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Note: Special issue titled, Animal Abuse and Family Violence: Linkages, Research, and Implications for Professional Practice. For additional articles see NCJ-222416-418 and NCJ-222420.

Annotation: Results of a survey of child welfare workers are presented examining how the issue of animal cruelty is addressed within the child welfare system.

Abstract: Twenty-two percent of the child welfare workers surveyed indicated they had been assigned child maltreatment cases where there was a subsequent disclosure of animal cruelty. It is becoming more widely recognized that there exists a relationship between animal cruelty and family violence. Frequently, animal control officers involved in removing a companion pet from a house, come across evidence of child maltreatment. Partnerships are beginning to evolve between animal welfare organizations and child welfare organizations to examine the connection and overlap of cases. The focus of this research is to answer the question: What is the prevalence of animal cruelty in the cases of families served by the State child welfare organization? A survey was distributed to family service workers, intake workers, and juvenile probation officers inquiring about cases involving animal cruelty. A total of 500 surveys were mailed with 121 returned. The questions address the ways in which animal cruelty is identified, the time and manner which disclosure occurs, coexisting issues, types of animals and injuries, information about the perpetrator, and implications for practice. Tables, figures, and references

Main Term(s): Child welfare ; Cruelty to animals

Index Term(s): Surveys/ ; Child abuse ; Home environment ; Family offenses ; Domestic assault ; Child abuse investigations ; Childcare worker casework ; Sociological analyses ; Domestic violence causes ; Child victims