



***“It’s Cool To Be Kind is about recognizing violence and abuse along with understanding the connection of human and animal victims. Through education, awareness, and kindness we can all take steps toward a non-violent society.”***

—Jill Dolon *President and Founder Unconditional Love Foundation*

There is an indisputable connection between human violence and animal cruelty. Simply put, when animals are abused people are at risk, and when people are abused, animals are at risk. Animal abuse is not solely an animal welfare issue and individuals who ordinarily are not concerned about animals should be concerned, because animal abusers typically abuse people as an escalating pattern of abuse.

Studies of prison inmates reveal that as many as 75% of violent offenders had early records of animal cruelty. We know that most serial killers as well as many of the kids involved in school shootings had a history of cruelty to animals. By teaching humane education, advocating compassion and understanding toward our children and animals we produce a more compassionate, less violent society.

One of the most common forms of animal abuse is animal fighting. Animal fighting affects the whole community because these events are riddled with drugs, gambling and illegal weapons. Children often witness the training and even the fighting of animals, fostering in them a passion for violence, a frightening disregard for other living beings and lack of respect for the law.

**Some possible signs of animal fighting:**

- Dogs with puncture wounds and lacerations, recent or long-standing wounds and abscesses, scars on the head, throat, legs, and ears.
- Bars and bite sticks of varying lengths that are used to pry open the dog’s jaws.
- Treadmills.
- Chains, ropes or spring poles hanging from beams or trees.
- Dogs tethered with thick chains. Dogs wearing wide collars with weighted rings.
- A person who seems to go through a lot of different animals.
- Roosters with combs and waddles surgically removed.
- Surgical needles, steroids, saline solution, vitamins, drugs and veterinary supplies.
- Groups of people of all ages, some with dogs, coming and going to a particular site, such as a basement, garage, or warehouse. Barns and any secluded spot in rural areas can be used for animal fighting.

**Standard signs of animal abuse:**

- Animals in poor physical condition.
- Animals that are excessively aggressive or submissive.
- Poor general sanitation.
- Space, light and ventilation deficiencies.
- Excessive number of animals for the space and other resources.
- Cruel confinement.
- Lack of necessary medical care.
- Parasite infestation.
- Animal abandonment.
- Evidence of dead animals, buried or unburied on the property.

