

Animal abuse is a warning sign

The animal-human violence link



Violence rarely happens in isolation. Research shows a strong connection between animal abuse and human violence.¹ This is known as “The Link,” and recognizing it can help protect both animals and people.

What’s “The Link?”

The Link refers to the well-documented connection between animal abuse and violence toward people, including domestic violence and child abuse. Abusers may harm animals to:

- Control or intimidate victims
- Create fear and psychological trauma
- Punish family members
- Signal or escalate violence toward people



71%

Of DV survivors say abusers threatened or harmed their pets²

88%

Of homes with child abuse also have animal abuse³

75%

Of pet abuse occurs in front of kids, continuing the cycle of violence⁴

5x

Animal abusers are 5x more likely to commit violent crimes⁵

why this matters

Animal abuse is often a warning sign of domestic violence, child abuse, or other family violence. Recognizing these signs helps our communities intervene earlier, preventing cycles of abuse from continuing.

No room, no escape

When shelters are full from overpopulation, survivors may have nowhere safe for their pets, keeping them trapped in abusive homes and showing how animal welfare and human safety are connected.⁶

The cost of overpopulation

Animal overpopulation strains shelters and rescues, leaving animal control agencies with limited space to house animals seized in cruelty cases. This slows responses to neglect and abuse and reduces capacity to protect both animals and people.

Prevention protects all

Reducing overpopulation frees shelter and rescue space, helping to strengthen enforcement of animal protection laws. Safer communities start with tackling problems caused by an unmanaged animal population.

Laws Saving Paws at work: fighting cruelty and overpopulation

LSP works to strengthen protections for animals and communities through education, advocacy, and prevention by:

- Promoting responsible pet ownership
- Advocating for stronger animal laws
- Promoting long-term solutions

¹American Humane, “Understanding the Link Between Animal Abuse and Family Violence”; ²National Link Coalition; ³ASPCA; ⁴DeViney, Dickert & Lockwood study (1983); ⁵Houston Humane Society; ⁶National Link Coalition

