

# JOIN US IN ADDRESSING THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL CRUELTY AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



## Mission

The South Florida Link Coalition is a multi-disciplinary, collaborative initiative created to increase education and awareness, address public policy, create programs, and lead research on The Link between animal cruelty and human violence.

The South Florida Link Coalition facilitates community and social change regarding Link issues by working to bring members of the community, government, criminal justice system, health care system, animal welfare agencies, and human services together, in order to foster healthy relationships between people and animals and reach goals that will positively impact public health and safety.

We are currently serving Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, Broward, Indian River, St. Lucie, Okeechobee, and Martin County and we have many dedicated community partners throughout the area.



## What is the Link ?

The Link refers to the intersection where family violence, child abuse, sexual abuse and other forms of criminal activity meets animal cruelty. It addresses education and awareness, prediction, prevention, and intervention of violence against animals and people with careful consideration to how the two problems inform one another. Animal abuse does not occur in isolation and is a part of a lifetime dysfunctional cycle.

The South Florida Link Coalition aims to use what we continue to learn from research to create a more link-informed community, local government, criminal justice system, and health and social services.

***"When animal are at risk people are at risk and when people are at risk animals are at risk!"***  
*–Phil Arkow National Link Coordinator*

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Acknowledging the human and animal bond, can help us to use what we know about the Link to keep families and growing children safer and healthier in the long run. There are over 300 millions pets living with families in the United States. Children are more likely to have a pet than a father living in their home. As long as we care about human welfare, we need to address the welfare of pets, or we are only doing half the job!



### FACTS:

- People who commit acts of serious animal abuse have higher rates of violent crime commission against humans, before and after their animal cruelty offenses.
- Animal abuse was a better predictor of sexual assault than were previous convictions for homicide, arson, or firearms offenses.
- Over 50% of battered women delay leaving abusive situations out of fear for the safety of their animals.
- Over 71% of battered women reported that their batterers had harmed, killed or threatened animals. More than 75% of these incidents occurred in the presence of the women and/or children to coerce, control and humiliate them.
- Children who harm animals or witness acts of violence against animals are at increased risk of developing antisocial behaviors.