

THE LINK BETWEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & ANIMAL ABUSE

IN HOMES WHERE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OCCURS, PETS ARE OFTEN SILENT VICTIMS TOO. ABUSERS FREQUENTLY USE ANIMALS AS TOOLS OF CONTROL THREATENING, HARMING, OR EVEN KILLING THEM TO MANIPULATE AND ISOLATE THEIR PARTNERS.

KEY FACTS:

STRONG BONDS, USED AGAINST THEM: SURVIVORS AND THEIR CHILDREN OFTEN FORM DEEP EMOTIONAL BONDS WITH PETS. ABUSERS EXPLOIT THIS CONNECTION TO CAUSE FEAR AND COMPLIANCE.

(Flynn, C. P. (2000). Woman's best friend: Pet abuse and the role of companion animals in the lives of battered women. *Violence Against Women*, 6(2), 162-177.)

HIGH RATES OF ABUSE: UP TO 70% OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS HAVE PETS. OF THOSE, NEARLY HALF TO THREE-QUARTERS REPORT THEIR PETS WERE HARMED OR KILLED BY THE ABUSER.

(Ascione, F. R., Weber, C. V., Thompson, T. M., Heath, J., Maruyama, M., & Hayashi, K. (2007). Battered pets and domestic violence: Animal abuse reported by women experiencing intimate violence and by non-abused women. *Violence Against Women*, 13, 354-373.)

BARRIER TO LEAVING: BETWEEN 20%-65% OF SURVIVORS DELAY LEAVING BECAUSE THEY FEAR FOR THEIR PETS' SAFETY AND SOME EVEN RETURN TO PROTECT THEM.

(Carlise-Frank, P., Frank, J. M., & Nielsen, L. (2004). Selective battering of the family pet. *Anthrozoos*, 17(1), 26-41.)

A WARNING SIGN: ANIMAL ABUSE IS A SIGNIFICANT PREDICTOR OF FUTURE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. THOSE WHO HARM PETS ARE MORE LIKELY TO ABUSE THEIR PARTNERS.

(Flynn, C. P. (2000). Woman's best friend: Pet abuse and the role of companion animals in the lives of battered women. *Violence Against Women*, 6(2), 162-177.)

CHILDREN ARE AFFECTED TOO: CHILDREN WHO WITNESS ANIMAL ABUSE ARE MORE LIKELY TO SHOW VIOLENT BEHAVIOR LATER IN LIFE.

(Currie, C. L. (2006). Animal cruelty by child exposed to domestic violence. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30, 425-435.)

SOLUTIONS & SUPPORT:

SAFE HAVENS FOR PETS: SOME SHELTERS AND PROGRAMS PROVIDE TEMPORARY PET HOUSING INCLUDING FOSTER HOMES, KENNELS, OR PET-FRIENDLY SHELTERS SO SURVIVORS DON'T HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN SAFETY AND THEIR COMPANION ANIMALS.

(<https://www.safehavensforpets.org>)

LEGAL PROTECTIONS: IN 27 STATES, COURTS CAN INCLUDE PETS IN PROTECTIVE ORDERS TO HELP KEEP THE WHOLE FAMILY SAFE ANIMALS INCLUDED.

(<https://www.animallaw.info/statutes/topic/domestic-violence>)

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