

REPORTING SUSPECTED ANIMAL CRUELTY

If you suspect an animal is being neglected or abused, report your concerns to the appropriate local authority. Anyone can report animal cruelty. Investigations are confidential.

Pets in the following cities:

Regina Humane Society
306.543.6363

Saskatoon SPCA
306.374.7387

Pets (all other locations):

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan
1.844.382.0002 (toll free in SK) or 306.382.0002

Livestock (anywhere in the province):

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan
1.844.382.0002 (toll free in SK) or 306.382.0002

Emergency/after hours

Please contact your local police or RCMP detachment

ANIMAL SAFEKEEPING

The Saskatchewan SPCA builds partnerships between animal and human service providers, with the goal of helping to protect both humans and animals from violence.

For further information on the relationship between animal abuse and domestic violence, please contact:

ViolenceLink.ca

Saskatchewan SPCA
1.877.382.7722 (toll free in Saskatchewan) or 306.382.7722

STOPS to Violence
306.565.3199

Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS)
306.522.3515

Veterinary Social Work Program
Western College of Veterinary Medicine
306.966.2852



The Community Initiatives Fund invests in the quality of life of Saskatchewan residents by offering grants for community projects that help support community development, inclusion, leadership and vitality.



Box 37, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3K1
1.877.382.7722 or 306.382.7722
saskspca.ca | info@saskspca.ca

 **theLINK**



Resource Guide *for*
HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

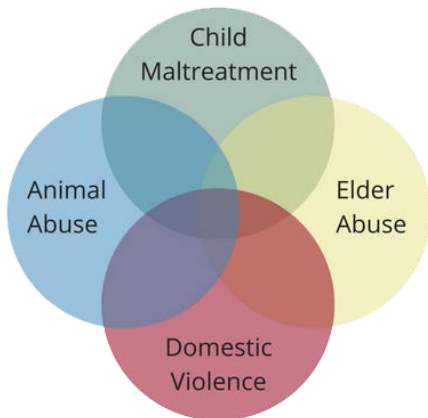
Understanding the LINK
between **animal abuse** and
domestic violence, and what
you need to know.

ANIMAL ABUSE: A FORM OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

There is a growing understanding of the interrelationship between domestic violence, animal abuse, child abuse, and elder abuse. This interrelationship is often referred to as “the Link.” According to Phil Arkow, Coordinator of the National Link Coalition, “when animals are abused, people are at risk. When people are abused, animals are at risk” (Arkow, 2013).

Animals may suffer directly from neglect or other forms of cruelty. In addition animals can be used as a tool for the abuser to control and punish the victim. Threats of violence towards a cherished pet could prevent victims from leaving or coerce them into returning to the home. Victims may also be forced to remain silent with threats to harm the animals if the violent behaviour is reported.

Pets are seen as part of the family, making it hard for many victims of abuse to leave the home knowing their pet is left behind. Even in situations where the pet is being cared for in a safekeeping program, there can be a heart-breaking impact on the adults and children in the family as they are deprived of a valuable source of comfort during a time of stress and turmoil.



When acts of violence occur in one of these areas, it is usually not an isolated incident.

These acts are “linked.”

Graphic provided by National Link Coalition, www.nationallinkcoalition.org



WARNING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ANIMAL ABUSE

Signs of animal abuse can be similar to those seen in children experiencing abuse.

- Neglect: animal in poor physical condition, emaciated, unkempt, matted fur
- Physical injuries: burns, bruises, lacerations, fractures
- Emotional abuse: animal demonstrates fearful behaviour or cowers in the presence of the abuser

Animal hoarding – having more animals than you can adequately care for – is another type of abuse. Animal hoarding can be associated with elder abuse, child abuse, and self-neglect.

In addition to what you might see in the home, you might hear conflicting or improbable explanations for injuries suffered by the animal. The victim or children in the family may tell you about threats of violence or actual abuse to animals that is taking place.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Ask questions about the presence and safety of animals in the home at intakes, client assessments, and interviews.

- Do you have animals in the home?
- Are you concerned about their safety?
- Do you have a place to take them to keep them safe?
- Do you need our assistance in doing so?

ANIMAL SAFETY PLANNING

Leaving an abusive relationship is not an easy thing to do. For the victim of interpersonal violence and abuse who owns animals, the decision to leave can be even more complicated. Encourage your clients to consider the following in the development of their safety plan:

- Try to remove the animals from the situation as soon as possible.
 - Ask trusted friends or family members to care for animals temporarily.
 - Contact a kennel to make arrangements to have pets boarded. Kennels will require proof of vaccinations. This information is often listed on veterinary invoices; alternatively, the veterinarian may be able to supply a full vaccination record directly to the boarding kennel, upon request.
 - Talk with local veterinarians, SPCAs/Humane Societies and animal rescues to determine if they can provide animal care.
- Gather supplies that might be useful if you have to leave quickly with your pet: a carrier, a favourite toy, bedding, a collar and leash, medications.
- Prepare a list of things a temporary caregiver should be aware of, including the pet’s daily routine, diet and feeding schedule, medical conditions and treatments, or behaviour issues.
- If animals are being threatened, keep any evidence you may have (such as photos, emails, or voice mail messages) to provide to police.
- Gather receipts or paperwork related to the purchase or care of pets to help prove ownership.