Abstract - Diemer

Shine a light on the shadows: The animal victims of domestic and family violence (DFV)

Animals are family, right? So, let’s talk about the animal victims of domestic and family violence (DFV). Lucy’s Project recognises the human-animal bond and CARE – Collaborates, raises Awareness of, Researches and Educates – about the animal victims of violence. This presentation will explore the harm caused to animals, both mental and physical, when domestic and family violence is perpetrated. These impacts can be immediate, such as injury or trauma sustained by the animal, or more long term such as veterinary needs, housing insecurity, being surrendered or fostered and separation from family. Animal cruelty is one of the most significant indicators of dangerous perpetrators and the risk to both humans and animals is currently under-recognised.

We will explore what needs to be improved to better meet the needs of animals affected by DFV as well as what is being done to help animals today. Let’s also talk about the benefit of animals and children staying together through trauma and the positive impact that can have. We’ll briefly acknowledge the cycle of violence and how adversely children can be affected by witnessing animal abuse.

- We will explore the risks to both human and animal life when animals are abused
- We will discuss the therapeutic benefits of keeping humans and animals together through DFV crisis
- Highlight some of the initiatives of Lucy’s Project and other organisations to tackle these issues
- Explain some of the dynamics of animal abuse in a DFV context.

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