

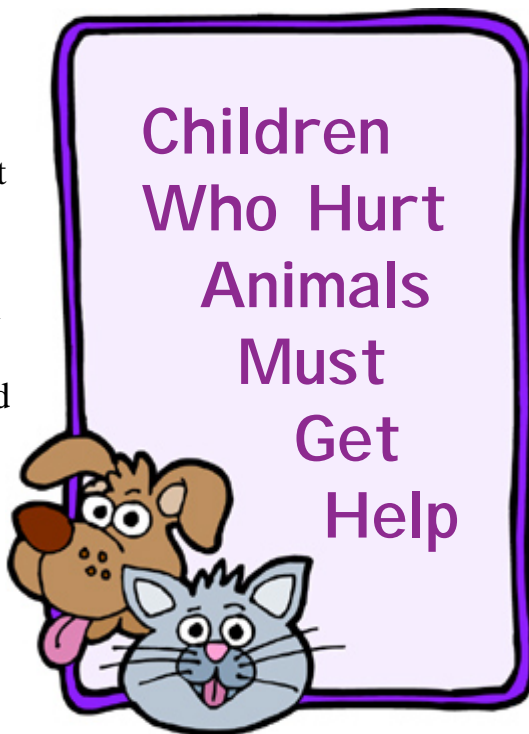
SAFE kids HEALTHY kids HAPPY kids

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Animal abuse during childhood is a *red flag*. It warns parents that their child needs professional help. Researchers from the University of Florida conducted a detailed study of violent and non-violent criminals. The study showed a high incidence of childhood abuse and neglect among *all* criminals. However, *violent* criminals were more likely to have abused pets, stray animals, wild animals and farm animals when they were children.

The acts of abuse towards animals were more than just kicking a dog. They were cruel and often gruesome. Examples include stomping a kitten to death and setting a dog on fire. These violent criminals rarely said they were sorry or felt bad about hurting the animals. In some cases, the type of abuse they committed on animals was like the acts they later committed on people.



If your child has been caught being cruel to an animal, it is very important to get help right away. Make sure your child does not continue to display violent behavior. Children must learn to have empathy for living, breathing beings.

Help your child grow up to be a kind and loving person.

- U Show kindness to people and animals.
 - U Treat family members with respect.
 - U Say loving words. Use praise for good behavior.
 - U Use loving gestures like hugs or a pat on the back.
 - U Talk about how others feel—physical pain and feelings.
 - U Meet your family's basic needs like food, shelter, clothing and child-care.
 - U Take an interest in your child's school, activities and friends.
- Being *cruel* to animals is not a childhood phase. It should **never** be allowed. Teach respect for all living beings--people and animals.

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.

544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. , 7 days a week.