs belonged to the boyfriend of the boy's mother.

Mr. Risher said the boyfriend was often seen with a protective guard on his arm, training the dogs to bite in front of the building. "Everybody would run when he came out," Mr. Risher said.

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Officers from the police's them the dog had to be killed Emergency Service Unit tranquilized the Cane Corso, a mastiff ward the officers, a scuffle en-

The Cycles of Violence - 1970s (The "Triad")

Animal Arson abuse Bedwetting

Tapia, F. (1971). Children who are cruel to animals. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development 2*, 70-77.

Wax, D. & Haddox, V. (1974). Enuresis, fire setting, and animal cruelty in male adolescent delinquents: A triad predictive of violent behavior. *Journal of Psychiatric Law*, 2(1), 45-72.

The Cycles of Violence - 1980s (The "Tangled Web")



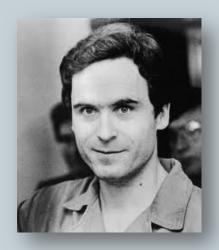
David Berkowitz "Son of Sam"



Albert DeSalvo "Boston Strangler"



Keith Jesperson "Happy Face Killer"



Ted Bundy

"Clues to a Dark Nurturing Ground for One Serial Killer"

-- New York Times, Aug. 7, 1991



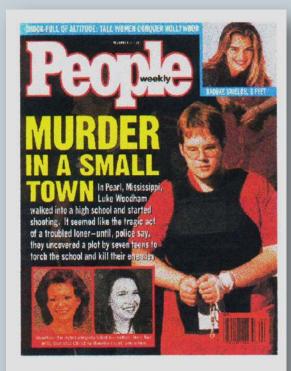
Little Jeff and his dog Frisky



Jeffrey Dahmer

Note: not every abuser becomes a psychopath – but he should receive help!

The Cycles of Violence - 1990s (Schoolyard Shooters)



Luke Woodham Pearl, Miss. Age 16



Andrew Golden Jonesboro, Ark. Age 11

The Cycles of Violence - 2000s (Links with other abuse)

- Fire setting
- Bullying
- Other criminal acts
- Decreased empathy
- Corporal punishment
- Physical and/or sexual abuse
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Exposure to animal abuse
- Other psychiatric disorders (e.g., APD)

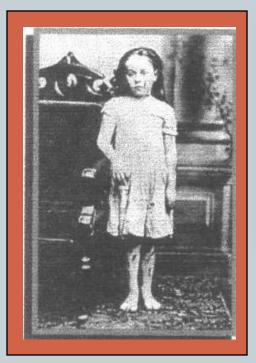
Becker, Steuwig, Herrera & McCloskey, 2004: A Study of Firesetting and Animal Cruelty in Children: Family Influences & Adolescent Outcomes

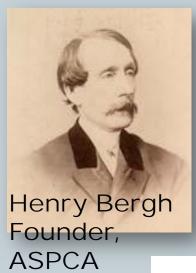
Henry & Sanders (2007): Bullying and Animal Abuse: Is there a Connection?

Animal Abuse and Child Abuse

The "Little Mary Ellen" Case (1874)







The Battered-Child Syndrome

C. Henry Kempe, M.D., Denver, Frederic N. Silverman, M.D., Cincinnati, Brandt F. Steele, M.D., William Droegemueller, M.D., and Henry K. Silver, M.D., Denver

Reprinted From The Journal of The American Medical Association July 7, 1962, Vol. 181, pp. 17-24 Copyright 1682, by American Medical Association

Animal Abuse and Child Abuse

- NJ DYFS: 60% also had abused or neglected pets



- Animal abuse in families with physical child abuse: 88%

- Bite rate: 11x greater



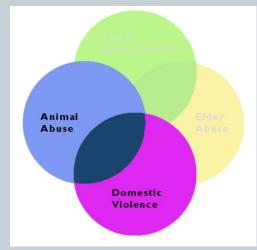


- Utilization of veterinary services was similar to general population

(DeViney, Dickert & Lockwood, 1983)

Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence

One Women's Shelter's Experience...



"I was referred to Crossroads about 4 months ago, but there were no openings. There were other shelters in the area, but they didn't have a foster care program for

animals. I lived in my car with the dogs. I tried Crossroads 4 months later, and they had an opening."



Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence

Animal Abuse Elder Abuse

Domestic Violence

"It wasn't just the cats and dogs, it was the sheep and the chickens.

I was terrified for their welfare.

I knew if I were to leave, he wouldn't hesitate to kill them. He had done it before."

-- New York Times 4/1/06



Susan Walsh, 50, Ellsworth, ME



Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse

Medical Issues for Seniors

- 1. Neglect of pet
- 2. Neglect self to care for pet
- 3. Hoarding
- 4. Attachment and pet loss
- Safety of caseworker, home health aide, homemaker services, or patient
- 6. Animal abuse as coercion/control





Interventions when animals are involved require creative solutions by professionals who are sensitive to animals and patients' attachments to them

Connecticut Anti-Cruelty Statutes Title 53. Crimes. Chap. 945 (Offenses Against Humanity & Morality)

§ 53-247. Cruelty to animals

- Overdrives, drives when overloaded, overworks
- Tortures or mutilates
- Deprives of necessary food, drink, protections from weather
- Abandons
- Carries in a cruel manner
- Cruelly beats or kills or unjustifiably injures
- Unjustifiably poisons
 - -- 1st offense: \$1,000 +/or 1 year; Subsequent: \$5,000 +/or 5 years
- Maliciously & intentionally maim, torture, mutilate, wound or kill
 - -- \$5,000 +/or 5 years
- Fighting: owns, keeps, trains, permits, attends, wagers
 - -- \$5,000 +/or 5 years

How do you define animal abuse or cruelty?

ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERNS

- pet in poor physical condition
- inadequate food, water, shelter
- lack of veterinary care
- dehydration
- malnutrition
- excessive matting of fur
- infestation of parasites
- animal is abandoned

PHYSICAL INJURIES TO ANIMALS

- bruising
- fractures
- lesions
- burns, scalds
- recreational drugs given to pets
- gunshot, dart, bow & arrow wounds
- collar has grown into neck

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- filth and poor sanitation
- overcrowding; hoarding animals
- dead animals on property
- inadequate lighting, ventilation or temp.
- feces and/or urine
- animals housed in motor vehicles

OTHER CONCERNS

- sexual abuse of animals
- dog fighting
- religious or satanic sacrifice

Arkow, P.: Breaking the Cycles of Violence: A Guide to Multi-Disciplinary Interventions. (Alameda, CA: Latham Foundation, 2003)

Legal definitions vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and public perceptions may not match legal standards.

c. 95% of cases are neglect

Why Do People Abuse Animals?

- 1. Ignorance, inability to empathize
- Lack of adequate coping skills
 (more sensitive to stress, including pet's behavior; release frustration and anger)



- 3. Socialized to abuse
- 4. Believe abuse is justified and beneficial (violence, power and control)
- Sense of entitlement (animals not worthy of moral consideration)
- 6. Personality dysfunction, poor impulse control
- 7. Religious and regional subcultures

Why Do Children Abuse Animals?

- Curiosity or exploration
- Peer pressure
- Relieve boredom or depression
- Fear of the animal
- Coercion by a more powerful person
- To protect the animal from worse abuse
- Re-enacting their own experience of being abused
- Regaining a sense of power after abuse
- Imitating adult actions
- Rehearsal for interpersonal violence

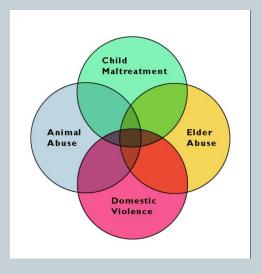
Why Do Batterers Target Animals?

Because they can...
Because they're convenient...

- To demonstrate and confirm power and control over the family "You're next!"
- To trap and isolate the victim and children
- To prevent her from leaving; to coerce a return
- To punish her for leaving
- To degrade her through involvement in the abuse
- To punish friends and family who help her escape
- Because they think the police don't care

KEY PREMISES

 Perceive and document animal abuse as a human health & welfare issue.



2. Redefine animal abuse as family violence.

3. Cross-train community caregivers to respond to *all* forms of family violence.

Challenges Addressed: Physician/Veterinarian Practice Management Issues





Challenge #1:

Consider abuse as a differential diagnosis

Challenge #2:

Recognize when client histories are deliberately misleading

Challenge #3:

Identify risk factors and diagnostic/environmental indicators that should cause you to suspect abuse

Challenge #4:

Establish protocol for cross-reporting with safeguards to limit liability

Risk Factors that Should Cause Suspicion for Veterinarians: Diagnostic and Environmental Indicators



- 1. Discrepant case histories
- 2. Utilization of several veterinary facilities
- 3. Multiple fractures of differing ages
- 4. Injuries to multiple animals
- 5. Repetitive history: accidents, death or turnovers
- 6. Awareness of violence in the home
- 7. Age of animal
- 8. Breed of animal
- 9. Gender (of animal; of perpetrator)
- 10. Low-income, substance abuse
- 11. Unusual behavioral signs
- 12. Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

Challenges addressed: Peer & Professional Support



Policy on Animal Abuse and Animal Neglect (1995, amended 2000, 2009, 2012)

The AVMA recognizes that veterinarians may observe cases of animal abuse or neglect as defined by federal or state laws, or local ordinances. The AVMA considers it the responsibility of the veterinarian to report such cases to appropriate authorities, whether or not reporting is mandated by law.

Prompt disclosure of abuse is necessary to protect the health and welfare of animals and people....

Challenges addressed: Forensic Medical Evidence

Forensic Science
Distance Education:
Online graduate
course in animal
cruelty and
interpersonal violence





International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association

Animal CSI



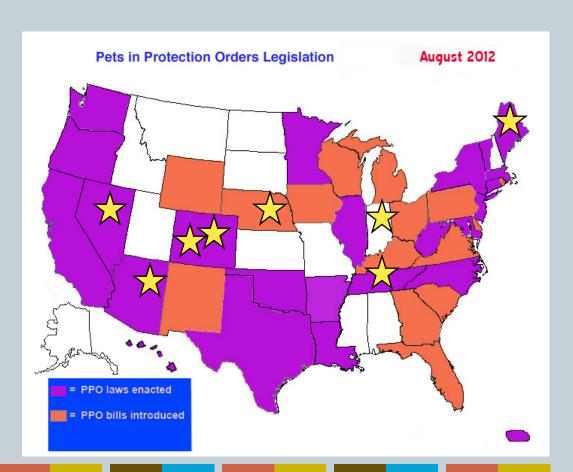
Challenges addressed: Public policy

<u>LEGISLATION</u>: 23 state laws & Puerto Rico include pets in domestic violence protection orders

PUBLIC POLICY:

State laws authorizing cross-reporting

- Vets report cruelty
- Vets report child abuse
- Vets report elder abuse
- CT: MDs report DV



Challenges addressed: Family integrity

"Safe Havens

900 women's shelters report a referral or housing program



"SAF-T"



70 women's shelters report on-site housing (None in CT yet)

Challenges addressed: Greater Respect for Abuse Cases

Connecticut Cross-Reporting Law (2011)

- ACOs must report cruelty cases to Commissioner of Agriculture, to be shared with DCF. If any open investigations at address, information shared with investigator and goes on child's record.
- DCF workers with reasonable cause to suspect animal abused or neglected shall report to Commissioner of Agriculture.
- DCF and DoAg shall develop and implement cross-training:
 - For DCF: identification of cruelty and its link to child welfare case practice
 - For ACOs: accurate and prompt identification and reporting of child abuse & neglect

Challenges addressed: Greater Respect for Abuse Cases

"CASA for Animals"

- HB 6310/SB5677: Permit vet from state DofAg to serve as animal advocate in cruelty cases, family relations matters and civil cases involving care, custody and well-being of animals.
- Rhode Island enacted similar law 2012



What You Can Do: ASK THE QUESTION!

- "Do you have pets at home?"
- "How are they cared for?"
- "Are you worried about their welfare?"

Nashville, TN: Lethality Assessment: 3 top risk factors for femicide:



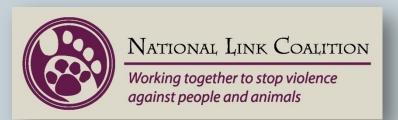
- » Suicide threats?
- » Access to weapons?
- » Threats to mutilate or kill pets?

DV fatalities decreased from 80% (even with 50% increase in calls)

Resources



Veterinary forensics www.aspca.org

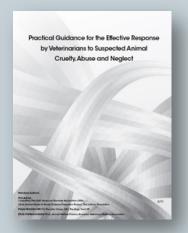


Speakers, Toolkit, LINK-Letter www.nationallinkcoalition.org





Prosecution webinars www.ndaa.org



Guidance for Vets www.avma.org



"Breaking the Cycles of Violence" www.latham.org



Grants www.redrover.org



AniCare/Child www.animalsandsociety.org

The Links Between Animal Abuse and Other Forms Of Family Violence: Species-Spanning Medicine



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