



FACA Policy Statement

Animal Abuse and Human Violence

The connection between animal abuse and violence towards humans has been well documented since the 1970s when the FBI first realized that many serial killers had histories of animal abuse. Since then, examples of this connection continue to play out in many forms of violence including school shooters, serial killers, and domestic abuse.

Domestic violence situations pose a unique opportunity for the abuser to use pets as leverage to control various family members. The abuser may threaten to kill the pet if the person leaves, for example. Research indicates that pet owners will sometimes stay with an abuser for fear of harm to their pets.

For this reason, the Florida Animal Control Association (FACA), supports programs that are designed to help victims of domestic abuse leave with their pets or have options for the safety and care of their pets. This may be accomplished through collaboration with women's shelters and other local resources that may play a role in dealing with domestic violence.

FACA supports the education of the public, law enforcement, prosecuting attorneys, judges, animal control and humane society officials of the connection between animal abuse and many forms of violence towards people. At the core of the issue is the need to take matters of animal abuse seriously not only for the welfare of animals but to help prevent future acts of violence towards people.

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