

PAWS for PREVENTION

A newsletter on domestic violence for veterinarians and their staff

New Info on the Web!



The [Colorado Link Project](#) has recently launched a new multi-professional website rich with research, information, resources. Check it out, bookmark it, and provide feedback...it is a work in progress and they are seeking input on how to make it work for you. LEVI also recently launched a web area just for veterinarians too. Check it out [HERE](#).



LEVI IS HERE TO PROVIDE PRESENTATION, MATERIALS, INFORMATION, REFERRALS AND RESOURCES. WE WILL GLADLY DO A SHORT PRESENTATION ON THE LINK DURING YOUR NEXT STAFF MEETING JUST ASK.

303-774-4534



COOL TOOL



The RedRover Relief program provides funding to Good Samaritans, animal rescuers and pet owners to help them care for animals in life-threatening situations. Learn more about RedRover Relief grants and sign up for a free newsletter about resources to help financially strained clients [HERE](#).

Know the signs..

Recognize

The fear of making a false report often contributes to underreporting. However, it is better to make a report that is unfounded than to not respond to a potential problem. In fact, Colorado grants those making reports that are later determined unfounded immunity from any legal proceedings. Knowing what to look for will eliminate some of the uncertainty. In this issue we'll be covering how to recognize client behavior, medical history and injury patterns that may be indicative of abuse.

Client Profile/Behavior

- Client may be new to your practice and visit multiple clinics.
- There may be discrepancies in names, addresses and ownership of animal.
- They may have multiple pets that may change often.
- Abusers come from all social classes but the majority are male.
- Unhealthy attachment to the pet (either too weak or too strong).
- Delay seeking medical attention.
- One partner may act nervous or indifferent around other.
- Client may be aggressive or argumentative.
- Not willing to comply with treatment.
- The client may have bruises.
- Victims tend to minimize the situation, but may make vague comments about not feeling safe at home.
- Client may lack knowledge about this or previous pets and appears indifferent about injury.

Medical History

- The story simply doesn't fit the injuries.
- The story changes. There may be inconsistent stories between family members or the story may change with each inquiry.
- A history or repetitive injuries among other animals in the house.
- Unexplained injuries or death to household animals in the past.



Examination

- Multiple fractures at different stages of healing.
- Open/ongoing wounds.
- Rib injuries.
- Animal has signs of neglect in addition to injuries (parasites, anemia, underweight, dirty).
- Animal may cower when approached by suspected abuser.
- Animal has abnormal response (cowering, aggression) to a normal activity—petting/playing.
- Limping/inability to walk.

Please be mindful that a determination of abuse or neglect should not solely be based on animal behavior. Instead, concerning animal behaviors should be considered as part of an overall picture.

You Can Help. We ALL Can.

The Silent Epidemic

There's a hidden childhood epidemic in Longmont. You don't hear much about it, but in 2010, there were 273 children affected. It is particularly harmful to the developing brains of infants and toddlers. Children exposed to this pollutant can have physical, emotional, behavioral and cognitive problems. What is this damaging poison that can leave a lifelong imprint on children?

Domestic violence and we can do something about it. Domestic violence is not just the physical and/or sexual abuse that children witness happening within an adult relationship. Domestic violence is about the children's fear, the chaos within which they live, and the uncertainty they feel in not knowing what's going to happen next. The one place that children should truly feel safe -- their home -- can be the scariest place of all. Children exposed to domestic violence are

more likely to suffer from health and sleep problems. The trauma disrupts healthy brain development, which may lead to academic and developmental deficits, problems regulating emotions and more aggressive behaviors. Children often blame themselves for the violence -- and as they grow older the burden of this guilt takes a toll. By adolescence, children from violent homes are at a much higher risk of depression, anxiety, drug & alcohol abuse, unintended pregnancy, eating disorders and suicide. We don't have to accept this in our community. You can help by reaching out to offer assistance. Refer those involved to local agencies who are experts in families experiencing violence.



Confidential free counseling is available 24/7 from Safe Shelter of St.

Vrain Valley @ 303-772-4422. Children from violent homes need help healing from the trauma of

witnessing violence, and learning and practicing non-violent ways to handle conflict. Safe Shelter offers this support for children/teens and their non-offending parents as well as assistance with healthy coping strategies and safety planning. It is a time to reflect on what you can do to help the biggest victims of domestic violence...who are often the smallest. Report suspected animal abuse/neglect, you could be saving a child from more trauma.

Respond

LHS Safe Keep Program



Imagine that you, your children, and your dog are all living in fear that someone in your home will abuse any, or all of you. You want to get out, but realize that the domestic violence shelter you are planning to utilize will not allow you to bring your pet. What would you do? Leave anyway and be fearful that the abuser will take out their anger on your pet, or decide to tough it out in hopes they will change. At Longmont Humane Society there is another choice: a program called **Safe Keep** that can temporarily house a pet while owners are fleeing an abusive situation. Through the program, Longmont Humane Society collaborates with local domestic violence organizations to provide low cost emergency animal housing, food and care until the domestic arrangement can be improved. As a local veterinarian please know this confidential program is available for your clients. For further information please contact Dr. Gail Rapoport, DVM at 303-651-0610 or the LHS Client Care Team at 303-772-1232

GET SMART(ER)

SHINE A LIGHT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

It is hard to know how to respond if you aren't confident about the topic. [October was domestic violence awareness month.](#)

Commit to increasing your level of comfort with The Link, Domestic Violence and other forms of abuse. Click [HERE](#) for links to webinars and information for your work in this area.

MAD FACTS



Children exposed to domestic violence were nearly **3X more likely** to exhibit cruelty towards animals than children with no prior history of witnessing violence.

Refer

EMERGENCY

Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley (24 hour confidential crisis line, shelter & counseling)	911 303.772.4422
LEVI (non-emergency referrals/resources)	303.774.4534
Longmont Humane Society	303.772.1232
Longmont Police Animal Control	303.651.8500
Dept. of Social Services	303.441.1000

Helpful E-Links



[LEVI—Vet Pages](#)
[Safe Shelter of St.Vrain](#)
[Colorado Link Project](#)
[National Link Coalition](#)
[ASPCA](#)

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