

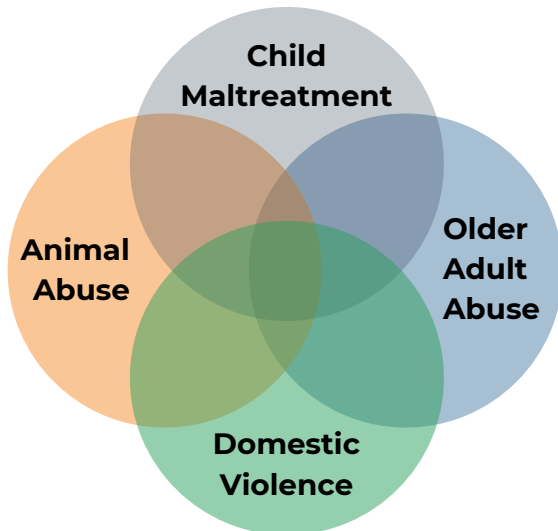
What you need to know about the Link:

Research in Saskatchewan and internationally shows a connection between domestic violence, animal abuse, child abuse, and older adult abuse. If one type of violence is present, other violence may also be occurring.

This is referred to as 'the Link.'

Pets themselves may be abused. Pets can also be used as a tool by the abuser to control the survivor. Threats of abuse toward a cherished pet could stop survivors from leaving or make them return home. Survivors may also be forced to remain silent with threats to harm the pet if the violence is reported.

Leaving a violent home is not easy to do; for a survivor who has a pet, the decision to leave can be even more difficult.

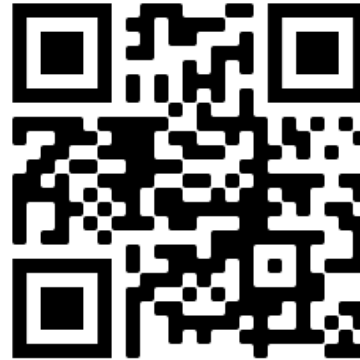


Graphic adapted from National Link Coalition, www.nationallinkcoalition.org

Reporting animal abuse:

If you suspect animal abuse, report your concerns to the appropriate local authority. Anyone can report animal abuse and investigations are confidential. Visit saskspca.ca for more information.

Learn more about the Link, safe housing options, research, and local initiatives:



violencelink.ca
saskspca.ca
info@saskspca.ca
1.877.382.7722



Animal Abuse

A form of family violence

"When animals are abused, people are at risk. When people are abused, animals are at risk."

- Phil Arkow



Signs of animal abuse:

Signs of animal abuse can be similar to those seen when humans experience abuse:

- Neglect: emaciated, unkempt, matted fur.
- Physical injuries: burns, cuts, limping.
- Emotional abuse: fearful behaviour, cowers in the presence of the abuser.

In addition to what you see, you may hear conflicting or improbable explanations for injuries on the pet. A survivor or child in the home may tell you about threats or actual abuse to their pets that is taking place.

Questions to ask:

If someone discloses animal abuse or you suspect abuse in the home, you can ask the survivor the following in a gentle manner:

- Are you concerned about the pet's safety?
- Do you have a safe place to take them?
- Do you need my assistance in doing so?

Safe housing options:

When survivors leave a violent home, there are safe housing options for their pets:

Friend or family:

- Ask a trusted friend or family member to care for the pet temporarily.

Safekeeping:

- Place the pet in a safekeeping program. The pet may be cared for in an animal shelter or foster home.

Co-sheltering:

- Some domestic violence shelters allow pets to stay with survivors. This way survivors have the pet at the same location, and not separated.

The goal is to always reunite the pet and survivor as soon as possible if separation is required for safe housing.

Visit saskspca.ca for safekeeping and co-sheltering options in Saskatchewan.

Safety planning:

When developing a safety plan to leave a violent home, the following may be helpful:

- Try to remove the animal before or with the survivor when they leave the home. Place the pet in a safe housing option. The abuser should not be told where the pet is being safely housed.
- Gather supplies that might be useful such as a carrier, favourite toy, medication, food.
- Prepare a list of things a caregiver should be aware of such as the pet's daily routine, diet, medical history, and likes or dislikes.
- If animals are being threatened or abused, the survivor should keep evidence they may have such as photos, texts, or videos.
- Gather receipts or paperwork related to the care of pets to help prove ownership.