

Know the connections between domestic/sexual violence and animal abuse.

According to a 2003 Report by the Humane Society of the United States, in a single sample of domestic violence shelters in the United States, 91% of adult victims of domestic violence and 73% of their children mentioned incidences of pet abuse occurring in their homes.

Many domestic violence victims delay seeking shelter because they don't want to leave their pet(s) behind.

In 88% of cases of physical child abuse, an animal has also been abused.

Program Support

Intentionally hurting an animal is unthinkable to most of us. Unfortunately, for persons who abuse their partner and children, this is not the case. If a child or intimate partner is being abused, it is possible that any animal living in that home has also been hurt, mutilated or killed. Abusers often use the threat or reality of harming or killing pets as a means of power and control over the entire family.

Domestic violence/sexual assault programs around the state often assist victims who fear for the safety of their pets as a result of the violence in their homes. They are able to assist people in developing a safety plan for their pets (see checklist inside) and in some cases programs can provide financial assistance for the pet's safety through resources such as Josie's Fund.

Want to learn more about the connections between domestic violence and animal abuse?

See the Following Resources

The First Strike Campaign, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L. St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20037, www.hsus.org

Safe Havens for Pets, Guidelines for Programs Sheltering Pets for Women Who Are Battered, 2000, Frank R. Ascione, Ph.D., Utah State University: www.vachss.com/guest_dispatches/safe_havens.html

American Humane Association, 63 Inverness Drive East, Englewood, CO, www.americanhumane.org

The Violence Connection, Doris Day Animal Foundation, www.ddaf.org

YOU CAN HELP

To Donate to Josie's Fund, send your donation to the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence
245 S. 84th St, Ste 200, Lincoln, NE 68510
Designate that it go toward Josie's Fund.



Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence 402- 476-6256
www.nebraskacoalition.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network:
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
1-866-331-9474



Josie's Fund: Pets Are Victims Too!

Helping Victims of Violence and their Pets & Understanding the Link Between Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse



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“I know it’s not safe for me to stay, but if I leave, I’m afraid that they will take their anger out on my pets and I can’t stand the thought of that.” *-Domestic Violence Survivor*

What is Josie’s Fund?

The evidence of a link between animal abuse and domestic violence is compelling. Studies have consistently found that in 70% to 80% of homes where domestic violence is occurring, a pet has been threatened, injured or killed.

Domestic violence and sexual assault programs in Nebraska often assist victims who fear for the safety of their pets as a result of the violence that is occurring. Perpetrators often use the threat or reality of harming or killing pets as a means of power and control over the entire family.

In 2004, the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence established Josie’s Fund to recognize the reality that pets are also impacted by domestic violence. The fund was established in memory of Ted and Jan O’Shea of Lincoln, who, along with their dog, Josie, died in a fire on Christmas Eve in 2003.

“Josie’s Fund” is used to support battered and assaulted women, children, and animals seeking safety and services through Nebraska’s domestic violence/sexual assault programs. The project also works to raise awareness about the connections between domestic violence, sexual violence, and animal abuse.

How can the funds be used?

Domestic violence and sexual assault programs in Nebraska may apply to the Coalition for financial assistance from Josie’s Fund. The funds may be requested to help pay for kenneling of pets, veterinarian bills, or other expenses that survivors of violence may incur related to pets living in homes where violence is occurring. The awards will typically be limited to \$50.

How does a program apply for money from Josie’s Fund?

Applications for Josie’s Fund are distributed by and available through the Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence and local domestic violence/sexual assault programs & must be completed and submitted by an employee or advocate of a Nebraska domestic violence/sexual assault program and not directly by the survivor.

Applications may be submitted to the Nebraska Coalition via fax: (402) 476-6806; email: ExecutiveDirector@nebraskacoalition.org; or by mail: 245 S. 84th Street, Ste 200, Lincoln, NE 68510. (Programs will be informed as soon as possible if their request will be funded)

How do batterers use and abuse pets?

- Kicking, hitting or throwing an animal
- Killing or maiming a pet to make a victim comply or to retaliate for a victim leaving
- Threatening to take a pet away to make the family keep the violence a secret
- Refusing or impeding someone from assisting an animal after it has been injured
- Pets mysteriously dying or disappearing

Why do batterers threaten, abuse or kill family pets?

- Isolate the victim and children
- Eliminate competition for attention
- Force the family to keep the violence a secret & Teach submission
- Perpetuate the context of terror
- Punish victim for leaving, prevent the victim from leaving, or coerce them to return
- Degrade the victim

Pet Safety Planning Checklist

The following checklist can help a victim/survivor plan for their pet’s safety.

If you are staying in the home...

- ✓ Keep emergency provisions (i.e., food, medicine) for your pet if your abuser withholds money from you.
- ✓ Keep the phone number of the nearest 24- hour emergency veterinary clinic.
- ✓ Establish ownership of your pet by creating a paper trail (e.g. obtain a pet license, have vet records in your name).

If you are planning to leave...

- ✓ Pack a bag that includes the pet’s food, medicine, documents of ownership, leash, carrier, toys & bedding.
- ✓ Take your pet to a safe shelter if you can’t safely keep it with you.

If you have left...

- ✓ Keep the pet indoors as much as possible and don’t leave it outside alone.
- ✓ Pick a safe route and time to walk your pet and, if possible, don’t walk alone.
- ✓ Explain your situation to your veterinarian and the importance of confidentiality. If necessary for safety, change veterinarians.

Questions to ask yourself...

- Do you worry about your pet’s safety?
- Has your partner threatened to harm or actually harmed your pet?
- Does concern for your pet’s safety keep you from leaving or seeking shelter?