Proceedings
from the
National Technology Assessment Workshop
on
Animal Assisted Programs
for
Youth At Risk

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Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health

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Jennifer Jackman, Ph.D. and Andrew Rowan, Ph.D, Editors
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INTRODUCTION

With the support of the Laura J. Niles Foundation, The Humane Society of the United States and the Center for Prevention of Youth Violence of the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health held a landmark national conference on evaluation of animal assisted programs for youth at risk on December 6-7, 2007 in Baltimore, Maryland. The National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal Assisted Programs for Youth At Risk successfully forged relationships between animal assisted programs and leading evaluation researchers, increased support for evaluation among program administrators and staff, identified new evaluation strategies, and laid the groundwork to advance research and recognition of animal assisted interventions in the context of youth violence prevention.

The conference was the culmination of a three-year project by the Humane Society of the United States that also included:

- A pioneering ethnographic study documenting expectations for program outcomes and mechanisms of change in five animal assisted programs;
- An extensive, first-ever survey of dog training programs for youth at risk;
- Provision of assistance to new evaluation research projects at animal assisted programs for youth at risk;
- Identification of additional new evaluation projects related to animal assisted interventions;
- An expert group meeting of leading researchers that discussed conference findings and future directions for evaluation in the field of animal assisted programs; and
- Development of an undergraduate online course in animal assisted programs for youth at risk.

In the report that follows, we summarize the proceedings of the conference and the expert meeting that followed.
WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

With 125 participants, the National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal Assisted Programs brought together an unprecedented assembly of program administrators, researchers in the field of animal assisted interventions, and national experts in evaluation research. (See Appendix A for list of conference participants.)

Program Participation

Workshop participants included administrators and staff from some 45 animal assisted activity and animal assisted therapy programs. (See Appendix B for list of participating organizations.) These programs are held at shelters, schools, hospitals, mental health institutions, and correctional facilities. The participating programs target a wide range of children and young adults, including emotionally troubled, at-risk, and adjudicated youth. The programs involve a range of animal species, including dogs, horses, farm animals, and wildlife.

Organizations that run dog training programs for youth at risk were particularly well-represented at the conference. The conference included ten organizations with dog training programs – four organizations that run either shelter-based programs or train shelter dogs and six service dog training organizations that hold ongoing dog training programs at a wide range of schools, mental health institutions, and correctional facilities. Several additional dog training programs for youth at risk also participated as well as shelters with an interest in establishing dog training programs.

Researcher Participation

The conference program featured recognized leaders in animal assisted intervention and human-animal bond research. These leaders in the field include Dr. Randall Lockwood (ASPCA), Dr. Andrew Rowan (HSUS), Dr. Barbara Boat (University of Cincinnati), Dr. Aubrey Fine (California State Polytechnic University), Dr. Arnold Arluke (Northeastern University), Dr. Mary Lou Randour (HSUS), and Kathy Kruger, MSW, who also represented Dr. James Serpell (Center for the Interaction of
Animals and Society Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania). Our collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Youth Violence resulted in the involvement in the conference of leading scholars in the youth violence prevention field, including Dr. Philip Leaf (Director, JHU Center for Youth Violence Prevention), Freya Sonenstein (Director, JHU Center for Adolescent Health), and David Altschuler (Principal Research Scientist, JHU Public Policy Institute). Dr. Martha-Elin Blomquist provided an additional voice from the juvenile justice policy perspective.

The conference also brought to the table for the first time several of the foremost leaders in evaluation research. The participation of Dr. Alan Kazdin (Professor of Psychology at Yale University and President-Elect of the American Psychological Association), Dr. Valerie Maholmes (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development), and Dr. Allan Cohen (Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation) added further heft to discussion around evaluation methodologies and the importance of evaluation to gaining legitimacy, institutional acceptance, and funding for animal assisted interventions.

In order to encourage the participation of new researchers, HSUS established a Graduate Student Scholarship Program for graduate students doing research in the field of animal assisted interventions. Recipients included Lacey Levitt, Department of Clinical and School Psychology, University of Virginia, Charlottesville - Ph.D. Candidate; Marivic Rosabelle, Department of Psychological Studies in Education, Stanford University - Ph.D. Candidate; Leah Brookner, Graduate School of Social Work, Portland State University - Combined Ph.D. and MSW Candidate; Amanda Taylor, Oregon State University, Ph.D. Candidate; Hazel Weiss, Assistance Dog Institute - M.S. in Assistance Dog Education Candidate; Magaly Madrid, Department of Education, Webster University - MA in Teaching Candidate; and Roberta Thompson, School of Social Work, University of Buffalo - Masters in Social Work, Health and Mental Health Candidate.

In total, twenty colleges and universities were represented at the conference. Several non-university-based research institutes also participated in the conference. (See Appendix B for lists of universities and research institutions.)
SUMMARIES OF PRESENTATIONS

Because of the diversity of the backgrounds and expertise of participants, the conference program was designed to achieve two goals. First, program sessions sought to provide basic information on youth violence prevention, research on animal assisted interventions, and evaluation methods. Second, the program provided a forum to enable participants to share new research and chart new research directions in evaluation of animal assisted programs. (The full conference program is available in Appendix C.) Below are speaker biographies and summaries of conference presentations and sessions.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Andrew Rowan, Ph.D., Executive Vice President for Operations, Humane Society of the United States

Andrew Rowan, Ph.D. is the Executive Vice President for Operations of The Humane Society of the United States and CEO of Humane Society International. Before joining The HSUS, Rowan was director of the Tufts University Center for Animals and Public Policy. He chaired the Department of Environmental Studies at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine. He was associate director for the Institute for the Study of Animal Problems at The HSUS, founding editor of the *International Journal for the Study of Animal Problems*, founding editor of *Anthrozoos*, and scientific administrator for the Fund for the Replacement for Animals in Medical Experiments. Rowan received a doctorate in biochemistry from Oxford University in 1975 after earning a master’s degree in biochemistry from Oxford University in 1971 where he was a Rhodes Scholar. Dr. Rowan is the principal investigator for The HSUS’s project with the Laura J. Niles Foundation on evaluation of animal assisted programs for youth at risk.

The major points from Dr. Rowan’s presentation are as follows:

- In the field of animal assisted interventions, we do not presently have strong evaluation. The research deficits that Beck, Katchner and others first identified in the 1980s persist today.
• HSUS's survey of dog training programs for youth at risk documents program goals, anticipated program outcomes, and practices in the areas of staffing, management, and training, participant selection, program content and structure, dog selection and care, community partnerships, funding, and program evaluation. (See Appendix D.) The survey reveals that most programs at least initially relied upon models or materials from Dr. Bonnie Bergin, Dr. Lynn Loar, or Los Angeles SPCA's TLC program. Programs anticipate improved cognitive, physical, speech and language, and social and emotional competencies and increased knowledge of animals and animal welfare. Program budgets range from under $10,000 to $450,000, with most programs operating with budgets between $20,000 and $65,000. Together, the programs have worked with some 5000 youth. All programs are dissatisfied with current evaluation strategies.

• Animal assisted intervention programs for youth at risk raise ethical issues in terms of the use and treatment of animals. Programs must be made safe and beneficial for both animals and people.

• Animal assisted programs have PR "umph." If they are effective and have a positive impact on community, more shelters may be interested in implementing animal assisted programs. Animal assisted programs might be able to address dog fighting among youth.

Dr. Rowan's powerpoint presentation is in Appendix E.
Evaluating Youth Violence Prevention Programs

In order to place animal assisted programs for youth in the larger context of youth violence prevention, the first session of the conference provided information on the causes of youth violence, key ingredients of youth violence prevention programs, and the state of evaluation research in the youth violence prevention field.

A Public Health Paradigm for Youth Violence: Risk Factors and Protective Factors
Philip Leaf, Ph.D., Director, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Philip J. Leaf, Ph.D. is the Director of the Johns Hopkins Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence and a Professor in the Department of Mental Hygiene with joint appointments in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Department of Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and the Graduate Division of Education at the Johns Hopkins School of Professional Studies in Business and Education. Dr. Leaf is the Director of the Pre- and Postdoctoral Mental Health Services Research Training Program, Co-Director of the NIMH/NIDA-funded Center for Prevention and Early Intervention. An expert in psychiatric epidemiology, mental health services research, and school-based interventions, Dr. Leaf is one of the nation’s most cited psychiatric researchers. He directed the consortium that developed the procedures currently in use by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice for screening youth for mental health, substance abuse, somatic health, educational, and family problems and currently serves as the Executive Director of the Child Development-Community Policing Program.

The major points from Dr. Leaf’s presentation are as follows:

- Youth violence is an important public health problem that results in deaths and injuries. It is important to focus on interventions other than police response.

- Risk factors that predict youth violence include individual factors (history of violent victimization or involvement, attention deficits, hyperactivity, or learning disorders, history of early aggressive behavior, involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, low IQ, and poor behavioral control); family risk factors (authoritarian childrearing attitudes, harsh, lax, or inconsistent disciplinary practices, low parental involvement, or low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers, low parental education and
income, parental substance abuse or criminality, poor family functioning, poor monitoring and supervision of children); peer/school risk factors (association with delinquent peers, involvement in gangs, social rejection by peers, lack of involvement in conventional activities, poor academic performance, low commitment to school and school failure), and community factors (diminished economic opportunities, high concentration of poor residents, high level of transiency, high levels of family disruption, low levels of community participation, and socially disorganized neighborhoods).

- Risk factors for violence are also risk factors for substance abuse, delinquency, teenage pregnancy, school dropout, and other youth problems. With animal assisted interventions, we might want to measure how interventions affect these problems as well as violence prevention.

- Protective factors that shield youth from violence include individual factors (intolerant attitude toward deviance, high IQ or grade point average, positive social orientation, religiosity); family factors (connectedness to adults outside of family, ability to discuss problems with parents, perceived parental expectations for high school performance, frequent shared activities with parents, consistent presence of parents when awakening, arriving home from school, in evening at mealtime, or when going to bed); and peer/school factors (commitment to school and involvement in school activities).

- Animal assisted programs need to identify which youth and which families would be most responsive to interventions and who is best positioned to sponsor and introduce programs.

- Since they are now held accountable for negative behaviors and suspensions as well as grades, schools are increasingly concerned about improving general social functioning, behavior and attitudes in the classroom, and student engagement. The greater focus on school climate issues may provide opportunities for introduction of low cost interventions that address these issues such as animal assisted programs.

- Community foundations may be interested in pilot studies on animal assisted interventions.

Dr. Leaf’s powerpoint presentation is in Appendix F.
The State of Evaluation in Youth Violence Prevention
Freya Sonenstein, Ph.D., Director, Center for Adolescent Health,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Freya Lund Sonenstein, Ph.D. is a professor in the Department of Population and Family Health Sciences at John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Since 2003 she has directed the Johns Hopkins Center for Adolescent Health. The Center is a prevention research center funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The Center for Adolescent Health's mission is to work in partnership with youth serving agencies to conduct research that will promote healthy transitions to adulthood for Baltimore youth. The Center's signature research project focuses on identifying and addressing the mental health needs of disconnected youth and young adults participating in a Baltimore employment and training program. Many of these youth engage in, witness or are victims of violent behavior. Dr. Sonenstein has focused her career conducting basic and applied research to inform family and children's policy. In 2004, Dr. Sonenstein was a member of an expert panel for NIH that reviewed the state of the science about "Preventing Violence and Related Health-Risking Social behaviors in Adolescents."

The major points from Dr. Sonenstein's presentation are as follows:

• Societal costs of youth violence include loss of educational opportunities, need for alternative schools and detention programs, increased demand on mental health, education and justice programs, and impact on victims, survivors, and families.

• A Baltimore survey of Youth Opportunities Program participants, who are 16-24 years old and out of school, found high levels of experience with violence. Many students report having been in a fight within the past year, carrying weapons, being forced to have sex, witnessing a homicide, and having been hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend.

• Measurement of program effectiveness requires comparison of equivalent groups who do and do not participate in the program. Studies must include measures before and after the intervention period. The evidence is stronger when individuals or schools are randomly assigned to receive the intervention or placebo, all participants are retained during study period, follow-up occurs after intervention, and findings have been replicated. The Center for the Study and Prevention of Youth Violence at University of Colorado reviewed more than 600 programs. The Center designated 11 model programs and 18 promising programs.

• Successful programs have a theoretical basis, address strong risk factors, involve long-term treatment, are often clinical, utilize cognitive behavioral strategies, are multi-modal and multi-contextual, focus on improving social competency and skills, are developmentally appropriate, are not delivered in coercive settings, and are delivered with fidelity.

• Programs can be harmful if they allow "contagion," use "scare tactics," or spend scarce resources on ineffective or harmful programs.
• Animal assisted interventions are at "proof of concept" stage in which you can demonstrate that a program can be implemented, that it is attractive to participants, and that you can see change occur from before to after an intervention.

• For some interventions, implementation of randomized controlled designs is very difficult. We need to develop better evaluation approaches since some of the most promising programs find it hard to meet gold standard research designs. Physiological measures may be useful to measure change.

Dr. Sonenstein's powerpoint presentation is in Appendix G.

David Altschuler, Ph.D., Principal Research Scientist, Institute for Policy Studies, Johns Hopkins University and Faculty, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

David M. Altschuler, Ph.D. is Principal Research Scientist at The Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Mental Health of the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Adjunct Associate Professor in Sociology, and a member of the faculty of the Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence. Dr. Altschuler has a doctorate in social service administration and a master's degree in urban studies from The University of Chicago. His work focuses on juvenile crime and justice system sanctioning, juvenile aftercare and parole, offender reentry, privatization in juvenile corrections, and drug involvement and crime among inner-city youth. Dr. Altschuler and a colleague started the Juvenile Reintegration and Aftercare Center (JRAC). He was Project Director and Co-Principal Investigator on an Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention funded project, which developed a model of intensive aftercare for the high-risk juvenile parolees. Most recently, he began working with the Department of Labor on evaluation of offender reentry programs.

The major points from Dr. Altschuler's presentation are as follows:

• Animal assisted programs need to think carefully about eligibility issues if they include "justice-involved" youth who may be on probation, parole, or supervised release. Decisions need to be made about who establishes selection criteria and who decides which youth participate.

• An important eligibility consideration is the level of risk posed by the youth to public safety and to the animal. Research shows that a young person who has been connected with or found guilty of a violent offense is no more at risk for re-offending than other youth.

• Participation in a program may make youth subject to sanctions or supervision unwarranted by their level of risk. Youth who do not cooperate or do well in a program can be subject to technical violations and sanctions from the justice
system. Inclusion of justice-involved youth also may entail supervision or monitoring from justice system personnel that may not be beneficial to the youth or program experience.

- Animal assisted programs will be more successful in seeking evaluation funding if they are multi-modal and recognize the contributions of animals, staff, and other aspects of programs. Powerful research designs examine the totality of factors and specify and examine each element.

Valerie Maholmes, Ph.D., CAS, Social and Affective Development/Child Maltreatment and Violence, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Valerie Maholmes, Ph.D., CAS, Program Director for the Social and Affective Development in Child and Family Processes/Child Maltreatment and Violence Research Program in the Child Development and Behavior Branch at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). She was a faculty member at the Yale University Child Study Center for 13 years where she served in numerous capacities with the School Development Program including Director of Research and Policy. In 1999, she was named the Irving B. Harris Assistant Professor of Child Psychiatry—an endowed professorial chair for child development and social policy. In 2003, Dr. Maholmes was awarded the prestigious Executive Branch Science Policy Fellowship sponsored by the Society for Research in Child Development and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Maholmes holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Howard University.

The major points from Dr. Maholmes' presentation are as follows:

- Funding is available for process evaluation and model testing, methodology development and validation, and pilot studies of an intervention prior to large scale testing. More than half of NIH funding is distributed to external researchers and programs. NIH is interested in the interplay of developmental, psychological, environmental, and biological factors related to youth violence.

- Intervention studies target specific factors and test hypothesized mediational models on a range of anti-social behaviors, target larger units of intervention beyond the individual, study mechanisms of intervention at multiple levels of analysis such as individual, family, peer, community and neighborhood, and are based on youth
risk factor research. Pilot studies test feasibility of larger scale evaluations and focus on evaluation of procedures related to community cooperation, training and supervising staff, insuring implementation fidelity, and recruiting and retaining target population.

- Studies that tailor interventions to specific high risk or understudied population are a particular priority. Future research priorities include across program component analysis to understand mechanisms of successful and unsuccessful interventions, evaluation of programs in different contexts, and research to enhance role of neighborhoods.

- Collaboration between non-profit organizations and universities or research institutes provides opportunities to access funds for innovative projects.

Dr. Maholmes’ powerpoint presentation is in Appendix H.

Allan Cohen, Ph.D., Director, Center for Advanced Planning and Evaluation, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation

Allan Y. Cohen, Ph.D. is the co-founder of PIRE (Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation), an independent non-profit research and technical assistance organization headquartered in Calverton, Maryland, employing 400 staff in nine centers across the USA. He currently directs PIRE’s Center for Advanced Planning and Evaluation, served as Associate Editor of the Journal of Primary Prevention and has supervised over 50 major evaluation and consulting projects in behavioral health. As a licensed clinical psychologist, evaluation specialist, theoretician and substance abuse prevention expert, Dr. Cohen has long been interested in the role of animals and pets in human development.

The major points from Dr. Cohen’s presentation are as follows:

- Evaluation is a powerful tool for improving and advocating for programs. Program administrators need to be aware of requirements of different sponsors and develop strategies to communicate what you know to be effective in ways meaningful to the sponsor.

- Most of the real work is done in programs that cannot be scientifically validated.

- Program personnel are one of the most powerful drivers of program success.

- While behavioral outcomes are important, you also need to measure what is really happening in the programs. Programs may not reduce the negative as much as increasing positive outcomes such as love, compassion, self-sacrifice, creativity, and other transformational motivations.
Sara Hassan, MHS, Research Program Coordinator, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Sara Hassan holds a masters degree of Health Sciences with a specialization in Mental Health. Ms. Hassan is the Research Program Coordinator of the Bloomberg School of Public Health’s Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence, where she coordinates and staffs various youth violence prevention programs. Ms. Hassan assisted in the production of a local teen violence prevention show produced by the Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Urban Leadership Institute and WMAR ABC Channel 2 and funded by the GOCCP and the CDC. Motivated by one of the television series entitled “Youth Violence Prevention”, Ms. Hassan and LaMarr Darnell Shields of the Urban Leadership Institute wrote Hands Off: Strategies to Combat Youth Violence, which focuses on bullying, gang violence, school violence, dating violence and self defense and provides a violence prevention vehicle that can be utilized in schools, after school programs and other youth organizations.

The major points from Ms. Hassan’s presentation are as follows:

- Youth should be involved in program development, implementation, and evaluation. Youth are effective trainers of other youth.

- Because what happens in school is reflected in communities and what happens in communities is reflected in schools, more youth violence prevention programs need to be directed at neighborhoods and communities.
Critical Issues in Evaluating and Establishing the Effectiveness of Animal-Assisted Interventions

In the second session of the conference, Dr. Alan Kazdin of Yale University outlined the current criteria for evidenced-based treatments, critiqued research to date on animal assisted interventions, and recommended evaluation strategies to help develop the field.

Critical Issues in Evaluating and Establishing the Effectiveness of Animal-Assisted Interventions
Alan Kazdin, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Child Psychiatry, Yale University; Director, Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic; and President-elect, American Psychological Association

Alan E. Kazdin, Ph.D. is the John M. Musser Professor of Psychology and Child Psychiatry at Yale University, Director of the Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic, and President-Elect of the American Psychological Association. Dr. Kazdin is a licensed clinical psychologist, a Diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology, and a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for the Advancement of Science. His honors include Research Scientist Career and MERIT Awards from the National Institute of Mental Health and Awards for Distinguished Scientific Contribution to Clinical Psychology and Distinguished Professional Contribution to Clinical Child Psychology, Outstanding Research Contribution by an Individual (Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy). His research focuses on childhood aggressive and antisocial behavior, child and family therapy, and processes that contribute both to clinical dysfunction and therapeutic change. He has authored or edited over 600 articles, chapters, and books. His 45 books focus on child and adolescent psychotherapy, aggressive and antisocial behavior, and methodology and research design.

The major points from Dr. Kazdin’s presentation are as follows:

• Evidenced-based treatments require randomized controlled trials with sufficient statistical power, which are very expensive and must meet very high standards. Smaller and less expensive research designs can be used initially to build the case for animal assisted interventions. These methods include single-case experimental research, rigorous qualitative research, and laboratory studies of human functioning such as neuro-imaging.

• One of the barriers to progress in research on animal assisted interventions are unsupported assumptions about human functioning and therapeutic change. These faulty assumptions include: building empathy, caring and respect will break the cycle of violence; developing self-control, emotional regulation, a positive sense of purpose, or responsibility will help redress clinical problems; and building self-esteem will help the child and reduce symptoms. These constructs, processes, and characteristics are not necessarily related to behavior, clinical dysfunction, and
therapeutic change. They can be changed without a change in clinical dysfunction, and clinical dysfunction can be changed without any impact on these constructs.

• The target populations in research on animal assisted interventions for youth have not been well-defined. The focus on “at-risk” children is problematic since this identification lacks specificity and most “at-risk” behavior is not easily identified. In addition, the “at-risk” focus requires studies to demonstrate both reduction in risk and to document outcomes.

• Applications of animal assisted interventions have been too diffuse, with few studies over very diverse problem domains.

• For research in the field of animal assisted interventions, we need to identify what we are trying to accomplish with AAI, what are the special strengths of AAI, and for whom is AAI likely to be effective and under what conditions. Research should expand outcome measurement focus to include quality of life and subjective experience.

• Rather than evaluating therapeutic change, researchers should examine the impact of programs on the quality of lives of participants. Using multiple measures and controls (e.g. compare contact with animals with no animal contact or stuffed animal), studies could measure ability to focus, sociability, knowledge acquisition, or neurological responses. Studies should include more than one animal and more than one therapist.

• Moderators in AAI treatments include type of animals, type of experience with animal, clinical problem, and personality and characteristics of child, animal, or combination.

Dr. Kazdin’s powerpoint presentation follows.
Critical Issues in Evaluating and Establishing the Effectiveness of Animal-Assisted Interventions

Alan Kazdin, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Child Psychiatry, Yale University; Director, Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic; and President-elect, American Psychological Association

Critical Issues in Evaluating and Establishing the Effectiveness of Animal-Assisted Interventions

Overview of the Presentation

Overall Goal:
To identify methodological and substantive next steps for AAI research

Key Topics:
1. Contexts
   • Treatment of Aggressive and Antisocial Child Behavior
   • Advances in Child and Adolescent Therapy Research
2. Barriers to Progress in AAI
3. Methodological Issues and Requirements
4. Substantive Questions and Topics to Pursue

Key Characteristics

Antisocial Behaviors
Aggressive Acts
Theft
Vandalism
Firessing
Lying
Truancy
Running Away
Cruelty
Precocious Sexual Activity
Substance Abuse

Characteristics that Make these Behaviors Clinically Significant
- Frequent and Intense
- Repetitive and Chronic
- BroaI Range of Behaviors
- Impairment in Everyday Life (e.g., home, school)

Typical Child
5-10 years old, male
Fights at home and at school (e.g., hits teachers, other adults, peers)
Explosive temper tantrums (screams, hits, damages property, routinely)
Lies
Steals
Disruptive and unmanageable at home and school
One or more of these: harm siblings, set fires, is cruel to animals, or runs away

Presented at the National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal-Assisted Programs for Youth at Risk, Baltimore, MD, December 2007.
Clinical and Social Significance of Conduct Disorder

1. Prevalence
2. Clinic referrals
3. Stability of the problem
4. Prognosis
5. Transmission across generations
6. Costs to society
7. Until recently, absence of effective interventions

Outcomes in Adulthood

Psychiatric Status: Greater psychiatric impairment including sociopathic personality, alcohol and drug abuse, and isolated symptoms (e.g., anxiety, somatic complaints); also, greater history of psychiatric hospitalization
Criminal Behavior: Higher rates of driving while intoxicated, criminal behavior, arrest records, and conviction, and period of time spent in jail
Occupational Adjustment: Less likely to be employed; shorter history of employment, lower status jobs, more frequent change of jobs, lower wages, and more frequently on public assistance (welfare)
Educational Attainment: Higher rates of dropping out of school, lower attainment among those who remain in school
Marital Status: Higher rates of divorce, remarriage and separation
Social Participation: Less contact with relatives, friends, and neighbors; little participation in organizations such as church
Physical Health: Higher rates of hospitalization for physical and psychiatric problems, if history of abuse as a child, higher morbidity and mortality rates for cancer, heart disease, and respiratory disease

Current Progress

1. Quantity of controlled treatment outcome studies
2. Quality of studies has improved
3. Conclusions from reviews
   a. Treatment works
   b. Effects are strong (Effect sizes ≥ .70)
4. Several evidence-based treatments are available

Evidence-Based Treatments

Brief Definition:
Treatments that have empirical research in their behalf (randomized controlled trials)

Criteria:
1. Random assignment of cases/participants to conditions
2. Careful specification of the patient population
3. Use of treatment manuals (well described and replicable treatments)
4. Multiple outcome measures (raters, if used, are naive to conditions)
5. Statistically significant differences between treatment and a comparison group (e.g., treatment as usual)
6. Replication of outcome effects, especially by an independent investigator or team (at least 2 or more studies, but usually many more are completed)

Examples of Evidence-Based Psychotherapies for Children and Adolescents

Anxiety, Fear, Phobias
   Cognitive Behavior Therapy
   Modeling
   Systematic Desensitization
Depression
   Cognitive Behavior Therapy
   Coping with Depression Course
   Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Adolescents
Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Delinquency
   Multisystemic Therapy
   Parent Management Training
   Cognitive Problem-Solving Skills Training
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
   Classroom Contingency Management
   Parent Management Training (Medication)

Evidence-Based Treatments for Conduct Problems

Parent Management Training is directed at altering parent-child interactions in the home, particularly those interactions related to child-rearing practices and coercive interchanges
Multisystemic Therapy focuses on the individual, family, and extra-familial systems and their interventions as a way to reduce symptoms and to promote prosocial behavior
Multisystemic Treatment Foster Care Model focuses on youth who are in placement and who are to return to their parents or more permanent foster care. Behavioral treatments in the placement and in the setting to which the child is returned are part of a comprehensive effort to integrate treatment and community life
Cognitive Problem-Solving Skills Training focuses on cognitive processes that underlie social behavior and response repertoires in interpersonal situations
Anger Control Training includes problem-solving skills training in the context of groups in the schools
Brief Strategic Family Therapy focuses on the structure of the family and concrete strategies that can be used to promote improved patterns of interaction. This treatment has been developed with Hispanic children and adolescents and has integrated culturally pertinent issues to engage the families
Functional Family Therapy utilizes principles of systems theory and behavior modification for altering interaction, communication, and problem-solving among family members
Developing the Research Agenda

1. Barriers to Progress in AAI Research
2. Methodological Issues and Requirements
3. Key Questions, Topics, and Priorities

Barriers to Progress

1. Unsupported assumptions about human functioning in light of current research

2. Mixing Theory of Etiology and Theory of Change

Key Points:
1. How the problem was caused is critical to know so one can provide treatment and prevention
2. Want to know the causes whenever possible but great progress can be made in knowing how to treat (change social, emotional, behavioral functioning without knowledge of causes)

Examples from Medicine:
- Examples of Problems: aspirin, chemotherapy, surgery
- Examples from Psychology:
- Early models (1940s - 1950s) of psychological/psychiatric disorders identify something in the child's development, in the parents, in the mother in particular, in psychosexual development, in development of self-esteem and so on as the PROBLEM and rectifying that problem as necessary for the SOLUTION

Methodological Issues

1. Treatment Outcome Methodology Requirements

   - Treatment manuals
   - Multiple therapists
   - Multiple outcome measures that directly evaluate the clinical problem
   - Randomized controlled trials, sufficient statistical power

2. Expand Research Methods

   - Quantitative research (Group research, null hypothesis testing of course)
   - Single-case experimental research
   - Qualitative research (rigorous designs, not mere descriptions)

3. Ongoing Assessment During AAI during and over the course of treatment

Key Questions, Topics, and Foci

1. Guiding questions

   - What are we trying to accomplish with AAI?
   - What are the special strengths of AAI?
   - For whom is AAI likely to be effective and under what conditions (i.e., what are the moderators of treatment)?
Moderator

Defined: Characteristic that influences the relationship between two variables, i.e., changes the magnitude or direction (e.g., sex, age, cohort)

Examples: If boys and girls respond differently, sex is said to be a moderator.

If patients with comorbid disorders respond less well to treatment, comorbidity is said to be a moderator.

AAI Examples might be:
- Type of animal
- Type of experience with the animal
- Clinical problem
- Personality characteristics of the child and of the animal, and their combination

Moderators of Therapeutic Change in the Treatment of Conduct Disorder

Child Factors
- Severity and duration of the disorder
- Comorbidity (presence of two or more disorders)
- Poor reading achievement
- School dysfunction (academic and social)

Parent and Family Factors
- Parent psychopathology (current and past)
- Parent stress (life events and perceived stress)
- Poor family relations (e.g., marital conflict, few shared family activities)
- Adverse childhood experiences (e.g., harsh punishment, poor monitoring)

Contextual (Socioeconomic) Factors
- Lower family income and/or receipt of public assistance
- Lower educational level
- Poor living accommodations (e.g., inadequate space, neighborhood)

Other Factors
- Perceived barriers to participation in treatment
- Parent-therapist and child-therapist alliance

Key Questions, Topics, and Foci

1. Guiding questions
2. Topics for Research
   A. Expand outcome measurement focus
      - Therapeutic change in relevant domains
      - Quality of life and subjective experience
   B. Draw on "other" AAI, i.e., Human Assisted Interventions
   C. Expand the range of intervention studies
   D. Laboratory Studies of Human (and animal) Functioning

Key Questions to Guide Treatment Research

1. What is the impact of treatment relative to no-treatment?
2. What components contribute to change?
3. What treatments can be added (combined treatments) to optimize change?
4. What parameters can be varied to influence (improve) outcome?
5. How effective is this treatment relative to other treatments for this problem?
6. What patient, therapist, treatment, and contextual factors influence (moderate) outcome?
7. What processes within or during treatment influence, cause, and are responsible for outcome (therapeutic change)?
8. To what extent are treatment effects generalizable across problem areas, settings, and other domains?

Key Foci for AAI Research

Summary

1. Expand outcome measurement focus
   - Therapeutic change in diverse domains
   - Quality of life and subjective experience
2. Draw on the "other" AAI, i.e., Human Assisted Interventions
   Both substantive and methodological resources
3. Expand the range of intervention questions that are addressed
4. Laboratory studies of human (and animal) functioning
Guiding Questions

1. What are we trying to accomplish with AAI?
2. What are the special strengths of AAI?
3. For whom is AAI likely to be effective and under what conditions (i.e., what are the moderators of treatment)?

Summary of Challenges

1. Methodological
   - The bar is high
   - Not just RCTs, more refinements in procedures and assessments
2. Models of Etiology and Change (Intervention)
   - Some of current AAI work is based on models no longer viable
   - Connections that are not causal (e.g., self-esteem, increasing responsibility, empathy) as paths to clinical change
3. AAI in Relation to Other Treatments
   - AAI is working in areas where great progress has been made (e.g., anxiety, depression, aggression) or where there are treatments of choice in difficult intervention areas (e.g., autism)

For Further Information

Alan E. Kazdin, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Yale University
New Haven, CT 06520-8205
Email: alan.kazdin@yale.edu

Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic
314 Prospect Avenue
New Haven, CT 06511
http://www.yale.edu/childconductclinic
Research on Animal Assisted Interventions for Youth At Risk: Theories, Best Evidence, and Challenges

The third session of the conference provided participants with the theoretical underpinnings of animal assisted programs as a youth violence prevention strategy, best evidence for animal assisted interventions in adolescent mental health, and a review of the major obstacles to evaluation of animal assisted programs.

Barbara Carr, Executive Director, SPCA of Erie County

Barbara S. Carr has worked in the animal welfare field for 20 years. She has served as the Executive Director of the Erie County SPCA since 1993. In addition to caring for companion animals through rescue, investigation, sheltering and adoptions, the ECSPCA cares for farm animals and has one of the largest wildlife rehabilitation centers in New York State. Ms. Carr has developed many outreach programs during her tenure at the ECSPCA, including award-winning humane education programs and curriculums for public and private schools.

According to Carr, preliminary research suggests a variety of potential outcomes for youth from participation in animal assisted programs such as decreasing depression and anxiety, reducing behavioral problems, improving emotional well-being, enhancing conflict management skills, increasing animal care knowledge, and facilitating social interaction. She asked panelists to address the following questions: What kinds of programs, types of participants, program ingredients, and which outcomes offer the "best shot" for demonstrating and documenting the effectiveness of animal assisted programs? In other words, what outcomes should be researched and what are the ideal program components to achieve these outcomes?

Theoretical Framework for Animal Assisted Interventions As Violence Prevention Strategy

Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services, ASPCA

Randall Lockwood is Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services for the ASPCA. He received his Ph.D. in Psychology from Washington University in St. Louis. He frequently provides training on

The major points from Dr. Lockwood’s presentation are as follows:

- The balanced and restorative justice model includes accountability, community safety, competency development, offender responsibility, victim involvement, and community partnerships.

- We need to identify what competencies are missing from youth and what competencies can be addressed through animal assisted interventions in order to help specific populations of juveniles become useful members of society.

- Violent criminal behavior constitutes a choice. We need to get youth to anticipate consequences and make better choices.

- Animals are good at reading and communicating mood and intentions. Some populations of people lack these skills for experiential and psychological reasons. Animals can be role models to children of these behaviors.

- The roots of violence and animal cruelty include culture, personal and family history, and biological predisposition. The need for power and control, a history of abuse, neglect, or trauma, low emotional intelligence, and absence of empathy are some of the individual and family risk factors for violence and animal abuse. Biological predisposition is related to impulse control and arousal issues and emotional intelligence and social intelligence issues. Young males sometimes lack impulse control, which can be the result of low-functioning frontal lobes. Impulse control and arousal issues can have roots in the interaction of genetic, neurochemical, and environmental factors.

- The use of functional MRIs and PET scans are promising tools for looking at the impact of interventions.

- Effective interventions provide multi-sensory experiences and engage a range of senses and motor skills, involve social interaction with peers and counselors, take place in a safe and supportive environment, and associate appropriate behavior with positive outcomes.

Dr. Lockwood’s powerpoint presentation is in Appendix I.
Best Evidence for Animal Assisted Interventions in Adolescent Mental Health
Katherine A. Kruger, MSW, Assistant Director, Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society, Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Katherine A. Kruger, MSW, Assistant Director of the Center for the Interaction of Animals & Society (CIAS) of the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, received her MSW from the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work in 2003. Prior to joining the CIAS, Ms. Kruger spent 11 years working in non-profit and research administration. Ms. Kruger also serves as Executive Secretary on the Board of the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ).

The major points from Ms. Kruger’s presentation are as follows:

- Many elements of sound research design (e.g. utilization of control or comparison groups, random assignment, well-defined, large and homogeneous samples, definition of specific outcomes and target behaviors, valid and reliable instruments to measure specified outcomes, minimization of bias, and use of appropriate statistical tests) have been missing from studies of animal assisted interventions.

- Animal assisted interventions have been applied to a range of mental health issues and diagnoses, including autism spectrum disorders, learning disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, conduct disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, affective disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, substance abuse, sexual abuse, suicidality, and dementia.

- Further empirical research is needed to investigate reports that animals may facilitate social interaction and build rapport, focus attention, have a calming effect, improve attendance, compliance and retention, provide social support and comfort, and are instruments of learning skills, cognitions, and behaviors.

- Funding for research is needed to make the field of animal assisted interventions attractive to university researchers. Since most studies have been carried out by students whose mentors are unfamiliar with the field or by health and mental health practitioners, research has been less rigorous.
• Researchers should look at non-specific effects of animal assisted interventions such as retention in treatment, rather than therapeutic change.

• The expert panel from CAIS Adolescent Mental Health Conference concluded evaluation of animal assisted interventions could be improved through augmentation to empirically supported treatments, comparison with other treatments, and prospective-longitudinal studies.

Ms. Kruger’s powerpoint presentation is in Appendix J.

Challenges in Evaluating Outcomes in Animal Assisted Interventions
Barbara Boat, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Cincinnati

Barbara Walling Boat, Ph.D. is Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and Executive Director of The Childhood Trust at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center. She has conducted research on the use of anatomical dolls in sexual abuse investigations and currently is interested in relationships among violence to children and animals and domestic violence, including dog bites. Her special clinical interests are treatment of dissociative disorders and the training and utilization of evidenced-based interventions in treating traumatized children.

The major points from Dr Boat’s presentation are as follows:

• Developed by Dr. Lynn Loar, Strategic Humane Intervention Program (SHIP) combines clicker training of homeless dogs with human interaction skills that focus on rewarding positive behavior. The YWCA of Greater Cincinnati, SPCA Cincinnati, and Childhood Trust collaborated to offer SHIP to battered mothers and children (2003-2004) and adolescents adjudicated for domestic violence and a caregiver (2005-2007).

• The goals for SHIP are lofty and include enhancing self-esteem, creating a more compassionate person, creating respect for the needs of animals and humans, enhancing empathy, and increasing child’s ability to delay gratification.

• Challenges in evaluation include: too lofty goals; complex outcome measures; lack of alignment between intervention and effective and available evaluation tools; developmental, cultural and stability issues that affect programmatic and follow-up potential; volunteer turnover; difficulties going to scale if program centered on individual program leaders; short length of intervention to impact behavior; and meeting expectations of multiple stakeholders.

• Solutions include post-retrospective instruments that ask participants about changes that they have experienced, what they have learned, and how they intend to use skills. Competencies gained in SHIP include knowing how to approach a strange dog, treating a dog after clicking behavior, giving a labeled praise when
someone does something you like, timing your click to mark the behavior you want to reward, being a trainer in the training game, and being patient when trying to teach someone a new skill. Preliminary SHIP data suggest that the effect of animal assisted programs on fear of animals could be an important outcome to measure. Standardized outcome measures are necessary for replication of programs.

- The impact of programs may be greater if they involve both the child and the caregiver.

Dr. Boat’s powerpoint presentation is in Appendix K.

Funding Evaluation of Animal Assisted Interventions
Mary Lou Randour, Ph.D., Director, Human-Animal Relations, Education and Outreach, Human Society of the United States

Mary Lou Randour, Ph.D., a psychologist, is head of the Department of Human/Animal Relations - Education & Outreach for The Humane Society of the United States. Dr. Randour contributes to the professional literature, identifies legislative and policy opportunities in the area of the link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence, and collaborates with various professional communities, including law enforcement, mental and public health, juvenile justice, child advocacy and domestic violence. Dr. Randour authored, A Common Bond: Child Maltreatment and Animals in the Family, a handbook developed in partnership with the American Bar Association, which is designed for all court officials

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working on child welfare concerns. She is first author of another handbook, *AniCare Child*, an approach that focuses on why and how to assess and treat children who abuse animals, and second author of *The AniCare Model of Treatment for Animal Abuse*, which focuses on the treatment of adults.

The major points from Dr. Randour's presentation are as follows:

- With evaluation, programs can reach a larger audience.

- We need to define what we are trying to achieve and what issues we are trying to enhance. The mode is animal assisted intervention.

- Resources for intervention programs and evaluations related to prevention of youth violence can be found within the Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Institute of Justice, and Office of Justice Programs) and the Department of Health and Human Services (Center for Disease Control, Administration for Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, NIH/NIMH, and Family Violence and Prevention Services).

- Partnerships between domestic violence programs and animal assisted programs could be effective.

- A National Technical Assistance Center on AAT and Youth Violence Prevention is needed to provide up-to-date information on programs, program evaluation instruments, grant proposals, technical assistance, publications and other resources and to facilitate communication.

Dr. Randour's powerpoint presentation is in Appendix L.
New Data on Animal Assisted Programs

The second day of the conference was devoted to presentations and discussions about new research and future research directions. Researchers provided new data on mechanisms of change in animal assisted programs, staff and participant perspectives on program effectiveness, and the role that animals play in achieving program outcomes.

Joan Dalton, Director, Project Pooch

Joan Dalton, the Director of Project POOCH, chaired the session. Ms. Dalton founded the program in 1993. She started with one dog and one youth. Since that time, Project Pooch has changed (and saved) the lives of hundreds of dogs and youths. Ms. Dalton has a BA and MST in education.

Perspectives of Youth in Animal-Centered Correctional Vocational Program: A Qualitative Evaluation of Project Pooch
Kate Davis, MSW, Graduate School of Social Work, Portland State University

Kate Davis, MSW, is a former faculty member of Portland State University's Graduate School of Social Work. Initially interested in doing clinical work with the incarcerated youth and their dogs at Project Pooch, Ms. Davis was instead asked to conduct a research study to determine youth perspectives about their experiences at Project Pooch. The result is a qualitative report about the experiences of youth working with dogs in a correctional facility. Currently, Davis spends some of her time in private practice, helping pet owners cope with the emotional burden of chronic and emergency veterinary issues. Davis is also a family therapist who works with abused children and their families.

The major points from Ms. Davis’ presentation are as follows:

• Program participants are the experts on their experiences. In qualitative interviews, Project Pooch participants report that they gained skills in patience, relationship building, employment, learning and teaching, communication, anger management, empathy and self-discipline. They also describe gains in technical skills that would benefit them upon their release including public speaking, being interviewed, grooming and training dogs, running a kennel, computer use, responsibility and leadership. Youth report that they learned about emotions and behavior from the dogs and became attached to the dogs as their companions.

• While there is interest in determining whether programs provide skills that will generalize into post-program experiences, the experience in itself is adequate for those who are seeking humane care for animals and inmates.

Ms. Davis’ paper is in Appendix M.
Staff Perspectives on Animal Assisted Interventions for Youth At Risk
Avril Lindsay, LCSW, CGP, Program Manager, Children's Village

Avril Lindsay, LCSW, CGP, has been practicing as a social worker at The Children's Village for more than fourteen years. In her time at the Children's Village, Ms. Lindsay has specialized in the treatment of trauma and psychiatric illnesses of children and adolescents, exploring creative ways to provide effective treatment. Ms. Lindsay is currently the Program Manager of the Children's Village Crisis Residence. Since 2001, Ms. Lindsay has been involved in the East Coast Assistance Dogs program (housed at the Children's Village) as a volunteer puppy raiser. She co-chaired the inception of the AAT program at the Children's Village. Ms. Lindsay is certified by ECAD as an Animal Assisted Therapy team, with Jaguar, a Yellow Labrador/Golden Retriever mix, bred by ECAD. Ms. Lindsay has presented on the uses of AAT to residential treatment centers, hospitals, and conferences, as well as training AAT handlers at CV.

The major points from Ms. Lindsay's presentation are as follows:

- Surveys found that the vast majority of Children's Village staff report that the presence of the dog caused youth to calm down, relate better to each other, be less defensive, and behave better. Staff report that the dogs provided emotional support to the children, that children learned about body language from the dogs, and that they enjoyed touching and playing with the dogs. Most staff believe that in at least some cases youth who would otherwise require a therapeutic hold did not need restraints when the therapy dog was present.

- Therapy dogs can be diagnostic as well as therapeutic tools.

Ms. Lindsay’s paper is in Appendix N.

Mechanisms of Change
Arnold Arluke, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University

Arnold Arluke, Ph.D. is Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at Northeastern University and Senior Scholar at Tufts University Center for Animals and Public Policy. His research examines conflicts and contradictions in human-animal relationships. He has published over 80 articles and nine books, including Regarding Animals (Temple University Press, 1996), Brute Force: Animal Police and the Challenge of Cruelty (Purdue University Press, 2004), Just a Dog: Understanding Animal Cruelty and Ourselves (Temple University Press, 2006) and The Sacrifice: How Scientific Experiments Transform Animals and People (Purdue University Press, 2006). He also edits with Clinton Sanders the Animals, Culture, and Society series for Temple University Press.

The major points from Dr. Arluke’s presentation are as follows:

- Social relationships among participants, animals, and staff in animal assisted programs are central elements in creating personal change in program participants.
Programs at Children's Village, Green Chimneys, Project Pooch, Forget Me Not Farm, and Erie County SPCA provided participants with at least seven types of social relationships: participant buy-in to the program; close relationships involving for the first time trust, intimacy, security, nurturing, and sacrifice; staff modeling of interpersonal and relationship skills; culture of success that empowers participants; weakening of hierarchies that encourages youth to be assertive, take responsibility and develop self-worth; development of empathetic skills from perspective-taking and identifying with the animals; and experiences coping with frustration.

- Animal qualities such as their encouragement of touching and lack of criticism foster close relationships for participants.

- To unpack the therapeutic magic of programs, researchers need to further explore the emergence and development of relationships between participants and animals and explore the extent to which these social relationships might be generically transferred to other programs for program replication. Further research is needed on extent to which changes are situational or whether they can be carried into other settings outside of the program.

Dr. Arluke’s paper follows.
Mechanisms of Change

Arnold Arluke
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Northeastern University
Boston, MA 02115

A number of speakers yesterday talked about the need to understand the mechanisms underlying successful and unsuccessful programs—that is asking how they work rather than whether they do. They also suggested that understanding the engine behind effective programs is a complicated task involving relationships that emerge between targeted youth and program animals and staff members.

I explored this question as an ethnographer—I immerse myself directly into the cultures I study—watching, listening, talking to participants, and sometimes participating with them—in order to understand their group perspectives and to provide a thick description of what their world looks like to them. Thanks to Green Chimneys, Children’s Village, Forget Me Not Farm, Project Pooch and the Erie County SPCA—all of whom generously opened their doors and lives to me— I spent a month doing fieldwork in these five programs. They were specifically chosen because they had national, and even international, reputations for being effective, based on anecdotal and research reports. (Of course, I had no comparison program to study that was ineffective). Two were service-dog programs, two were obedience-dog programs, and one was a farm animal program that also offered gardening.

My goal, then, was to produce insight—and encourage future research—into the characteristics of apparently effective interventions. All the programs I studied provided “participants” (i.e., the targeted children, adolescents, and young adults) with seven kinds of social relationships involving animals, staff members, and the programs themselves.

The first relationship is with the program itself. Participants “buy into” or wholeheartedly embrace their exposure to and training with animals, along with the programs more generally. Most obviously, they buy into these programs because most find it intrinsically appealing to be, play, or work with animals. Hands down, this beats every other activity they have. How much fun is phonics if you have not been doing well with it?

Participants also buy into programs when they see them as a way to develop or express parts of their personalities that have not flourished. Some, for example, may feel competent or responsible for the first time, and find this experience rewarding—especially when they are praised for it or see what it leads to. Others already have these skills, but are never in safe settings where they can act certain ways without being criticized or

1 A longer version of this talk will appear in late 2008 or early 2009 in the Journal of Social Issues under the title, “How Animal Assisted Activities Help At-risk Children and Incarcerated Young Adults.”
losing status. The big guy who is able to nurture a program kitten may be used to people who would make fun of him for expressing any softness. In either case, satisfaction in discovering or unlocking these social skills for the first time can generalize or spill over into increased interest or belief in the program itself.

Finally, participants buy into programs when they identify with the animals' plight and future. Farm animal and dog-obedience programs use animals having sad histories—they have been abandoned, abused, or otherwise mistreated. Participants often ask where these animals come from, why they are injured, or how they learn such bad behavior, to which staff members explain their troubled histories. In turn, many participants connect their own abused, homeless, or abandoned backgrounds to their animals. By making these connections, participants take comfort in their own situations and have hope for a better life—just as program animals have a safe and secure place and a hopeful future.

A second social characteristic of these programs is that participants have many opportunities to try on and experience close relationships with animals and people that involve trust, intimacy, security and sacrifice.

Some of these close relationships are with program animals. Here, participants not only train or care for particular animals over a long time but develop emotional attachments to some, which can be quite profound. Qualities unique to animals help to build these close relationships, including providing quick, easy, and uncomplicated physical contact with participants—something they don't get with humans. Participants also immediately get something back that is positive—affection and attention—that is also lacking in their human contacts. Once established, close relationships with animals can yield major benefits. For example, they may be the closest, longest, and safest relationships ever experienced by participants with any living companion, whether human or nonhuman. Consequently, these relationships also allow participants to experience the loss of an emotional connection, and feelings of selflessness that follow when their animals leave programs for adopters or disabled clients.

Participants also can form close relationships with program peers that can have lasting significance. They are encouraged to help each other train animals by pointing out and correcting peers' mistakes, thereby fostering teamwork and joint problem solving. And they are allowed to socialize informally with each other by talking, playing, teasing, or rough housing. Both experiences can lead to friendships.

Participants also can form close relationships with staff members. The latter tend to relate better to participants than do most other adults in these facilities. Resulting strong rapport and trust make participants feel the staff understands them and will do the right thing by them. In turn, participants reveal things to staff members that they cannot tell other teachers or administrators; doing so will get them into trouble (e.g., having a gun) or be too personal (e.g., having girlfriend problems). Not surprisingly, participants commonly feel they are part of a tight family—something that many never before felt.

A third relationship created is for staff members to take on healing roles with participants. Some of this is predictable role modeling of interpersonal and emotional skills never
shown to and reinforced for participants. For one, staff model nurturing behavior when they interact with animals or with participants themselves. Patience and control are also modeled—this is especially important because so many children in these programs are impatient and impulsive. Participants are shown how to gain control over animals, and then by deduction, how to control themselves. Staff members also model assertiveness, as opposed to aggressiveness. This is a new idea for participants because they are used to being a victim or perpetrator. Now, they are shown that they can have their own goals and motivations, without abusing or victimizing anyone.

Other healing roles are less predictable. I saw staff members assuming a destigmatizing role with participants to free them, at least temporarily, from destructive labels when they visit programs. Most staff members have very little information about participants’ mental health or criminal backgrounds. Program directors are not usually given such information and, even if available, the sentiment is that such information could adversely affect the staff by biasing their interactions with participants or making them worry about participants’ well-being once they leave the program. Also, programs do not want to focus on the participant’s mental health problems and, if staff had this information, they might bring it up when interacting with them.

Staff members also assume uncritical roles toward participants to make them feel safe and comfortable, compared to the way adults usually regulate and judge them in classes or therapy sessions. For example, some staff members do not control or criticize misbehavior, even to the point of not yelling if someone runs off. Staff members believe this uncritical stance parallels how animals uncritically accept participants. A less intentional way to be uncritical is for staff members to ride the coattails of the rapport created by program animals. Because they are associated with these animals, staff members are perceived by participants not as single individuals but as units with animals, sharing a halo of uncritical acceptance.

A fourth characteristic of these apparently successful programs is that they make participants feel empowered. Staff members and animals create a micro-culture of success where participants can usually acquire new skills, see positive results, gain new roles, and learn to speak of their own accomplishments.

Programs empower participants by teaching them to regard their work with animals as important and beneficial. In both service and obedience-dog programs many spoke about how their trained animals provided adopted families with new companions or enabled disabled clients to function more independently. Participants actually see the successful results of their training when adopters or clients return with dogs that appear well placed in their new homes. Participants also feel good because their efforts benefit animals too. In two programs, participants helped animals in need or “saved” them from death, as with problem dogs that could not otherwise be adopted.

Another way to empower participants is by preparing them for work outside the institution. Those in dog training programs can potentially earn a living by becoming obedience trainers, kennel workers, dog groomers, or animal caretakers. One program deliberately prepared its youth for future work by treating them as employees: they recorded their time on the job, got paid for their time, and sometimes had their work performance assessed. They also were expected to “give and take orders” as well as appear and speak professionally with outsiders who came to kennel a dog, receive dog training, or consider a dog for adoption. Also, in this program, students were constantly reminded about the parallels between their work with dogs and the kinds of job skills they will need
after release, such as being polite and reliable when dealing with the public. More indirectly, participants also assume important roles, such as that of teacher to disabled clients, adopters, or peers, which teach social skills like responsibility that might carry over into their future lives.

Finally, participants feel empowered by learning to speak about and label their own improvement. They hear staff members who are quick to verbalize presumed changes in participants, no matter how subtle or ambiguous the change. Some participants learn to parrot and see these presumed changes in themselves. Articulating such change is also part of their socialization into these programs because they know the staff wants to hear that. One child, for instance, talked about his “anger management problems” that he now had “under control,” which was the same language used by his supervising staff member to describe his success. In a similar vein, many participants spoke about feeling much “calmer” because of their program experience, again a change commonly pointed out by staff members. Of course, giving participants a language to frame their emotions may have educational uses, whether, in fact, there really are such changes, by increasing their self-awareness.

A fifth characteristic of these programs—and one closely related to the empowerment of participants—is that they are less hierarchical and formal than those experienced by participants in classroom settings. Weakening the traditional hierarchy promotes personal change by encouraging participants to be assertive, take responsibility, and feel self worth.

Program hierarchy is softened in several ways. One way is to close the knowledge and competence gap between adult and child. Novices in the dog programs know nothing about animal behavior, care, and training, while staff members know everything. This gap quickly closes as staff members freely share information and skills with participants, a few of whom gain sufficient expertise to rival and even challenge the staff’s authority.

Hierarchy is also softened because animals occupy a tier below the children, in terms of authority and power, unlike the classroom hierarchy of teacher versus student. For once, the participants have someone below them. In addition, an informal hierarchical alliance is created when participants develop stronger bonds with individual animals than had by staff members—it is no longer adult versus only the child.

Animals also soften the hierarchy by bringing an informal air to programs compared to more formal settings, such as classrooms. One way they do this is by making conversation easier between child and adult. Participants can ask questions about animals, and adults can easily initiate conversation with participants through animals, when talking to them might otherwise be hard. Another way animals create informality is that they bark, snore, hee haw, defecate, urinate, vomit, attack, run uncontrollably, kick, or act out. These acts temporarily break the usual routine and provide occasions for laughter.

A different way to soften hierarchy is to reduce overt signs of the low, institutional status of participants in the overall facility. For example, one program director gives clothing to participants that does not resemble the uniform, drab clothes worn by other
youth in the facility (i.e., gray sweat pants and T-shirts); instead, they wear colored shirts bearing the program's name, blue jeans, and Columbia rain slickers. Several programs also provide non-institutional food to participants.

Finally, hierarchical differences are softened when staff members stop themselves from making decisions so that participants can become decision makers. Although control is not abdicated for urgent matters, when it is, it provides an important experience for participants. For example, to deal with a mouse problem, one program director let participants come up with their own solution as part of her larger goal of allowing them to think through problems on their own. Staff members also reinforce participants' authority or expertise by allowing them to disagree with their decisions. For instance, one young man with two years' experience in a dog-obedience program sometimes disagrees with the director about how best to train his animals.

A sixth program characteristic is that participants encounter new perspectives by working with clients, staff members, and animals. Learning and applying these perspectives requires empathic skills absent or weak in many participants.

The first perspective they learn is that of the animals, both as individuals and species. For example, to train dogs successfully, participants are encouraged to "think like a dog" when teaching them new commands. Once participants become comfortable interpreting the dog's perspective, they invariably conclude that their animals care about them, increasing their attachment and encouraging them to use and trust their newly learned empathic skills. Participants also are taught to generalize the animal's perspective to adult groups, such as parents or teachers, by using animals as metaphors to teach lessons about human relationships. In one case, the program's mascot allowed the staff to teach students important lessons about good parenting when the good-natured dog allowed several very frisky puppies to jump on her without stopping or getting angry with them. The program director told students that the dog was being a good parent by being patient with her demanding "kids."

Participants also learn to see things from the perspective of adults, such as that of their disabled clients. In the service-dog programs, participants use wheelchairs in class and on field trips to role play their client's disability. They learn that some people have it worse than they do, or they directly observe clients' limitations. These programs also have students train disabled clients to use the dogs; as they get to know their clients, students learn that their clients have feelings and goals akin to their own.

A seventh, and final characteristic I will mention is that these programs allow participants to be frustrated when interacting with their animals and then to cope with this frustration. Working with animals can be challenging. This is certainly true for any novice, especially a young child with anger control and attention deficit disorders. A common early complaint, for example, is that the dogs just sit there and look at participants instead of listening and responding to their commands. Even more experienced students get frustrated at times. A few described dog training as a "battle" that got them annoyed at times. Facing and dealing with such problems is thought to instill greater self-control, patience, calmness, or self-awareness in participants.

Most participants learn to manage their frustration. They learn, in a practical sense, that when they get frustrated training dogs, they get nowhere with them. For example, some students say that if they are angry when they try to train their dogs, the dogs will sense this and shutdown and not want to work with them. Instead, they learn to be patient with their charges, as training the same behavior often takes many repetitions.
Participants also draw on their relationships with animals to lessen frustration and deal with impatience. For instance, one boy who had a “big struggle” with patience learned to “stop himself” from getting angry by realizing that “it’s just a dog, calm down. It doesn’t know any better.” Another boy claimed that by simply looking at his dog’s face “you are like, how in the heck I am supposed to get mad at him.”

According to staff members, participants’ new patience with animals transfers to becoming less frustrated with people. One boy, for instance, spoke about how he felt more patient with his own young child, instead of quickly becoming frustrated with its difficult behaviors. Another felt that learning patience with dogs helped him get along better with difficult peers in his unit.

In sum, all the programs I studied provided a similar set of social relationships to participants. For ethnographers interested in unpacking the therapeutic magic of these programs, the next steps are, first, to discover additional relationships and refine those that I reported—such as further detailing the emergence and development of relationships between participants and program animals; second, to explore the extent to which these seven relationships might be generically transferred to other programs or whether their success is more idiosyncratic and dependent on the personality of a dominant individual present in the program; and third, to look at whether or how these relationships interface with participants’ lives in the community. Only by answering these and other hard questions can we begin to share your magic and increase its power in the future.
The Impact of Animal Visitation in an In-Class Humane Education Program
Kate Nicoll, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director, Soul Friends
William Samuels, Ph.D., Director of Research, People, Animals and Nature, Inc.

Kate Nicoll, MSW, LCSW is a clinical social worker with more than twenty years of experience working with children and families. Since her graduation from Smith College, Ms. Nicoll has practiced in a multitude of settings including inpatient psychiatric care, private practice, homecare, hospice, several hospitals and children’s clinic. Four years ago, Ms. Nicoll founded the nonprofit, Soul Friends, Inc, a nonprofit established with a mission to provide innovative clinical and educational programs that promote the healing benefits of the human-animal bond. Soul Friend's curriculum-based programs include Heeling Hearts, Come, Follow Me, and WE LOVE ANIMALS! She is the author of two books, Soul Friends: Finding Healing with Animals and A Therapy Dog at Work and Play. She has presented at local, national and international conferences on animal assisted interventions in her work with children.

Bill Samuels, Ph.D. earned his terminal degree in Experimental Psychology and Psychometrics from the University of Texas at Arlington. Dr. Samuels has created and evaluated education (including humane education) programs in a variety of settings including primary and secondary schools; colleges; and for after-school, government, non-profit, and community-based programs. His research interests include animal assisted interventions, human-animal interactions, pro-social development, resilience, and best teaching practices—especially for students who are at-risk and in non-traditional settings. An advocate of animal welfare and compassionate, student-centered learning, Dr. Samuels has published and presented research on humane education, education program evaluation, constructivism, and teacher professional development.

The major points from Ms. Nicoll and Dr. Samuel's presentation are as follows:

- Previous research suggests hands-on learning and presence of a live animal may have more impact on elementary school children than other types of presentations. Interventions should be developmentally appropriate, tactile, multi-sensory, and interactive. Cognitive processing in young children is anchored in immediate experiences.

- Students can benefit from humane education and animal assisted interventions in a classroom settings. The presence of animals increased effects of humane education program. Animal visitation is salient. Diverse teaching strategies may synergize.

Ms. Nicoll and Dr. Samuel's powerpoint presentation is in Appendix O.
Open Forum Research Discussion: Promising Research Directions

The Open Research Forum provided an opportunity for both university and program-based researchers to discuss ongoing and proposed research projects.

Carol Rathmann, Director, Forget Me Not Farm

Carol Rathmann, Program Director of Humane Society & SPCA of Sonoma County Program Director, developed and has directed Forget Me Not Farm since 1992. With more than 30 years of experience in humane education and animal welfare, Ms. Rathmann holds a Master’s Degree in Psychology. Her studies focused on the effects of abuse, neglect and trauma on early childhood development. She is a Registered Veterinary Technician with certification from Harcum College (1998) as a Specialist in Animal Assisted Activities and Therapy. Ms. Rathmann has received numerous awards for her innovative work at Forget Me Not Farm, including Prevent Child Abuse California’s Henry Bergh Award in 1994, for the year’s most innovative program for child abuse treatment and prevention.

The major points from Ms. Rathmann’s presentation are as follows:

- There is no magic bullet in instrumentation for evaluating animal assisted interventions
- Videotaping is a good strategy to document what is happening in programs. Forget Me Not Farm is having experts from a variety of disciplines analyze 18 hours of videotape.

Preliminary findings from the following studies were reported upon during the Open Forum Research discussion:

Kate Nicoll, MSW, LCSW, Soul Friends
The Benefits of Animal Assisted Interventions and TAGteach in Improving Eye Contact and Body Awareness in Special Needs Children

A goal-directed animal assisted therapy group, Come, Follow Me! has shown success in the integration of TAGTeach (Teaching with Acoustical Guidance) in a population of special needs children. Research has commented on the motivating factor of animals in treatment, as well as the ability of these interactions to assist with learning about appropriate touch and boundaries, improve communication and reduce isolation (Chandler, 2001). Come Follow Me! is a six session program of social skills development and dog training for children living with autism spectrum disorders, ADHD and other developmental challenges. The incorporation of clicker training, known as TAGTeach in human interactions, has shown encouraging results in improving attention and body awareness in diverse populations including gymnasts and children living with autism. Interactions with animals have been thought to be able to increase focus and attention, as well as to be agents of de-arousal (Kruger et al 2004). In this study, eye contact and body awareness was tracked in five
children participating in the group program. Children were given a TAG point, such as “look at me” or “hands by your side” during interactions with both the therapy dog and group leader in an attempt to promote prosocial behavior during social communication. The children’s TAG points were tallied by an outside observer and the child was rewarded in the moment by success in the human-animal interaction and later with a workbook and sticker book that tracked their positive behavior. A pre and post questionnaire completed by parents by three of the participants noted improvement in several areas of social communication including eye contact for two of the children. This pilot study demonstrated the benefits of a didactic approach of TAGteach and the integration of animal assisted interventions in a group program for special needs children.

The Effectiveness of a Curriculum Based Animal Assisted Intervention Psychotherapy Group on Hopefulness and Empathy in Adolescents

During the period of June-July, 2006 a group of 8 adolescents (3 girls, 5 boys) who were students in an inner city technical high school in Connecticut went through the Heeling Hearts program using a newly developed student workbook. The workbooks were developed by the Heeling Hearts program founders, Kate Nicoll, M.S.W. and Cindy Tifone, MA., in connection with Suzanne Duke, Ph.D., who received a grant from Southern CT State University to help develop the workbooks and pilot test their effectiveness in enhancing the program.

Parental or guardian consent was obtained before pre and post testing was obtained from each of the students. Students were identified by the school psychologist and were part of an anger management group. Both before and after the 8-week program, the students each took two paper and pencil tests. The first was Bryant’s Empathy Index for Children and Adolescents, a 22 item instrument scored on a 1-5 scale of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree which contained items such as “I get upset when I see a girl being hurt” and “It makes me sad to see a boy who can’t find anyone to play with.” This index has been successfully tested for internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha = .79) and internal validity, and thus has been frequently used in the literature. The second instrument distributed was a Hopefulness Scale. Here there were 6 questions answered on a 6-point scale of None of the Time to All of the Time, with questions such as “I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me”.  

Kate Nicoll, MSW, LCSW, Soul Friends
The results were positive with this very small pilot test. On the Empathy Index, all 8 students increased their total score, with increases ranging from 1-11 points, with an average 4.63. On the Hopefulness Scale, all students but one increased their total score, from 2 points to 5 points increase, and the one student’s total score remained unchanged. The average increase was 2.63 points. The results seem to indicate that the program enhanced with the new workbooks may be effective in positively impacting empathy and hopefulness in the population at-risk youth. Continued testing with larger numbers of adolescents is recommended.

Marivic Rosabelle Dizon, Stanford University School of Education
Creature Comfort: The Effect of an Animal-Assisted Intervention on Anxiety and Self-Disclosure Among Youth Exposed to Community Violence

The purpose of this dissertation study was to test experimentally whether an animal-assisted intervention would have an effect on middle school students’ anxiety level and amount and type of emotional self-disclosure during an interview that examined exposure to community violence. Participants were 42 students in grades 6 to 8. Twenty students were randomly assigned to the experimental group (i.e., presence of a therapy rabbit) and twenty-two students were randomly assigned to the control group (i.e., absence of a therapy rabbit). Students participated in a pre-interview, community violence interview, and post-interview during which anxiety was measured. During the community violence interview, students were asked questions about violence they witnessed in their neighborhood (e.g., seeing the police arrest someone, seeing someone get shot). Self-disclosure was measured as total word count and frequency of negative emotion words used during the interview. Students’ Immediate Anxiety, Greatest Anxiety and Delayed Anxiety were measured at the conclusion of the interview. During the post-interview, students were asked to describe their experience participating in the study. Students in the experimental group were also asked questions about their experience with the therapy rabbit.

Students in the total sample reported being exposed to a high level of community violence, with 59% witnessing between four to seven violent events. Hearing gunshots was the most frequently reported event, and 38% of students knew either the victim or perpetrator of the violent event they witnessed. Because this study had a small sample size, interpretation of findings was based on the magnitude and direction of the effect sizes. The animal-assisted intervention had a medium effect on students’ Greatest Anxiety and level of self-disclosure. Students in the experimental group compared to students in the control group reported higher Greatest Anxiety and fewer negative emotion words (e.g., scared, sad). The animal-assisted intervention had a small effect on students’ Immediate Anxiety, Delayed Anxiety and total word count. Anxiety was not found to be significantly related to self-disclosure. Qualitative findings included the following: 1) Students demonstrated empathy and care for the victims/or perpetrators of the violence; 2) Students stated that the interview was a positive outlet through which they could relieve their distress; 3) Students engaged in “touch-talk dialogue” with the therapy rabbit; and 4) Students felt comfortable in the interview due to the presence and interaction with the rabbit. This study demonstrated that an animal-assisted intervention can be a source of support for youth exposed to community violence.
The purpose of this study was to explore the potential benefits of a therapeutic horsemanship program for children adopted from foster care and their adoptive mothers. A case study analysis using mixed methods was done on a sample of nine adopted children and their adoptive mothers. Standardized measures, open-ended interviews and surveys were administered to determine effects on external child behavior, child self-esteem and parenting stress. The Child Behavior Checklist was administered to measure behavioral challenges in the children in this sample. There were no statistically significant changes on any of the CBCL scales. Qualitative data from the mothers and instructor and researcher observations show some affect on behavior. The Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory-3 was administered to measure self-esteem of the nine children in the sample. The decrease on the Global Self-Esteem Quotient of the CFSEI-3 was statistically significant. Of the nine children, only three of them scored in the clinical range at pre-test. Of these three, two moved into the normal range and the third improved her score to be very close to the normal range. Qualitative data from the mothers, Instructors and researcher observations support this finding. The Total Stress score of the Parenting Stress Index – Short Form for the mothers in the sample did not show a statistically significant decrease. Six of the nine mothers' pre-test and post-test scores were in the clinical range and only three had decreased post-test scores. The Qualitative data obtained through interviews, surveys and observations did not support a direct impact of the program on stress levels but rather an impact on level of support. Many mothers reported that they liked spending time with the other mothers to share resources and discuss their children. The data collected in this study does not provide sufficient evidence to make any causal statements about therapeutic horsemanship programs and children adopted from foster care. It does, however, provide support for the need for future research. The findings from this study have implications for meeting the needs of a variety of children adopted from foster and their adoptive parents.

Dr. Cody contributed several additional comments as follows:

- Programs need to be cautious about their use of language, particularly using the term “success” without adequate research findings.

- Research should be grounded in theoretical frameworks.

- Partnerships between programs and researchers enable both to use their expertise.
The process of shaping a puppy to become a reliable service dog offers many experiential learning opportunities. Teaching effective parenting strategies to teens at-risk by teaching them this method may provide a valuable prospect for learning. Many psychologists have studied behavioral and learning theories during their undergraduate and graduate work. University programs provide hands-on learning through laboratory work where students shape and observe the behaviors of animals including rats, pigeons and other species. Providing a similar experiential learning opportunity to teens deemed as “At-Risk” offers an effective means of teaching them important social and emotional concepts resulting in improved parenting skills and attitudes. In this research study, teens are referred through the juvenile probation department into the Assistance Dog Institute’s High Schooled Assistance Dog Program (HS A-Dog). Prior to the teens’ involvement in the HS A-Dog Program, each participant is administered the Adult and Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI) pre-test A. Using Dr. Bonita Bergin’s HS A-Dog curriculum (BASICS and ABC’S of the SMARTEST DOG TRAINING), the teen trainers are taught how to nurture, shape behaviors and foster willing attitudes within the dogs resulting in their graduation as service dogs. The participants, upon their departure from the program complete the AAPI post-test B. Initial test results have shown significant improvements in the participants’ parenting attitudes. Constructs identified in the AAPI include; Understanding of Normal Developmental Behaviors, Level of Empathy and Understanding of a Child’s Needs, Valuation of Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, Understanding of Appropriate Family Member Roles, and Ability to Empower Children to Make Good Choices. The greatest deficits identified to date in the pre test have been related to understanding appropriate family member roles. Pilot data shows improvement in all areas monitored by the AAPI for each participant. These results are encouraging and reflect a need for expanded research on the efficacy of this teaching methodology. By teaching the skills to teens-at-risk and shaping their attitudes related to effective parenting, we can disrupt the cycle of abuse and neglect, resulting in fewer incidents of child maltreatment for the next generations. Traditional methods of parenting education have not proven to be greatly effective. The skills and attitudes necessary to train a service dog draw striking parallels to those employed by effective parents. Taking this psychology lab to the teens who need it most will prepare them for success in their greatest role as an adult, that of a parent.
Kenna Graunke, R.N., Southern Oregon Humane Society  
Long-term Effects of Animal Assisted Programs: The Process of Follow Up Data Collection on LEAP Participants

Southern Oregon Humane Society has conducted an animal assisted program for middle school at risk youth in the Rogue Valley since 1999. Approximately 190 students and 95 dogs have participated in the program. Although anecdotal evidence leads us to believe that there are positive long term effects, insufficient data have been collected.

LEAP (Love, Empathy, Acceptance, Partnership) costs approximately $8000 per session. The money for the programs comes from foundations, donors and the organization’s general operating budget. The need for social programs is increasing in the Rogue Valley. Therefore, evaluating the long term effects of LEAP has become a priority as funding decisions are, in part, based on the outcomes.

Many of the participants live in poverty and violence. The Rogue Valley high school dropout rates exceed the statewide average. The number of homeless students enrolled in school is the second highest in the state. The number of those under 18 living below the poverty line exceeds the national average of 17.4%. The crime index for Medford, the largest city in the Rogue Valley, has been higher than the national index for the past 8 years.

The goals of LEAP include creating attitudes of kindness, caring, respect and responsibility in adolescents by involving them with animals. Lessons are designed to help students gain skills that will assist them in obtaining an education and becoming a productive member of the community.

Pre and post surveys, journaling, presentations and observation by teachers, staff, participants and peers, reflect changes in knowledge, behaviors and thought processes that occur during the program. For the past four years, follow up with students has been conducted in person two to three weeks after graduation. Calls are placed to the dogs’ adoptive families. Interviews of participants at three month intervals for the first year have been attempted with been variable results due to time constraints, the transitory nature of the students and confidentiality issues.

At this time, tools are being developed to collect and evaluate data to assess long-term effects of LEAP. A multi-faceted approach to reach participants will follow. Contact methods will include use of telephone calls, contact with local high schools and colleges, posters, the internet and the media. We will evaluate both subjective and objective outcomes. The information will be compiled and used in presentations and in reports to possible funding sources.
Leah Brookner, MA, MSW, Portland State University  
AAT for Children with Early Onset Mental Illness: Quantifying the Benefits

Two pilot studies focus on measuring the therapeutic effects of individualized Animal Assisted Therapy provided to children, aged 2 – 5 years, with early onset mental illnesses or those considered at-risk for developing serious behavioral and emotional problems due to abuse, neglect, poverty, parental mental illness, and/or drug abuse in the family. Children were recipients of traditional mental health services, with the experimental group receiving the added AAT intervention. Each study measured changes in the participants' behavior and emotional functioning during the 18-week period in which the intervention was provided. Children were observed individually and in classroom settings; data were gathered from therapists, teachers, classroom assistants and animal handlers. Instruments include the Deveraux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) and the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS) as well as a progress tool that captured weekly quantitative and qualitative changes in the children. N = 30. Data have not yet been fully analyzed; dissertation is in progress.

Ms. Brookner contributed additional comments as follows:

• Animal assisted interventions can be grounded in theory drawn from biophilia, attachment theory, and ecological systems theory.

Aimee Tetreault, Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association  
Horses that Heal: The Effectiveness of Equine Assisted Growth and Learning On the Behavior of Students Diagnosed with Emotional Disorder

Students with a diagnosis of Emotional Disorder (ED) have a wide range of academic and behavioral problems (Gable, Hendrickson, Tonelson & Van Acker, 2002). The issues these children face can adversely affect student academic performance and hinder social relationships (Kauffman, 2001). One method alone will not resolve complex emotional disorders. Multiple interventions are needed to serve this population. This research project examines how Equine Assisted Growth and Learning (EAGAL) influences the classroom behavior of elementary school students diagnosed with ED in a special education setting. Using the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Emotional Learning (Stage D), Goals Standards and Objectives, two goals were used to form objectives for this study. They were carried out using EAGAL as the intervention method. A group of 10 students were asked to participate in this study to determine if EAGAL is an effective intervention for students diagnosed with ED.
The increased need for effective interventions and the difficulty of working with at-risk adolescents have resulted in the design of many non-traditional approaches to therapy for at-risk youth. Equine-assisted psychotherapy (EAP) combines traditional therapeutic interventions with a more innovative component involving relationships and activities with horses. The purpose of this study is to fill a research gap by examining the therapeutic outcomes of EAP in treating at-risk adolescents ages 12-18. The findings suggest that at-risk adolescents who participate in an EAP program experience greater positive therapeutic progress in psychosocial functioning than those who do not participate in an EAP program.
Future Directions for Evaluation and Practice of Animal Assisted Interventions

Challenges in Researching Animal Assisted Activities: Is the Tail Wagging the Dog?

Steven Klee, Ph.D., Associate Executive Director – Clinical and Medical Services, Green Chimneys
Jay Davidowitz, Ph.D., Senior Supervising Psychologist, Green Chimneys

Steven Klee, Ph.D. is the Associate Executive Director for Clinical and Medical Services at Green Chimneys. Dr. Klee joined the Green Chimneys staff as director of treatment in 2004. He holds a BS from the City College of New York and an MA and Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Louisville. He has presented on clinical topics internationally and has published numerous articles in professional journals. He is a member of the American Psychological Association, Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy and the American Board of Professional Psychology. In addition, Dr. Klee has held adjunct professor positions at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn.

Jay Davidowitz, Ph.D. came to Green Chimneys in 2005 and serves as the training director of the predoctoral internship program in clinical psychology. He holds a Bachelor's degree and Ph.D. in Psychology from Fordham University and has completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Clinical Psychology at Central Islip Psychiatric Center. Dr. Davidowitz has held (adjunct) Assistant Professor positions at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Fordham University, Post College and Quinnipiac University.

The main points from Dr. Klee and Dr. Davidowitz’s presentation are as follows:

- Rather than going from research to design, animal assisted research depends on what is available to design. Research needs safeguards for both children and animals. Common difficulties in AAI research are that animal people are not usually clinical researchers, clinical researchers are not usually well-informed about animal care and behavior, and researchers cannot control all aspects of access and training.

- Green Chimneys undertook an experimental study to examine how children's competencies are affected by the presence of an animal. The study compares the performance of children on math competency, symbol recognition, and other measures in the presence of a live dog with their performance in the presence of a stuffed animal. Data are still being analyzed.

- Recommendations for developing an institutional research agenda include getting everyone on board (administration, clinical staff, and farm staff): 1) look at what is naturally occurring in your agency for possible research directions; 2) start with small, controlled studies, choose studies that can be built upon; 3) get IRB
approval; 4) set aside time for training research assistants about animal handling; 5) locate funds for research; 6) identify study pool of psychology students to assist with research; and 7) involve Dr. Alan Kazdin at all stages.

Drs. Klee and Davidowitz’s powerpoint presentation is in Appendix P.

Bridging Clinical Practice and Research in Animal Assisted Interventions
Aubrey Fine, Ph.D., Professor, College of Education and Integrative Studies, California State Polytechnic University

Psychologist Aubrey Fine, Ph.D. has been in the field of Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) for over thirty years. He has also been an active faculty member at California State Polytechnic University for 26 years. His leadership among faculty and teaching excellence earned him the prestigious Wang Award in 2001. He is the editor of The Handbook on Animal Assisted Therapy, which is now in its second edition (Elsevier/Academic Press, 2006). He has also published other academic books, numerous articles, and video documentaries on related subjects such as parent/child relationships, learning/attention disorders, and sports psychology. Dr. Fine’s newest book Afternoons with Puppy (Purdue University Press, 2007) is a heartwarming account about the evolving relationships and outcomes among a therapist, his therapy animals and his patients over the course of over two decades.

The main points from Dr. Fine’s presentation are as follows:

• Animal assisted interventions involve a partnership between animals and humans in which both have an impact on the therapeutic process. Animal assisted interventions are not only about the presence of animals, but the knowledge of how to use animals to move forward.

• Some of the benefits of participation in dog training programs are related to the experience as volunteerism. Youth develop pro-social skills from volunteering. Peer tutoring has been shown to improve social behavior, communication, attitudes, self-concept and self-satisfaction.

• Working with animals can lessen frustration and enhance patience. The strongest buy-in is that animal assisted interventions are novel and fun.

• Practitioners need to pay closer attention to need for program evaluation and documentation in order to bridge clinical practice and best practice research.

• Generalization of skills beyond therapeutic settings and maintenance are crucial to social skills training. Generalization includes temporal generalization that continues after treatment and generalization across settings in which treatment changes are displayed outside of therapeutic settings.
• To assess social skill deficits, researchers could consider social validity (peer acceptance, friendship status, parent and teacher judgments), school data (attendance, disciplinary referrals, and suspension), direct observations of child's behavior in a natural environment, and measurements of component skills.

Dr. Fine's powerpoint presentation is in Appendix Q.

**Future Directions in Outcome Evaluation for Animal Assisted Programs for Youth-At-Risk**

*Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D.*

As an educator and researcher, Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D. has over 25 years of experience studying the causes and prevention of juvenile delinquency, focusing in particular on legal and social policies and institutions that affect child and youth welfare. She received her MA and Ph.D. in Jurisprudence and Social Policy from the University of California, Berkeley and Boalt Hall School of Law. Dr. Blomquist was a Senior Fellow with the California Attorney General, Department of Justice Targeted Research Fellowship Program, Bureau of Criminal Statistics, undertaking research using the Bureau's various longitudinal arrest and disposition data bases. Dr. Blomquist has served on the Board of Directors for the Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault in Bakersfield, CA, where she also provided training for volunteers and assisted as a volunteer rape crises counselor. Her involvement with the Western Society of Criminology includes her terms of office as vice president and president. Dr. Blomquist's research and consulting experience include projects with the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and the American Prosecutors Research Institute. Currently, Dr. Blomquist is a lecturer with the University of California, Irvine.

The main points from Dr. Blomquist's presentation are as follows:

• Referring agencies and their missions are a source of evaluation criteria. Schools, mental health and foster care agencies and youth corrections programs provide definitions for a youth's "at-risk" designation. They view animal assisted activities as a means for addressing deficiencies that interfere with a youth's performance and relations in educational, family or public settings. They may diagnose deficiencies in knowledge or skill competencies, grade- and age-appropriate abilities and/or psychosocial functioning. Referring agencies also are a possible data source for researchers.

• Program staff can make use of exploratory data collection activities such as written reflections from youth, progress notes, achievements, and commentary or observations by adults, parents, outside animal experts, and adopters of animals trained by youth to develop instruments to measure program effectiveness.

Dr. Blomquist's paper is in Appendix R.
Best Practices Discussion Groups

The final component of the conference was a series of small group discussion sessions on Evaluation and Research, Program Content and Participants, Program Management and Training and Building Support: Community Partnerships, Funding, and Public Awareness. Using the report of the Survey of Best Practices in Dog Training Programs as a starting point, these sessions sought to identify what works in animal assisted programs. To facilitate the cross-fertilization of ideas, we paired as co-facilitators of these sessions program administrators who run different types of programs. For example, administrators of equine assisted programs were paired with leaders of dog training programs. Representatives of service dog training programs were paired with their counterparts in shelter-based dog training programs.

Evaluation and Research
Co-facilitators:
Barbara Boat, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Cincinnati
Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D.
KC Henry, Project Director, Humans and Horses Foundation

Barbara Walling Boat, Ph.D. is Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and Executive Director of The Childhood Trust at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center. She has conducted research on the use of anatomical dolls in sexual abuse investigations and currently is interested in relationships among violence to children and animals and domestic violence, including dog bites. Her special clinical interests are treatment of dissociative disorders and the training and utilization of evidenced-based interventions in treating traumatized children.

KC Henry has been working with therapeutic riding programs in nearly every possible capacity for over thirty years. In fourteen years of work with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center, she was the first paid staff member and moved from instructor to Executive Director. Under her leadership, Fieldstone Farm completed a $4.5 million capital and endowment campaign, built a state-of-the-art Therapeutic Riding Center, developed a staff of 31 people and served 200 students weekly. Ms. Henry is the Executive Director of the Horses and Humans Research Foundation and Principal of Transitions Unlimited, a consulting firm that provides strategic planning, board development and project management for non-profit organizations.

As an educator and researcher, Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D. has over 25 years of experience studying the causes and prevention of juvenile delinquency, focusing in particular on legal and social policies and institutions that affect child and youth welfare. She received her MA and Ph.D. in Jurisprudence and Social Policy from the University of California, Berkeley and Boalt Hall School of Law. Dr. Blomquist was a Senior Fellow with the California Attorney General, Department of Justice Targeted Research Fellowship Program, Bureau of Criminal Statistics, undertaking research using the Bureau’s various longitudinal arrest and disposition data bases. Dr. Blomquist has served on the Board.
of Directors for the Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault in Bakersfield, CA, where she also provided training for volunteers and assisted as a volunteer rape crises counselor. Her involvement with the Western Society of Criminology includes her terms of office as vice president and president. Dr. Blomquist’s research and consulting experience include projects with the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and the American Prosecutors Research Institute. Currently, Dr. Blomquist is a lecturer with the University of California, Irvine.

The main points from the Evaluation Research workshop are as follows:

- Evaluation and research have different goals and requirements. All agencies should do basic program evaluation, but not all organizations need to be involved in research. For program evaluation, “does it work” is not necessarily the focus. Program evaluation is also concerned with process and fidelity of implementation. Experts in program delivery are not necessarily the personnel who should do research.

- Well-done case studies are a viable strategy to help build the case for animal assisted interventions.

- Research needs to be focused and not diffuse.

- Research is necessary to gain the respect of the scientific community and acceptance for programs to secure funding in order to make programs more available.

**Building Support: Community Partnerships, Funding, and Public Awareness**

**Co-Facilitators:**

**Rick Yount, Director of Therapeutic Interventions, Assistance Dog Institute**

**Carolyn Clark-Beedle, Executive Director, Assistance Dogs of the West**

Rick Yount is currently the Director of Therapeutic Interventions at the Assistance Dog Institute in Santa Rosa, CA. Mr. Yount, a licensed social worker, received his BA at West Virginia University and is earning his MS degree in Assistance Dog Education at ADI. Rick has worked with children for 20 years as a social worker in specialized foster care and residential programs. Rick is a certified High Schooled Assistance Dog instructor and founder of Golden Rule Assistance Dogs in Morgantown, WV.

Carolyn Clark Beedle brings 20 years experience in business management, program design and development, sales, marketing and non-profit management to Assistance Dogs of the West, where she serves as Executive Director. She has worked with corporate and non-profit entities in leadership, global team management, marketing/business development and educational program management. She served on the ADW Board for 6 years prior to taking the ADW Executive Director position in January 2006.
The main points from the Building Support: Community Partnerships, Funding, and Public Awareness workshop are as follows:

- Best practices include close collaboration with community partners, outreach to internal and external constituents, internal and external PR, program participation in community events, opportunities for student programs beyond educational programs, volunteer recruitment and involvement, and multiple funding sources.

Mr. Yount and Ms. Beedle’s powerpoint presentation is in Appendix S.

Program Content and Participants
Co-facilitators:
Kenna Graunke, Humane Educator, Southern Oregon Humane Society
Alex Hollo, East Coast Assistance Dogs

Kenna Graunke, RN, has been the Humane Education Coordinator at Southern Oregon Humane Society for 4 years. She serves on the APHE (Association of Professional Humane Educators) board. Much of her 27-year nursing career has been spent working as an emergency dept. trauma nurse. She was involved in the Oregon Trauma System for 3 years while working as the Trauma Coordinator at a rural hospital. Ms. Graunke is currently a contract clinical instructor in the nursing program at Rogue Community College in Medford, Oregon.

Alex Hollo began tutoring at-risk kids in 1991 during the school year and taught outdoor education and horseback riding in the summer. She received her Master’s degree in Special Education from Vanderbilt University in 1996, specializing in teaching children with emotional and behavioral disorders. While teaching at Green Chimneys with her own social therapy dog, Ms. Hollo saw the benefits of involving at-risk children with animals. In March 1999, she began training under East Coast Assistance Dogs founders Dale and Lu Picard, and has now realized her dream of applying her educational background to her passion for animals and troubled kids.

The main points from the Program Content and Participants workshop are as follows:

- Initially, residential treatment institutions viewed participation in ECAD programs as a reward for good students, and sent their best students to the programs. When they began to understand the benefits of the program, they sent students with worst behavioral problems. Since training service dogs requires a certain level of cognitive functioning, ECAD developed a series of additional programs to accommodate students with different levels, needs, and abilities, including a kennel management program and programs with therapy dogs.

- Neither ECAD nor LEAP staff review history or diagnoses of participants. However, institutional records including grades and attendance could provide some data for researchers.
• LEAP empowers participants by letting them know that they are making a difference to the dogs. LEAP uses massage of dogs as opportunity for both dogs and children to relieve stress. The program matches kids with dogs and kids with other kids. LEAP teaches youth dog and human body language, responsible pet care, dog bite prevention. LEAP modified TLC program to better match their constituency.

• Teachers are always present during LEAP sessions. Teachers need to know what students are being taught. They also are responsible for discipline. Following the end of the program, teachers share with students news of dog adoptions.

Program Management and Training
Co-facilitators:
Lynn Thomas, Executive Director, Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association
Beth Shapiro, Director of Humane Education, SPCA of Erie County

Beth Shapiro is the Director of Humane Education at the SPCA Serving Erie County and has been with the shelter for three years working with the Humane Education Department, Investigations and the Infirmary. She has a BS in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from Buffalo State College and has been in the education field for almost twenty years serving as a day care director, teacher and humane educator.

Lynn Thomas, LCSW, is co-founder and Executive Director of EAGALA, a non-profit association for professionals providing Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. Founded in 1999, EAGALA provides certification training and has over 3,500 members worldwide. Ms. Thomas has also worked as Executive Director of two youth residential treatment programs and has provided counseling and mental health services for youth and families for over 15 years. Her love and focus involve experiential approaches to helping youth, including work in wilderness treatment settings and animal-assisted therapies.
The main points from the Program Management and Training workshop are as follows:

Staff can make or break a program. Staff play a key role in shaping the programs success. Evaluation needs to measure staff impact. Important criteria for staff selection include trustworthiness, education degrees, and ability to work with kids and animals. Identifying dog trainers who also can work with kids can be a challenge. Teams are important such as therapists working with dog trainers or equine specialists.

- Programs for volunteers should include applications, orientation, and job descriptions. Staff need to be prepared to reassign or let go of volunteers who are not working out.

Both staff and volunteers should be able to model the positive behaviors that the program seeks to teach the children. The application process or orientation for both staff and volunteers should include role play as clients. Manuals also are important to program quality.
Concluding Remarks

Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services, ASPCA

Randall Lockwood is Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services for the ASPCA. He received his Ph.D. in Psychology from Washington University in St. Louis. He frequently provides training on issues of animal cruelty and human violence for law-enforcement, social service, mental health, education and veterinary professionals. Dr. Lockwood is co-author of Cruelty to Animals and Interpersonal Violence and Forensic Investigation of Animal Cruelty: A Guide for Veterinary and Law Enforcement Professionals, and author of Animal Cruelty Prosecution.

The following are the main points from Dr. Lockwood's concluding remarks:

• A major concern has been the realization that the strength and effectiveness of many of these programs lie in the personal qualities and dedication of the founders of those efforts. It is important to capture as much information as we can about the specific qualities that effective program managers bring to a program.

• We need to be more attuned to what it is we are trying to do and what our funders or potential funders want to see us accomplish. Are we interested in treatment outcome measures, attitudinal change, behavioral change, knowledge change, all of the above? Are we interested in risk to society, quality of life? Do we have a clear sense of what populations are best served by animal interactions, and who might be inappropriate.

• We should avoid defining our outcome measures so narrowly that they become disconnected from the bigger picture of integrating animals into interactions that allow people to function more safely and happily in society.

• Effective programs help participants identify and make good (non-violent) choices, empower participants to gain power and control in pro-social ways, allow frequent opportunities to send, receive and interpret emotional communication, foster a sense of justice and fairness that extends beyond the individual, and provide the resources to continue to remain resilient in a toxic world.

Dr. Lockwood's full remarks follow.
Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President, Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

I am very pleased to have the last word at a gathering that began with a brainstorming session with Dr. Andrew Rowan more than five years ago, discussing our enthusiasm for many of the programs that have been highlighted during this conference, and our concern that they were not receiving the funding support they needed for longevity. We were also concerned that these programs were rarely seen as significant contributions to the field of violence prevention and intervention. They were often viewed as too warm and fuzzy in an era where the emphasis was on programs that emphasized punitive and coercive approaches – boot camps, DARE, "scared straight" programs and other politically popular but ultimately ineffective or counter-productive approaches. We are very thankful to the Laura J. Niles Foundation for providing the resources to study many of these programs in more detail – and to bring all of you together to share in the efforts to create a less violent society.

First, let me address the issue of program longevity. I feel I have some authority in speaking to this, as a representative of the Western Hemisphere’s oldest animal welfare organization. The ASPCA was founded in 1866, largely through the courage, tenacity and clarity of convictions of Henry Bergh, labeled “The Great Meddler” by his contemporaries. While many organizations drift from the vision of their founder and become fragmented in their focus- I think the strength, growth and longevity of the ASPCA is directly linked to our immersion in its history. Our staff meets under Henry’s gaze in our conference room, surrounded by memorabilia of more than 140 years of dedication to fighting cruelty to animals. Our agents enforce laws that he was instrumental in writing. We are guided by the past, but we are very aware of new challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed to keep moving that vision forward.

Likewise, a major concern of the research that was supported by the Niles Foundation, and a major concern of this conference, has been the realization that the strength and effectiveness of many of these programs lie in the personal qualities and dedication of the founders of those efforts. At the risk of leaving out many pioneers, I want to mention that a driving force behind organizing this conference was the reality that many of the most influential figures cannot be expected to continue forever. We know that much of the effectiveness of Project Pooch lies in the personal dedication of Joan Dalton. The spirit of Forget-Me-Not-Farm embodies the values of Carol Rathmann. Green Chimneys would not be what it is today without the guiding principles of Sam Ross. Unfortunately, we cannot clone these wonderful people and the many others who have launched great programs. This is why it is so important to capture as much information as we can about the specific qualities that the activities of effective program managers bring to a program.

This brings us to the recurrent theme of this conference – the need for effective program evaluation. We need to be more attuned to what it is we are trying to do, and what it is that our funders or potential funders want to see us accomplish. Are we interested in treatment outcome measures, attitudinal change, behavioral change, knowledge change, all of the above? Are we interested in risk to society, quality of life? Do we
have a clear sense of what populations are best served by animal interactions, and who might be inappropriate. On the other hand, we should avoid defining our outcome measures so narrowly that they become disconnected from the bigger picture of integrating animals into interactions that allow people to function more safely and happily in society.

Another point that has been stressed in this meeting is the need to make sure that we focus on the positive changes these programs produce and the competencies they help develop in participants. I agree with Dr. Kazdin's admonition that we avoid too much emphasis on thinking of the target populations for such programs as "at-risk" and focus on the benefits that these programs can bring to a diverse audience, while recognizing that some populations are more in need of improvement in these competencies than others. This is consistent to how we talk about behavior change in applied animal behavior. We no longer focus on "treating" abnormal behavior in companion animals, but rather on finding methods to foster and preserve "behavioral health". Likewise the focus on the "Restorative Justice" model that has been adopted by modern for juvenile justice professionals is on defining the core competencies that help a young offender to get back on track and stay there.

In reviewing the effects Dr. Arluke and others have noted in some of the programs we have reviewed in this conference, I think we can identify the kinds of things that effective programs do to meet this need:

- They help participants identify and make good (non-violent) choices
- They empower participants to gain power and control in pro-social ways
- They allow frequent opportunities to send, receive and interpret emotional communication
- They foster a sense of justice and fairness that extends beyond the individual
- They provide the resources to continue to remain resilient in a toxic world

We are not asking those of you who have ongoing programs to scrap what you are doing and start measuring a few things that might indicate a positive change. What I am suggesting is that you try to bring greater clarity to documenting what you do and why, describing it in a way that allows those who follow you, or who want to replicate what you have done elsewhere, to be able share the vision of your program. Don't try to change the world, focus on your "best shot", the things you know make a positive change in the people with whom you work. If possible, offer quantitative measures of the qualitative changes that you know result from your program.

Again, thank you all for your dedication in your efforts to create a more compassionate world.
EXPERT GROUP MEETING OVERVIEW

An expert group meeting was held on December 8, 2007, following the National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal Assisted Programs for Youth At Risk. The expert group was comprised of a subset of researchers from the conference. The expert group included Dr. Andrew Rowan, Dr. Randy Lockwood, Dr. Barbara Boat, Dr. Aubrey Fine, Dr. Amie Arluke, Dr. Mary Lou Randour, Dr. Christina Ridley-Curtiss, Dr. Martha-Elin Blomquist, Kathy Kruger, MSW, and Dr. Jennifer Jackman. Using the issues that Dr. Kazdin raised during his presentations as a starting point, the expert group discussed conference results and options for future directions in evaluation of animal assisted programs.

The main points from the Expert Group Meeting are as follows:

- Participants came away from the conference with a strong desire to get involved in evaluation. The conference was ground-breaking in terms of forging links between researchers and practitioners and moving the field forward.

- Participants had two different concerns: 1) program evaluation to improve outcomes and funding and 2) research to develop the field.

- Research on therapeutic change requires larger budgets. Animal assisted interventions are not ready to compete in the therapeutic realm. Small controlled, single-case experimental, qualitative, and laboratory study designs, as Dr. Kazdin suggests, are best initially to build the case for AAI.

- The effect of animal assisted interventions on quality of life for participants, staff, and animals is an important and viable research direction with hard endpoints that are easier to measure. Measures of staff quality of life could include staff turnover and morale. Reduced staff turnover and improved morale result in better care. Measures of participant quality of life could include retention and compliance with treatment. Even short-term improvements in quality of life can be beneficial.

- The strength of animal assisted programs is the connection between people and animals. Regardless of treatment objectives or outcomes, promoting good care of animals and respect for animals can create an important paradigm shift.

- "Founder effects" shape many of the current animal assisted programs. Few programs are in their second or third generation of leadership. Philosophies, evaluations, and procedures are not yet institutionalized. Research is needed to capture the ingredients that animate animal assisted programs in order to promote organizational development, sustainability, and replication. Replication is critical.

- Animal assisted reading programs are a possible research focus since these programs are more standardized and the literature shows that teaching skills can transform behavior. Reading programs also have a variety of well-established outcome measures. Concrete measures include how many books are taken out.
of the library, grades, and homework. Care would need to be taken to start with equal reading levels and interest among the children and to standardize training of volunteers to be efficient reading coaches. A controlled study could be done comparing the traditional reading program model, college student instructors with dogs, and dogs alone.

- Training parenting behavior is another promising research direction. However, research would need to show lasting and generalizable effects beyond the program since many years might intervene between program participation and parenthood.

- At-risk is a problematic label. Programs need to define precisely for what participants are "at risk."

- An accumulation of case studies also will help build the case for animal assisted interventions. Case studies should be rigorous in which independent therapists review clinical records to document responses to prior treatments and the effects of participation in animal assisted programs. Searches for existing case studies should be conducted, including calls through APA for submission of case studies. Confidentiality is an important consideration. An online course could be developed to teach the case study method.

- Data on outcomes for shelter dogs should be collected by programs.

- The Healthy Start study offers a model of a multi-site study with a variety of programs. Differences among programs were documented. The study used matched pairs as a control.

- A National Technical Assistance Center for Animal Assisted Interventions would be a powerful resource for both researchers and practitioners. The Center could be the repository for published and unpublished research, conference proceedings, and instrumentation. Possible models include the NIH Center for Alternative Medicine, Center for Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, Hamilton Fish Institute, the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center. A Center could be established by Congressional act with federal funding.

- Research has shown that bringing together a group of youth with behavioral problems creates the danger of contagion and reinforcement of negative behavior. In groups, the balance of youth with and without behavioral problems is critical. Theoretically, in animal assisted dog training programs, dogs could be the equivalent of the "good people" and a positive force. The human dog handlers also contribute positively to the group dynamic.

- With a small amount of funding, RFPs can be generated and grants disseminated for research collaborations between animal assisted programs and university-
based researchers. A first stage could support graduate students to work with programs.

- One of the next steps could be to submit a R18 request for funding to support a series of conferences to develop the field to take us to the next step. At the conferences, practitioners and researchers would work together to formulate research directions and strategies.

- Additional research is needed on whether the “magic” of programs is transferable or is tied to individuals who run the programs. Research is needed to capture the ingredients that animate animal assisted programs in order to promote organizational development, sustainability, and replication.
ACTION STEPS

Conference participants shared both concerns with current evaluation methodologies and research in the field of animal assisted interventions and a strong commitment to enhance the field through improvements in research design and directions, program best practices, and collaboration between program administrators and researchers. The conference and subsequent expert group meeting produced a variety of recommendations to improve research, evaluation, and programs in the field of animal assisted interventions.

Conference speakers provided a critique of research in the field of animal assisted interventions. Lack of definition of target populations, diffuse applications of animal assisted interventions, and faulty assumptions about therapeutic change have marred prior research efforts. Animal assisted interventions are not ready to compete in the therapeutic realm. Evidenced-based treatments require randomized controlled trials with sufficient statistical power, which are very expensive and must meet very high standards.

However, smaller and less expensive research designs can be used to build the case for animal assisted interventions. These methods include single-case experimental research, rigorous qualitative research, and laboratory studies of human functioning such as neuro-imaging. Research should use controls (e.g. comparing contact with animal with contact with no animal contact or contact with a stuffed animal). An accumulation of case studies also could help build the case for animal assisted interventions.

Program administrators and researchers need to identify what we are trying to accomplish with animal assisted interventions, populations whom would be most responsive, and conditions under which these programs would likely be the most beneficial. Measurement of non-specific outcomes may be more manageable than therapeutic change. Studies could measure concentration, sociability, knowledge acquisition, or neurological responses. Researchers also could look at retention in treatment. Research needs to address the durability of behavioral changes into the future and generalization of skills beyond therapeutic and program settings.

The conference and expert group meeting identified several promising new research directions. Quality of life of participants is one such viable research focus. Qualitative studies in this field lend support for pursuing research in this area. Quality of life has hard end-points. Measures of participant quality of life could include retention and compliance with treatment. Improvements in quality of life for staff also could be measured. Measures of staff quality of life could include staff turnover and morale, which have important implications for quality of care.

Another fruitful research area might be animal assisted reading programs. Reading programs are more standardized and the literature shows that teaching skills can transform behavior. Reading programs also have a variety of well-established outcome measures. A controlled study could be done, allowing comparison of interventions with and without the presence of animals.
Contagion is often a problem in youth violence prevention programs involving group activities. In animal assisted interventions, another avenue of research could examine the possibility that dogs, along with handlers, theoretically are the equivalent of the “good people” in a group of youth with behavioral problems and that this dynamic could prevent the dangers of contagion. In general, research design needs to examine the totality of factors involved in the program, including the contributions of animals, youth, and staff.

Animal assisted programs also need to be evaluated in terms of their impact on animals. We need to look at animal behavior in the context of animal assisted programs. Data should be collected on outcomes for shelter dogs. Ethologists could contribute to an understanding of animal experiences in these programs.

Administrators, clinical staff, staff who work with animals, referring agencies, and researchers should be involved in the development of institutional research agenda. Referring agencies of youth are a source of evaluation criteria and data.

Conference discussions also pointed to the relationship between best practices and evaluation. The HSUS Best Practices Survey of Dog Training Programs and best practices discussion groups illuminated important practices in the areas of staffing, management, and training, participant selection, program content and structure, dog selection and care, community partnerships, and funding. Three key recommendations were made concerning best practices. First, programs need to be safe and beneficial for both children and animals. Second, interventions should be developmentally appropriate, multi-sensory, and interactive. Third, program impacts may be greater if both children and caregivers are involved.

Implementation of these recommendations and future research in the field depend upon collaboration among programs, referring agencies, researchers, and funders. In particular, cooperation between non-profit organizations and researchers at universities and research institutes maximizes both funding opportunities and successful evaluation.

The conference identified several possible collaborative endeavors for the future. First, research could be advanced by the development of a research agenda and acquisition of funding for an RFP program to pursue these research directions. With a small amount of funding, RFPs could be generated and grants disseminated to research partnerships between animal assisted programs and university-based researchers. An initial stage could support graduate students to work with programs.

Second, conference participants expressed support for the establishment of a National Technical Assistance Center for Animal Assisted Interventions. A National Technical Assistance Center for Animal Assisted Interventions would be a powerful resource for both researchers and practitioners. The Center could be the repository for published and unpublished research, conference proceedings, and instrumentation.

A third collaborative effort could involve submission of a R18 request for funding to support a series of subsequent conferences to develop the field to take us to the next
step. At subsequent conferences and meetings, practitioners and researchers could work together to define research strategies.

Conference participants viewed the December 6-7 meeting in Baltimore as a historic juncture in the field of animal assisted interventions. The unprecedented representation of program administrators, researchers in the field, and evaluation experts created a foundation of knowledge, ideas, and networks that have the capacity to advance the field in new and exciting directions.
APPENDIX A

National Technology Assessment Workshop

on
Animal Assisted Programs

for
Youth At Risk

PARTICIPANT LIST

December 6-7, 2007
Baltimore, Maryland
Jennifer Alfonso  
Clinical Director  
Anger Management Techniques  
15 West Montgomery Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850  
301-704-5610  
angermgt@aol.com

David Altschuler Ph.D.  
Principal Research Scientist  
JHU Institute for Policy Studies  
3100 Wyman Park Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
410-516-7174  
dma@jhu.edu

Arnie Arluke Ph.D.  
Professor of Sociology  
Northeastern University  
ProfArluke@aol.com

Carolyn Clark Beedle  
Executive Director  
Assistance Dogs of the West  
914 Baca Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
505-986-9748  
info@assistancedogsofthewest.org

Martha Elin Blomquist Ph.D.  
249 Via Florecer, Apt. 143  
Mission Viejo, CA 92692  
marthaelin@aim.com

Rosemary Alfonso  
Animal Control Officer  
Prince Georges County  
humanelaw@hotmail.com

Cherie Ansin  
Program Director  
Perkins School  
971 Main Street  
Lancaster, MA 01523  
978-660-7002  
cansin@perkinschool.org

Judith Aronstein  
Program Coordinator  
Animals as Intermediaries  
3 Gregory Lane  
Acton, MA 01720  
978-621-5701  
juditharonst@gmail.com

Kathryn Bissell DVM  
Program Director  
People, Animals, Love (PAL)  
4900 Massachusetts Ave. NW - Suite 330  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-966-2171  
kate@peopleanimalslove.org

Amy Blossom  
Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Association (EAGALA)  
P.O. Box 993  
Santaquin, UT 84655  
801-754-0400  
equine@eagala.org
Joe Cavaretta  
Executive Director  
People, Animals, Love (PAL)  
4900 Massachusetts Ave. NW - Suite 330  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-966-2171  
joe@peopleanimalslove.org

Janet Cederlund  
Executive Director/Founder  
Light Center Foundation  
17421 Marengo Road  
Union, IL 60180  
815-482-2511  
JCederlund@aol.com

Betty Charmatz  
Social Worker  
Baltimore City Dept. of Social Services  
3007 E. Biddle Street  
Baltimore, MD 21213  
443-423-5500  
bcharm@dhr.state.md.us

Kim Charmatz Ph.D.  
Curriculum Director  
Humane Society University  
700 Professional Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879  
301-721-6448  
kcharmatz@hsus.org

Chungluri Chhakchhuak  
President  
People for Animal Rights & Society of Mizoram, India  
11592 Old Baltimore Pike  
Beltville, MD 20705  
301-595-0798  
huti@msn.com

Jason Clark  
Experimental Education Facilitator  
Waterford Country School  
357 North Main Street  
Moosup, CT 06354  
860-230-2268  
jclark@waterfordcs.org

Stephanie Clark  
Manager, Outreach & Training  
Humane Society: Youth/NAHEE  
67 Norwich Essex Turnpike  
E. Haddam, CT 06423  
860-434-8666  
sclark@humanesocietyyouth.org

Patricia A. Cody Ph.D.  
Post Doctoral Fellow  
The University of Texas at Austin - School of Social Work  
1 University Station, D3510  
Austin, TX 78712  
512-413-6405  
triciacody@mail.utexas.edu

Allan Cohen Ph.D.  
Director  
Center for Advanced Planning and Evaluation, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation  
11720 Beltsville Drive, Suite 900  
Calverton, MD 20705  
301-755-2700  
AYCOHEN@aol.com

Ayza Corbett  
Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, JHU Bloomberg School of Public Health  
624 North Broadway  
Baltimore, MD 21205
Tracy Cruickshank  
Director, Program Development & Outreach  
Community Alliance Against Family Abuse  
P.O. Box 5442  
Scottsdale, AZ 85261  
602-790-4430  
tcruicks@hotmail.com

Paula Cuccaro  
Faculty Associate  
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston  
7000 Fannin Street – Suite 2632  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-500-9684  
paula.m.cuccaro@uth.tmc.edu

Joan Dalton  
Executive Director  
Project POOCH, Inc.  
P.O. Box 305  
Lake Oswego, OR 97034  
503-697-0623  
project_pooch@yahoo.com

Jay Davidowitz Ph.D.  
Senior Supervising Psychologist  
Green Chimneys  
400 Doansburg Road, Box 719  
Brewster, NY 10509  
jdavidowitz@greenchimneys.org

Kate Davis MSW  
Portland State University  
4211 S.E. 48th Avenue  
Portland, MA 97206  
katedavismsw@earthlink.net

Tracey DePaul  
Animal Assisted Therapy Program Supervisor  
Wordsworth RTF  
2120 Susquehanna Road  
Abington, PA 19001  
215-887-6794  
naturewitch1@comcast.net

Marivic Dizon  
Ph.D. Student  
Stanford University  
815 Bennett Ave, Apt. 3  
Long Beach, CA 90804  
650-906-0926  
mdizon@stanford.edu

Julie Dunn  
Executive Assistant, Executive Vice President - Operations  
HSUS  
101 Tschiffely Square Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
301-548-7771  
jdunn@hsus.org

Linda Fazio  
Executive Director  
Chariot Riders  
3170 Chariot Court  
Manchester, NJ 08759  
732-657-2710  
overfences@aol.com

Jill Felice  
Program Director  
Assistance Dogs of the West  
914 Baca Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
505-986-9748  
info@assistedogsofthewest.org
Eugene Fields  
4404 Furley Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21206  
443-857-7774  
efieldsjr@verizon.net

Kate Franklin  
Education Director  
Humane Society of Sarasota County  
2331 15th Street  
Sarasota, FL 34237  
941-955-4131  
education@hssc.org

Ann Gearhart  
Director - Humane Education  
The Snyder Foundation for Animals, Inc.  
3600 Clipper Mill Road #224  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
410-366-0787  
agearhart@snyderanimals.org

Molly Gibb  
6011 N. Independence  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
405-848-5272  
mthiellaughter@yahoo.com

Alberta Girardi  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Carleton University  
1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa ON  
CANADA  
613-520-2600 x3695

Aubrey Fine Ph.D.  
Professor, College of Education and Integrative Studies  
California State Polytechnic University  
909-869-2799  
ahfine@csupomona.edu

Donna Frezell  
Founder  
Golden Opportunity Assistance Dogs  
1413 Helena Montague Ave  
London, ON N6K 1Z3  
519-670-1809  
dfrezell@sympatico.ca

Susan Gessner  
CCA/Assistance Dogs  
177 Waterfront Court  
Atwater, CA 95301  
209-358-5420  
seg547@elite.net

Melanie Gilbert  
P.O. Box 633 - 681 Thompson Street  
Lemont, PA 16851  
814-574-2991  
mds270@psu.edu

Karen Gostenhofer  
Gostenhofer Designs  
10 Rugg Road  
Sterling, MA 01564  
978-422-8014  
kgostenhof@verizon.net
Kenna Graunke  
Humane Educator  
Southern Oregon Humane Society  
2910 Table Rock Road  
Medford, OR 97501  
541-779-3215, x106  
kenna@southernoregonhumane.org

Maya Gupta  
President  
Ahimsa House, Inc. (Safe Haven for Pets Program)  
82 Lakeview Drive NE  
Atlanta, GA 30317  
706-338-7685  
meg51@columbia.edu

Cindy Haines  
Director, Programs and Volunteer Services  
PAWS Columbus  
P.O. Box 8964  
Columbus, GA 31908  
706-322-6207  
chaines@pawscolumbus.org

Tami Harbolt-Bosco  
Public Education Coordinator  
Metro Louisville Animal Services  
3705 Manslick Road  
Louisville, KY 40215  
502-574-5556  
drewsmuse@insightbb.com

KC Henry  
Executive Director  
Horses & Humans Research Foundation  
P.O. Box 480  
Chagrin Falls, OH 44022  
440-543-8306  
kchemberg@aol.com

Greer G. Griffith  
Manager -  
Animal Assisted Therapy  
ASPCA  
110 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10011  
212-876-7700 x4417  
greerg@aspca.org

Paul Haefner  
Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Association (EAGALA)  
P.O. Box 993  
Santaquin, UT 84655  
801-754-0400  
equine@eagala.org

Lindsay Hamrick  
Monadnock Humane Society  
Route 10 - P.O. Box 678  
W. Swanzey, NH 03469  
603-352-9011  
lindsay@humanecommunity.org

Sara Hassan MHS  
Research Program Coordinator  
Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, JHU Bloomberg School of Public Health  
624 North Broadway  
Baltimore, MD 21205  
410-955-3962  
sohassa@jhsphs.edu

Lezlie Hiner  
Executive Director  
Work to Ride, Inc.  
98 Charmounix Drive  
Philadelphia, PA 19131  
215-877-4419  
wtr@worktoride.net
Alex Hollo  
3525 Trimble Road  
Nashville, TN 37215  
615-383-1958  
alex.hollo@vanderbilt.edu

Karyl Hurley  
Scientific Affairs for Mars Pet Care  
Mars Inc.  
575 Rock Raymond Road  
Downingtown, PA 19335  
908-619-1044  
kjh34@cornell.edu

Carly Ikuma  
Humane Society International  
700 Professional Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879  
301-548-7780  
cikuma@hsus.org

Jennifer Jackman Ph.D.  
Humane Society of the United States  
35 Santuit Pond Road, 7D  
Mashpee, MA 2649  
jjackman@hsus.org

Mary Lou Jennings  
Coordinator - Animal Assisted Therapy Program  
Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 E. Thomas Rd. - Volunteer Services Department  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-690-0898  
mjennings@phoenixchildrens.com

Alan Kazdin Ph.D.  
Professor of Psychology and Child Psychiatry  
Department of Psychology  
Yale University  
New Haven, CT 6520  
203-432-9993  
Alan.Kazdin@Yale.Edu

Steve Klee Ph.D.  
Associate Executive Director - Clinical and Medical Services  
Green Chimneys  
400 Doansburg Road, Box 719  
Brewster, NY 10509  
sklee@greenchimneys.org

Kathy Kruger MSW  
Assistant Director  
Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society - Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital (University of Pennsylvania)  
3900 Delancey Street, Room 2068  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
kkruger@vet.upenn.edu

Stephanie LaFarge  
Senior Director Counseling  
ASPCA  
1717 South Philo Road  
Urbana, IL 61802  
217-337-9773  
stephanie1@aspca.org
Karen McCarthy  
Courteous Canines  
10 Barbara Drive  
Bristol, RI 02809  
401-954-2699  
kamccarthy@cox.net

Sandra McCune  
Research Mgr. - Human-Animal Interactions  
Waltham Center for Pet Nutrition, UK  
Freeby Lane  
Leicester, LE14 4Rt  
44-1664-415535  
sandra.x.mccune@eu.effem.com

Dr. Steven Morse, Director  
Garfield Park Academy  
P.O. Box 189  
Willingboro, NJ 08046  
609-877-4111  
smorse@garfieldparkacademy.org

Tara Nollet  
Humane Education Coordinator  
Ottawa Humane Society  
1010 Champagne Avenue South  
Ottawa, ON K1S 4P3  
613-725-3166 x235  
taran@ottawahumane.ca

Allison Nozemack  
Training and Behavior Manager  
MDSPCA  
3300 Falls Road  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
410-235-8826  
allie@mdspca.org

Ellen McCorquodale Martin  
Senior Patient Liaison  
Ben Taub General Hospital  
1504 Taub Loop  
Houston, TX 77030  
713-873-2717  
ellen_martin@hchd.tmc.edu

Kathi Miller  
National Director of Education  
VisionQuest National Ltd.  
720 W. Colonial Drive - Suite 105  
Orlando, FL 32801  
407-649-4944  
kathi.miller@vq.com

Kate Nicoll LCSW  
Executive Director  
Soul Friends  
300 Church St., Suite 105  
Wallingford, CT 6492  
203-640-3406  
kate@soul-friends.org

Nicole Nopper  
6905 Hall Road  
Sinclairville, NY 14782  
716-969-4069  
nikki_nopper@yahoo.com

Kathleen Orlando  
Boys & Girls Club Coordinator  
Caring People Alliance  
1819 JFK Boulevard - Suite 220  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215-545-5230  
kathleenmorlando@yahoo.com
Stergios Roussos  
Community Scientist  
ACRD/CBEACH  
2054 Pinehurst Court  
Merced, CA 95340  
209-723-4399  
steve@akouo.org

Andrew Rowan Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President - Operations  
Humane Society of the United States  
700 Professional Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879  
arowan@hsus.org

William E. Samuels  
People Animals Nature  
2800 Victory Boulevard - Room 3S-209  
Staten Island, NY 10314  
718-982-4130  
samuels@mail.csi.cuny.edu

Angela Schwartz  
Psychology Intern  
Green Chimneys Children Services  
400 Doansburg Road  
Brewster, NY 10509  
845-279-2995 x334  
aschwartz@greenchimneys.org

Kelly Sears  
Program Manager  
Capital Area Humane Society  
7095 W. Grand River Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48906  
517-626-6060  
ksears@cahs-lansing.org

Leland C. Selby, Esq.  
Secretary  
Laura J. Niles Foundation  
88 Field Point Road  
Greenwich, CT 06830  
203-629-7310  
lselby@fcsn.com

Beth Shapiro  
Director - Humane Education  
SPCA serving Erie County  
205 Ensinger Road  
Tonawanda, NY 14150  
716-629-3515  
beths@s pcaec.com

Anne Shroeder  
President  
Star Gazing Farm, Inc  
P.O. Box 162  
Boys, MD 20841  
301-349-0802  
farmeranne@stargazingfarm.org

Bettina Shultz  
Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Association  
(EAGALA)  
P.O. Box 993  
Santaquin, UT 84655  
801-754-0400  
equine@eagala.org

Kate Simmer  
Program Director  
Work to Ride, Inc.  
98 Charmounix Drive  
Philadelphia, PA 19131  
215-877-4419  
wtr@worktoride.net
Joan Marie Twining
Executive Director
Rose of Sharon Equestrian School, Inc.
5630 Sharon Drive
Glen Arm, MD 21057
410-592-2562
roses@iximd.com

Lydia Wade-Driver
Executive Director
Blue Ridge Assistance Dogs
8600 Smith Avenue
Manassas, VA 20112
703-369-5878
DogManners@aol.com

Jen Walker
Regional Lead
Delta Society
6036 N Missouri Ave
Portland, OR 97217
503-550-4358
dog_logic@yahoo.com

Judy Warren
Executive Director
CCA/Assistance Dogs
5659 West Brooks Road
Merced, CA 95340
209-723-2777
POSTVTNKR@aol.com

Hazel Weiss
Assistance Dog Institute
1075 Creston Rd.
Berkeley, CA 94708
510-558-1741
samnhaezel@comcast.net

Rebecca Yonker
Program Coordinator
Capital Area Humane Society
7095 W. Grand River Avenue
Lansing, MI 48906
517-626-6060
ryonker@cahs-lansing.org

Rick Yount
Director of Therapeutic Interventions
Assistance Dog Institute
1215 Sebastopol Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95407
707-545-3647
rick@assistancedog.org
APPENDIX B

Organizations Represented at National Technology Assessment Workshop for Animal Assisted Programs for Youth At Risk

Animal Shelters and Sanctuaries
Ahimsa House, Inc. (Safe Haven for Pets Program)
Capital Area Humane Society
Chautauqua County Humane Society
Forget Me Not Farm
Humane Society of Sarasota County
Metro Louisville Animal Services
Ottawa Humane Society
PAWS Columbus
Prince Georges County Animal Control
Humane Society for Southwest Washington (Project Click)
Strategic Humane Interventions Program, Cincinnati SPCA and Childhood Trust
Southern Oregon Humane Society (LEAP)
SPCA serving Erie County (TLC)
Star Gazing Farm, Inc
Washington Humane Society

Non-shelter Animal Assisted Programs (continued)
Rose of Sharon Equestrian School
Soul Friends
VisionQuest National Ltd.
Work to Ride, Inc.

Therapeutic Institutions/Schools
Anger Management Techniques
Ben Taub General Hospital
Children's Village
Garfield Park Academy
Green Chimneys
Jupiter Academy
Perkins School
Phoenix Children's Hospital
The Children's Home
Waterford Country School
Wordsworth RTF

Universities and Research Organizations
American Psychological Association
Arizona State University
ACRD/CBEACH
California State Polytechnic University
Denver University
Gostenofer Designs
Humane Society University
Johns Hopkins University
Northeastern University
Oregon State University
Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation
Portland State University
Post University
Southern Connecticut State University
Stanford University
University of Buffalo
University of Cincinnati
Universities and Research Organizations (continued)
University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine
University of Virginia
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
University of Texas at Austin - School of Social Work
Webster University
West Chester University
Yale University

Animal Advocacy and Education Organizations
ASPCA
Humane Society of the United States
Humane Society International
Humane Society: Youth/NAHEE
People Animals Nature
The Snyder Foundation for Animals, Inc.

Funders
Laura J. Niles Foundation
National Institute for Child Health and Development
Waltham Center for Pet Nutrition, UK/Mars Inc.

Anti-violece/Child Advocacy Organizations
Community Alliance Against Family Abuse
Caring People Alliance
Rocky Mountain Children’s Law Center

Other
Baltimore City Dept. of Social Services
APPENDIX C
NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP ON
ANIMAL ASSISTED PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH AT RISK

PROGRAM
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2007

8:30AM Registration

9AM Welcome and Opening Remarks
Andrew Rowan, Ph.D., Executive Vice President for Operations,
Humane Society of the United States

9:30AM – 10AM
A Public Health Paradigm for Youth Violence: Risk Factors and Protective Factors
Philip Leaf, Ph.D., Director, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

10:15AM-12PM Evaluating Youth Violence Prevention Programs

The State of Evaluation in Youth Violence Prevention
Freya Sonenstein, Ph.D., Director, Center for Adolescent Health,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Panel Discussion:
Chair: Philip Leaf, Ph.D., Director, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

David Altschuler, Ph.D., Principal Research Scientist, Institute for Policy Studies,
Johns Hopkins University and Faculty, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Valerie Maholmes, Ph.D., CAS, Social and Affective Development/Child Maltreatment
and Violence, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Allan Cohen, Ph.D., Director, Center for Advanced Planning and Evaluation,
Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation

Sara Hassan, MHS, Research Program Coordinator, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

12PM-12:45PM Lunch Break

1PM – 2PM Critical Issues in Evaluating and Establishing the Effectiveness
of Animal-Assisted Interventions

Alan Kazdin, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology and Child Psychiatry, Yale University;
Director, Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic; and President-elect,
American Psychological Association
2PM – 4:45PM  Research on Animal Assisted Intervention for Youth At Risk: Theories, Best Evidence, and Challenges

Chair: Barbara Carr, Executive Director, SPCA of Erie County

Theoretical Framework for Animal Assisted Interventions As Violence Prevention Strategy
Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services, ASPCA

Best Evidence for Animal Assisted Interventions in Adolescent Mental Health
Katherine A. Kruger, MSW, Assistant Director, Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Challenges in Evaluating Outcomes in Animal Assisted Interventions
Barbara Boat, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Cincinnati

Funding Evaluation of Animal Assisted Interventions
Mary Lou Randour, Ph.D., Director, Human-Animal Relations, Education and Outreach, Human Society of the United States

5PM-7PM Networking Reception

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2007

8:30AM Continental Breakfast

9AM – 10:50AM  New Data on Animal Assisted Programs

Chair: Joan Dalton, Director, Project Pooch

Perspectives of Youth in Animal-Centered Correctional Vocational Program: A Qualitative Evaluation of Project Pooch
Kate Davis, MSW, Graduate School of Social Work, Portland State University

Staff Perspectives on Animal Assisted Interventions for Youth At Risk
Avril Lindsay, LCSW, CGP, Program Manager, Children’s Village

Mechanisms of Change
Arnold Arluke, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University

The Impact of Animal Visitation in an In-Class Humane Education Program
Kate Nicoll, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director, Soul Friends
William Samuels, Ph.D., Director of Research, People, Animals and Nature, Inc.

10:50AM – 11AM Coffee/Tea Break

11AM – 12:30PM  Open Forum Research Discussion: Promising Research Directions

Chair: Carol Rathmann, Director, Forget Me Not Farm
12:30PM – 1PM Lunch Break

1PM-2:45PM Future Directions for Evaluation and Practice of Animal Assisted Interventions

Challenges in Researching Animal Assisted Activities: Is the Tail Wagging the Dog?
Steven Klee, Ph.D., Associate Executive Director – Clinical and Medical Services, Green Chimneys
Jay Davidowitz, Ph.D., Senior Supervising Psychologist, Green Chimneys

Bridging Clinical Practice and Research in Animal Assisted Interventions
Aubrey Fine, Ph.D., Professor, College of Education and Integrative Studies, California State Polytechnic University

Future Directions in Outcome Evaluation for Animal Assisted Programs for Youth-At-Risk
Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D.

2:45PM – 3PM Coffee/Tea Break

3PM – 4:20PM Best Practices Discussion Groups

Evaluation and Research
Facilitators: Barbara Boat, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Cincinnati
Martha-Elin Blomquist, Ph.D.
KC Henry, Project Director, Humans and Horses Foundation

Program Content and Participants
Facilitators: Kenna Graunke, Humane Educator, Southern Oregon Humane Society
Alex Hollo, East Coast Assistance Dogs

Building Support: Community Partnerships, Funding, and Public Awareness
Facilitators: Rick Yount, Director of Therapeutic Interventions, Assistance Dog Institute
Carolyn Clark-Beedle, Executive Director, Assistance Dogs of the West

Program Management and Training
Facilitators: Lynn Thomas, Executive Director, Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association
Beth Shapiro, Director of Humane Education, SPCA of Erie County

4:30PM – 5:30PM Reports from Groups

Concluding Remarks
Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services, ASPCA

Andrew Rowan, Ph.D., Executive Vice President for Operations, Humane Society of the United States
Current and Best Practices of Dog Training Programs for Youth At Risk

Prepared by Jennifer Jackman, Ph.D.
The Humane Society of the United States
As a part of its Dogs Helping People Helping Dogs project with the Laura J. Niles Foundation, the Humane Society of the United States conducted a Survey of Best Practices of Dog Training Programs for Youth At Risk. The 57-item questionnaire sought to illuminate program goals and objectives, program staff management and training, participant selection, program content and structure, dog selection and care, community partnerships, program funding, and program evaluation. (See Appendix A.) The survey asked respondents to identify current and best practices in these areas. The survey instrument was based on the Questionnaire of Violence Prevention/Intervention Programs Involving Animals, which was designed by Deborah Duel and Randy Lockwood (2000). Additional items were added to this instrument to measure specific aspects of dog training programs. The Survey of Best Practices of Dog Training Programs for Youth At Risk also drew from findings in Animal Assisted Activities for At-risk and Incarcerated Children and Young Adults: An Introductory Ethnography of Five Programs by Arnold Arluke (2006).

HSUS identified 24 dog training programs for youth at risk in the United States. Surveys were distributed by e-mail and mail. Fifteen programs responded to the survey. Fourteen completed the survey; one organization reported that it no longer runs a dog training program for at-risk youth. In addition to completing the survey, organizations submitted brochures, training materials, DVDs, articles, and some evaluation instruments.

These fourteen programs reflect a range of dog training projects for at-risk youth. (See Table 1.) Half of the respondent programs involve animal shelters. Of the programs, four are run by animal shelters (LEAP, Project Click, TLC and PAL). An animal shelter, YWCA, and university-based research center collaboratively administer a fifth program (SHIP). Two other programs train shelter dogs, but the shelters are not involved in program administration (Project Pooch and Paws and Think). Seven of the programs are not connected with shelters (HS A-DOGS, ADW, SF, and ECAD at CV, GC, JB, and MF). Six of these programs (HS A-DOGS, ADW and ECAD programs) train assistance dogs. Soul Friends has youth work with therapy dogs on agility exercises.

Table 1. Dog Training for Youth At Risk Program Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Date Established</th>
<th>Sponsor(s)</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total Youth Participants In Program History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People and Animals Learning (PAI)</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Wisconsin Humane Society</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Milwaukee, WI</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Pooch (PP)</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Project Pooch/Oregon Youth Authority</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Lake Oswego, OR</td>
<td>300+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Schooled Assistance Dogs (HS A-DOGS)</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Assistance Dog Institute Bergin</td>
<td></td>
<td>Santa Rosa, CA</td>
<td>300+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Assistance Dog Program and Working Dogs Program (ADW)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Assistance Dogs of the West</td>
<td>Bergin/ADI</td>
<td>Santa Fe, NM</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
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<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/Green Chimneys (GC)</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Green Chimneys</td>
<td>ECAD</td>
<td>Putnam, NY</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/Children's Village (CV)</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Children's Village</td>
<td>ECAD</td>
<td>Dobbs Ferry, NY</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/Mercy First Children and Family Services (MF)</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Mercy First Children and Family services</td>
<td>ECAD</td>
<td>Syosset, NY</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love, Empathy, Acceptance and Partnership (LEAP)</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Southern Oregon Humane Society</td>
<td>TLC/SPCALA</td>
<td>Medford, OR</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Love and Compassion (TLC)</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>SPCA of Erie County</td>
<td>TLC/SPCALA</td>
<td>Tonawanda, NY</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/Jewish Board of Children and Families (JB)</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Jewish Board of Children and Families</td>
<td>ECAD</td>
<td>Hawthorn, NY</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawsibilities, Pregnant Paws, Pawsitive Corrections (PAWS)</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Paws and Think</td>
<td>Bergin/ADI</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Humane Interventions Program (SHIP)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The Childhood Trust, Cincinnati SPCA, and Cincinnati YWCA</td>
<td>Loar</td>
<td>Cincinnati, OH</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come, Follow Me! (SF)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Wallingford, CT</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click (PC)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Humane Society for Southwest Washington</td>
<td>Loar/Boat</td>
<td>Vancouver, WA</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondent programs are spread throughout the country. Together, these programs have worked with some 5000 youth. The programs are run in collaboration with schools, detention facilities, mental health treatment centers, and other social service agencies. Youth in these programs include adjudicated offenders, victims of abuse and neglect, economically disadvantaged children, and children who have cognitive, emotional, or behavioral problems.

In most cases, these programs were developed based on models, materials, and advice from one of three sources: spcaLA's Teaching Love and Compassion, Dr. Lynn Loar,
or Dr. Bonnie Bergin's Assistance Dogs Institute (ADI). The SPCA of Erie County (TLC) and Southern Oregon Humane Society (LEAP) relied on spcaLA’s manual for development of their TLC programs, although Southern Oregon Humane Society's modifications to TLC prompted the organization to rename their program LEAP in 2006. Strategic Humane Interventions Program (SHIP) and Project Click (PC) used Dr. Lynn Loar's programs as a model. Dr. Bonnie Bergin founded Assistance Dog Institute (ADI), which sponsors High Schooled Assistance Dogs (HS A-DOGS) and runs bachelor and masters degree courses that train students in how to establish and run assistance dog programs. Assistance Dogs of the West (ADW) and Paws and Think (PAWS) were established by graduates of ADI’s college, who, in turn, based their programs on Bergin's work. One of ECAD’s co-founders also trained at Assistance Dog Institute. ECAD developed its own curriculum and established programs at Green Chimneys, Children's Village, Jewish Board of Children and Families, and Mercy First Children's and Family Services. Project Pooch (PP), Come Follow Me! (SF), and People and Animals Learning (PAL) were established without prior models.

Program Goals and Objectives

While these programs draw from different models and train dogs for different purposes, they share fundamental assumptions related to at-risk youth and dogs. In their articulation of goals, most programs link youth participation in dog training to development of psychological, social and physical competencies that can be transferred to family, school, community, and work settings. As the SPCA of Erie County (TLC) describes it, the dog training program “utilizes the powerful natural affinity towards animals that most children experience” as the basis for encouraging compassion, empathy, caring, respect and responsibility to break the cycle of violence.

For shelter-based programs and other programs that train shelter dogs, the anticipated benefits for youth and dogs are inextricable. For example, SHIP’s goals are “helping homeless dogs become more adoptable through clicker training and helping caregivers and their children learn positive interaction skills.” The goals include identifying positive behaviors in dogs and people, reading positive cues in dogs and people, breaking down behaviors into small steps to ensure success, reacting positively and immediately to each step toward a goal, transferring skills to home and community settings, and behaving safely around dogs. PAL’s goals include teaching children the importance and benefits of being kind to animals, building empathy for animals and people, and giving children the opportunity to develop self-esteem, self-confidence, and nurturance. The programs also seek to empower youth by giving them confidence that they can make a difference when they help dogs secure permanent homes.

While the assistance dog programs (with the exception of PAWS) place dogs that have been bred to be service animals, they also incorporate animal welfare and animal care into their goals and their youth-at-risk curriculum. The dog assistance programs have an additional goal of helping people with disabilities, which also has benefits for youth. According to ADW, “Students gain knowledge, build responsibility and a compassionate awareness of people with different abilities, and make a concrete contribution to their community.” These programs also allow customization of dog training for disabled clients and increase the number of assistance dogs available for placement (ECAD).
Program Content and Structure

Most of the dog training programs for youth at risk entail multiple, structured sessions in which youth are taught about dog training techniques, animal behavior, and animal care. These lessons are often encoded with parallels between human and dog communication, behavior, learning styles, and group interactions. Through positive reinforcement techniques and exercises, youth train dogs in basic obedience and, in the case of the assistance dog programs, service commands. Many programs also include a broader range of lessons on animal welfare topics, less formal interactions with dogs, field trips, and other activities related to the care of dogs and other animals.

Of the programs, Soul Friends, Project Pooch, HS A-DOGS, SPCA of Erie County, Assistance Dogs West, ECAD, and Paws and Think have developed manuals that outline training methods and curriculum. (See Table 2.) Some manuals are based on previously published books, model programs, and curriculum. Curriculum developed by Lynn Loar, Bonnie Bergin, and spcaLA are most frequently cited. However, few programs exactly replicate their predecessors. For example, while PAWS is based on ADI, the organization trains dogs from shelters and rescue groups rather than purpose-bred dogs and involves students in caring for animals at shelters and wildlife rehabilitation facilities. As mentioned earlier, Southern Oregon Humane Society’s TLC program has evolved into LEAP.

The structure of programs varies. Most programs offer sessions several times a year. In each session, classes are held between one and five times each week. Excluding Project Pooch in which the dog training programs are year-round, sessions range in length from 3 weeks to one academic year. Total program hours range from 5 hours to 180 hours. ECAD’s four programs in which two cohorts of students spend a full school year training dogs in class for four days a week provides the most program hours for students.

Table 2. Characteristics of Dog Training Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th># participants per session</th>
<th># sessions per year</th>
<th>Length, frequency and scheduling of sessions</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Manual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>Cincinnati SPCA</td>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7 weeks, one 2.5 hour class per week in evening</td>
<td>17.5 hours</td>
<td>no, but use Loar materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>Wisconsin Humane Society</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 weeks, 5 days per week, three hours each, 9am-12pm in summer</td>
<td>45 hours</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>SPCA of Erie County</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 weeks, 5 days a week, 2 hours, after school</td>
<td>50 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Participating Schools</td>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>4-6 weeks, 2-3 hours a day, during school</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>At shelter and community center</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4 weeks, 3 hours per day, four days</td>
<td>48 hours</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Kennel Education Center at MacLaren School</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>5 days a week during day</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>At facility, sometimes at a shelter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>School year, summers, 6 classes plus interview, 1 hour each</td>
<td>7 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>ADI, School, detention facilities</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Semester, 5 days per week, 1 hour per day, during and after school</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>Schools, detention facilities, community center, therapy clinic, boys and girls clubs</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>Children's Village</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 classes per day, 4 days a week throughout the school year, 90 minute classes</td>
<td>180 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>Green Chimneys</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 classes per day, 4 days a week throughout the school year, 90 minute classes</td>
<td>180 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>Mercy First Children and Family Services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 classes per day, 4 days a week throughout the school year, 90 minute classes</td>
<td>180 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several programs set or address individualized goals for participants. At Soul Friends, a treatment form, goals, and a behavioral plan with parental consultation are completed for each student. In the ECAD/Green Chimney's program, children's school counselors and therapists set goals for the children's participation such as staying on task, communicating with peers, and responsibilities for others. In HS A-DOGS programs, individual goals are set for students. In some cases, HS A-DOGS staff works with students on individualized attitude, behavioral, or skill issues. At PAWS, counselors specify why individual students will benefit from a program before the session begins. In the first week of the session, TLC staff meet with students to establish personal goals and goals for the dogs. At LEAP, in the last session, program leaders meet with students to set individualized post-program goals, which often include addressing behavioral issues. Other programs do not set individual goals, but do respond to individual needs over the course of the sessions.

Among the fourteen programs, the number of students in each session ranges from 4 to 20. The average class includes 8 students. Occasionally, programs face some attrition over the course of a session. The main reasons for attrition are psychiatric hospitalization, runaways, illness, and expulsion or dropout from school. Some programs also have lost students who could not get along with peers or have other behavioral problems. Rather than attrition, LEAP has experienced the problem of students who enter the program session midway in alternative school classes. LEAP reports that the addition of a new student after the start of the program reduces the benefits of participation for the student and interferes with group dynamics.

Most programs utilize dog trainers as full or part-time staff or as volunteers. For many programs, the program leader works with a dog trainer and volunteers. ECAD instructors are trained in ECAD's curriculum and dog training techniques, and are assisted by a volunteer.

The average ratio of adults (program leaders, trainers, and volunteers) to students is 1:3. Soul Friends, PAWS, ADW and SHIP have the most adult supervision for students at approximately one adult for every two youths. Project Pooch has the lowest ratio of adults to students at one adult for seven participants. (See Table 3.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Adult/Student Ratio</th>
<th>Participant Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>Jewish Board of Children and Families</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>2 classes per day, 4 days a week throughout the school year, 90 minute classes</td>
<td>180 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>Parks and recreation, day care, school</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>6 weeks, one 50 minute class per week outside of school hours</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Program Ratios of Students to Adults and Dogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Adults*: Students</th>
<th>Dogs: Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>1 : 2-3</td>
<td>1 : 4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>1 : 3</td>
<td>1 : 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>1 : 3</td>
<td>1 : 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>4 : 10-14</td>
<td>1 : 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>1 : 3</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>1 : 7</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>3 : 5</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>1 : 5</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>3 : 5-10</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>2 : 7</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>2 : 7</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>1 : 6</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>1 : 6</td>
<td>1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>1 : 2</td>
<td>1 : 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Program leaders, trainers, staff and volunteers

Programs differ in the extent to which students work with one or more dogs over the course of their involvement in the session. In some programs, students are paired with one dog for the duration of the program. In other programs, a group of students work with a single dog. In still other cases, students work with a variety of dogs over the course of the program. In the service dog programs, dogs may have a succession of trainers. At ADI, dogs receive two years of training before their permanent placement. They may have 3-4 trainers over this time. The Children’s Village students do “finishing training” with dogs who have completed basic obedience training with students at Green Chimneys. ECAD programs also have students train different dogs during the year in order to improve the dog’s training and to make separation from specific dogs easier at the end of the year.

For programs in which specific dogs are assigned to individuals or a team, a variety of factors enter into the matches. In some cases, participants can choose or give preferences for the dogs with which they would like to work. Some programs match youth and dogs based on personality traits or commonality of problems. For example, at HS A-DOGS, a dog with attention deficits might be matched with a trainer who is diagnosed with ADHD. PAWS puts rowdy dogs with rowdy students, and shy dogs with shy students. Experience is also an issue. At Project Pooch, the tougher dogs are assigned to the more experienced youth. At ECAD/JB, the dogs are rotated among students for the first couple of weeks to assist the pairing of dogs and students based on temperament.
All of the programs use positive reinforcement training techniques. Positive reinforcement training methods stress "patience, love, and understanding of the dog's individual issues and histories" (LEAP). SHIP, Project Click, Soul Friends, and Project Pooch use the clicker training technique. At ECAD/JB, the program teaches students to "influence the dog's behavior by making changes in their own energy level (movement, vocal level, and intonation) and body language (physical cues, positioning, posture, breath, tension, relaxation, and facial expressions)." ECAD uses cause/effect training in which markers are used for correct, wrong, keep trying, and moving on for a task. The programs that train dogs for adoption teach the basic commands such as sit, down, stay, walk on leash, and come. Assistance dog programs teach 80-90 specialized commands.

While dog training is a significant part of the curriculum, most programs also include a broader range of topics. Many programs teach students about dog safety, dog behavior, animal laws, animal welfare, dog anatomy, dog health, spay and neuter, and animal relinquishment issues. The HS A-DOGS program covers human psychology, parenting education, behavior management for dogs and people, and video production skills. PAL includes wildlife rehabilitation and cat behavior and socialization components. Project Pooch teaches students job skills including work ethic, working with the public, and accountability. LEAP addresses issues such as anger management, environmental concerns, conflict resolution, bullying, gangs, violence, history, geography, and journaling. SHIP provides clicker training homework that involves praising and improving interactions with family members. Several programs also train students in public speaking.

Education about disabilities is a component of the curriculum for assistance dog programs. ECAD includes lectures, hands on exercises, face-to-face interactions, and videos regarding disabilities. Both ECAD and HS-A DOGS engage students in simulation exercises where they pretend to be disabled and have to rely on wheel chairs.

Although students often assist with the adoption process in shelter dog programs, they only have limited interactions with the future owners of shelter dogs after training is complete. At Project Pooch, participants play an active role in the adoption process by showing potential adopters the dogs and telling them about the dogs' characteristics. Since Project Click students spend a substantial amount of time at the shelter, they often interact with potential adopters. At TLC, potential adopters are invited to observe the training class, which facilitates some interactions with dogs and children.

The service dog training programs allow more interaction between students and clients who will receive the dogs. At HS A-DOGS, students are invited to watch client
training and to demonstrate commands. At the graduation ceremony, student trainers are seated with clients at the dinner. Letters between students and clients are also encouraged. Students are included in client interviews for dog placements (ECAD, ADW). Student trainers work with the dog’s future owner to demonstrate commands (ECAD).

Parent and guardian involvement in programs varies widely. Most commonly, parents and guardians are only involved to the extent that they sign permission forms for the children and attend graduation ceremonies. The only program in which a parent or guardian is required to attend sessions is SHIP. Soul Friends involves parents or guardians in formulation of goals for the student before the program begins.

Most programs mark the end of the session with a graduation ceremony. At most graduation ceremonies, students demonstrate the commands that their dogs have learned, receive certificates, and have a party. Many events include family members, community representatives, and organizational donors. Along with the certificate, program staff often give students photos of the dogs and other memorabilia. Since at Project Pooch students do not leave the program at the same time, ceremonies are held for the dogs at which certificates are presented. For some of the assistance dog training programs, the graduation ceremony also includes handing their dogs over to client recipients.

After the conclusion of a session, some programs seek to continue to involve youth in their work. At ADW, students are invited to help the program with public education through presentations to community groups. SHIP has begun to recruit students and family members to return as “ship mates” or mentors for future classes. Project Click graduates sometimes become regular shelter volunteers.

Best Practices for Program Content and Structure

The success of the programs depends upon positive and flexible learning environments. Positive reinforcement is at the core of all programs. Not only are positive interactions and training techniques important to learning success for both dogs and youth, they model behavior for youth. Along with dog training exercises, programs identify several additional types of learning activities of particular value to programs: touching dogs, puppy socialization, field trips, teaching dogs to read, homework, videos, role play, and graduation ceremonies. For school-based programs, the integration of teachers and school administrators can benefit further student development.

Food and Welcoming Environment

Food and candy – in abundance. Nurture, nurture, nurture families that are highly stressed with carbs! We meet at 6:30 PM, families are hungry and tired so first we eat. We give people time to sit and talk dog talk or whatever. The atmosphere is relaxed and welcoming, thanks to all the support from the SPCA that provides tables and chairs and storage space and anything else we might need. Even during renovations, the SPCA has said “We will always find a space for you.” (SHIP)

A lot of smiling and laughing! (SHIP)
We play the training game every day and this provides an opportunity for peer relationships to develop in safe and positive way. (PC)

Personalized items: Each participant has a name tag, a waiter’s apron (which they personalize with drawings) and a clicker. Everyone puts on an apron and name tag on arrival and we keep these during the week. (SHIP)

Positive Reinforcement
Emphasis on the positive in interactions with both animals and people. Rewarding skill acquisition with labeled praises: “I really like how you held your hand down low so the dog won’t jump”. “Great job clicking right when the dog looked at you.”; “That was a wonderful way to let your learner know that she was near the target you chose by clicking her hand movement” (during the training game). “Thank you so much for helping us clean up.” “You are so patient with the dog. That is a wonderful skill.” (SHIP)

“The goal is not just to get the dogs trained, but to teach the children how to train, using positive motivation and not force, fear or violence. No animal should be handled in an aggressive or inhumane manner. Rewards-based training is the goal of this program. Corrections and compulsion-based techniques should be kept to a minimum. “ (HS ADGS)

The implementation of TAGTeach I the 2nd year made a significant difference in the way staff relate to the students. It created a structure for how to deal with problem behaviors without using punishment. (Project Click)

TAGTeaching to assist in the integration of positive reinforcement. (Soul Friends)

The integration of clicker training and positive interactions with therapy dogs to provide motivation, reinforcement and an experience in positive touch. (Soul Friends)

Clicker training gave students a way to communicate with the animals that was safe and positive. (Project Click)
Measures of Success for Students
Curriculum Training Levels program provides measurable goals instantly to students (ADW)

Respecting that the youths are young adults and giving them the opportunities to solve problems rather than just getting answers. (Project Pooch)

Our teen trainers are taught all aspects of service dog training and given the responsibility and opportunity to succeed in even the most difficult training tasks. (HS A-DOGS)

Draw Comparisons Between Dog Training and Other Relationships
The comparisons of dog psychology and pack behavior to human social psychology and group interactions is a key topic that is used to address issues that the teens are struggling to overcome. This provides a non-threatening technique to discuss difficult issues and also develop insight in our teen trainers. (HS A-DOGS)

We emphasize the role of the teen trainer as one of a teacher and parent. By drawing these analogies, we are able to build empathy toward teachers and parents as well as provide tools that will help the teens should they become parents or teachers. This experiential learning of critical parenting skills has the potential to help multiple generations of the future as these tools benefit the next generations. (HS A-DOGS)

Involve Youth with Clients
Involving our teen trainers in the client training and graduation activities gives them a greater level of empathy and understanding of the lives of people with severe physical disabilities. We place many of our dogs with people experiencing quadriplegia so our students see a perspective of different challenges sometimes even greater than their own challenges. This also heightens the experience of a positive sense of purpose for our teen trainers. (HS A-DOGS)

The final act of placing the service dog with the person they will serve is a celebration of hard work, dedication and extreme sacrifice. Our teen trainers are invited to hand over the leash to a person with a disability during a graduation ceremony. The teens achievements are duly acknowledged by the hundreds of attendees giving the community the chance to see our “at-risk” teens in a different light. (HS A-DOGS)

We strive to have our teens meet and interact with the physically disabled recipients of the dogs. We value our teen trainers’ abilities and involve them in our client trainings when possible. (HS A-DOGS)

Youth participate in interviews and team training with clients. (ECAD)

Flexibility
Modify training protocol to meet treatment plan objectives. (ADW)

Curriculum Development and assessment- trainer discussion, flexible teaching styles. (ADW)
Because of fluidity of the field of humane education, LEAP has been designed to allow for new information and techniques to be integrated into the program as they become available. (LEAP)

LEAP is a flexible program that allows for spontaneity. It is designed to adapt to the needs of the students who often do not have basic needs met. It is designed to be a positive in lives of students who often feel they have little to be positive about. (LEAP)

Incorporated into LEAP are a variety of experiences for the students honoring multiple learning styles. The curriculum is presented using techniques that allow visual, verbal, kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and interpersonal learning. (LEAP)

Support of Classroom Teachers/Integration into Classroom
LEAP is fully integrated into the classroom with the support of the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher provides stability and continuity in the classroom, assumes responsibility for discipline, and can carry the experience forward with the students throughout the rest of the year.

There is a belief, held by all who support this program, that LEAP makes a difference in the lives of our youth. (LEAP)

Have developed relationship with teachers through classroom presentations and WHS publications. (PAL)

Additional Activities to Engage Students
As a college, we are always reaching out to improve our program and expand its potential to help others. We have begun to teach our teens to train their dogs to read as a method to foster their interest in reading as well. The teens have taught as many as 12 commands to their dog via having the dog respond to a command on a flashcard. (HS A-DOGS)

We place high value on early puppy socialization and training. The teens begin with the new pups at birth, gaining an understanding of the importance of touch in early neurological development. Many attachment and bonding issues facing our teens can be addressed in a non-threatening and insight building method using the newborn pup as a teaching tool. (HS A-DOGS)

Touching animals is encouraged. Many students are not exposed to
good touch at this age. They are able to spend time petting, brushing and massaging their dogs. Studies show that this touch decrease the production of stress hormones in both species, creating calming effect. (LEAP)

Emphasis on doing the homework and sharing outcomes with the group. (SHIP)

Most days are started with a small cleaning project (kennels, organizing laundry/grooming room) and the students seem to really enjoy this structure since the day can get more hectic in the afternoon. (PC)

Ending each week with a field trip gave the students a much deserved break and served as an important bonding time for everyone. (Project Click)

Having the graduation ceremony at the school increases the interest level as well. (SPCA of Erie County)

Annual ADW Graduation attendance. (ADW)

Student simulation of disabilities, where do not have ability to use arms or legs. (ECAD)

Education/Training for Staff
Continuing education in dog training, teaching, and disabilities (ADW)

Humane educator and the CPDT actively research to find resources and information to keep LEAP content current. (LEAP)

Principles of applied behavioral analysis to help with goals and treatment objectives. (Soul Friends)
Specialized training for ECAD staff by ECAD program. (ECAD)

Materials
Dog communication handouts are helpful in reinforcing importance of communication and relationship. (PAWS)

Handouts from Karen Pryor’s clicker training and the book, Positive Perspectives, by Pat Miller provide the content for animal behavior. Having minimal resources help keep the students from feeling overwhelmed by too much paperwork. (PC)

Videos of clients and dogs working together. (ECAD/GC)

Preparation for Employment
Using standards that employers will value such as good attendance record and working while at the kennel. We also encourage being self-directed and seeking what needs to be done and then doing it. (Project Pooch)

Staff hold youth accountable for all work that needs to be done. We do not enable youth. We maintain performance appraisals and observational data (Project Pooch)
Program Staff, Management and Training

A combination of full-time and part-time staff and volunteers run most programs. (See Table 3.) ADW and HS A-DOGS have the largest staff size and volunteer core. The shelter-based programs rely heavily on humane education staff and, in several cases, the shelter's executive director. With the exception of ECAD's institutionally-based programs, few programs involve psychologists or other clinical staff. Clinical staff from Children's Village, Green Chimneys, Jewish Board of Families and Children, and Mercy First Children and Family Services frequently confer with ECAD staff at these institutions about the progress of individual students in these programs. All programs have experienced dog trainers and managers.

Table 3. Program Staffing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FT Staff</th>
<th>PT Staff</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Staff Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ph.D. Psychologist, YWCA staff, shelter staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Education Manager (graduate degreee), Education Specialist (BA), Dog Trainer (graduate degree and 10 years training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>Exec Dir, humane educators, van driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>Education coordinator, certified dog trainer, teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>Humane Education Coordinator, probation officer from juvenile court, student intern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Exec Director, Canine Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Ed.D., DVM, MS, LSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Dog trainers, occupational therapist, client placement trainer, student teaching assistants, curriculum developers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>MS in special education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Co-founder of ECAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trained by ECAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>M.Ed specializing in behavioral and emotional disorders of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>LCSW, Occupational Therapist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most programs provide training to their volunteers. Trainings range from 2 hours to 3 days. They include presentations, videos, and written materials. Volunteers are often briefed by staff who play different roles in the project. For example, correctional facility as well as Project Pooch staff brief Project Pooch volunteers. At Project Click, volunteers receive mentor training from the juvenile court. For shelter-based programs, volunteers are briefed both on the shelter's work and the specific youth dog training program. In several programs, on-the-job training is provided rather than prior training. Most volunteers have some experience handling dogs. The larger number of volunteers at ADW and HS A-DOGS reflect the role of volunteers in raising puppies for the programs.

Institutionally-based programs confront particular management challenges. Clinical staff and dog training program staff may have different visions of the program and criteria for participant selection. As one instructor describes, “The faculty and staff (at the institution) really [did] not understand why kids are training dogs. They thought we were just playing with puppies all day. I had frequent problems with staff trying to pull kids out of the program for behavioral infractions during or after school, e.g. the staff wanted to use the program as a way to give or take away from students. I also had problems recruiting kids because staff thought many of the kids did not deserve it.” With videos, demonstrations, graduation ceremonies, and networking with school and clinical staff, the program was able to win the cooperation and support of the institution.

Best Practices for Staff, Management, and Training

Dog training programs for youth at risk bring together organizations and individuals with a diversity of interests and skills, ranging from animal shelters, detention centers, schools, and service dog providers to dog trainers, humane educators, teachers, social workers, probation counselors, parents, and the youth and dogs whom the programs serve. Shared commitments to youth and dogs animate the programs. Collaboration, communication, and continuing education for staff and volunteers are central to program success.

Close collaboration and Communication
Close collaboration among participating institutions that enables us to adapt and change our program. We are a three-legged stool and could not do SHIP without each other. Next Fall we are going to embed SHIP in the Adolescent AMEND program at the YWCA. AMEND-SHIP will be a 15 week program with the same families attending both programs instead of families participating in Adolescent -AMEND as an open group. An AMEND
group leader will be our designated contact and hopefully, join our SHIP portion which will be a 7 week program embedded in the middle of the 15 weeks. This approach will enable families and their group leader to have continuity as well as better utilize the skills taught in SHIP. It also will offer additional program evaluation options. (SHIP)

Regular staff meetings/case studies (ADW)
Quarterly meetings/program review (Children’s Village)
Daily wrap ups & review at end of each day to discuss issues and strategies (PAL)
A collaborative approach with parents to help identify individual specific goals within the group setting. (Soul Friends)
Collaboration (ADW)
Work with the entire shelter staff to add to and shape our curriculum (SPCA of Erie County)
Training & Brainstorming session/Orientation prior to the sessions starting (SPCA of Erie County)
LEAP is fully supported by both the executive board and the executive director of the So. Oregon Humane Society. (LEAP)
All staff attend extra programs the agencies offer related to working with the teens. (ECAD)
Every year we do a demonstration for the entire agency to show what the dogs have learned. People who don’t see us on a daily basis are always amazed at how well behaved and skilled the dogs are, thanks to the student trainers. (ECAD/Mercy First)
Make self available to anyone who has concerns about a students trainer and work with them to resolve it. (ECAD/Mercy First)
Every year I talk to the clinical staff, particularly new interns, about the benefits of AAA/ AAT. (ECAD/Mercy First)
Flexibility to Incorporate Feedback
Ongoing input into the program and flexibility. SHIP is evolving based on the creative ideas and feedback we receive from volunteers and families. (SHIP)
Investment in getting initial information from participants, outcome data and a willingness to help collect this information. All volunteers are involved in this process as well as helping with “homework” projects. (SHIP)
Well-Trained, Multi-skilled Team
The staff is well-qualified to teach the program. The CPDT has additional graduate level
training as an animal behavioralist. She is a nationally known speaker, writer, and researcher. The education coordinator has experience as a trauma and emergency room RN. She also has experience as a trauma coordinator responsible for developing and teaching injury prevention programs. She also worked as an RN at a community clinic that had a contract with a boarding school for troubled teens. (LEAP)

A multidisciplinary team of clinicians knowledgeable in the benefits of AAT including: social workers, counselors, occupational therapists and special education teachers – and clinicians well versed in the principles of applied behavioral analysis. (Soul Friends)

Realistic time demands on “staff”. Everyone is a volunteer and everyone has a busy schedule plus crises and unexpected events in their lives. Everyone trains to fill all the roles in SHIP so that we are interchangeable (except for the dog trainers who are indispensable) allowing us to cover the program when a volunteer is unable to make it and do so without inducing guilt feelings. I generally miss 1-2 SHIP meetings due to being out-of-town, etc. and everything goes smoothly. (SHIP)

One-on-one training with volunteers (PAL)

Hands-on involvement with every aspect of the program (PAL)

All instructors are required to learn the ECADemy curriculum thoroughly and buy into it (ECAD).

Staff, instructors, kennel help, and management participate in team training and when possible participate as a disabled person. (ECAD/CV)

All instructors participate in therapeutic intervention classes (TCI) twice a year. (ECAD)

The Humane Education Coordinator and the CPDT, continually research and read information regarding teaching and working with youth-at-risk. Both attend humane education and dog training conferences and participate in organizations to increase their knowledge and skills to meet the goals of the program (LEAP)

We offer an annual workshop or seminar with experts in the field, participate in several networks, take online training courses, and review several journals. (PAWS)

Ongoing Staff Training (Children’s Village)
Humane Education Conferences (SPCA of Erie County)

Team training/teaching (ADW)
Consistency in our instructors of what, how, and why we teach. (ECAD)

Mutual Focus on Animals and Youth
A mutual focus on helping animals is essential – but those are the people who self-recruit to SHIP. Sometimes we have to remind our “People-People” volunteers to focus on the human participants more so that they do not monopolize the dogs or the dog trainers. (SHIP)

Positive Environment
Maintaining an upbeat and exciting environment (PAL)

Case Management Model
Case management model is implemented by staff (Project Pooch)

Participant Selection

While all programs target at-risk youth, these at-risk populations range from victims of abuse and neglect, adjudicated offenders, and youth with cognitive, emotional and behavioral problems to students who are economically disadvantaged or have problems with social skills, low self-esteem, or depression. (See Table 4.) Some youth are referred to the programs by school administrators, teachers and counselors. In the case of LEAP, trainings may include an entire class from an alternative school, where all students are deemed at-risk. Child welfare and mental health agencies refer other students to the dog training programs.

Other youth have become a part of the criminal justice system. They are referred by probation officers and social workers connected with juvenile courts. Students in Project Click are completing court-mandated community service. SHIP youth have been remanded by courts to the AMEND Program. Participants in Project Pooch are incarcerated. HS A-DOGS and ADW conduct trainings at youth correctional facilities. Most participants already have been through multiple placements within child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice systems before they enter ECAD programs.

Table 4. Characteristics of Program Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Participant Population</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>Victims of Abuse/Neglect, Adjudicated</td>
<td>12 yrs to adult parents</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>Schools, victims of abuse/neglect, at-risk, in-need of service</td>
<td>10-13 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Schools, at-risk, economically disadvantaged with accompanying educational and emotional problems</td>
<td>11-13 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Schools, victims of abuse/neglect, at-risk</td>
<td>12-18 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of programs target adolescents and early teens, with several programs including older teens through the age of 18 (PAWS, Project Click, ADW, and HS A-DOGS). Project Pooch serves 18-24 year olds. Most programs have both male and female participants, with the exception of Project Pooch and Children’s Village, which are based at male correctional and treatment facilities, respectively.

Admission policies vary. (See Table 5.) Some programs have formal application processes (Project Pooch, ECAD). Several programs interview students as a part of selection or orientation process. Interviews also can identify students who don’t like dogs, have histories of animal abuse, or display other attitudes, characteristics, or behaviors that might hinder successful program participation. At the same time, interviews can allow students to hone their interviewing skills, help set individual goals for students, and inform youth of what to expect from the program.

### Table 5. Participant Selection Process and Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Source of Youth</th>
<th>Selection Process</th>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>Adolescent AMEND Teens are adjudicated and remanded to AMEND.</td>
<td>Youth and Parent/Guardian remanded to AMEND can choose SHIP.</td>
<td>Self-select from AMEND</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Click</th>
<th>Adjudicated, at-risk</th>
<th>13-18 year olds</th>
<th>Male, Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Incarcerated, victims of abuse/neglect, at-risk</td>
<td>18-24 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>General population, schools, victims of abuse/neglect, adjudicated, at-risk</td>
<td>12-18 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>Victims of abuse/neglect, at-risk, adjudicated, incarcerated, alternative high schools</td>
<td>12-18 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>General population, schools, victims of abuse/neglect, adjudicated, physical and developmental disabilities</td>
<td>8-18 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>At risk or in need of service. Impoverished, inner city youth who are referred through child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice system</td>
<td>14-18 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>At risk or in need of service. Impoverished, inner city youth who are referred through child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice system</td>
<td>10-16 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>At risk or in need of service. Impoverished, inner city youth who are referred through child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice system</td>
<td>13-18 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>At risk or in need of service. Impoverished, inner city youth who are referred through child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice system</td>
<td>13-18 years</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum, ADHD, Cognitive-Emotionally Challenged</td>
<td>11-14 years</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Setting and Procedures</td>
<td>Target Group</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Teacher or social worker nominates student</td>
<td>Target children who like animals, at-risk in dangerous neighborhoods, self-esteem issues, problems in classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Assistant Principal and school aid select students with input from teachers and guidance counselors.</td>
<td>Student need. Violence in home, poor grades, poor social skills, violence towards animals may be inclusion factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Schools, particularly alternative schools</td>
<td>School select participants. In alternative schools, enrolled in class. In mainstream schools, selected by teachers and counselors.</td>
<td>Students must agree to respect dogs, peers and teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>Probation counselors refer students.</td>
<td>As referred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Correctional Institution</td>
<td>Apply. Treatment managers, counselors, and administrators select youth. Interviewed by peers. Criminal records checked for past animal abuse.</td>
<td>No animal abuse. Have had 1.5-2 years treatment. Participate in activities in unit. Show self-awareness, not security risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>Schools, Correctional Programs</td>
<td>Referred by teachers, counselors, correction officers. Interviewed by Program Coordinator.</td>
<td>As referred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>Schools, institutions</td>
<td>Collaborate with staff from school/program to select. Interview.</td>
<td>Low self-esteem, depression, social skill deficits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Referred by state, care managers, therapists, schools, peers. Interview.</td>
<td>Like dogs. No repetitive animal abuse. Desire to self-improve. Acceptable mental acuity and cognitive ability. Ability to work with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>Youth in CV school</td>
<td>Application and review. Interview approved students</td>
<td>Only exclude if shown dangerous, uncontrollable, or AWOL behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>Youth in GC school</td>
<td>Application and review. Interview approved students</td>
<td>Only exclude if shown dangerous, uncontrollable, or AWOL behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>Referred by child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice agencies</td>
<td>Application and review. Interview approved students</td>
<td>Only exclude if shown dangerous, uncontrollable, or AWOL behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>Application and review. Interview approved students</td>
<td>Only exclude if shown dangerous, uncontrollable, or AWOL behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>Special education programs through parks and recreation, child guidance clinics, Dept. of Children and Families, Individual Therapists</td>
<td>Program manager screens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Policies towards participation of youth who are known to have abused animals in the past differ among the programs. PAL, Project Pooch, and PC exclude youth from their programs if they have a history of animal abuse. In the case of Project Pooch and Project Click, these youth are excluded because the programs are concerned that they cannot monitor youth behavior at all times. Both of these programs have multi-faceted contact with dogs that goes beyond the training sessions. PAL does not accept youth with a history of animal abuse because it defines itself as a prevention rather than treatment program.

SHIP, SF, HS A-DOGS, TLC, ADW, ECAD, and LEAP do not exclude youth who have engaged in acts of animal cruelty. SHIP, LEAP, and HS A-DOGS do not review past criminal histories. They view their programs as representing a clean slate for youth. For trainings at detention centers and developmental centers, ADW requires initial counseling on animal cruelty in which individuals discuss their involvement in animal cruelty acts, why the act was wrong, how they felt, and what they hope to gain from the programs. All programs that allow the participation of youth who have committed animal cruelty acts monitor youth closely.

**Best Practices for Participant Selection**

Programs employ several types of screening mechanisms to aid in identification and selection of students, including applications, interviews, parents, and referrals from schools and other partner agencies. These mechanisms also help to determine individual youth needs and to orient youth to the program. Close collaboration with parents/guardians and school/agency personnel is also recommended for participant selection. Programs differ on policies regarding admission of youth with histories of animal abuse.

**Admission Screening**

*Pre-screening for sensory sensitivities, behavioral and social challenges. (Soul Friends)*

*Questionnaire completed by the student to gain a commitment from the child (PAL)*

*We interview the students, giving them the opportunity to learn interviewing skills (HS A-DOGS)*

*We interview participants prior to selection to set expectations and to provide an experience with interviewing (PAWS)*

*Commitment to helping homeless dogs become more adoptable. (SHIP)*

*Must love dogs and be willing to learn proper care and training techniques. Can’t have animal abuse issue. Living unit treatment managers often find out about animal abuse not in criminal records and help screen. (Project Pooch)*

*Interviewing tool sets expectations (PAWS)*

*We do not have student files, although do ask referring staff if there are any alerts that I should know about. I would rather start with a clear slate and meet every students with a positive expectation. (ECAD/JB)*

*Hands on interviews with students. (ECAD/GC)*

Take the time when recruiting to get everyone on board – clinicians, cottage staff, and teachers. If they approve a student now, they will continue to be supportive throughout the year. (ECAD/JB)

Guide staff in making good referrals. That is, many staff want kids to join the program because “it would be good for him” or “he loves dogs.” They will tell me a boy is not a good candidate because he is hyper or controlling or manipulative, but those kids make good trainers! I have to make sure they understand that training is difficult and can be very frustrating. We need kids who are physically, cognitively, and emotionally capable of training a future service dog. We really want to set kids up to succeed from the start.” (ECAD/JB)

Once I get the referrals from staff, I interview each kid individually or in small groups. I try to weed out the ones who think it is an easy class or only do it to go on field trips. I will also ask former trainers – subtly – if they think the candidate is appropriate to the program. They truly understand what it takes, they know their peers well, and are brutally honest. (ECAD/JB)

Parental Involvement
Parental input in the identification of goals. (Soul Friends)

Thorough packet of information mailed to parents/guardians. (PAL)

We incorporate parental input. (PAWS)

Concise description of SHIP for teens and their caregivers and being available to answer questions about SHIP (SHIP)

Relationships with Schools/Agency Personnel
Have developed relationship with teachers through classroom presentations and WHS A-DOGS publications. (PAL)

Collaborate with school and probation staff to determine which teens have the greatest need of program benefits. (HS A-DOGS)

Recommendation by a teacher/social worker stating why the student would benefit. (PAL)

Having an aid (vice principal as well) that works with the students on a daily basis (someone they look up to) helps as far as recruitment. (SPCA of Erie County)

The Humane Society works in conjunction with our community’s alternative schools. They are our conduit to the at-risk youth population. (LEAP)

There is buy-in from both administration and classroom teacher. (LEAP)

Allowing school personnel to select the students as they know the individual student needs
reaches students who are more likely to benefit from the program. (LEAP)

We talk with the administrators of at-risk populations and have them identify their primary at-risk populations. (PAWS)

School/detention center counselors/teachers/program managers. (ADW)

Recommendation by a teacher/social worker stating why the student would benefit. (PAL)

We spend time with the facility talking about goals and who might benefit. (PAWS)

We rely heavily on counselor and PO recruitment. The detention center staff know the program well and do a great job of recruiting participants that they feel will benefit the most. (Project Click)

Close coordination with Adolescent – AMEND (SHIP)

Orient Students, Establish Rules of Conduct, and Set Goals
Our teens attend an orientation that explains the importance of training service dogs and the responsibilities involved. We immediately draw the parallels of dog training to that of being a teacher and also a parent. The teens are shown a video of a service dog helping a person with a disability. (HS A-DOGS)

Students agree to the rules of conduct. We are experimenting with having students generate their own rules of conduct and signing a contract to follow these rules. (LEAP) Questionnaire completed by the student to gain a commitment from the child. (PAL)

A multidisciplinary approach in the development of goals and objectives for each child. (Soul Friends)

Instructors being very clear and specific with expectations of students. (ECAD)

Involve Graduates As Mentors
A new plan to use graduates of SHIP (both teens and their caregivers) as SHIPMATES to help recruit appropriate families to the program by meeting with them at the AMEND program. (SHIP)

Postgraduates help as well as they want to be mentors for the program (there is a lengthy list of students that want to return as mentors and it has become a popular program). (SPCA of Erie County)

Past students talking to new students. (ECAD/CV)
Dog Selection and Dog Care

Most of the programs train dogs in order to enhance their prospects for long-term adoption (SHIP, PAL, PP, HS A-DOGS, PC, LEAP). One program (PAWS) trains shelter and rescue dogs to be assistance dogs. Three programs train purpose-bred dogs to be assistance dogs who will be placed with clients with disabilities (HS A-DOGS, ADW, and CV). Soul Friends uses therapy dogs in its programs that are owned by staff and volunteers. (See Table 6.)

Table 6. Sources of Dogs for Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Source of Dogs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>Shelters and rescue groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>Breeders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>Breeders, other service dog organizations, and occasionally shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>Own breeding program, other service dog orgs., breeder donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>Own breeding program, other service dog orgs., breeder donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>Own breeding program, other service dog orgs., breeder donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>Own breeding program, other service dog orgs., breeder donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>Staff and volunteers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shelter dogs are temperament-tested and receive health clearance before they are included in the programs. Most programs use the SAFER dog evaluation method along with staff observations. Dogs must show an interest in treats, not demonstrate aggressive posturing, be healthy, and be willing to be on a leash. LEAP chooses dogs for whom "basic obedience and social skills [will] improve their chances for a lasting adoption." TLC selects dogs that are in need of manners or enrichment. Project Pooch gives preference to dogs that have been at shelters the longest, are large, are most in need of training, and are most at risk of euthanasia.

Some attrition of dogs occurs over the course of programs. Occasionally, dogs are removed from the program for medical or behavioral reasons. More frequently, dogs are adopted during the course of training. Shelter dogs that are trained in the programs have a high rate of adoption. PAL reports an adoption rate of 100%. Most dogs are kept until they can be placed.
Golden retrievers and Labrador/Golden Retriever crosses are the breeds most often selected to be service dogs. According to HS A-DOGS, these dogs are chosen based on temperament, lack of prey drive, lack of arousal, and good health. However, not all of the dogs will be trained successfully as service dogs. HS A-DOGS reports that 50% of their dogs are placed as service dogs, 30% as facility or social therapy dogs, and the remainder may be released as pets. Similarly, of the dogs in the ADW program, 90% are placed in working environments and 10% become pets or therapy dogs. Some dogs remain in the training program. ECAD/GC also has a 90% placement rate for assistance dogs.

For the shelter-based programs, dogs remain at the shelter for the duration of training sessions. However, there are some differences in dog housing among the service dog training programs. At the ADI, dogs are housed with caregivers who raised them and spend time in ADI offices. ECAD dogs are kenneled near classroom sites on weekdays and at volunteer homes on weekends. For some correctional institution training programs, participants are allowed to have dogs stay with them occasionally as a reward for good behavior. At ECAD/Children's Village, dogs are kenneled away from the facility out of a concern that students will become attached to individual animals.

Veterinary care is provided to all dogs. Most of the shelter-based programs have on-site clinics, veterinary technicians or veterinarians. Project Pooch and ADW take their dogs to local veterinary clinics. HS A-DOGS employs a part-time veterinarian. Owners provide veterinary care for Soul Friends' dogs. In its four programs, ECAD or volunteers who house dogs on the weekends handle the veterinary needs of dogs.

The programs vary in the extent to which students have responsibility for the dogs. In all programs, participants provide general training and stroke the dogs. (See Table 7.) Most programs also include play, grooming, and walking dogs. Some programs involve more extensive responsibilities for and activities with the dogs. Project Pooch participants help run the kennel, and are responsible for meeting all day-to-day needs of the dogs. ECAD/Children's Village students also help run the onsite kennel where dogs are housed on weekdays. The HS A-DOGS program includes early puppy petting and training, teaching dogs to read, and therapy dog visits. At Project Click, students clean kennels and learn basic veterinary techniques. Some programs such as ADW have student trainers take their dogs on field trips. In the LEAP program, dogs also stay with students in the classroom for quiet socialization.
Table 7. Youth Responsibilities for Care and Training of Dogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>General Training</th>
<th>Service Training</th>
<th>Stroking</th>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Grooming</th>
<th>Walks</th>
<th>Cleaning Kennel</th>
<th>Feeding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/JB</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Best Practices for Dog Selection and Care

Selection and care of dogs are priorities for programs. The welfare of both youth and dogs is enhanced by temperament-testing, staff involvement in dog selection, monitoring of dogs and youth, and, in the case of the assistance dog programs, breed and breeder selection. Dog welfare benefits from positive reinforcement training techniques, socialization, and veterinary care. Dog variety can improve learning opportunities for youth and adoption opportunities for dogs. Involvement of youth in various aspects of dog care in addition to training may enhance youth development, teach youth about appropriate care for their own current or future pets, and enhance relationships with the dogs.

Evaluation of Dog
Suitability and temperament testing by qualified dog trainers. (SHIP)

Temperament tested. (Soul Friends)

Registered therapy dogs. (Soul Friends)

Safer Evaluation and Match Maker Program. (PAL)
Our SAFER Team Leader, dog trainer and other shelter staff as a group effort have chosen dogs that are selected. (SPCA of Erie County)

Temperament testing done by skilled trainers. (ADW)

Temperament testing. (PAWS)

The animals are temperament tested twice before participating in the program. (LEAP)

Work closely with WHS A-DOGS animal behavior department to select dogs. (PAL)

The staff at the Oregon Humane Society is very hands-on with the animals. They are aware of what qualities are desirable in the dogs selected for the program. (LEAP)

Shelter make records of dogs they'd like to incorporate into the program. (PAWS)

Consistency in what acceptable skill levels the dog must have to be placed. (ECAD/GC)

Have multiple handlers for each dog to enforce consistency. (ECAD/GC)

Positive Reinforcement Techniques
   Gentle, positive and fun learning through clicker training. (SHIP)

Lot's of good treats. (SHIP)

Monitor Dogs
   Ongoing careful observation by dog trainers to spot stress and monitor the dog's adjustment to the program. (SHIP)

The dogs receive excellent medical care. Because of staff and volunteer involvement with the dogs, problems are identified and addressed early (LEAP)

Every dog is neutered/spayed, vaccinated micro-chipped. (Project Pooch)

Our dogs are in the program from the time they are whelped until they are placed. We see the dogs every day, and get to know each dog very well. (ECAD/JB)

The dogs are regularly seen by other instructors and volunteers who give feedback on dog's health, temperament, etc in different situations. (ECAD/JB)

Variety Among Dogs
   Select a variety of breeds and mixes. (PAL)

Dog selection includes older dogs, big dogs, death-row dogs. Develop compassion for dogs that don't fit the small, cute category. Youth feel good about saving dogs from death row. (Project Pooch)

Due to the nature of our shelter, we do not have specific criteria for dog selection. The benefit of this is students get to work with a variety of breeds and personalities and are exposed to different training challenges. (Project Click)
Because we are a full adoption facility and the animals are temperament tested at intake, we have a wide variety of adoptable dogs to choose from. The dogs are closely observed during the program for any chances in disposition or any health concerns which are addressed immediately. (LEAP)

**Involve Youths in Care**
Youth learn proper care for any dogs they may have in the future (Project Pooch)

When a dog has just been neutered/spayed, the youths spend a lot of time comforting them (Project Pooch)

**Socialization**
Our dogs are socialized immediately upon birth. Our “puppy petters” make certain that the pups are nurtured during the critical first weeks of their lives. Building trust and a love of people are goals set for our pups that are critical to helping our dogs connect with our teen population. (HS A-DOGS)

We begin formal training of our pups prior to four weeks of age. This early opportunity to learn how to learn creates an increased ability to learn difficult tasks later on in the dog’s life. Our dogs have greater abilities to problem solve later on as a result of their early puppy experiences. (HS A-DOGS)

Southern Oregon Humane Society has a strong volunteer program and each dog enjoys additional one on one time with a volunteer on a daily basis. All animals in the facility get time in the play years and interaction with other dogs as tolerated. (LEAP)

We believe that our dogs benefit greatly from living in staff offices. Social interactions with other dogs are monitored more efficiently using this method. Our dogs also learn how to behave appropriately in an office setting. Our dogs are provided with recreational opportunities by our staff and college students. Many of our dogs in training enjoy a romp on the beach during weekends. (HS A-DOGS)

**Breeding**
Internet Research: breed, personalities, traits, experience in the field, etc. (ADW)

Long term working relationships with breeders that understand programs needs and knows their dogs temperament and abilities. (ADW)

Exchange programs with other service dog organizations (ADW)

Our breeding selections are based on Dr. Bergin’s thirty-two years of experience in the service dog field. Our purpose-bred Golden Retrievers and Lab/Golden crosses are intended to be low aroused, loving helpmates with very low prey drive. (HS A-DOGS)

Have our own breeding program with a history of success. (ECAD)
Community Partnerships

The dog training programs have forged a variety of relationships with animal care organizations, social service agencies, correctional facilities, and schools. In most cases, these relationships are ongoing partnerships. For example, SHIP is run as a collaboration between the Childhood Trust, Cincinnati SPCA, and YWCA. PAL, LEAP, and TLC have ongoing relationships with school systems and specific schools. Project Click works closely with the Clark County Juvenile Court since their students are fulfilling court-mandated community service requirements. Project Pooch is administered in partnership with the Oregon Youth Authority. The assistance dog programs – HS A-DOGS, ADW, and PAWS – work with the greatest number and variety of schools, treatment centers, and correctional facilities. The ECAD programs also are collaborations between the dog assistance training program and mental health institutions. These institutions sub-contract with ECAD to operate the dog training programs.

Best Practices for Community Partnerships

All youth at risk dog training programs rely on community partnerships to identify participants, fund programs, recruit volunteers, integrate youth into communities, and create future opportunities for youth. Development and maintenance of these partnerships require outreach, close collaboration, and program feedback mechanisms.

Close Collaboration

All partners are active in the program with specific roles. The Childhood Trust manages the program details and recruiting volunteers; the YWCA is the grant recipient and liaison to Adolescent AMEND and manages expenses. SPCA Cincinnati provides the meeting facility and the shelter dogs. (SHIP)

Collaboration with the Department of Children and Families to assist in program supplementation for children with special needs, and identified as at-risk. (Soul Friends)

We worked with the staff at the court during the development and having strong relationships with them has been critical to our success. Probation officers and counselors are always available to us when we have questions or concerns. (Project Click)

Emphasize cross in-service learning opportunities for/with partnering agencies. (ADW)

Encourage community partners to “market” ADW programs and fund raising objectives. (ADW)

Funding for LEAP is provided by a variety of community members, including private donations, foundations and business/service clubs (LEAP)

Planning meetings with documents – partnership agreements. (PAWS)

Shared goals and resources. (PAWS)
Collaboration with the special needs programming of area park and recreation departments. (Soul Friends)

**Feedback from Partners**
All partners provide valuable feedback to the program. (SHIP)

Ongoing feedback. (PAWS)

Modify/adapt ADW curricula content to suit the objectives of each partnership (ADW)
All partners celebrate each other. SHIP received the Volunteer of the Year award in 2004 from the YWCA and is also featured in the SPCA Cincinnati ads and brochures. The Childhood Trust at CCHMC collaborated with SPCA Cincinnati on a research project on owners of high-risk dogs. (SHIP)

**Outreach to Parents and Students**
Outreach to parents of special needs children. (Soul Friends)

Presentations in schools to recruit participants. (PAL)

Academic Animals (WHS A-DOGS humane education publication for teachers). (PAL)

Media. (PAL)
Ongoing positive publicity in media brings money and volunteers. (Project Pooch)

Accessing volunteer match website has brought us virtual volunteers. (Project Pooch)

**Youth Presence in Community**
Day care center presentation by PAL students. (PAL)

Our teens take part in parades and other community events to help the community see our teens in a positive regard. (HS A-DOGS)

Students are required to do a presentation for a grade school class in the community, sharing information with younger students. (LEAP)

Teens participate in community event, staff information tables, answer questions, and give demonstrations. (ECAD)

**Volunteer Involvement**
Various volunteer groups help us with office work and getting our newsletter ready for mailing. (Project Pooch)

Volunteers assist you with basic skills, interviewing, and problem solving. (Project Pooch)

Volunteers house dogs on weekends. (ECAD)

Marketing to the local community for volunteers. (ECAD/JB)
Opportunities for Students Beyond Programs

Our college offers post-secondary educational options to the teens in our HS A-DOGS A-Dog program. (HS A-DOGS)

We have partnered with other universities to expose our teen trainers to graduate and undergraduate college students through the Office of Service Learning. (HS A-DOGS)

We involve our teen trainers in helping adults with developmental delays by having the teens teach the adults how to groom and interact with the dogs. (HS A-DOGS)

Because of HS A-DOGS relationship with other rescue agencies, students exposed to a local wild animal rescue by tour or visit from staff. Members of Spay and Neuter Your Pet are available to talk with students and offer resources, including financial assistance for spaying and neutering. (LEAP)

Inviting students to participate in SOHS A-DOGS events to potential donors gives them the opportunity to gain self-confidence and practice respect. (LEAP)

Program Funding

Most programs have very modest budgets. At the low end, PAWS runs its programs for $800. SHIP and Project Click spend less than $5000 a year. At the high end, ADW’s multiple training programs at substance abuse treatment centers, detention centers, developmental centers, and schools cost $449,000 per year. (See Table 8.)

Project Pooch, HS A-DOGS, and ADW have larger budgets. In the case of Project Pooch, the organization operates a full-service kennel, providing shelter, food, and veterinary care for dogs who have been brought from shelters. ADW and HS A-DOGS incur expenses related to the acquisition and care of service dogs, higher staffing levels, transportation, and more participants. Since many of the costs of shelter-based programs such as dog care and staff are a part of overall shelter budgets, program budgets may appear lower. Assistance dog programs also are more likely to receive social service agency contractual fees.
Table 8. Program budgets and funding sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>General Funds</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Comm. Orgs.</th>
<th>Corp.</th>
<th>Agency Fees/ Contract</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHIP</td>
<td>Less than $5000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAL</td>
<td>$22,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>$35,000-40,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>$20,190</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Click</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fees for film companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>$88,964</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>$449,500</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Special events; retail sales from website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td>$140,000</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/MF</td>
<td>$63,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/ JB</td>
<td>$63,000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Insurance; participant fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All programs rely upon foundation grants. Most also receive contributions from the public and community organizations. Corporations donate to several of the programs (PP, HS A-DOGS, ADW, Project Click, ECAD/CV, and ECAD/GC). With the exception of TLC, the shelter-based programs are in part funded by their shelter's general budget.

Funding for even modest budgets can be problematic. Project Pooch notes the difficulty of donors that want to fund specific projects rather than ongoing salaries. HS A-DOGS reports that its college graduates who establish programs of their own have to underwrite the costs themselves and that valuable programs are sometimes forced to close for lack of funds.
Best Practices for Program Funding

Active and continuing engagement of donors and the larger community lays the groundwork for successful fundraising. Foundations are the primary preferred funding sources. Some programs advocate solicitation of corporate support. Others encourage development of contractual relationships with agencies for fees. Institutional support of board and staff is also identified as critical.

Foundation Grants
We don’t need much money. Just for supplies and food. We can’t even get our volunteers to bill us for gas mileage. We are fortunate to receive a grant from a foundation in Ohio that covers all expenses. The YWCA in the past has funded the program for battered women. We do not charge a fee – nor do we intend to do so. (SHIP)

Grants are requested from local foundations who are dedicated to serving the community. (LEAP)

Those who contribute to LEAP recognize the value and power of the program. We have had continued support from several foundations and businesses. (LEAP)

Writing grants. (ECAD)

Engage Community and Donors
Keeping community and donors informed. (PAL)

Keeping in the media spotlight. (PAL)
Empower students, clients and all volunteers with the message to increased fundraising network. Students have designed fund raising campaigns (small but helpful,) families have become engaged, clients continue to fund raise and do presentations for ADW, etc. (ADW)

Grantors and donors are invited to the graduation. Their presence reinforces the importance of the work that the students did and helps celebrate their success. (LEAP)

Holding events. (ECAD/GC, ECAD/JB)

Publishing quarterly newsletters. (ECAD/CV)

Networking and attending other non-profit events to show support. (ECAD/GC)

Corporations
Corporate sponsorship (Project Pooch)

Fees from Schools and Juvenile Centers
We contract with schools and juvenile centers and receive a fee for service to implement the program. (HS A-DOGS)
Fee based educational and vocational programming. 40% of annual revenue is recognized through these partnerships and the student interaction with the dogs increases dog flexibility and dog ability to focus on “the task” as opposed to “the person”...client’s with disabilities receive quality dogs faster. (ADW)

**Individual Donors**
Individuals support part of the program costs through donations. (HS A-DOGS)

In 2001, Oprah awarded Dr. Bergin the “Use Your Life” award with a $100,000 grant for the program. (HS A-DOGS)

Enclose donor envelopes with newsletter. (Project Pooch)

**Internal Collaboration**
We work very closely with other Humane Educators as well as our own shelter staff and Development Department to secure funding to meet the programs needs. They have been able to find funding sources from many different donors. (SPCA of Erie County)

Active staff grant writing and networking for increased appropriate grant opportunities. (ADW)

Board of directors. (Project Pooch)

Board development plan and board support (annual appeal, special mailings, special events, development of major donors, etc). (ADW)

Involve board of directors (PAWS)

**Anticipated Outcomes**

Program administrators anticipate that participation in dog training programs will encourage the development of a wide range of cognitive, physical, social/emotional, speech/language, and knowledge competencies in youth. Despite differences in program structure, content, purpose of dog training, staffing levels and budgets, shelter dog and assistance dog training programs expect and report similar outcomes for youth participants.

**Cognitive Skills**

Problem solving is among the cognitive skills that youth are expected to gain from program participation. (See Table 9.) Dog training participants need to “break down learning into small increments of successive steps towards goals” (SHIP). Youth learn to solve problems through positive interactions (SF). Youth need to solve problems when dogs do not respond to commands (LEAP). As PAWS describes, “Youth focus on what their dogs are telling them and problem solve how to motivate them and reinforce good
choices." Since "no two dogs are alike," programs that allow youth to work with multiple dogs require individualized problem solving (PAL). The training requires problem solving and conflict resolution involving other students as well as dogs (PP).

Table 9. Cognitive Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking Down Learning Components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing Positive Behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following Directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concentration is another cognitive competency that dog training programs seek to improve. In these programs, students need to stay focused on a variety of tasks (PAL). Learning training techniques and safety measures for working with dogs requires concentration (LEAP). "Teen trainers are taught to keep one eye on dogs at all times, anticipate behaviors of their dog and apply split second timing to mark behaviors," reports HS A-DOGS. Training requires repetition and memorizing by both dogs and students (LEAP).

Several programs anticipate that students will gain organizational skills from their participation. At HS A-DOGS, students are required to maintain training logs on their dogs. Students need to organize the equipment that they use for training (LEAP). Student involvement in shelter functions such as arranging adoptions and operating a kennel with multiple animals further enhance organizational skills (Project Click).

Physical Skills

Dog training is a physical activity that requires youth to use balance, coordination, and motor skills. (See Table 10.) Since many dogs have little training, significant physical effort may be necessary to manage dogs (PAL). PAWS refers to the "different body postures, voices and movements [students use] to motivate and shape behavior." As SHIP describes,
clicker training requires exact timing to identify, click and reward positive behaviors. Gross and refined motor skills and physical synchronization are involved in training service dogs, which, in turn, develops the motor skills of the dogs. (HS A-DOGS) Both Soul Friends and LEAP mention the physical coordination necessary to walk dogs through agility courses, figure eights, and weaving in and out of other dogs. Use of hand signals to communicate with dogs also requires physical skill (LEAP). Walking dogs, handling cats, grooming, and cleaning kennels are additional physically demanding activities in which students participate at Project Click, Project Pooch, and ECAD/CV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor planning and execution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine and Gross Motor Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Synchronization/Timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand Signals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling other animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning Kennels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grooming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor planning and execution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactile, olfactory, visual, proprioceptive, vestibular and auditory sensory processing and integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social and Emotional Competencies

Respondents describe a variety of social and emotional skills that dog training programs may foster. (See Table 11.) Empathy is a desired outcome of all dog training programs. As HS A-DOGS describes, “An understanding of the dog’s perspective is required to train effectively and provides another opportunity to build levels of empathy.” LEAP, along with other shelter dog programs, shares the plights of the specific dogs in their care with the students, which causes the students to identify with their dog’s experiences of abandonment or abuse. In addition to general empathy with dogs, program participants
learn to empathize with older dogs and dogs with medical problems (PP), and, in the case of assistance dog training programs, the disabled (CV, HS A-DOGS, ADW). The assistance dog programs seek to teach students to have empathy with the disabled through educational programs and role play (ECAD, HS A-DOGS, ADW).

Table 11. Social/Emotional Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social/Emotional Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Regulation/Anger Management/Self-control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbal Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize body language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selflessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with peers/Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in Stress/Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in Aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice modulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community philanthropic participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-sufficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ability to control anger, frustration, and impulses is another important competency to be gained through dog training programs (SHIP, SF, PAL, HS A-DOGS). As HS A-DOGS describes, "students learn to be dog whisperers, developing the ability to relate through two-way communication with their dogs ... Self-control is fostered by the many opportunities to regulate emotions when training their dogs. The patience required to maintain the respect of the dog for a benevolent leader requires the teens to practice emotional regulation." According to ECAD/JB, the program teaches students the "cause and effect of their actions, self-control with their dogs and peers, and how their emotions directly affect the animals as well as people around them (positive as well as negative)." One ECAD instructor reports that unlike her classroom teaching experience students in the dog training program never have behavioral incidents in class that escalate out of control.

In addition, participation in these programs is expected to counter depression, aggression and anxiety. According to HS A-DOGS, "A positive sense of purpose knowing that you are successfully helping others in the community is a powerful tool to fight depression. Training a service dog provides that tool." Programs comment on how the presence of dogs lowers blood pressure and anxiety levels (HS A-DOGS). In the process of training, youth "learn to recognize stress and anxiety in themselves and their animal partners and learn ways to relieve that stress/anxiety for themselves and the animal through positive interactions and reinforcement" (Soul Friends). HS A-DOGS adds that, "Teens with greater degrees of empathy are also less likely to be aggressive with others." At LEAP, discussions of dog and human aggression are a part of the program. Says LEAP, "aggression is not permitted in either species. Students must treat the dogs, other students, and teachers with respect are removed from the setting. Dogs who show any aggression also are removed from the program."

Program participation is expected to foster communication. The programs may enhance the ability of youth to "enjoy interactions with people and animals (SHIP). For example, the canine communication skills that Soul Friends seeks to foster are seen as providing learning experiences regarding animal behavior, a positive tactile experience, a positive experience that focuses on social interaction, an experience in autonomous decision making, and an opportunity for responsibility and care of an animal and enhancement of motor skills. As PC notes, "Students must communicate with the animals on a daily basis in order to train behaviors and attend to their needs. They also interact with staff, peers, and patrons on a daily basis." Youth learn verbal and non-verbal communication skills in order to train the dogs. Eye contact is another aspect of social interaction that the dog training programs facilitate (Soul Friends). Training requires communication and cooperation with other youth in the program (PAL). Since Project Pooch participants are actively involved in running the kennel and helping with adoptions, they learn how to communicate with visitors and volunteers as well as dogs and classmates (PP). According to ECAD, students learn that "motivation is a better way to teach or get the desired results than intimidation."

Improving family relationships is another central goal of the programs. Family communication is enhanced by program emphasis on positive reinforcement training techniques (SHIP). In SHIP's in-class and homework assignments, family members use clickers to facilitate positive interactions with each other. Both PAWS and HS A-DOGS
describe how their programs improve parenting skills. The lessons learned from dog training include "the importance of bonding and attachment, the need for consistency in setting limits and boundaries, the importance of using praise to shape behaviors, the importance of 'catching them doing something right,' the significance of emotional synchronization, an understanding of appropriate normal developmental behaviors, level of empathy and understanding and valuing of needs, valuation of alternatives to corporal punishment, understanding appropriate family roles (parent v. child), and understanding the value of empowering a child or a dog to make choices as part of the learning process" (HS A-DOGS).

For many program participants, training a dog marks the first time in which they have been entrusted with a responsibility. Says PAL, "The children are given a big responsibility to train a shelter dog." With this responsibility comes the possibility for success. According to PAWS, "By preventing their dog's euthanasia, they experience success (also a new experience for many) and pride, knowing they made a difference." Participation also enhances self-efficacy (SHIP). The students also "learn selflessness in being able to train a dog that they know will be adopted by someone else" (LEAP).

Program participation can instill in students a sense of community service. As ECAD relates, "Through this program, students who may have been receiving services for much of their lives learn to provide community service for others, helping people with disabilities to become self-sufficient. Students who have been neglected or abused learn to provide care and nurturing."

Speech and Language Skills

Dog training requires students to verbalize and to understand and communicate instructions. According to Soul Friends, participation in these programs "encourages children to practice skills of verbal interactions as they translate the teaching of basic commands they receive to applying them to the therapy dog through positive training techniques. The children learn to take in multiple step directions and then apply them."

At Project Pooch, shy youths are often charged with giving kennel tours to allow them to practice conversational skills. Dog training requires the students to initiate communication with the dog (SF). At HS A-DOGS, parents report that their children have initiated more dialogue as a result of their participation (HS A-DOGS). Programs in which more experienced children assist less experienced children also facilitate communication and learning. Several programs require that students make presentations. For example, at LEAP, each student is required to make a presentation to a grade school class. Preparation for these presentations is extensive. Presentations, along with demonstrations, also are a part of graduation ceremonies. SHIP seeks to teach family members to communicate with each other clearly in speech and in writing. Journal writing is included in several programs.
Knowledge and Attitudes

Programs facilitate acquisition and retention of various types of knowledge. (See Table 12.) Most fundamentally, students gain knowledge about dog training and dog care. Youth are taught anywhere from 8 to 80 commands, which they, in turn, teach to the dogs. Youth learn how to shape dog behaviors through praise and rewards. In addition, according to HS A-DOGS, “a deeper appreciation of animals is developed as the teens see the incredible abilities of trained service dogs.” Students also demonstrate their knowledge when they speak with members of the public, make presentations, and play games such as Humane Society Jeopardy (LEAP).

Table 12. Knowledge and Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pet Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Welfare, including anti-cruelty laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Skills (working with public, attendance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Training Commands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students learn how to interact with dogs. According to SHIP, they “learn how to approach dogs safely, how to read a dog’s signals, and how to calm and soothe a dog.” They are taught how to care for animals. At HS A-DOGS, they learn to brush teeth and coats, clean ears, and trim nails. The programs also provide an opportunity for students to ask questions about their own pets (SHIP).

In most programs, students are exposed to animal shelters and gain knowledge about animal welfare, animal cruelty, animal relinquishment, laws regarding animal abuse, and animal safety. When programs are housed at shelters, students have regular interactions with a wide range of shelter animals and staff (PC). In other programs, students visit shelters and wildlife rehabilitation centers (PAWS). Staff at these facilities provide tours and teach children about the animals and the facility’s work.

Youth also learn about group interactions. As PAWS describes, the “first class is about pack theory, leadership and caretaking.” They learn life lessons such as how to make appropriate decision-making and don’t compare yourself to others (PAWS). Youth are taught how to be leaders and how to play support roles.

Vocational and workplace skills are another type of knowledge acquired through program participation (PP, ADW, ECAD). Project Pooch participants are given a "New
Hire Packet" when they enter the program that sets the stage for lessons in work ethic and contractual relationships. For all programs, regular attendance can establish patterns replicated in school, work, and therapeutic settings. Programs also seek to improve academic performance. Knowledge of animal care can produce concrete employment opportunities. For example, after they are released, some Project Pooch participants have gained employment in dog grooming or other animal care professions. ECAD/Mercy First students receive vocational educational credit for their participation in the program.

Program Evaluation

While these fourteen dog training programs for youth at risk share expectations for the psychological, social, and physical benefits of program participation to youth, assessment of these outcomes through program evaluation remains a major challenge. Most programs have attempted multiple forms of evaluation to measure outcomes and improve future sessions. (See Table 13.) However, most program administrators and researchers are dissatisfied with methodologies employed thus far. For example, SHIP believes the length of programs is "too short to engender change" that can be measured in attitudinal surveys.
Table 13. Evaluation at Dog Training Programs for Youth At Risk

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<td>SHIP</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>interview with family on video</td>
</tr>
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<td>PAL</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>TLC</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>PP</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>recidivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWS</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attendance, grades, incidents of suspension, behavioral conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GPA, school attendance records, Parenting Skills Inventory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADW</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>recidivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/CV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Test scores on student and dog skills and student interactions with peers and disabled clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECAD/GC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Test scores on student and dog skills and student interactions with peers and disabled clients</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>TAGTEACH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation most often comes in the form of both formal and informal reports from staff, teachers, or supervisors. This feedback is often in the form of staff debriefings that are held before and/or after training sessions. Children's Village has conducted surveys of staff perspectives on animal assisted interventions.

Student self-assessment measures include interviews, surveys, and focus groups. Several programs also conduct formal or informal behavioral assessments of student progress. Some programs use pre-test and post-test measures to assess changes in attitudes, knowledge and skills. At both LEAP and TLC, students complete surveys at the beginning and end of sessions to evaluate their knowledge of animal care, attitudes and conflict resolution skills. HS A-DOGS administers a pre- and post-test parenting skills inventory. ECAD evaluates students based on skills tests with dogs, demonstration of the dogs skills, and interaction with peers and disabled clients.

Some programs try to elicit parental perspectives on change that has occurred during the session. Soul Friends measures the extent to which goals set in conjunction with parents were achieved for each child. PC, PAWS, SHIP, and ADW also attempt to get feedback from parents or guardians. SHIP videotapes interviews with family members as well as students at their graduation events.

Staff in partner institutions such as schools and detention centers are a source of assessments. Probation counselors provide feedback to PC. School administrators and teachers report on changes in student behavior to LEAP and TLC. In ECAD programs, program staff and clinical and school staff are in frequent communication about individual students.

Programs also rely on institutional records. Project Pooch and ADW track recidivism of participants. PAWS and HS A-DOGS review school attendance records, grades, and suspensions. PAWS and PP monitor behavioral conduct incidents.

Few programs have been evaluated formally by outside researchers. Project Pooch, Soul Friends, and TLC have worked with university researchers on preliminary evaluation studies. ADW will soon be working with an occupational therapist at the University of New Mexico on program evaluation. Some programs such as HS A-DOGS and SHIP also have in-house researchers.

Most programs do not systematically follow up with students to measure long-term change. LEAP is an exception. In addition to remaining in contact with teachers to provide updates on dog adoptions, LEAP attempts to return to schools for interviews 3-6 weeks after the program. In some cases, they also complete 6 month and 1 year follow-up interviews.

Follow up with dog placements is also limited. At Project Pooch, adopters are encouraged to return to the facility with their dogs for additional training. LEAP asks adoptive families for permission to call for updates on the dog and to encourage them to send photos or stories about the dog. They also offer free follow up training sessions.
Two of the assistance dog programs, however, do monitor their placements closely. ADW staff makes contacts with client at 30, 60, 90, 180, 360, and 520 days to assess effectiveness of the client/dog team. HS A-DOGS has monthly contact for the first six months after placement and conducts annual updates thereafter. For six weeks after placement, ECAD has weekly contact with the client. ECAD also has a 3-5 year follow up program for its dog placements.

Many of the programs cite a need for assistance in developing evaluation methods. LEAP has faced difficulties in its ability to track students for long-term follow-up. The need for more quantitative data are noted. According to HS A-DOGS, “There is an urgent need to provide increased quantitative support to demonstrate the impact of these programs on the parenting abilities of teen participants” in order to secure more support and funding for these programs. PAL concurs with the need for development of more effective methods of program evaluation and attitude assessment. ADW also notes the need to alleviate the burden of record keeping through standardization, which could improve both program operation and evaluation.

Best Practices for Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is essential to documentation of outcomes, program improvement, and future support. Research objectives should be incorporated into programs. Evaluation data sources should include youth, family of participants, staff, and peers. Follow up of participants is necessary to measure long-term change.

Family Evaluations
Debriefing the families on video provides feedback on the program and what they liked and suggested changes. (SHIP)

Parental evaluations. (Soul Friends)

Staff Evaluations
Staff debriefing also results in very useful suggestions to be incorporated in the next SHIP program. (SHIP)

Ongoing conference with program “teachers” determine what is working and what needs attention. (Project Pooch)

Instructor/Trainer interviews and observations. (ADW)

Instructor/Trainer surveys. (ADW)

Talk with all staff including custodian, school nurse. (PAWS)

Utilize ADW organizational learning for continuing improvement of curricula. (ADW)

Incorporate Research Into Program
Research objectives and plans for publication and presentations. (Soul Friends)
Measurement, goals and documentation for activities with people and dogs. (ADW)

A commitment to research and demonstrating the benefits of AAT. (Soul Friends)

Peer Evaluation
Peer evaluation through daily acknowledgements. (PAL)

Peer feedback. (Children’s Village)

Participant Self-Assessment
Youth have opportunities to evaluate the program (Project Pooch)

Written Student and Client Tests. (ADW)

Pre and post testing. (Soul Friends)

Survey attitudes of participants. (Children’s Village)

The post surveys are designed to encourage critical thinking. (LEAP)

The final evaluation provides us with important feedback. The students take it seriously and seem to enjoy helping develop future sessions for other students. (Project Click)

We have a licensed therapist give the pre- and post-test questionnaires to assess parenting attitudes. This is done in a way that the participants do not link the program with taking the test. We don’t want the students to answer the pre- or post-test questions with the intention of getting into the program. (HS A-DOGS)

Daily journal writing. (PAL)

Lecture and test teens weekly (raters and recorded). (ECAD/GC)

Use of Existing Instruments/Expertise
Formal evaluation done by program staff (Project Pooch)

We used a validated and normed assessment tool to measure a unique aspect of our program, i.e., impact of the program on parenting attitudes. (HS A-DOGS)

We have consulted with the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD) to design research projects related to our program. (HS A-DOGS)

We have consulted with a pediatric neuropsychologist to assist in developing project evaluations. (HS A-DOGS)

We are in the process of trying to develop a new written evaluation as well as a more thorough tracking systems. (TLC)
Public Access Test. (ADW)

Solo Handler and Client Tests. (ADW)

Feedback from Community
Informal feedback from employers. (Project Pooch)

Post-program Follow up
Continued follow up with the classroom teacher and keeping the students informed about the dogs’ progress enables the students to feel connected. It reinforces the sense of accomplishment, especially when the dogs are adopted. It also reinforces the idea of being interconnected with the animals, the shelter and each other. (LEAP)

Following the students at 3 month, 6 months, and one year helps to evaluate the programs effectiveness. The surveys are used to adapt program to student needs. (LEAP)

Dog Evaluation
Utilize a practical worksheet (number rated and recorded) that measures the dogs’ skills monthly. (ECAD/GC)

Have volunteers who take dogs on weekends give reports (ECAD/GV).

Conclusions

Youth At Risk dog training programs share a common approach to dog training, expectations for the benefits to youth, dogs, and society, and, for the most part, views of best practices. All of the programs use positive reinforcement training techniques. Positive reinforcement is viewed as the best technique for training dogs and for teaching youth the value of positive interactions. Programs identify a wide range of cognitive, physical, social/emotional, speech/language, and knowledge competencies that youth may gain from participation. None of the programs are diagnosis-specific in their participant selection. For most programs, sessions include a range of students who are deemed at risk due to situational, experiential, or psychological, emotional, or behavioral attributes.

Community partnerships are essential to the establishment and maintenance of all youth-at-risk dog training programs that participated in the surveys. Through these programs, organizations have developed working relationships with schools, correctional facilities, juvenile courts, and other agencies that work to help, treat, or rehabilitate youth. Staff from these agencies may help program administrators select and set goals for participants, report on the effects of the program on individual students, attend sessions, train volunteers, and provide fees for service or other funding.

The programs in this survey do offer different models. While differences among programs exist in the length, curriculum, training locations, sponsorship, and composition of participants, a major distinction is whether programs train shelter dogs or assistance dogs. Differences in dog training purposes shape many aspects of programs and potentially youth experience. At the most basic level, the types of dogs that participate in
the programs are very different. While assistance dogs clearly have individual personalities and temperaments, there is little diversity in their breeds or backgrounds. They do not have individual stories of abandonment and abuse—as shelter dogs do—to which students can relate.

Assistance dog and shelter dog programs structure interactions with dogs differently. Students in assistance dog programs are more likely to work on their own with a single dog throughout their session, and less likely to work in groups with other students and to interact with a variety of dogs. In some cases, assistance dog sessions are longer, due in large part to the more extensive training that service dogs require. However, some assistance dog programs do have students work with multiple dogs to ensure consistency of training and reduce student attachment to specific dogs.

While in some shelter dog programs a student is assigned one dog with which to work (PP, PAWS), students in these programs often cycle through the dogs, working individually with most dogs by the end of the program (PC). In still other programs, teams or groups of students work together to train dogs. The adoption of shelter dogs during the program also reduces the amount of time spent with a single dog.

Although the assistance dog programs also promote animal welfare, animal welfare and humane education are a much larger part of the curriculum for programs involving shelter dogs. With increased exposure to shelters, youth learn first-hand the causes and consequences of relinquishment, abandonment, and abuse. However, even among shelter dog programs, there is tremendous variation. All of the shelter dog programs include lessons on animal welfare, animal care, and humane education. All of the programs include tours of shelter facilities. However, the extent to which students are integrated into day-to-day shelter operations varies. Working off community service hours at Project Click, students become well-acquainted in many aspects of shelter work from veterinary care to cleaning kennels. The lesser involvement of students in shelter activities in other programs may reflect the younger participant ages in many of the shelter programs. The LEAP program is taught at schools, which also minimizes student contact with shelters. However, in many shelter programs, students sometimes return as volunteers.

While shelter dog programs provide more insights to students about animal welfare issues, assistance dog programs increase student awareness of and empathy for people with disabilities. In the training exercises, students often have to place themselves in the position of a disabled person. For example, in several programs, students must use wheel chairs. Participants in assistance dog programs often have fairly extensive contact with people who face physical and other challenges. In some cases, students help train clients to work with their dogs.

Overall, in this survey, assistance dog programs appear to have larger budgets, more staff, more volunteers, and run a greater variety of programs with a wide range of community partners. However, there are exceptions in each case. Shelter dog budgets also may appear smaller because many costs such as care of dogs and program staff are already absorbed in shelter budgets. None of the shelters received agency or participant fees.
The many variations among programs create important evaluation challenges. Arguments can be advanced for the advantages and disadvantages to youth of these program differences. However, because of difficulties in evaluation of programs, questions of how program differences affect outcomes for youth remain unaddressed. Most of the programs state a need for additional advice and support in the area of evaluation. While most programs have tried multiple evaluation strategies, few programs express satisfaction with the state of program evaluation.

WORKS CITED

1. Title of Program:

2. Organization’s Name:

3. Address:

4. Contact person name and title:

5. Phone Number:

6. E-mail Address:

7. Web Site URL:

8. Origination date of the program:

9. Was this program modeled after any other existing program(s)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe:

**PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

10. What are the goals and objectives of your program?

11. What types of competencies does your program seek to affect through dog training?

☐ Cognitive (e.g. concentration, organizational skills, problem solving skills, memory skills)

Please describe:

☐ Physical (e.g. balance, coordination, motor skills)

Please describe:

☐ Social/Emotional (e.g. communication, self-control, empathy, depression, anxiety, aggression)

Please describe:

☐ Speech/Language (e.g. verbal interaction, initiate conversation, relay instructions)

Please describe:

☐ Knowledge and Attitudes (e.g. dog training, pet care, animal welfare)

Please describe:

☐ Other:
12. Program Staffing:  
# of full-time staff: _____ /  # of part-time staff: _____ /  # of volunteers: ______

13. List staff positions and the credentials or professional education associated with the staff member filling each position:

14. What training do volunteers working for this program receive?

15. Does a licensed therapist actively participate in the development, operation, or assessment of the program? If yes, briefly describe her/his role.

16. Who teaches the animal training portion of the program? (Check all that apply)  
☐ Dog trainer  ☐ Program leader  ☐ Veterinarian  ☐ Veterinary technician  ☐  
☐ Kennel staff  ☐ Volunteer  ☐ Other __________________________

Best Practices for Staff, Management, and Training

Please describe some of the practices in your program related to staff, management, and training that particularly help meet your program’s goals and objectives.

1)  

2)  

3)  

4)  

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.
17. What is the general nature of the population served by this program? (Check all that apply)

- General population
- Schools
- Victims of abuse/neglect
- Adjudicated offenders
- “At-risk” or “in need of service” populations
- Other: ____________________

18. What are the selection criteria for your program?

19. How many participants are selected for each session? _______

20. What is the age of participants reached through this program? _______

21. What is the sex of participants? (Check all that apply.)

- Male
- Female

22. How are participants referred to the program?

23. Please describe your policy on exclusion/inclusion of youth with a history of animal cruelty?

24. Are individualized goals set for participants?  

- Yes  
- No

If yes, please describe:

25. Do you have any attrition of participants during each session?  

- Yes  
- No

If yes, please describe reasons:

**Best Practices for Participant Selection**

Please describe some of the practices in your program related to participant selection and recruitment that particularly help meet your program’s goals and objectives.

1) 

2) 

3) 

4) 

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.
PROGRAM CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

26. Does your program have or use a manual?  □ Yes  □ No
   If yes, please describe:

27. How many sessions of the dog training program are held each year? ______

28. What is the duration of each session?
   □ school year □ semester  □ 8 weeks  □ 6 weeks  □ 4 weeks  □ other ___

29. How many classes are held per week? ___  How long does each class last?

30. When are the classes conducted?
   □ during school  □ afternoon after school  □ evenings  □ weekends  □ other_____

31. Where are classes conducted?

32. Is transportation provided for the participants?    □ Yes □ No
   If yes, who provides the transportation?

33. What is the ratio of teachers/therapists/volunteers to students in these sessions?
   ______ ______

34. What is the ratio of dogs to students (e.g., one dog assigned to two youths)?
   ______

35. Are the parents of the participants required to participate in the program?
   □ Yes  □ No
   If yes, in what way?:

36. Please describe the primary dog training techniques used and the skills or behaviors that are taught to the dogs:

37. What aspects of interactions with dogs does your program include?
   □ Dog training—general  □ Dog training for service work  □ Play
   □ Stroking/Touching  □ Grooming  □ Feeding  □ Cleaning kennels
   □ Walks  □ Other ____________
38. In addition to dog training, does your program include other curriculum content for the youth? What topics are covered and how is this content delivered? Please describe:

39. How do you mark the end of a session? (Check all that apply.)
☐ graduation ceremony  ☐ certificate  ☐ party  ☐ demonstration with dogs  ☐ other __
Please describe:

40. Do participants meet or interact with the person(s) with whom the dog will be placed?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Please describe:

Best Practices for Program Content and Structure

Please describe some of the practices in your program related to program content and structure that particularly help meet your programs goals and objectives.

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.

DOG SELECTION AND CARE

41. What is the source for the dogs in your program?

42. What criteria are used for selecting dogs for the program?

43. What becomes of the dogs following the completion of the program? What percentage are adopted/placed?

44. Do you have any attrition of dogs during each session?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
If yes, for what reasons do animals leave the program?
45. How do you match dogs and participants?

46. Where are dogs housed in between dog training classes?

47. How are the veterinary needs of dogs met?

Best Practices for Dog Selection and Care
Please describe some of the practices in your program related to dog selection and care that particularly help meet your program's goals and objectives.

1)

2)

3)

4)

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

49. Please list and describe your program's partnerships with schools, police, boys and girls clubs, YMCAs, corporations, agencies, and/or other community organizations?

Best Practices for Community Partnerships
Please describe some of the practices in your program related to community partnerships that particularly help meet your program's goals and objectives.

1)

2)

3)

4)

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.
PROGRAM FUNDING

50. Program's annual budget: ______________

51. Is the host organization a:  □ Nonprofit  □ For-profit corporation  □ Government agency  □ Other

52. Check the following sources from which you receive funds for the program. (Check all that apply.)
   □ General funds of your organization  □ Contributions from the general public
   □ Foundation grants  □ Government funds  □ Community organizations
   □ Corporate sponsors  □ Participants fees
   □ Contracts/fees charged to agencies referring participants  □ Other __________

Best Practices for Program Funding
Please describe some of the practices in your program related to funding that particularly help meet your program's goals and objectives.

1)

2)

3)

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

53. How many individuals have participated in the program since it originated? ______

54. What methods of evaluation and measures are used in examining the success of the program? (Check all that apply)
   □ Attitude survey(s)  □ Reports from clinical staff, teachers, or other supervisors
   □ Self-assessment  □ Peer assessment
   □ Assessment of behavior changes  □ Peer assessment
   □ Tracking of recidivism  □ Other _____________________________
   Please describe:

55. Is any outside agency, organization, or university involved in the assessment or evaluation of this program?  □ Yes  □ No
If yes, please describe:
56. Do you have contact with participants after conclusion of the program such as “booster” sessions or follow up evaluation of the long-term effects of the program?  □ Yes □ No
If yes, please describe:

57. Do you have contact with new owners of dogs after conclusion of the program?
□ Yes □ No
If yes, please describe:

Best Practices for Program Evaluation
Please describe some of the practices in your program related to program evaluation that particularly help meet your programs goals and objectives.

1)  
2)  
3)  
4)  

Please feel free to attach pages with additional best practices.

OTHER BEST PRACTICES
Please describe any other best practices related to your program that you would like to identify.

QUESTIONS/NEEDS
Please describe any problems that your program has faced or questions you would like to raise concerning best practices.

Please attach materials, evaluation reports, and manuals related to your program. The survey and all documents should be e-mailed to Jennifer Jackman at jjackman@hsus.org or mailed to Jennifer Jackman, HSUS, 35 Santuit Pond Road, Unit 7D, Mashpee, MA 02649. The deadline is May 15, 2007.
GUIDE TO PROGRAMS

Additional information on the programs surveyed can be found as follows:
Come, Follow Me!, Soul Friends
http://www.soul-friends.org/

East Coast Assistance Dogs
http://www.ecad1.org/
East Coast Assistance Dog Program Sites:

  Children's Village
  http://www.childrensvillage.org/programs-dog-more.htm

  Green Chimneys
  http://www.greenchimneys.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=98:
est-coast-assistance-dogs&catid=116:training&Itemid=97

  Mercy First Children and Family Services
  http://www.mercyfirst.com/ourPrograms.htm

  Jewish Board of Children and Families
  http://www.jbfc.org/wwa/Dprogram.htm

High Schooled Assistance Dogs, Assistance Dog Institute
http://www.assisteddog.org/

Pawsibilities, Pregnant Paws, Pawsitive Corrections, Paws and Think
http://www.pawsandthink.org/

People and Animals Learning, Wisconsin Humane Society http://www.wihumane.org/education/pal.aspx


Project Pooch
http://www.pooch.org/

School Assistance Dog Program and Working Dogs Program, Assistance Dogs of the West http://www.assisteddogsofthewest.org/

Strategic Humane Interventions Program, SPCA Cincinnati, YWCA Greater Cincinnati, and The Childhood Trust of Cincinnati Children's Hospital
http://www.ywca.org/site/pp.asp?c=agLGXNOE&b=3990283

Teaching Love and Compassion, SPCA of Erie County http://www.yoursPCA.org/site/PageServer?pagename=dept_humane#TLC
APPENDIX E

Opening Remarks

Andrew Rowan, Ph.D., Executive Vice President for Operations, Humane Society of the United States

Animal-Assisted Activities/Therapy?
by
Andrew N. Rowan
Executive Vice President
Humane Society of the U.S.
Washington, DC

Outline of Project

1) Under study: observations by experienced volunteer (A. Arkin) of five-century (CA, OR, TINS, JEF & SPCA of Erie Co.) - produced a report.
2) Talked to these and other centers about program evaluation challenges.
3) Worked with Dr. Alan Kazdin of Yale to help develop a study potential evaluation projects - suggestion: and engaged several evaluation studies.
4) Surveyed at-risk youth dog training programs.
5) Develop an online source on the topic.
6) Held a National Conference on topic.
7) Develop report & recommendations for future.

Acknowledgements & Thanks

- Organizations
  - The Laura Slesin Foundation - the funder
  - Johns Hopkins Center for Prevention of Youth Violence - the conference sponsor
  - Assistance Dog Institute, Assistance Dogs of the West, ASPCA, Chicago's Canine, East-West Assistance Dogs, Florida's America's Growth & Learning Association, Forget Me Not Farm, Green Chimneys, Project PLACE, Southwest Oregon Humane Society, and the SPCA of Erie County

- People
  - Dr. Arnold Arkin, Alan Kazdin and Randall Lickwood
  - Dr. Jennifer Jackson
  - HSA: Judy Davis, Francis Joseph, Donna Price and Beth Runyan

SURVEY OF PROGRAMS

- 24 orgs. identified using dog-training for ARY (did not look at programs using other species)
- 14 responded to survey
- 1 no longer engaged in ARY project
- Data from 14 in next slides
**SURVEY RESULTS (n=14)**

- Established
  - 7 ('93-'97), 4 ('99-'01), 3 ('03-'04)
- Goals
  - Train dogs for adoption, help youth develop social/cognitive skills, help people with disabilities
- Program Manuals
  - Modifications of Los Angeles SPCA (TLC), Loan, Ronnie Bergin, or own manuals

**SURVEY RESULTS (n=14)**

- Program characteristics (ca. 5000 students)
  - 4 (10-20 participants), 10 (40-90 participants);
  - 5 (50-60 hrs), 3 (5-18 hrs), 4 (180 hrs); 9 (1.1 student-dog ratio)
  - 13 recruits 12-18, 1 over 18, 2 below 10 and up to 21;
  - 4 male only
  - 7 dogs from shelters, 7 dogs from breeders, staff
- Staffing & Budget
  - Range from 0.10 FTE's to 2,250 volunteers
  - 4 < $10K, 7 $20K-$50K, 1 $50K, 1 $150K

**SURVEY RESULTS (n=14)**

- Anticipated Outcomes
  - Cognitive skills
    - Problem-solving, recognition, conflict resolution
  - Physical skills
    - Balance, co-ordination, hand signals and dog handling
  - Motor planning & execution
  - Social & Emotional Competencies
    - Self-control, motor management, empathy, responsibility, collaboration, sense of duty, self-confidence
  - Speech & Language skills
  - Knowledge & Attitudes

**SURVEY RESULTS (n=14)**

- Evaluation
  - All were dissatisfied with the evaluation process and results
  - Many talked of the need for assistance in this area
  - Family evaluation, staff evaluation, design research into program, peer evaluation, participant self-evaluation (e.g. daily journal), use of developed instruments, post-program follow-up

**Negatives of dogs & At-Risk Youth**

- Growth of inner city dog fighting
- Dogs have names like Hitler, Chainsaw & Killer
- “Owner’s” psyche or “street cred” tied to how well the dog performs
- These are the most common dogs that inner city youth interact with?
CONCLUSIONS

- AAT/AAA programs for At-risk Youth are quite common – but data still sparse
- Programs have lots of PR “oomph” – opportunity for more shelters to engage in them (450 private shelters have $1 million + annual budget)?
- Next two days will outline where we are – thank you again to all who made this conference possible!
APPENDIX F

A Public Health Paradigm for Youth Violence: Risk Factors and Protective Factors

Philip Leaf, Ph.D., Director, Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

A PUBLIC HEALTH PARADIGM FOR YOUTH VIOLENCE: RISK FACTORS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Philip J. Leaf, Ph.D.
Johns Hopkins Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence

Epidemic
- An outbreak of a contagious disease that spreads rapidly and widely.
- An outbreak of disease that affects a much greater number of people than is usual for the locality or that spreads to regions where it is ordinarily not present.

Johns Hopkins Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence

A Public Health Approach
- Detect and define the problems through surveillance
- Determine the causes of the problems
- Develop and test interventions for preventing or remediating the problem
- Implement the interventions

Waging Peace: Working to reduce youth violence by creating and supporting positive environments for youth and families.
Occurrence

- Youth violence is an important public health problem that results in deaths and injuries. The following statistics provide an overview of youth violence in the United States.

- Although high-profile school shootings have increased public concern for student safety, school-associated violent deaths account for less than 1% of homicides among school-aged children and youth (Anderson et al. 2001).

- In 2004, more than 750,000 young people ages 10 to 24 were treated in emergency departments for injuries sustained due to violence (CDC 2005).

- In a nationwide survey of high school students (CDC 2004):
  - 33% reported being in a physical fight one or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey.
  - 17% reported carrying a weapon (e.g., gun, knife, or club) on one or more of the 30 days preceding the survey.

An estimated 30% of 6th to 10th graders in the United States were involved in bullying as a bully, a target of bullying, or both (Nansel et al. 2001).

Among 10 to 24 year olds, homicide is the leading cause of death for African Americans, the second leading cause of death for Hispanics, and the third leading cause of death for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Asian/Pacific Islanders (CDC 2006).
An estimated 97% of youth use the Internet (Lenhart, Madden & Hitlin, 2005; USC Annenberg School Center for the Digital Future, 2005).

Internet harassment has increased from 6% in 1999 to 9% in 2005 (Mitchell, Wolak, Finkelhor, 2006).

39% of youth who are harassed report feeling very/extremely upset or afraid because of the incident (Ybarra, Mitchell, Wolak, Finkelhor, 2006).

A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

• Detect and define the problems through surveillance
• Determine the causes of the problems
• Develop and test interventions for preventing or remediating the problem
• Implement the interventions

Risk Factors

• Research on youth violence has increased our understanding of factors that make some populations more vulnerable to victimization and perpetration.
• Risk factors increase the likelihood that a young person will become violent. However, risk factors are not direct causes of youth violence; instead, risk factors contribute to youth violence.

Individual Risk Factors

• History of violent victimization or involvement
• Attention deficits, hyperactivity, or learning disorders
• History of early aggressive behavior
• Involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
• Low IQ
• Poor behavioral control

Deficits in social cognitive or information-processing abilities
• High emotional distress
• History of treatment for emotional problems
• Antisocial beliefs and attitudes
• Exposure to violence and conflict in the family
Family Risk Factors

- Authoritarian childrearing attitudes
- Harsh, lax, or inconsistent disciplinary practices
- Low parental involvement
- Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers

Community Risk Factors

- Diminished economic opportunities
- High concentrations of poor residents
- High level of transiency
- High level of family disruption
- Low levels of community participation
- Socially disorganized neighborhoods

Peer/School Risk Factors

- Association with delinquent peers
- Involvement in gangs
- Social rejection by peers
- Lack of involvement in conventional activities
- Poor academic performance
- Low commitment to school and school failure

Family Protective Factors

- Connectedness to family or adults outside of the family
- Ability to discuss problems with parents
- Perceived parental expectations about school performance are high
- Frequent shared activities with parents
- Consistent presence of parent during at least one of the following: when awakening, when arriving home from school, at evening mealtime, and when going to bed
- Involvement in social activities

Individual Protective Factors

- Intolerant attitude toward deviance
- High IQ or high grade point average
- Positive social orientation
- Religiosity
### Peer/School Protective Factors

- Commitment to school
- Involvement in social activities

### Risk Factors

#### INDIVIDUAL PEER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Adolescent/Early</th>
<th>Teenage Pregnancy</th>
<th>School Dropout</th>
<th>Violence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rebelliousness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Favorable Attitudes Towards the Problem Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior</td>
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#### FAMILY

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<td>Family Management Problems</td>
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#### SCHOOL

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<td>Academic Failure Beginning in Elementary School</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Commitment of School</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

### A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

- Detect and define the problems through surveillance
- Determine the causes of the problems
- Develop and test interventions for preventing or remediating the problem
- Implement the interventions
School-Based Violence Prevention: Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

Helping Families and Communities by:
- Providing an immediate team response to incidents where children have witnessed a traumatic event,
- Providing follow-up response after an incident has occurred,
- Organizing community outreach after an incident.

Designing School-Wide Systems for Student Success

A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH
- Detect and define the problems through surveillance
- Determine the causes of the problems
- Develop and test interventions for preventing or remediating the problem
- Implement the interventions

Maryland Organizational Model

School Level
- 467 PBIS Teams (1 per school)
- Title I lead (1 per school)
- Behavior Support Coaches (2-4)

District Level (24)
- Regional Coordinators

State Level
- State Leadership Team
  - Maryland State Department of Education (MDE)
  - Sheppard Pratt Health System
  - Johns Hopkins Center for Prevention of Youth Violence
  - 24 Local school districts
  - Department of Juvenile Services, Mental Health Administration
- Management Team
- Advisory Group

National Level
- National PBIS Technical Assistance Center
  - University of Oregon & University of Connecticut
APPENDIX G

The State of Evaluation in Youth Violence Prevention

Freya Sonenstein, Ph.D., Director, Center for Adolescent Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Purpose of the Presentation

- Brief overview of what we know about evaluating violence prevention programs for youth
- Primarily based on:
  - NIH State-of-the Science Conference Statement
  - 2004

Topics:

- Why youth violence prevention is important
- How do we determine whether a program works?
- What do we know about effective programs?
- Challenges to determining effectiveness of some programs?
**The Importance of Preventing Youth Violence**

- Societal costs of youth violence:
  - educational opportunity loss
  - need for alternative schools and detention programs
  - demand on already stressed mental health, education and justice programs
  - impact of youth violence on victims, survivors, and families

  Source: Thomas Insel, M.D., Director, NIMH

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**YO Participants Experience with Violence**

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**YO Participants Mental Health**

- Ever stayed overnight for mental health reasons:
  - Most common were:
    - Detention center (n = 67)
    - Hospital (n = 26)
  - Ever received outpatient mental health services:
    - Most common were:
      - Professionals, like a psychologist, psychiatrist (n = 45)
      - School-based mental health services (n = 27)
  - Ever received school-based mental health services
  - Experiencing anxiety symptoms

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**How to Measure Whether a Program Works**

- Core idea: An evaluation studies what happens over time to people who do get an intervention compared to those who don’t.
- Requires comparison of equivalent groups who:
  - do and don’t get the program
  - before and after intervention period
- Requires focus on behavior change:
  - Reductions in engagement in violence
  - Aggravated assault, armed robbery, rape and homicide
  - Many studies focus on precursors such as delinquency, physical aggression or antisocial behavior

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**Evidence is Stronger When:**

- Individuals (schools) are randomly assigned to receive the intervention or the “placebo”
- All or nearly all study participants are followed throughout the study period
- Behavior is measured some time after the intervention—e.g., 12 months after
- When findings have been replicated

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**Why do we care about the strength of the evidence?**

- Provides more assurance that if the program is replicated under similar circumstances, the results are likely to be the same
APPENDIX H
The State of Evaluation in Youth Violence Prevention

Valerie Maholmes, Ph.D., CAS, social and Affective Development/Child Maltreatment and Violence, National Institute of child Health and Human Development
NIH Expert Panel on Youth Violence Intervention Research (1999)

NIH recognized the need for intervention programs that focus on children and youth at risk because of the interplay of developmental, biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors related to violence; and interventions that disrupt the stability of violent behaviors through appropriately timed strategies.

Panel Goals

- To examine the many research recommendations that have already been made
- To determine which are most pressing in light of prior and current research
- Discuss research needs focusing on interventions to reduce youth violence

Panel Recommendation

- Studies of youth violence interventions
- Support for preliminary work to develop interventions prior to large scale testing.

Research on the Development of Interventions for Youth Violence

RFA for exploratory/developmental research grant applications (R21) exploring the translation of ideas from basic behavioral and social science into novel interventions for children and youth demonstrating or at risk for violent behavior:
- Process evaluation and model testing
- Methodology development and validation
- Piloting of an intervention prior to large scale testing

Trans-NIH Support

- NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- National Institute of Mental Health

Intervention Development Studies

- Target specific factors and test hypothesized mediational models of the impact of the intervention on a range of antisocial behaviors
- Target larger units of intervention beyond the individual
- Study the mechanisms of intervention at multiple levels of analysis such as individual, family, peer, community and neighborhood
- Based on findings from youth violence risk factor research, as well as studies on such topics as motivation, decision-making, group formation
Pilot Tests

- Test the feasibility of conducting larger scale evaluations of promising strategies.
- Focus on evaluations of procedures for obtaining and maintaining community cooperation, training and supervising staff, insuring implementation fidelity, recruiting and retaining a representative sample of the target population, recruiting staff representative of and rooted in the community...

Grants Awarded

- 12 Grants ($3 million/year) funded under this RFA
  - Engagement in Parenting Programs for Young Children (Dumas)
  - Violence Prevention Through Legal Socialization (Fagan)
  - Outpatient Treatment of Juvenile Sexual Offenders (Fletcher)
  - Making Choices: A Social Development Program

Tailored Interventions to Specific Populations

- Studies that lead to the development of strategies for tailoring interventions to different high risk or understudied groups of aggressive children or youth and their caregivers

- A Culture Based Model for Youth Violence Risk Reduction (Hines)
- Preventing Abuse in Adolescent Dating Relationships (Jouriles)
- Reducing Violence by Joining Education and Prevention (Kellam)
- Moral Disengagement: Measurement and Modification (McAlister)
- Trauma Focused Intervention Targeting Risk for Violence (Rivard)

Follow-up Studies

- Additional lines of inquiry funded by NIH Institutes and other agencies
- Supplements to support research and training for under-represented minorities and persons with disabilities
- Use of additional funding mechanisms to expand the breadth and scope of prevention research
  - Conference grant (R13) to foster communication among scientists, public policy leaders, and practitioners on evaluation models and implementation of evidence-based programs
  - R01 projects to follow cohorts, test interventions in more depth and over longer periods of time

- A Family-based Prevention for Early Conduct Problems (Shaw)
- Using Media to Prevent Violence Among Rural Youth (Swaim)
NIH State of the Science Conference on Preventing Violence and Related Health Risking Social Behaviors in Adolescents
October 13-15, 2004

"To provide healthcare providers, patients, and the general public with a responsible assessment of currently available data on preventing violence and health-risking social behavior in adolescents."

Conference Conclusions
- Many interventions aimed at reducing violence have not been sufficiently evaluated or proven effective, and a few widely disseminated programs have been shown to be ineffective and perhaps harmful.
- Programs that seek to prevent violence through fear and tough treatment appear ineffective. Intensive programs that aim at developing skills and competencies can work.
- Interventions to reduce violence may be context dependent. Research must proceed in varying contexts and take account of local culture.

Future Research Priorities
- Across-program component analysis should be carried out to develop a more rigorous understanding of the mechanisms that underlie successful and unsuccessful interventions.
- Programs should be evaluated in different contexts to be sure that apparently important aspects of successful demonstration programs have external validity.
- Urgent need for research directed at changing neighborhoods to enhance their role in protecting young people.

Additional Priorities
- Attention to diversity among investigators involved in violence research is important.
- Funding to promote dissemination of violence prevention programs that have been shown to be effective through rigorous RCT research.
APPENDIX I

Theoretical Framework for Animal Assisted Interventions As Violence Prevention Strategy

Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and Legislative Services, ASPCA
Violent or Criminal Behavior Constitutes a Choice

"As any parent knows, youths are more likely to show a lack of maturity and an undeveloped sense of responsibility... These qualities often result in impetuous and ill-considered actions and decisions."

- Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy on outlawing the death penalty for crimes committed by those under 18
What are the roots of animal cruelty and other forms of violence?
“If empathy is the enemy of violence, depersonalization is its ally. The more we are able to create psychological distance between us and others, the more likely we are to commit acts of violence and aggression against them.... By depersonalizing them, good, caring people can support barbaric treatment of others; they put them outside their own circle, into the category of ‘the other’.”

James Garbarino, *The Lost Boys*, 1999

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**Roots of Violence and Animal Cruelty**

- Need for Power and Control
- Real or Perceived Injustice
  - History of Abuse/Neglect
  - Trauma
- Low Emotional Intelligence
  - Poor ability to read/communicate emotion
- Absence of Empathy

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**What are the consequences of exposure to family violence?**

“To the young child, there is no gap between his soul and that of animals.”

G. Stanley Hall (1904)
How Does Exposure to Family Violence and Cruelty to Animals Affect Children?

- Promotes desensitization and damages the capacity for empathy
- Creates the idea that they, like their pets, are expendable
- Damages the sense of safety and confidence in the ability of adults to protect them from harm
- Leads to acceptance of physical harm in allegedly loving relationships
- Fosters seeking of empowerment by inflicting pain and suffering
- Leads to imitation of abusive behaviors

Child Maltreatment as a Risk Factor for Psychiatric Illness

- Depression: 2-3 X's higher in CAN
- Suicide: 3-12 X's higher in CAN
- Borderline Personality Disorder: >60%
- Dissociative Identity Disorder: 85-98%
- Somatization: GI, GYN, Pelvic pain
- Self-Mutilation: 4 X's higher in CAN

Child Maltreatment as a Risk Factor of Violence & Crime

- Significantly higher delinquency arrest rates for CAN victims predict adult criminality and violence
- Compared with matched controls, CAN increases crime 2-2.5 X's in women
- 28% of maltreated children convicted of a serious crime
- Revictimization: Female CAN victims have 2-3 X's higher rate of rape as adults

Child Maltreatment as a Risk Factor for School Problems

- >50% of abused children have significant school problems (including conduct problems)
- >25% of abused children require special education programs
- Several studies suggest CAN decreases IQ
- CAN victims 2 X's more likely to be unemployed as adults

Trauma and Brain Damage

Human Data

- Combat PTSD patients had 8% decrease in right hippocampal volume compared with matched controls - correlated (r = -0.64; p < 0.05) with memory retention deficits (Bremner et al., 1995)
- Female abuse PTSD patients had 12% decrease in left hippocampal volume compared with controls (Bremner et al., 1997)

Abuse-Related Types of Psychopathology

- Impaired stress response (sensitivity to traumatic reminders, alterations in neuroendocrine stress response systems)
- Use and abuse of substances to regulate mood, sense of self, and behavior
- Interpersonal and relationship problems (attachment disorders, social withdrawal, promiscuity, antisocial behavior, spouse abuse, parenting problems)
“... these were the children who managed to grow up without being taught that poking something into a puppy’s eye is harmful and should not be done, or that destroying property is against the rules.”

- Robert K. Ressler on 'serial killers'
*Whoever Fights Monsters* (1992)

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**Mean Age of Appearance of Major Indicators of Conduct Disorder**

- Cruelty to Animals – 6.5 years
- Stealing – 7.5 years
- Fire-setting – 8.0 years


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**1. Impulse control and arousal issues**

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**Biological Factors in Violence**

**Functional PET scan**

- The prefrontal cortex of many violent offenders is less metabolically active
Modern technology and social habits affect the brain in ways not imagined by Mother Nature.

- Dopamine triggered by game success - feel rewarded
- Certain triggers change in neurotransmitters resulting in hostility, feelings of loneliness and depressed mood

2. Emotional intelligence and social intelligence issues
Successful social animals are highly competent at communicating mood and intention.

Impairment of reading emotional cues
- Child victims of physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse
- Various autism-related disorders
- Psychopathic personality

A variety of studies describe difficulties in accurately reading and responding to non-verbal emotional cues.

Does this apply to animal interactions?

Incidence of Animal Abuse in 53 Child-Abusing Families

Pets had injured a family member in 69% of animal abusive households vs. 6% in non-abusive.

Violence Prevention and Intervention

Strategies for Intervention

- Build What is Absent
  - Develop or Redevelop Emotional and Communicative Competency
  - Capacity for Empathy
- Teach What was Overlooked
- Fix What is Broken
- Remove What is Toxic
Can empathy be taught in a day?

Mirror Neurons
- First described in the early 1990's by Italian neuroscientist Giacomo Rizzolatti and his colleagues who observed neurons in the brains of macaque monkeys that fired when they grabbed and object and also when they watched another monkey grab the same object.

More recent human studies have identified mirror neurons that are active when people see others expressing disgust or being touched.
- People show more powerful mirror responses to stimuli that are relevant to their experiences.
"As we learn more about the biological basis of empathy and emotion, we can speak quite precisely about the neuronal basis of the empathetic feelings in our bones, or in our veins, when we see particularly striking movement in a picture."

David Freedberg, Ph.D., "Action, Empathy, and Emotion in the History of Art"
General Characteristics of Effective Intervention

- They provide multi-sensory experiences that engage a full range of senses and motor skills
- They occur in a context of social interaction with peers and counselors
- They take place in a safe and supportive environment
- They provide opportunities to associated appropriate behaviors with positive outcomes

Characteristics of Effective Intervention that Address the "Roots" of Violence

- They help participants identify and make good (non-violent) choices
- They empower participants to gain power and control in pro-social ways
- They allow frequent opportunities to send, receive, and interpret emotional communication
- They foster a sense of trust and fairness that extends beyond the individual
- They provide the resources to continue to remain resilient in a toxic world
Randall Lookwood, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President/ Anti-Cruelty Initiatives
and Legislative Services

ASPCA
THE ANIMAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

email: randalll@aspca.org
phone: 571-225-3463

WE ARE THEIR VOICE.
Best Evidence for Animal Assisted Interventions in Adolescent Mental Health

Katherine A. Kruger, MSW, Assistant Director, Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society
Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Plan of Lecture

- History of why and how we chose to examine AAIs in adolescents
- The calls for more rigorous research
- Elements of well-designed studies
- Best evidence for AAIs with adolescents
- Expert panel conclusions and recommendations
- Some parting thoughts on why the call for more rigorous research is not being heeded

Can Animals Help Humans Heal?

- The Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands embarked on a project to find the most promising treatments in adolescent mental health.
- Our role involved:
  - Creating a 'white paper' on the use of AAIs in adolescent mental health
  - Holding a public conference on the topic
  - Convening a panel of experts from the fields of AAT, Psychiatry, Psychology and Social Work to create a research agenda for the future.

Can Animals Help Humans Heal?

Beginning the Literature Review

Out of 340 potential articles, fewer than 20% (approximately 40) included AAIs and some aspect of adolescent mental health. We excluded studies that dealt primarily with learning disabilities, mental retardation, autistic pervasive developmental disorders, and criminal behavior, as well as dolphin programs.

- Effects reported
  - Which diagnoses showed greatest positive results?
  - What types of interventions worked best for particular diagnoses?
  - Effect of the animal vs. effect of the handler?

- Which subjects benefited most
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Ethnic and cultural differences
  - Does the client have to have an interest in animals?
**Missing in Action: Basic Elements of Sound Research Design**

- Utilization of a control or comparison group.
- Random assignment.
- Well-defined, homogeneous sample, and a sample size large enough for statistical analyses to be meaningful.
- Specific outcomes and target behaviors defined.
- Data collection instruments are appropriate to the defined outcomes, and are valid and reliable.
- Program under observation is mature.
- Threats to validity and the effects of personal biases are examined and minimized.
- Appropriate statistical tests are utilized.
- Results are generalizable and replicable.

**LaJoie, 2003: Twenty years of progress?**

From a population of 334 potential articles identified:
- 112 were retrieved
- 45 contained quantitative information
- 9 reported enough information to be included in a meta-analysis (standard deviation or variance, sample size, and means for treatment and comparison group [p-values are optional])
  - 6 studies utilized a control group
  - 3 utilized a pre-post design

**Beck & Katcher, 1984: An early call for more rigorous research**

Found only 6 studies that utilized control groups
Called for:
- Studies that account for expectancy & novelty effects
- Use of adequate control groups
- A distinction between transient emotional responses to animals and the long-term effects of their presence
- A distinction between “recreation” & “therapy”
- Even-handed (non-defensive) evaluation of research data
- A cost/benefit analysis of these programs

**AAl’s Applied to a Wide Range of Mental Health Issues and Diagnoses**

- Autism spectrum disorders/PDDs
- Learning disorders
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Conduct Disorders (CD & ODD)
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Affective disorders (depression, anxiety)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Eating disorders
- Substance abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Suicidality
- Dementia

**Therapeutic Settings in which AAl’s are Commonly Used**

- Individual psychotherapy and counseling
- Inpatient and residential facilities
- Group homes
- Prisons and correctional facilities
- Outpatient group therapy
- School-based counseling
- Equine-facilitated psychotherapy (EFP)
- "Swim-with-dolphins" programs

**“Best” Evidence: Consistency & Volume of Independent Reports**

While wel-controlled quantitative studies are lacking, there are an impressive number of independent reports that repeatedly cite the same benefits of incorporating animals in therapy. These point to areas that might repay further empirical investigation within the context of adolescent mental health. These reports suggest that animals can:

- Facilitate social interaction and the building of rapport
- Focus attention and have a calming effect
- Improve attendance, compliance, and retention
- Be objects of attachment in therapy (transitional objects)
- Provide social support and comfort
- Be used as symbols and metaphors, and provide opportunities for projection
- Be instruments of learning (skills, cognitions, behaviors)
Animals as Facilitators of Social Interaction

Increase social desirability.

Make a person accompanied by a friendly animal appear more approachable, less threatening, happier, and more relaxed.

Stimulate conversation by their presence and unscripted behavior, and by providing a neutral, external subject on which to focus.

Uniformly positive results have been reported.


The Calming Effect of Animals

In an attempt to measure human response to the presence of animals, various physiological and behavioral indicators of stress (e.g., heart rate, blood pressure, self-report measures of anxiety, etc.) were measured both with and without an animal present.

Methodological differences among studies make it hard to compare their findings, and conflicting results have been reported.

Conclusion: Animals can decrease arousal for some people in some contexts.

Best Evidence: The Companionable Zoo
Aaron Katcher & Gregory Wilkins, 1994-2000

- Setting: Devereux Foundation residential youth treatment facility, Pennsylvania.
- Sample: 55 boys with ADHD and CD; mean age 12.56 years.
- Intervention: Students randomly assigned to either "Outward Bound program" (outdoor activities) or "Companionable Zoo program" (learning about-and care of)-birds, lizards, rabbits, chinchillas, guinea pigs, hamsters, fish, and, where space permits, pot-bellied pigs, goats, sheep, and miniature horses.
- Length of intervention: 5 hours/week; 6 months in each program, followed by cross-over.

Companionable Zoo vs. Outward Bound
Aaron Katcher & Gregory Wilkins, 1994-2000

Attendance rates
- Average attendance: CZ = 89%; OB = 64%
(t=2.81, 48 df, p < .01)
- After cross-over from OB to CZ: 67% ➔ 87%
(t=2.94, 28 df, p < .01)

Behavior in regular school program
- CZ children showed decreased agitated and aggressive behavior, improved behavioral control, better cooperation with instructors, greater interest in learning compared with OB children.

Influence of Context on Symptoms
Achenbach Teacher Report Form & Child Behavior Checklist

Total Problem Score Externalizing Score
(Zoo School Residences)

Limitations & Caveats

The Companionable Zoo (Katcher & Wilkins, 1994-2000)
- The CZ program was a complex and multi-faceted program, and the authors acknowledge that it is unclear how much each part of the program contributed to its overall effectiveness.
- This intervention was not meant to "cure" ADHD or CD, but was designed more as a means of facilitating the educational process for children with limited attention and behavioral problems.
- Significant improvements in behavior were never reported in the residences, and the authors acknowledge that the effects were highly-context specific.
- No long-term follow-up of these students has been attempted, and the results have not yet been replicated (although an evaluation appears to be in progress).
2004

**Can Animals Help Humans Heal?**

- The Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands embarked on a project to find the most promising treatments in adolescent mental health.
- Our role involved:
  - Creating a ‘white paper’ on the use of AAls in adolescent mental health
  - Holding a public conference on the topic
  - Convening a panel of experts from the fields of AAT, Psychiatry, Psychology and Social Work to create a research agenda for the future.

Some of the Expert Panel’s Conclusions

- The trajectory of AAls as a science is similar to the way in which other mental health disciplines have developed, and there is tremendous promise in this area.
- The challenges facing the field are the same as those seen in the development of any new psychotherapy model.
- There is a science to developing new models of intervention, and AAls must begin to employ this scientific model.

**Some Panel Conclusions (cont’d)**

- Because the cost of mental health care can be a substantial burden, if the domains of facilitation, engagement, retention, and compliance can be positively impacted by the presence of animals, this possibility alone make AAls worthy of further study.
- Examining these non-specific effects of animals should be a research priority.

Ways of Approaching the Evaluation of AAls

**Some Panel Conclusions (cont’d)**

- **Augmentation:** Adding on an animal to an empirically-supported treatment and comparing the results to what would be expected from treatment as usual.
- **Comparison:** Compare the effects of an animal-centered therapy to another comparable activity.
- **Prospective-Longitudinal:** Because a relationship may need to be built with both an animal and a therapist over time, there may be major differences between the short-term effects of animals and their long-term effects.

**Final Thoughts**

If it has been 20 years since Beck & Katcher originally called for more rigorous research, and it may now be worth considering the barriers that are preventing the research from progressing.

Some preliminary thoughts include:
1. Many studies are conducted by students, not seasoned researchers. And, student mentors are often not familiar with the test.
2. The impetus for most of this work comes from health or mental health practitioners, not researchers.
3. Research is often done on pilot programs, and the programs are not well-established or lasting.
4. Studies and programs are not replicated (likely related to 1.3 above).
5. Significant funding would need to be available to make the attractive as a field of inquiry for researchers.

**Roadmap for the Future**


Available at:
http://www2.vet.upenn.edu/research/centers/cias/pdf/CIAAS_AAI_white_paper.pdf
Challenges in Assessing Outcomes in Animal Assisted Interventions: A Journey With SHIP (Strategic Humane Interventions Project)

National Technology Assessment Workshop On Animal Assisted Programs For Youth At Risk

Barbara Boat, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry
Cincinnati College of Medicine and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

Introduction

- Took advantage of this topic to review our 6 iterations of SHIP (during 2003-2007)
- The view from the outside is not the same as the view from the inside i.e., it is one thing to say it, another to do it!
- Discuss some challenges we confronted when trying to implement outcomes assessments of SHIP
SHIP I - III with Battered Mothers and Their Children
What did we learn from our outcome evaluation?
- Essentially nothing from pre-post questionnaires
- No idea how to code the tapes
- Reality check: 7 week intervention = 14 hours only to impact behavior (+ a little homework time)
- But... participants showed up – almost 100% attendance, and smiled a lot! (We came to their location)
- And... participants told us verbally they were getting the message about rewarding desired behaviors and being more gentle and patient with people as well as dogs

SHIP IV-VII: Switched to AMEND: Adolescents adjudicated for domestic violence
Challenge: Could we complement each other?
- AMEND: 15 week program downtown YWCA
- $20/session, court-ordered
- Essentially lecture: parent and teen groups separate
- Focus on anger management
- Types of pre-post questions:
  What is abuse?
  Name 3 appropriate ways to manage anger
  What is the cycle of violence?

SHIP/AMEND Program
- 7 weeks
- Volunteer staff of 7-8 includes 3 clicker trainers
- Meet at new SPCA Cincinnati site
- Clicker trainers select 3 suitable homeless dogs from shelter for clicker training

Typical SHIP/AMEND Program
6:30 – 8:30 pm on Wednesday
- Supper- Homework review
- Clicker practice
- Dog safety and intros
- Dog training/ Kennel clicking
- Training game with people (candy reward)
- Homework assignments (My Clicker Homework or Labeled Praise Homework)
How is SHIP different from AMEND?:

"AMEND is group setting with discussions about family issues, drugs, gangs, violence, etc. SHIP is not anything like AMEND. SHIP is more one on one and energy is focused on development of relationships. Rewarding the dogs for obeying commands taught them control. Paralleling the idea with human behavior (we get what we put into something.)"

Feedback From SHIP/AMEND Participants

SHIP/AMEND: IV-VI: Challenges

- Programs for at-risk youth are dynamic: What need for flexibility and creativity, what aspects are stable enough to measure? "Selling" the program.
- Developmental, cultural and stability issues affect recruitment, program focus and retention
  - Little interest in dogs, allergies
  - High-risk neighborhoods and fear of dogs
  - Range of abilities
  - Capacity of caregiver
  - Runaways, hospitalization, separations
  - Follow-up with transient population
- Philosophical fit (skill acquisition vs. cognitive focus)

Feedback From SHIP/AMEND Participants

- "The SHIP program is more motivated and works as a group."
- "It's not just meant for anger. It is to bring families together."
- "Allows interaction with child and parents where the focus is on helping animals. Seems to help grow relationships among each other."
Feedback From SHIP/AMEND Participants

• What are some useful things you have learned in SHIP?
  - "When a child is doing a good job, reward them in some way." 
  - "I have learned how to work with a group and rewarding people for doing good to me."
  - "Use positives, not negatives."
  - "It's all about positive reinforcement and behavior modification. It has been a good reminder and excellent example of positive reward increasing positive behavior."
  - "I have learned how to communicate and train a dog without speech."

One solution: “The Retrospective Post”

• Avoid the trap of the group baseline or pre-post questionnaires

• What or how much do you know now that you did not know before the program?

• How competent did you feel before SHIP and how competent do you feel now?

Other approaches

• In what ways have you changed? What have you learned?
  - Give 6 choices with # 6 being “Other”; check as many as apply

• How do you intend to use these skills?
Challenge and Solution: Meeting the Expectations of Multiple Funders and Stakeholders

- Serving many masters and one size does not fit all
- YWCA and Childhood Trust: Positive ways to manage own behavior and influence behaviors of others in a setting that fosters humane values.
- Kenneth R. Scott Foundation: Enhance welfare of homeless dogs

Challenge: Enlisting Help From Volunteer Staff in Outcome Evaluation Planning and Feedback

Debriefing (with food!)

Ideas from our 'dog people' for the Scott Foundation

**SHIP VI Program Dog Statistics**

- Number of dogs evaluated: **16**
- Number of dogs used in group: **6**
- Number of dogs caged trained (kennel clicking): **8**
- Number of dogs adopted: **7**
**SHIP Program Dog Information**

Dog Evaluation (1 unacceptable - 5 acceptable)

- Cage approach
- Treat through cage
- Getting out of cage
- Treat outside cage
- Accepts handling
- Clicker sound
- Reaction other dogs
- Reaction humans
- Clicker Training focus, four on the floor, etc.

**Challenges: Maintaining quality, training volunteers, going to "scale"**

- Training and debriefing and ability to offer program frequently
- Scale requires standardized measures among programs

The Wellness Project pre-post study on height gain in 7th graders over a 9 month period. Lost an average of 2 inches!

**Current Plans to Assess SHIP Outcomes**

- Humility does help!
- Will try retrospective post outcome evaluations
- Will continue to keep dog statistics
- Will use pie charts
- Will explore ways to do follow-up in 3 months
- Will explore ways to collaborate with AMEND to assess mutual outcomes
- Will check out approaches with INNOVATIONS
Funding Evaluation of Animal Assisted Interventions

Mary Lou Randour, Ph.D., Director, Human-Animal Relations, Education and Outreach, Humane Society of the United States

Preparation
- Programs + Evaluation = Larger audience
- Evidence-based
- Needs assessment
  - Site
  - Subjects
  - Instruments
  - Replicability?
- Building networks & partnerships

Show Me the Money! Or some advice on obtaining funding
- Do your homework
- Introduce yourself to program staff
- Be creative; team up with other institutions and individuals
- Persist
- Organize
Department of Justice
- Bureau of Justice Statistics
  - GREAT Anti-gang Initiative
- Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
  - Prevention & Intervention Programs
- National Center for Children Exposed to Violence, Yale Child Study Center
- National Institute of Justice
  - Office of Research & Evaluation
  - Office of Science & Technology
- Office of Justice Programs
  - National Criminal Justice Reference Service

HHS continued
- Administration for Children & Families
  - Family Violence Prevention
  - Research & Evaluation
  - Healthy Families Initiative

HHS (continued)
- Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  - Anticipated FY 2008 Funding Opportunities-TA Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention. $3.99 million
- NIH/NIMH
  - Family Violence Prevention & Services Act
  - Funded by VAWA, administered by HHS

National Center/Registries for Evidence-based Practice
- National Registry of Evidence-based Programs
- Violence Prevention – 17 entries

Examples from National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices
- **All Stars** is a multi-year school-based program for middle school students (11 to 14 years old) designed to prevent and delay the onset of high risk behaviors such as drug use, violence, and premature sexual activity.
  - **CASASTART** (Stringing Together to Achieve Positive Tomorrows, formerly known as Children at Risk), is a community-based school-centered substance abuse and violence prevention program developed by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. CASASTART targets youths between 8 and 13 years old who have a minimum of four identified risk factors.
Examples from National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) and PATHS Preschool are school-based preventive interventions for children in elementary school or preschool. The interventions are designed to enhance areas of social emotional development, such as self-control, self-esteem, emotional awareness, social skills, friendships, and interpersonal problem solving skills while reducing aggressive and other behavior problems. (1) Concepts are presented through direct instruction, discussion, modeling.

Second Step is a classroom-based social skills program for children 4 to 14 years of age that teaches important social skills aimed at reducing impulsive and aggressive behavior while increasing social competence.

Centers/Registries, cont’d

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
- Database of national listings of violence prevention, intervention, and treatment programs
- Database of bibliographic information and CPTP abstracts of violence related research
- Database stores information about violence-related curricula, videos and other resource materials
- Database of data collection tools available on violence-related topics for program evaluation purposes

Centers/Registries

National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- Established by act of Congress in 2000
- Collaboration of academic and community-based service centers
- Network comprises 70 member centers; 45 current grantees and 25 previous grantees
- Funded by the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration

More

Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence
- Administered by the George Washington University; funded by OJJDP
- National resource center for the research and development of school violence prevention strategies
- Database Overview
  - National and state-level survey and school summaries
  - Classification of programs as Effective or Noteworthy
  - Survey and Measures

And still more

Statistical Briefing Book
- Basic statistical information on juvenile offending, victimization of youth, and involvement of youth in juvenile justice system
- Data analysis tools
- Easy access to NIBRS: Victims of Domestic Violence (EzAniNIBRS)

The last one

Child Welfare League of America
- Association of nearly 800 public and private nonprofit agencies that assist more than 3.5 million abused and neglected children
- National Center for Research and Data
  - National Data Analysis System
  - Research and Evaluation
  - Research to Practice Initiative
  - National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology
Organize

- National Technical Assistance Center on AAT and Youth Violence Prevention
- Up-to-date information/links about AAT & YVP programs
- Database of program evaluation instruments
- Listserv
- Evaluation/grant proposal writing consults
- Teleconferences
- Publications and other resources
Introduction

Project Pooch is a canine-centered vocational educational program located at an Oregon juvenile correctional facility for male offenders. Dogs that are facing euthanasia or prolonged shelter care are selected by Project Pooch staff for placement at Project Pooch’s on-site kennel. The dogs are then prepared for adoption by the incarcerated residents. These residents, who once hired are recognized as employees of Project Pooch, are also given the responsibility to groom, train and present each dog for adoption. They work as part of a team of kennel staff, and are trained in animal health, behavior and adoption promotion. Project Pooch is the only vocational program at the study site that provides residents with the opportunity to interact with non-human animals. Unlike some prison programs, the dogs do not live with their caretakers, but do have regular contact with the youth assigned to care for them.

This qualitative research study provides insight into the experiences of the 14 youth who participated in the study. Their responses cannot be construed to be applicable to all participants of this or similar programs; however, the findings in this study appear to be similar to findings emerging from a growing body of literature pertaining to animal facilitated programs in correctional settings (Strimple, 2003; Furst, 2005; Turner, 2007). In this evaluation, participating youth described developing patience, experiencing an emotional connection with dogs in the program and developing practical employment skills including improved communication with staff, peers and people from the outside community.
Methods

Accessing the facility and designing the instrument

Project Pooch is housed within an Oregon youth correctional facility. After describing the purpose of the study and the protections that would be put in place for the participants, permission was granted by appropriate authorities to proceed. The superintendent at the time met personally with me and expressed interest and support for the project, and also provided a detailed and useful context for the current treatment and rehabilitation goals of the facility (personal conversations Gary Lawhead, 2002). Additionally, the study was reviewed and approved by the H.S.R.B. of Portland State University.

I approached this study using both ethnographic tools and qualitative research methods. The blending of these two perspectives in research potentially maximizes the empowerment of the study participant, with the researcher bringing a spirit and method of ignorance and inquisitiveness (Leigh, 1998). The participant is viewed as the authority on the subject being studied. This approach seemed to be effective, as the youth interviewed were forthcoming, informative, relaxed and talkative.

Prior to designing and initiating formal interviews with youth, I and a student assistant conducted ethnographic interviews and focus groups with youth and staff, identifying “cover terms” and “descriptors” (Leigh, 1998) that would allow us to maximize familiarity with the context in which Project Pooch operates. These contacts also helped us get to know staff and inmates, which allowed for comfortable access to residents’ cottages and staff meeting areas for interviews. This access also permitted the researcher to observe interactions between youth and peers and staff.

Visiting all areas of the campus also afforded the experience of the physical and psychological aspects of behavioral and movement restraints within a correctional facility. On one occasion, this researcher participated in a “count”, in which inmates count off in numbers so that an accurate accounting of whereabouts is made. Momentarily forgetting my setting, when the count came to my place in the line, the end of the line, I shouted out my age. The guard chastised me, appropriately, and reminded me that this is an important way that safety and structure are maintained in the institution. This was also in keeping with the structure of walking two by two when walking along the campus. These experiences provided insight into the contrast between the settings on cottage and Project Pooch: on cottage the setting is physically large and there are more youth to be supervised, compared to Project Pooch, where smaller groups of youth are active within a contained setting.

Because this study included field work and observation in multiple settings, I was able to observe youth interacting with staff, peers, dogs and occasionally people from the outside or “the outs”. I also had the opportunity to conduct formal interviews with staff and to participate in activities at the correctional facility. Following the initial focus groups and interviews, an extensive interview survey was developed. Questions were designed to provide Project Pooch with participants’ evaluation of the program and to provide information about the participants’ overall description of the emotional and vocational...
experiences of the program. An initial copy of the survey was given to two participants for feedback before administering the interview for the study.

Sample

This was a convenience sample of 14 participants. Many potential participants were employed at Project Pooch during a period of six months, where all current participants were invited to participate in interviews. Flyers were distributed to the residential cottages and were left at Project Pooch as well. There was some observed “snowball” effect as some participants encouraged their friends to participate. Others chose to participate after being in a focus group or being referred by the director of the program. This is a weakness of the study, as one can't know who chose not to participate and why they chose not to participate. It is also a small sample size.

Youth who were interviewed ranged in age from 17-22. The average age was 19. Participants had been in Oregon Youth Authority Custody for an average of two years, with a range of one month to almost five years. Interview participants had been at Pooch from three weeks to seventeen months, the average being six months.

*Ethnicity of participants:*
- Multiple Identities, non-white: 1
- African American: 1
- Latino: 2
- Native American: 2
- Caucasian/ “White”: 8

*Interviews*

Interviews with individual youth were conducted in private areas of either residential cottages or a private area at Project Pooch. Most interviews lasted an hour and a half, and responses were written down verbatim. Probes were utilized when participants were not forthcoming; however, most participants were eager to converse about their experiences and opinions.

The interview used with the youth participants consists of 31 questions. Thirteen questions were selected for analysis on the basis of their relevance to relationships with people and dogs, communication with people, descriptions of inter-personal functioning and personal assessment of skill development. Excluded questions were those questions that specifically pertained to the daily operations of Project Pooch.

*Analysis*

I initially completed a content analysis of responses to each question. Themes were preliminarily identified based upon frequency of occurrence within the text of the interviews. Three individual readers, not associated with the project, were given copies of the interview responses and were asked to identify themes that they observed, using the same technique of recording the frequency of certain responses to each question. In group
and individual sessions, the readers and I reviewed our findings and found consistency among the themes identified in each question area.

In the second portion of the analysis I reviewed the complete text of all of the responses to the thirteen questions multiple times, extracting potential global themes. The principal investigator then completed a content analysis recording frequency of occurrence of pre-selected terms. The content analysis was then reviewed with an independent reader who had identified these themes as well.

Results

Themes in response to each question

Thinking about other youth, who is most likely to get the most out of this program?
Participants identified that the best candidate is someone who is “willing to learn”, who is mature.

Is working at Project Pooch like you thought it would be? In what ways?
Participants stated that they thought it would be harder, thought it would be easier. Most stated that they learned more than they thought they would.

What do you feel you have learned about yourself from your experiences at Project Pooch?
Participants reported that they learned that they have patience and that they can teach what they learn.

What employment skills have you gained from your participation at Project Pooch, if any?
Grooming and animal training were equally represented, with interview skills following closely behind that.

Does working at Project Pooch give you opportunities to work on your treatment goals? If yes, how?
Participants cited developing patience and relationship skills.

What type of relationship(s) do you have or have you had with dog(s) at Project Pooch?
Participants noted that they were both teacher and friend to their assigned dog, depending upon the circumstances.

What do you feel you have gained or learned from this relationship, if anything?
Patience, learning from animal about emotions and behavior were most frequently noted by participants.
Has your relationship with the dogs changed at all since you started at Project Pooch?
Youth note that they become more attached to the dogs as time goes on and they report relating to the dog as an actual companion, rather than being “just a dog”.

How, if at all, has your relationship with the dog(s) at Project Pooch affected your relationship with other youth at Institution?
Although more youth stated that there was not a change, half of them went on to discuss how they can talk to peers at Pooch about their dogs, and interact in ways that they could not talk to peers at their cottage.

Have your relationships with other youth at Institution changed at all since you started working at Project Pooch? If so, please describe how.
Half say yes, half say no. Described same as above.

Have your relationships with staff at Institution changed at all since you started working at Project Pooch? If so, please describe how.
Overall, yes. Youth describe an experience of sharing knowledge and mutual appreciation for dogs with staff.

Project Pooch is:
__All treatment __ More Treatment __Equally Treatment and Work __ More Work __ All Work
Youth describe that Pooch is a place where you can apply the things you’ve learned in treatment, but it is not a treatment program. The program is seen predominantly as equally treatment and work. All responses clearly identified the lack of clarity regarding the question of “what is treatment”, which is reflective of confusion that can accompany treatment planning in juvenile institutions (Inderbitzin, 2007) and which coincided with my own observations.

In what ways , if any, has being part of Project Pooch affected your personality?
On a scale of 1-10 0=no change at all, 5=I’ve changed a little in this area, 10=I’ve changed 100% in this area.
Averages
Patience 8.5
Empathy 6.1
Anger Management 6.25
Self-Discipline 6.0
Self-Esteem 3.75
Attitude Towards Authority 3.2
Relationship With People On the Outs 4.5

Youth reported only positive changes. If youth reported no change or reported that they had that skill already, the response was counted as O but included in the overall count for averaging purposes.
**Global Themes**

**Patience and responsibility**

“That I didn’t have as much patience as I thought I did—like sometimes she’s not doing stuff right, in the afternoon she do it right. I see that I can be patient, teach her how to be and I don’t have to yell—just be patient.”

“I’m more patient than I thought I was. I wake up knowing I will see my dog. I make rawhide on cottage; this guy he buys raw material and I’ll make it for him (dog) and stuff.”

“A lot of patience—because she’s stubborn. We could be walking and all of a sudden she stops and I’d pull her at first, that’s not good. Then the dog, she don’t like that. She starts rolling around and she’d see it’s fun—she stops. Now I nudge her. When she falls down, I’ll pick her up.”

“Yeah., because when I first started, we didn’t have a relationship, but now we have to be there. Feeding, grooming, obedience.”

“Used to look at dogs like ‘can you fetch?’ Now I kind of look at dogs like a person. They need help. See they are just like people.”

“Yeah. I’ve learned a lot of things like as in, how to care for dogs, like grooming, training. Gained a lot of patience. Learned how to care for another person. My dogs are like my closest friends.”

**Developing a Relationship**

“Great. I don’t understand the whole bonding thing. Don’t see much point in bonding when you have to pass them on. It’ll take a couple before I’m used to passing them on. I’ve been bonding with out thinking of it. He’s already close to me.”

“Business and companion. When I get a dog, I know pretty much where they came from. With new Pooch dogs, I wonder where they’re coming from. I feel for cuts, bruises, wonder where they have been. You get attached. Happy when they get us dogs, though.”

“...At first hadn’t any interactions with dogs in seven years. Used to think dogs were just dogs sitting out in the yard and a friend.”

“It’s like a real good relationship. I like my dog. My dog likes me. It’s like kid going to college, real sad. I didn’t come yesterday. I had thought she was leavin’...she was still here. We took pictures. You get real attached to the dogs.”

“How much a dog can love you, depends on you. How much you could mean to somebody else. All my life I’ve been used a lot— for custody, teachers pass me on. Dogs just love you.”
Work Skills

Learning and Teaching
"I have the ability to teach, not just the dogs, but others about what I do."

"I never knew so much about dogs. You learn body positions and can prevent things from happening."

"Learned how to use positive/negative reinforcement. Good for us to forget about everything else and good for dogs if they have been abused."

"Learning more about myself. Where my social skills are, how I feel about acting more assertive. Learning how to act assertive and not feeling like I'm hurting someone and being an idiot."

"Personally, me, it helps me on treatment goals. Like on Cottage here we deal with family issues, which leads to crime, here leads to future. This job is like a real job- like you're on the outside working. Grandma died. Now when I think of it, I messed up, she's looking down on me. This is something that will help me be a good family man, a decent man, everything my family wasn't. Be what my grandma dreamed for me."

Communication/Social Skills

"Helps me specifically to learn to work with people. Thought people were all manipulative and out to hurt me. So I can relate to people not from treatment to work on this."

"Yes. I'm more open, more willing to talk with staff-where before it was 'I gotta do what he says because he's the authority figure, but I don't want anything to do with him'"

"The youth that had her before me was frustrated with her and when I got her I taught her to lie down, and the previous owner says "dumb mutt", but he also wants to know how I did it. Because I have a relationship with her."

"We got dogs, they got dogs, so we talk about it. Compare training techniques." (regarding staff)

"Learning more about myself. Where my social skills are, how I feel about acting more assertive. Learning how to act assertive and not feeling like I'm hurting someone and being an idiot."

"Yes. By becoming a new person. You got to change your old ways. 2 years ago- I would've been smoking out in back. I've matured. "Blank" (treatment professional) makes you think of who you are, what you used to be. I like to be the guy who greets everyone. 'I like that guy.' I can put my street knowledge into the dogs."
Technical skills

"Computer skills. Flyers. Advertising. Researching, study about the dogs. My very first dog bit someone. I read about (the breed) that they were stubborn to train, and ways to get around it. The dog went on to be a guard dog".

"Interviews, public speaking, grooming, training, kennel worker, computer, responsibility, leadership."

"Helps with talking with people from the outside. Institutional people have a hard time with that. Maybe regular business skills."

Discussion

The youth involved in this evaluation, with the exception of one participant, described experiences that are characteristic of having a sense of personal agency. In an article on altruistic coping, Toch (2000) provides insight into agency by way of describing an inmate crew photographed after helping an elderly man chop and stack his wood, noting that the men are "...publicly presented (and able to define themselves) as capable of contributing to the world instead of waiting for their sentences to expire" (p. 271). As one of the Pooch participants said "Yeah. I've learned a lot of things like as in, how to care for dogs, like grooming, training. Gained a lot of patience. Learned how to care for another person. My dogs are like my closest friends." Throughout the interviews, the youth emphasized their experience in doing, teaching and learning. Accompanying this was the stated experience of relationships with the dogs and vicariously through the dogs with other people.

Interviewing and hiring youth employees, being responsible for a dog, and running the kennel as a member of a team requires participants to actively coordinate together in the management of a project. This kind of movement is not characteristic of institution living overall, where movements are generally closely supervised and directions are to be closely followed. In an interview study of 144 incarcerated youths, Lane (2002) found that youth reported that the juvenile correctional programs that had the most impact on them were those that had provided something to them, i.e., life skills training and counseling made a difference to the youth in terms of changing their attitudes and behavior. This is consistent with the experiences reported by the youth in this study.

The dogs in the program appear to serve as a conduit for learning and communicating, and as such a conduit for self-efficacy. Youth describe learning from their dogs and learning from other youth about dog care or training. They describe their pleasure at being able to teach something, and to prepare a dog for adoption which not only means training the dog, but adequately presenting the dog as a potential adoptee. The youth clearly enjoy the companionship of their dogs and report a sense of comfort and relationship and learning with the animals.
Summary and Recommendations

The process of understanding and defining the animal-human relationship continues to deepen and mature (Beck, A.M. & Katcher, A. 2003; Hines, 2003; Melson, 2001 & Serpell, J.A., 2000). Practitioners who bring humans and non-human animals together for therapeutic purposes and researchers who are interested in defining that experience continue to attempt to define practices and to accurately measure the effects of animal assisted interventions (Delta Society, 1995; Fine, A.H., 2000; Kruger, K.A., Trachtenberg, S.W. & Serpell, J.A., 2004). In essence, the questions asked about animal assisted interventions have been “does it work” and “how do we know it works” and “what is ‘it’?”

Perhaps an additional set of questions, driven by the values of human dignity and humane animal care, are needed for assessing the effectiveness of animal facilitated correctional programs. When an evaluator approaches a program for which one goal is to place animals in adoptive homes, the program can produce a list of adopted animals. Does that aspect of the program work? It does. Evaluations of animal assisted correction programs seem to indicate that the incarcerated residents gain many benefits from their participation (Merriam-Arduini, 2000; Turner, 2002; Strimple, 2005). If the question is whether these programs are beneficial for incarcerated participants as they participate in it, the answer seems to be “yes”.

Animal behaviorists know that a dog that is engaged in purposive work and interaction, whether it is being companionable or chasing sheep, is a dog that is likely to display fewer behavioral difficulties. Humans also seem to need a level of engagement in meaningful, self-directed activity to meet our maximum potential (Kirschenbaum, H. & Henderson, V. L.1990; Houchins, 2001; Maslow, 2005). This is certainly the case for still-developing incarcerated youth who are trying to complete their task of transitioning into adulthood from inside the walls of an institution (Altschuler & Brash, 2004). On the occasions when animal welfare advocates and human rights advocates find that they have a shared interest in providing humane care to all living creatures, despite their offenses, there exists the potential for a powerful alliance to influence reformation of care for sheltered dogs and for incarcerated individuals.

Although correctional institutions serve as an agent of social control (Jacobs and Steele, 1975;) and there is continuing debate about how those incarcerated should be treated (Inderbitzin, 2007a), there continues to be an effort to prepare the youth for life as a responsible adult from inside the institution (Houchins,2001; Altschuler & Brash, 2004. Although animal facilitated programs do not fall in line with some community members’ views of punishment, animal facilitated programs have served to provide opportunities for work and engagement for the youth. Additionally, static variables in recidivism may include access to education and learning how to utilize leisure time appropriately (Cottle, et. al. 2001), both of which appear to be present as opportunities in Project Pooch.

It appears that the animals and the youth share similar dilemmas: each group needs to be cared for, rehabilitated and integrated into a community. The youth are
placed into a locked facility which proposes to reform, rehabilitate and consequate them according to state laws. Shelter animals are placed in a secure facility, with the hope that the dogs will be placed in a home and will avoid euthanasia. The animals and the youth spend extended amounts of time in these facilities, facing an uncertain outcome. Perhaps Furst (2006, p. 425) in her review of Prison Based Animal Programs (PAPs) presents the potential for these programs best:

Given all that is wrong with our prisons, the possibility of PAPs being identified as reliable and effective treatment is alluring. Not only could some of the more than 2 million incarcerated people benefit, but programs that pair inmates with homeless animals make it possible to help an inordinate number of animals as well. Homeless animals and prison inmates are both "throwaway populations," discarded by a society that cares not what happens to them (and prefers they be kept out of sight). Having inmates and animals help each other in a symbiotic relationship results in a win-win-win situation, with not only the inmate and animal benefiting but the larger community as well.

Acknowledgements
A sincere thank you to the Humane Society of United States for providing the financial support that allowed me to finish this project. A special thank you to Dr. Arnie Arluke, who not only encouraged the H.S.U.S. to consider my work, but whose work also informed and energized the writing process of this article. Finally, a grateful thank you to Joan Dalton for her tireless work with the animals and youth that come her way and for her diligence and patience in pursuing the completion of this project.

References


Introduction
Using animals as part of a therapy process has been enjoying a resurgence in popularity in the last thirty years. Prior to this, animals had been used as more therapy aides, even Freud had a dog; but with little focus on the effect these animals were having. This is rapidly changing. The reason why is made clear by Bern Williams when he said “There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face” (Fine, 2000, p. 180).

The increased interest and use of animals being seen as part of a therapy process has resulted in animals being seen as an actual treatment adjunct, called Animals Assisted Therapy. What is Animal-Assisted Therapy? Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT), activities are designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning (Delta Society, 2004). AAT is a goal-directed intervention in which an animal that meets specific criteria is an integral part of the treatment process. AAT is directed and/or delivered by a health/human service professional with specialized expertise, and within the scope of practice of his/her profession. The animals used in AAT range from gold fish in aquariums to horses in fields, and many in between. The activities they can be engaged in, from watching to riding, to being licked, watched, played with or hugged, is only limited by the imagination of the professional leading the treatment. But with all of this attention, has come an increased curiosity as to what exactly happens within this paradigm. This curiosity raises the need for research into AAT’s effectiveness. One major area of needed research is the perceptions of staff involved in the process as to the effectiveness of AAT. This will be explored in this article.
Background

AAT may be provided in a variety of settings to address the concerns of different population groups. One group that has received much attention in the AAT practice and literature and appears to have benefited from AAT is at-risk youth. Early work such as Gonski (1985), using a therapeutic pet with abused and neglected children to develop empathy helped spark interest in The Children’s Village (CV), a child welfare agency located in Dobbs Ferry.

In 1999 CV became a training site for the East Coast Assistance Dogs, ECAD, an organization that raises, trains and places dogs with individuals having various disabilities that cause loss of independence (Arluke, 2007). The school was chosen as the natural place where youth could sign up for a course on "service dog training." At that time, the ECAD dogs went to school Monday through Thursday. For those staff who were “puppy raising,” caring for puppies that would eventually become service dogs in their home, this schedule presented a logistical problem. This was solved by obtaining the permission of administration to have puppies in the offices of those raising them during working hours on non-school days. With the introduction of puppies into offices of therapists, an interesting phenomena began to be noticed. The kids were scheduling their sessions for Fridays, the days when the puppies were present, a clear change from the pattern previously where many youth saw Friday as the beginning of the “weekend.” The dog was a natural pull to therapy. The kids wanted to be there. They also wanted to talk. This was noticed by two therapists Avril Lindsay and Beverly Richard who began as volunteers raising puppies for (ECAD). Interestingly this put them in a position to see first-hand the impact that they dogs were having in treatment. They helped everyone notice. As a result they worked collaboratively to build the AAT program.

These two therapists began to explore this phenomenon with Lu Picard, founder of ECAD. By 2001 an official pilot project, was approved by the The Children’s Village, for three dogs and four handlers. That program was given the seal of approval less than a year later. It is important to note that not only was CV interested in adapting this new therapeutic intervention because of it's promising possibilities, but they were also interested in the ability of an AAT Program to develop specific measurable goals for each child. This fit well into CV's treatment planning philosophy.

One area this program was begun was in a specialized unit, the Crisis Residence Program, which housed the most needy children at CV. Here youth were most in need of expedited interventions as they were either a step down from a psychiatric hospitalization or youth placed to prevent a hospitalization. All youth here are treated in an intense short-term program in this two eight-bed sub acute unit housed on the campus of The Children’s Village Residential Treatment Center. An added advantage was that due to the self-contained nature of the program, it would be easier to see any emerging problems and to modify the program.

Early in the implementation of the AAT, the co-founders realized that if the program was to succeed it required that the staff “buy into" the program. A major way to do this was to have transparency in the running of the program.
The AAT team also realized that while they had to deal with fear and concerns of the children, they also had to find ways of dealing with the fears and concerns of the staff, adults have had years to build their fears.

One example of this is the following:

*When we started the program we had a therapy dog, Jaguar who worked in the program and one staff who was so afraid we actually had to tell the kids she was allergic to guarantee the respect of space. (We learned this after a kid tried to sneak up to her with Jag). Over time, she grew to know and predict Jaguars behaviors, and would tell people that she was afraid of dogs, but Jaguar was Jaguar, not just any dog.*

This story had a happy ending, but CV wanted to ensure that all efforts with the therapeutic dogs also worked out equally well. This resulted in the cofounders beginning to meet with other interested therapists to discuss the program, and a staff survey performed in 2004 which sought to get a clear picture of the staff perceptions of CV’s AAT effectiveness and to uncover their concerns. And the field of AAT was changing. There was more research and writings that was showing positive finding for traumatized youth with behavioral challenges. Fawcett and Gullone (2001) suggested that youth with conduct disorder that often attribute negative thoughts and feelings to those around them can begin to form a positive bond with a therapist in the presence of an animal, as the therapist appears more benign in the presence of the animal.

A decision was made to try to get in front of the concerns that staff had so that they could be resolved, and not allowed to linger and eventually, if unaddressed, disrupt the program. In December 2004, a confidential survey was hand delivered to each staff person involved with the Crisis Residence. A unique identifying number was written on each survey so that the research department could tell which staff completed the survey and which did not. That way, intensive follow-up could be conducted to ensure a high response rate, while protecting the privacy of the staff completing the form (Baker, 2005).

**Measure Development**

A multidisciplinary team at Children’s Village developed the AAT Survey. There were 3 sections of the survey. Staff rated each questions using a Likert scale of (0) none of the youth (1) some of the youth (2) most of the youth and (3) all of the youth). The first section of the survey consisted of the 15 closed-ended items to which the following response choices were offered (Baker, 2005).

These 15 items were: (1) Youth behave better when the dog is around, (2) Youth who are agitated calm down when the dog approaches, (3) Youth with low self-esteem feel better about themselves because they feel loved and accepted by the dog, (4) Youth who would
otherwise require a therapeutic hold don't need one if the dog is around, (5) Youth feel more motivated to get better when the dog is around, (6) Youth feel supported emotionally by the dog, (7) Youth enjoy touching and playing with the dog, (8) Youth relate better to each other in the group because they share an appreciation for the dog, (9) Youth learn about body language from the dog, (10) Youth learn to be patient from being/interacting with the dog, (11) Youth are less defensive when the dog is around, (12) Youth enjoy having the dog around, (13) Youth want more time than is offered now with the dog, (14) Youth have allergies to the dog, (15) Youth are afraid of the dog (Baker, 2005).

The second section of the survey consisted of 17 items with the following Likert Scale response options (0) definitely not, (1) somewhat, and (2) definitely. These 17 items were: (1) I enjoy having the dog around, (2) I enjoy touching and playing with the dog, (3) I have allergies to the dog, (4) I am afraid of/uncomfortable with the dog, (5) Hygiene can be an issue with the dog, (6) AAT has been a useful addition to the unit, (7) AAT enhances the educational program on the unit, (8) AAT enhances the recreational program on the unit, (9) AAT enhances the clinical program on the unit, (10) AAT facilitates behavioral management on the unit, (11) AAT provides opportunities for sex education on the unit, (12) AAT provides opportunities for youth to talk about family backgrounds and family trees, (13) AAT provides opportunities for youth to explore abuse issues because it is easier to talk about animal abuse than their experience, (14) AAT facilitates socialization among peers, (15) AAT provides a focus of communication for children, (16) AAT improves group morale among the youth, (17) AAT allows youth and staff to forge positive links (Baker, 2005).

The third section of the survey consisted of 6 open-ended questions: (1) What is the best part about having the dog in the Crisis Residence, (2) What is the worst part of having the dog at the Crisis Residence, (3) What is the most beneficial aspect to AAT, (4) What is the least beneficial aspect of AAT, (5) How could AAT at the Crisis Residence be improved? And (6) what else would you like to tell us about AAT at the Crisis Residence (Baker, 2005).

The measurement was revised slightly in the 2007 administration as is indicated below.

Overview of Procedures

Between December 2004 and January 2005 CR the 28 staff who worked at least one day shift at the Crisis Residence were given blank surveys and asked to complete them and send to the research department. Staff that did not complete them were given reminder notices and additional blank copies. Eventually 27 staff completed the survey. One staff was on disability and could not complete the survey (Baker, 2005).

In December of 2007 a revised survey was offered to all twenty staff who worked at least a one day shift at the Crisis Residence. Staff were given blank surveys they were asked to complete and return anonymously to the CR AAT intern, or the Administrative Assistant.
Results of the 2004/2005 Survey Compared to the 2007 Survey

The responses to the 15 closed-ended questions in section 1 are presented in Table 1a. Responses to the 26 closed-ended questions surveyed in 2007 are offered in Table 1b.

Table 1a: Staff Perceptions of Youth’s Behavior 2004/5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth who are agitated calm down when the dog is present</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth enjoy having the dog around</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth relate better to each other</td>
<td>03.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth are less defensive when the dog is around</td>
<td>03.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth enjoy touching and playing with the dog</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth learn to be patient from the dog</td>
<td>03.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth are (not) afraid of the dog</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth behave better when the dog is around</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth feel more motivated when the dog is around</td>
<td>03.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth feel supported emotionally by the dog</td>
<td>03.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth (don't) have allergies to the dog</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth with low self-esteem feel better about</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth want more time with the dog</td>
<td>03.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth learn body language from the dog</td>
<td>00.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth who would otherwise require a hold don’t</td>
<td>04.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2004/5 of the 15 items, responses indicated uniformly positive attitudes towards the program. To facilitate interpretation of the findings, the most and all categories are collapsed and the items are arranged in order of positive responses. That is, 92.6% of the staff reported that agitated youth calm down when the dog is present, 92.5% of the staff reported that that most or all youth enjoy having the dog around, 92.3% reported that most or all of the youth relate better to each other because of the dog, 88.9% reported that most or all of the youth are less defensive when the dog is around, 88.8% reported that youth enjoy touching and playing with the dog, 88.4% reported that most or all of the youth learn how to be patient from being with the dog, 87.5% reported that most or all of the youth are not afraid of the dog, 85.2% reported that most or all of the youth behave better when the dog is around, 84.6% reported that most or all of the youth feel more motivated when the dog is around, 81.5% reported that most or all of the youth feel emotionally supported by the dog, 79.2% said that none or some youth have allergies, 77.8% reported that most or all of the youth with low self esteem feel better about themselves because they feel loved and...
accepted by the dog, 7.7% of the staff reported that most or all of the youth want more time with the dog, 76% of the staff reported that most or all of the youth learn body language from the dog, and 72% reported that most or all of the youth who would otherwise need a therapeutic hold don’t because of the dog. Thus, at least three fourths of the staff gave positive responses to all 15 items on the first section of the survey. Responses indicate that staff believe that youth derive pleasure and therapeutic benefit from the presence of the dog in the Crisis Residence (Baker, 2005).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>most/def</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth behave better when the dog is around</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth who are agitated calm down when the dog approaches</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth with low self-esteem feel better about themselves because they feel loved and accepted by the dog</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth who would otherwise require a therapeutic hold don’t need one if the dog is around</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth feel more motivated to get better when the dog is around</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth feel supported emotionally by the dog</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth enjoy touching and playing with the dog</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth relate better to each other in the group because they share an appreciation for the dog</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth learn about body language from the dog</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth learn to be patient from being/interacting with the dog</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth are less defensive when the dog is around</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You enjoy having the dog around</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You enjoy touching and playing with the dog</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth should have more time than is offered now with the dog</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies can be issues in having the dog around</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1b. Staff Perception of Youth’s Behavior 2007
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>55.0%</th>
<th>30.0%</th>
<th>15.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene can be an issue in having the dog around</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT has been a useful addition to the unit</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT enhances the educational program on the unit</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT enhances the recreational program on the unit</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT enhances the clinical program on the unit</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT facilitates behavioral management on the unit</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides opportunities for sex education on the unit</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides opportunities for youth to talk about family backgrounds and family trees</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides opportunities for youth to explore abuse issues because it is easier to talk about animal abuse than their experience</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT/A facilitates socialization among peers</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT/A provides a focus of communication for children</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT/A improves group morale among the youth</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT/A allows youth and staff to forge positive links</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007 in an expanded list of questions similar trends were found. Responses indicated uniformly positive attitudes towards the program. From 90% understanding that the AAT program fostered socialization, to 80% of staff seeing that this program improving group moral, communication, and facilitating youth speaking about abuse. Staff, 80%, saw youth as enjoying this dogs and felt that it also added to the recreational program. An overwhelming 80% of staff felt that there should be more time allowed with the dogs for the children precisely because they saw it as being so beneficial.
Table 2 presents the responses to the questions in the second section of the survey.

Table 2: General Staff Opinions as to Effectiveness of Program, and Staff Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am (not) afraid of the dog</td>
<td>03.7 07.4 88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (don't) have allergies to the dog</td>
<td>03.7 14.8 81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT improves group morale</td>
<td>07.7 11.5 80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT enhances clinical program</td>
<td>03.8 15.4 80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT allows youth and staff to forge pos. links</td>
<td>04.0 16.0 80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT enhances the recreational program</td>
<td>08.3 12.5 79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT facilitates behavioral management</td>
<td>03.7 18.5 77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy having the dog around</td>
<td>00.0 22.2 77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides a focus of communication</td>
<td>07.7 15.4 76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT has been useful addition to the unit</td>
<td>03.8 19.2 76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy touching the dog</td>
<td>07.4 18.5 74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT facilitates socialization among peers</td>
<td>00.0 26.9 73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides opportunities for family tree</td>
<td>03.8 23.1 73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides opportunities to explore abuse</td>
<td>00.0 29.2 70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT enhances educational program</td>
<td>08.7 26.1 65.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT provides opportunities for sex ed</td>
<td>20.8 25.0 54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene is (not) an issue with the dog</td>
<td>22.2 40.7 37.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The items are presented according to the positive responses received. Six items received positive endorsements by at least 80% of the staff: not being afraid of the dog, respondent not having allergies, AAT improving morale, AAT enhancing the clinical program, and AAT allowing staff and youth to forge positive links. An additional nine items were endorsed by 70% to 79% of the staff: AAT enhancing the recreational program, AAT facilitating behavioral management, the respondent enjoying the dog, AAT providing a focus of communication, AAT being a useful addition to the unit, the respondent enjoying touching the dog, AAT facilitating socialization among peers, AAT providing an opportunity to talk about family trees, and AAT providing opportunities for youth to explore abuse issues. One item was endorsed positively by 65% of the staff: AAT enhances the educational program; one item was endorsed positively by 54.2% of the staff: AAT provided opportunities for sex education; and one item was endorsed positively by only 37% of the staff: hygiene not being an issue (22.5% said it was definitely an issue and 40.7% said it was somewhat of an issue) (Baker, 2005). In 2007 these questions were included in the first section.
Tables 3a and b present the responses to the question about what is the best part of having the dog at the Crisis Residence.

**Table 3a: What is the Best Part of Having the Dog at Crisis Residence? 2004/5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calms youth</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De-escalates crisis</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps kids focus</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids enjoy dog</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful, non specific</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight staff felt that the best part was that the dog’s presence helped to calm the youth down while an additional four said that the dog was helpful in a crisis situation. Three staff felt the dog helped youth focus, two staff reported that the best part was that the youth enjoyed the dog, three said that the best part was that the dog was helpful (although they did not specify how), and seven made miscellaneous comments (another way to engage kids, it’s smart, kids can be touched without being afraid, etc.) (Baker, 2005).

**Table 3b: What is the best part about having the dog in the Crisis Residence, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Building</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutically beneficial because of calming influence on children</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007 an overwhelming 95% saw the best part of the AAT Program being the therapeutic impact that the dogs have on the youth.
Tables 4a and b present the responses to the question what is the worst part of having the dog at the Crisis Residence.

**Table 4a: What is the Worst Part of Having the Dog at Crisis Residence? 2004/5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene/odor</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth become distracted</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fears</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One-third of the staff reported that there is no worst part of having the dog in the Crisis Residence. Four each said that the hygiene/odor was the worst part and that youth became distracted by the dog. Three staff reported that the worst part was that there was not enough time with the dog. Two each said the worst part was allergies and fears. Three staff made miscellaneous comments (Baker, 2005).

**Table 4b. What is the worst part of having the dog at the Crisis Residence, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids afraid of dog</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distracting/kids use negativity to seek attention from dog</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(some people had multiple answers so the percentage is more than 100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007 most staff could not think of anything that was negative about the program. Of those who could think of a concern it was that the dogs posed an opportunity to the youth to act negatively in order to gain attention from the dogs.
Tables 5a and b present the responses to the question what is the most beneficial part of AAT at the Crisis Residence.

**Table 5a: What is the Most Beneficial Part of AAT (n=21), 2004/5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps in treatment</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth enjoy</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calming</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six staff said they didn’t know what the most beneficial aspect was and 1 person left the question blank. Five staff reported that the most beneficial aspect was that it helped the youth; four said that it helped with treatment; three said that youth enjoyed/loved the dog, three said the dog was calming and six staff made miscellaneous comments (staff participate, feels like home) (Baker, 2005).

**Table 5b: What is the most beneficial part of AAT, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides a positive focus/activity around which the residents can gather and participate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides emotional support for the children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building and communication among SW, staff, and children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007 most staff felt that the youth were offered emotional support by the dogs. Secondly staff felt that the therapeutic dogs offered a positive focus for the youth around which they could come together and interact.
Tables 6a and b present the responses to the question what is the least beneficial part of having the dog at the Crisis Residence.

**Table 6a: What is the Least Beneficial Part of AAT (n=18), 2004/5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine staff left this question blank. Of the 18 respondents, 8 reported that there was no least beneficial aspect. Five said that least beneficial aspect was insufficient time with the dog and five made miscellaneous comments (allergies, the dog is a distraction, it encourages attention-seeking in the kids, it is hard for the youth when the dog leaves, etc.) (Baker, 2005).

**Table 6b: What is the least beneficial part of AAT, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distracting residents from other programs and activities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kids do not engage due to either lack of investment or fear of animals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at times kids compete over the dog’s attention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time with therapy animals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(some people had multiple answers so the percentage is more than 100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007 most staff could not think of a least beneficial aspect of the program. Of those who could, 20% felt that it was the lack of engagement of the children with the animals, either due to the lack of investment in the animals or their fear of them.
Tables 7a and b present the responses to the question how could the AAT program at the Crisis residence be improved.

**Table 7a: How Could the AAT Program be Improved (n=20), 2004/5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More dogs/more time with the dog</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More training</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No way it could be improved</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Half of those who provided a response said that the way to improve the program is to allow the children to have more time with the dog and/or to have more dogs in the Crisis Residence. Four staff each responded that more training was needed (but not specified) or nothing needed to be done to improve the program. Two staff made miscellaneous comments (include the dog in the treatment plan, and include in more activities) (Baker, 2005).

**Table 7b: How could the AAT program be improved, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>more scheduled programs and activities (both group and individual) with therapy dog including during the evening hours</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more training and education for staff</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By 2007 staff felt that more scheduled activities with the dogs would be beneficial, by 50%. This included not only individual work but also group work, reflecting an expansion in how staff were coming to understanding the benefits of the AAT Program.
The final tables, Tables 8a and b, present the responses to the question regarding anything else the respondent would like to say about the program.

**Table 8a: What Else about the AAT Program? (n=14), 2004/5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great program, very helpful</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing else to say</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve more kids</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>07.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids can say things to dog they can’t say to person</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>07.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calms even the most aggressive kid</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>07.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight staff remarked that the program was terrific and very helpful. Three said they had nothing else to add. One each made specific comments including the program should involve more kids, the program calms even the most aggressive youth, and the youth can say things to the dog they cannot say to a person (Baker, 2005).

**Table 8b: What else about the AAT Program, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>having a dog around is comforting, familiar, and soothing to both residents and staff</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT seems to be more beneficial in working with the children the more it’s used</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2007 staff have come to understand that having a therapeutic dog around is comforting and soothing to both youth and staff. They also see the effectiveness in the AAT Program, 20% understanding that the more it is used the more effective it is.

**Discussion**

Perhaps the clearest way to discuss the findings is to illustrate some of the key ones with a story, a story involving a child, a therapy dog and how the staff became engaged and learned to support this program. This is demonstrated not only in the information in the tables above, where there is a clear trending of staff understanding the AAT program and becoming more sophisticated in seeing opportunities for utilizing the AAT program but also through their actions as is demonstrated in their own stories.
One of the key findings from Table 1a and b is the staff's perception of the ability of a therapy dog to calm a youth down. This is clearly illustrated in the story of Carl.

Carl is mildly mentally retarded, with significant psychiatric issues. He has violent tantrums, breaks things, and can require being restrained. He had been having a particularly difficult evening. Carl had thrown his dinner into the kitchen, threatened a peer, and was now running through the unit banging on pictures and anything else he might have had a chance to break. He had already broken the fire extinguisher casing, a chair, and was trying to fight.

By the time his therapist saw him in a mirror he had been upset and yelling for about 10 minutes. No attempts to calm him had worked. He came running down the hallway towards her office. Jaguar had heard him a little while before and was sitting in the doorway in a way asking for permission to go out. He came barreling around the corner and stopped in his tracks when he saw Jaguar and his therapist.

Two staff followed him around the corner, as Carl collapsed to the floor next to where Jaguar was standing. Almost as though on cue, she laid down across his lap. Everyone thought we were going to end up in a restraint. His therapist raised her hands as if to surrender and said to her coworkers "it's OK, I think Jaguars got it under control." Carl looked up at his therapy dog and put his arms around her resting his head on hers. They sat there for almost fifteen minutes, then he returned Jaguar to his therapist's office and he returned to program.

A second key finding from Table 1a and b is that the children learned to be patient from the dog. Adam exemplifies this:

Adam, a 13 year old emotionally disturbed young man with complex psychiatric issues, was residing at the Crisis Residence. His therapist's office and Jaguar were located on his floor. As Adam had difficulties with peers, staff, in school and program, part of his treatment plan had been that he could use his therapist's office, and Jag, as a safe place to go if he felt unsafe or upset. He did this effectively. He'd frequently show up, say hi, sit for a while, play with Jag, and return to program successfully.

At this point in time Jag was young, and not yet fixed. She was being considered for a breeder for ECAD, was in heat, her third, really mopey, and clearly not herself. Early
December, Adam was back in our program due to disruptive behavior in his residential cottage, difficulties in school and like Jag, was not himself.

Adam left the school program one day and came down to his therapist’s office. She was on the phone so he sat with Jag, trying to engage her with a toy. She was not her usual self looking for someone to play with her. She just lay there. He put her head in his lap, and eventually lay on his belly facing her, nose to nose. When his therapist hung up the phone he commented that Jag was not playing with him. His therapist explained that she may not be feeling well, and continued doing what she was doing. Adam, while stroking her ear, went into a monologue to Jaguar explaining to her that she shouldn’t be sad, or worried, that Ms. Lindsay loved her and cared about her, and the other staff did too, and that even though she could not see her family for the holidays or go home, we’d make sure that she had a good Christmas, and lots of presents, and a nice dinner.

Adam’s brother was going to the foster home for Christmas, Adam, due to his behavior, was not welcome there. In about 15 minutes he worked out through Jaguar, what all of us had been trying to get him to work out for weeks.

Two key findings from Table 2, that AAT enhances the clinical program and allows youth and staff to forge positive links become clearer with this story:

Olivia was 8 when she was referred to the program. Given her admission paperwork, she was the first, and probably only child the team made the conscious decision to keep away from Jaguar. Olivia came to us with a psychological evaluation had her describing to the evaluator her and her younger siblings having decapitated, and dismembered a puppy, disposing of it in the garbage shoot. It later came out that her mother had no knowledge of this, as the young children were left unsupervised quite a lot.

Interestingly, Olivia had an extreme fear of dogs and as a result the team kept Jaguar off the unit initially. Eventually, during her 8-month stay, it was not possible to restrict the therapy dog, and not fair to the other children. Rituals were developed with Olivia surrounding Jaguars movements and whereabouts. She would always be told before we brought Jag to the unit, the door to the room Olivia was in would be closed, and then the door to the room that Jaguar was in would be closed too. Initially Olivia was afraid to walk past the closed door, and required staff to come with her, at times holding her hand.

The other kids were all ecstatic to see Jag again. They could not understand Olivia’s fear. She couldn’t understand what they were so excited about. What happened over the next 6 months or so was almost unbelievable. The transformation with this little girl was amazing. Without consciously planning it, desensitization began.
Our day room has a wall of windows so that staff can see from the hallways in. Slowly, Olivia began moving herself to a chair so that she could watch the other kids interact with Jaguar. Safely, tucked away behind the glass and closed door she would watch.

It is important to this story to note that in therapy Olivia was largely mute. She’d sit, play games, but would not say a word. With the other kids coaxing her, the next thing we noticed was that Olivia would keep the door open, stand behind someone and watch the kids interact with Jaguar in the hallway. Soon she asked us to leave the door open, the other kids had her curious as to how Jaguar felt. With support, encouragement, and a sensitivity to her timing in this process, she eventually did touch the therapy dog as Jag’s back was towards her, which allowed the teeth of her 75 pound frame to be no where near this fragile little girl.

By the end of her stay, Olivia was throwing the ball down the hallway for Jag to retrieve, and then ducking into her room, and watching Jag run back towards where she had been standing. While that relationship in of itself was miraculous to watch, the real therapy piece here was that her relationship with her therapist paralleled her increased trust of Jaguar. Jaguar was never allowed to do anything that she hadn’t been told about ahead of time. That allowed her to form a bond with her therapist, a verbal therapeutic relationship. She was allowed to ask about Jaguar and her therapist was allowed to ask about her family, feelings, and progress.

She eventually went home to her mom, with her siblings and support services. She was able to process her losses quite a bit as a result of developing a relationship with her therapist and her therapy dog teaching the team learned so much about the possibilities of AAT.

A key finding from Tables 5 a and b is the ability of therapy dog to be helpful and emotionally supportive. While most of the time we think of a child needing to be helped as a child who is aggressive Tisha illustrates that agitation can take many forms, and a therapy dog is very helpful here as well.

Tisha was seven and very sexually and verbally provocative. She was on a mixed age unit where she presented as very needy, very clingy to staff. Most residential programs have personal space rules, designed to protect kids from inappropriate touching, either from peers or staff. But these rules can be very difficult for youth, of all ages. Jaguar solved some of that miracle of touch issue for us. Tisha hugged her regularly. She would just stop by the office where jaguar often was, for a hug from Jag. And then go about her day.

Eventually Tisha was getting ready to transition into a new foster home, a risky placement we all knew. But a seven year old should not be in residential settings if avoidable. Part of her transition was her new foster mother visiting her. This woman had the insight to understand what Jaguar’s hugs had come to mean to Tisha. She came in for one of the visits with a dog toy for Jag, a farewell and thank you gift for Tisha to give Jaguar. She did with much pride. On her last day at the program, she was laying on her belly next to Jaguar, talking to her about her new home. It was picture perfect. She was asked if she’d like her picture taken, so that she could have a picture of Jaguar and her to take with her. She did. It was beautiful.
So many foster kids have no photo history. They are in places for such short periods, and have few mementos of their life stories. Tisha has a laminated picture of her and Jaguar to start her in her new home with. A positive experience to take with her.

Conclusion

Today CV boasts seven full time dogs, and sixteen handlers, runs two trainings a year, and has established a bi-monthly meeting of staff on all of the treatment teams dealing with the dogs. But several years ago things were very different. CV was not quite sure what it was doing, and where it would go. What has been learned is that the AAT has proven to not only be beneficial to the children but also the staff with staff coming to understand that the more it is used the more effective it is. The following story illustrates this:

During uncertain times in NYS child welfare, our program lost several positions. During a team meeting addressing this, everyone was understandably upset. At the time the program was still new, and we were all trying to read everyone’s reaction to animals on the unit, Jaguar being the most prominent one. This was in some ways the genesis the study that we did on staff perceptions.

We should have realized that we got the answer about staff perceptions when during the meeting, one of the staff stopped and asked where Jaguar was, and why she wasn’t in the meeting. Several others chimed in, complaining that it had not been thought important enough to bring her to comfort them when they were given bad news. They were right. We went and got her. She has been an active participant in team meetings since.

Staff, to this day, still come to the office to visit with Jaguar. During a good day, or a difficult day, they need to say hello. Even when this resulted in their needing to come into the office of an administrator, due to promotions and shifting responsibilities. But even this shift did not deter them, now that they have seen what AAT can do. With the need of the key staff to spend more time off the unit the team was upset that Jaguar was spending less time on the unit with the kids (as a handler must be with her). But they also came up with a
solution, several of them registered for the next series of classes to become handlers. We now have 10 people on a team of 30 trained. Staff who were initially resistant to the idea, and saw the dog as a reward that needed to be earned, instead of a team partner and tool, had now seen the interactions be so effective that they look for her. And they continue to use her. Something will be going on with a kid and staff will say to me “where’s Jag” and look in the direction of the kid in trouble. This transition has been remarkable.

With this has come a major shift in the staff’s thinking from seeing the therapy dogs as a “reward” to be given to children who are following their program to seeing the therapy dogs as an integral part of the treatment of the children, and a source of de-stressing for themselves. The AAT is so much a part of the program at the CR that when staff are interviewed, even temporary staff, they are asked about their comfort level in being around dogs.

Summary

The Children’s Village has demonstrated that the creativity and excellent treatment outcomes brought about by their AAT Program was not enough to ally all of the concerns of the staff. The staff needed to feel that their concerns were heard. Through careful attention to staff’s concerns, programmatic structuring, including having them participate in two surveys designed to surface these issues, staff has become a major supporter of this crucial therapeutic adjunct to healing children.

Bibliography


Baker, A. AAT Survey results prepared for the cr program, The Children’s Village, unpublished manuscript, 2005


Brief Bios of authors:

Avril Lindsey, LCSW, CGP, has been practicing as a Social Worker at The Children’s Village for more than fourteen years. After receiving her Graduate degree from Fordham University, she has continued her post graduate training through seminars, trainings and a Post Graduate Certificate in Interpersonal Trauma. In her time at the Children’s Village, Ms. Lindsey has specialized in the treatment of trauma and psychiatric illnesses of children and adolescents, exploring creative ways to provide effective treatment. Ms. Lindsey is currently the Program Manager of the Children’s Village Crisis Residence. Since 2001, Ms. Lindsey has been involved in the East Coast Assistance Dogs program (housed at the Children’s Village) as a volunteer puppy raiser, and co-chaired the inception of the AAT program at the Children’s Village. Ms. Lindsey is certified by ECAD, as an Animal Assisted Therapy team, with Jaguar, a Yellow Labrador, Golden Retriever mix, bred by ECAD. Ms. Lindsey has presented on the uses of AAT throughout the North East to residential treatment centers, hospitals, and conferences, as well as training AAT handlers at CV.

Patricia O’Gorman, Ph.D. a consultant to Children’s Village, is known for her work in child welfare and substance abuse where she has served in positions ranging from Clinical Director of a child welfare agency to Director of Prevention for NIAAA. She is a psychologist, trainer and author of numerous articles and books including *The Lowdown on Families Who Get High: Successful Parenting for Families Affected by Addiction*, (CWLA, 2004).
WE LOVE ANIMALS!
Evaluating the integration of animals in a classroom setting

Kate Nicoll, LCSW of Soul Friends, Inc.
W. Ellery Samuels, PhD of People, Animals and Nature, Inc.
National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal Assisted Programs

Rationale for Study

Ascione, F.R. (1992) study found no statistically significant effect of KIND NEWS on first graders humane attitudes but "qualitative analysis suggested an enhancement of humane attitudes occurred for the first grade experimental group children"

Ascione study did show an effect of the program on humane attitudes of fourth and fifth graders

Need for ongoing research in the integration of animal assisted interventions in classroom settings

Rationale for Study (continued)

- Hands-on learning and a live presentation of an animal may have more impact on elementary school children (Vockell and Hodal, 1980)
- Developmentally appropriate: tactile, experiential, multisensory and interactive
- Cognitive processing in young children focuses on concrete experiences and empathy is similarly anchored to immediate experiences (Gnepp and Gould, 1985)
We Love Animals! Model

- Six session 25-30 minute humane education program supplemented by animal assisted interventions
- Animals were either Delta Society registered or prescreened for their ability to tolerate interactions with young children
- Hands-on learning with dogs and guinea pig
- Lessons on observation of animal behavior

Can you speak dog?

- Dog bite prevention
- Hands-on learning
- Sharing stories and experiences
- Animal science
- Communication skills
- Dog body language

Bird Care

- Proper care of pet birds
- Social needs of pet birds
- Bird tricks and toys
- Language skills, basic science skills of observation

Rabbit Care

- Care needs
- Humane Treatment
- Social needs
- Sensory experience
- Language skills
- Problem solving

What do Animals Need?

- Identify grab bag items
- Basic pet care
- Responsibility of pet ownership
- Sensory experience with language skills
**HYPOTHESIS**

H1: Animal visits will increase the report of first-grade children's empathy toward animals

H2: WLA! And KIND News may have an impact on children's humane attitudes.

H3: Children's bond and connection to animals at home may impact their humane responses

Empathy measured by score on Primary Attitude Scale (PAS) and human-animal connection measured by Companion Animal Bonding Scale -child (CABS)

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>25.64</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Love Animals Only</td>
<td>26.93</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIND News Only</td>
<td>24.79</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>27.65</td>
<td>7.61</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results
• Descriptive Statistics
  - 154 Students
    • 80 Males, 65 Females, 10 unknown
  - Pets
    • 43% Had Dog(s)
    • 30% Had Fish
    • 26% Had Cat(s)
    • 15% Had Other Pets
      - E.g., Hamsters, Hermit Crabs, Etc.

Results (cont.)
• Correlations
  - No Corr. between Presence of Pet in Home and PAS Scores (r\text{Highest} = .05, n.s.)
  - Gender Corr. with PAS Scores
    • Pretest Score (r_{142} = .22, p < .05)
    • Posttest Score (r_{130} = .20, p < .05)

Results (cont.)
• Effect of Program
  - Planned Comparisons of Posttest Scores
    • With Pretest Scores and Gender as Covariates
  - 130 Students’ Scores Available for Analysis
  - Scores for Both and Animal-Visits Groups
    • Significantly Higher than Scores for Control Group
      • Both vs. Control: t_{13} = 2.68, S.D. = 2.12, p < .05
      • Animal vs. Control: t_{13} = 1.68, S.D. = 3.07, p < .05
  - Scores for KIND News-Only and Control N.S.
    • KIND News vs. Cntl: t_{13} = -.14, S.D. = 2.83, n.s.

Discussion
• Animal Visits Improved Attitudes towards Pets
  • Hands-on intervention beneficial for first graders
• KIND News Alone Not Effective but anticipate a synergistic effect
  • Not used in its most effective fashion; 84% of teachers surveyed in 2006 thought KIND news improved their students treatment of one another
  • Presence of Animals in the Home Not So Important Here
• Girls’ PAS Scores Were Higher than Boys’
Discussion (cont.)

- Implications
  - Students Can Benefit from Humane Education and Animal Assisted Interventions in classroom settings
  - Animal visitation is salient
  - Diverse Teaching Strategies May Synergize
  - Materials work best when actively integrated into the classroom setting
Challenges in Researching Animal Assisted Activities: Is the Tail Wagging the Dog?

Steven Klee, Ph.D., Associate Executive Director, Clinical and Medical Services, Green Chimneys
Jay Davidowitz, Ph.D., Senior Supervising Psychologist, Green Chimneys

Common Difficulties in AAA Research
- Typical research goes from idea to design. BUT... AAA research goes from what is available to design.
- This research needs to consider safeguards of BOTH children and animals.

"The Outside of a Horse Is Good for the Inside of Man"
Sir Winston Churchill
Common Difficulties in AAA Research

- Animal people are not usually clinical researchers.
- Clinical researchers are not usually well informed about animal care and behavior.
- Researcher does not control all of the elements of the research-dependence on animal people for access, training and guidance.

Recommendations

- Get everyone on board including administration, clinical staff and farm staff
- Look at what is naturally occurring in your agency for clues as to what to study
- Call Dr. Kazdin
- Start with small, well controlled studies
- Choose studies that can be built upon
- Get IRB approval before sending consent

Study I

Independent Variable: Live Dogs (2) vs. Stuffed Animal

Dependent Variables: WISC-IV
Digit Span, Symbol Search
W-J Math Fluency

Recommendations

- Have animal staff on IRB
- Call Dr. Kazdin
- Set aside time for training of research assistants with handling of research animals
- Explain to administration why so much time is being spent on research efforts and or call Dr. Kazdin
Recommendations

- Have animal staff on IRB
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- Set aside time for training of research assistants with handling of research animals
- Explain to administration why so much time is being spent on research efforts and/or call Dr. Kazdin

Contact Information

- For further information about the AAI research or any other Green Chimneys program, contact us at:
  - sklee@greenchimneys.org
  - jdavidowitz@greenchimneys.org
Bridging Clinical Practice and Research in Animal Assisted Interventions

Aubrey Fine, Ph.D., Professor, College of Education and Integrative Studies, California State Polytechnic University

Overview of the Session
- The Value of Volunteering and Mentoring
- Peer Tutoring
- The Need for Research and Outcome Assessment
- The Importance of Generalization and Maintenance

The Story of Velma and Juan: Putting a face to our work

Project Second Chance: Youth Diagnostic and Development Center (YDDC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico - An Example
- Court-mandated adolescents are helped in a small group of dogs to change their behaviors so they can be adopted.
- During each session four shelter dogs are brought to the center by the Humane Association.
- The dogs are boarded for the three-week period. Dogs are paired with a resident who becomes a mentor. The care includes maintaining the kennel, feeding, walking, and training their assigned dog.
Velma - The Letter

"I knew there was something similar about the Velma and I, but I never understood it. Although she was a terror, I felt a connection to her. One day, she bit me and I had to go to the vet. She was so scared and hungry, and I couldn't help but feel sorry for her. She has been abandoned by her owner, and this seems to be what she needs. Velma needs a second chance. She needs a mentor who can give her trust and show her that she is loved and that not all humans are to be distrusted."

From Afternoons with Puppy - Flew and Eisen (2008)

Juan's Impression of being Velma's mentor

"Juan said, "You know, I really spent time thinking about what I needed to do to help this Velma. I couldn't help it. She was so scared and hungry, and I couldn't help but feel sorry for her. She has been abandoned by her owner, and this seems to be what she needs. Velma needs a second chance. She needs a mentor who can give her trust and show her that she is loved and that not all humans are to be distrusted."

Why People Volunteer

"There are so many things I would like to talk about in this book, but my favorite is the one about people helping others. When I read about the Velma and Juan story, I was moved. I thought about how much love and care Velma had for me, and I knew that I had to do something to help her. I began to understand how important it is to help others, and I made a promise to myself that I would do everything I could to help her. It took courage for her to try to trust people, and I also should be grateful to her. She opened my eyes to the gift of kindness. It took courage for her to try to trust people, and I knew that I wanted to be her friend. It's amazing that this shy, timid and fearful dog changed me.

BOTTOM LINE: Helping others increases emotional well-being (Rosen and Stutzer, 2004)."
Volunteering with People or Animals. Is there a difference?

Peer assisted learning (PAL) has been shown through meta-analyses to assist in changes in attitudes, self-concept, and behavior ratings of both tutors and tutees (Johnson and Johnson, 1989).

* Rubin (2003) and Ginsburg-Block (2006) point out that PAL interventions may help the affective needs of vulnerable student populations.

The Value of Working with the Dogs

- Anecdotes such that animals can lessen the frustration of the youth involved and at times help them deal with their own impatience (Arluke, 2007)

The Healing Power of “Silence”

- Peer assisted learning (PAL) has been shown through meta-analyses to assist in changes in attitudes, self-concept, and behavior ratings of both tutors and tutees (Johnson and Johnson, 1989).

- Rubin (2003) and Ginsburg-Block (2006) point out that PAL interventions may help the affective needs of vulnerable student populations.

Effects of Peer Tutoring

- Peer-mediated interventions studies have shown that students can effectively help improve the social behaviors of their peers (Arrega-Mayer, 1998; Mortweet, 1996; Gardner et al., 2001).

- Good et al. (2001) have gained personally by becoming better communicators and achieving a clearer sense of identity. Most mentors point out that they have gained a sense of self-satisfaction by becoming role models to others.

For it is by muteness that “a dog becomes for one so utterly beyond value; with him one is at peace where words play no torturing tricks. When he just sits loving and knows he is being loved, those are the moments that I think are precious to a dog; when with his adoring eyes, he feels that you are really thinking of him.”

- W. H. Drexel, from: Memories, 1924

- The strongest buy in to this form of intervention is that working with animals is novel and fun.
AAI must be thought of in terms of a Partnership Between Animals and Humans. Both make an impact on the therapeutic process.

Review of what we know already

- USU has identified 24 dog training programs for youth at risk in the United States.
- In most cases the major goal of all programs is to attempt to enhance the development of psychological and emotional skills which can be transferred to other life activities.

What do most programs consist of?

- Sessions focus around dog training techniques and animal care. All programs include the use of positive training techniques.
- Some programs go beyond typical dog mentoring activities and address issues such as anger management, conflict resolution and journaling.

Anticipated Outcomes

- Problem solving skills
- Empathy
- Anger and self control
- Dealing with frustration: Developing patience
- Helps students verbalize and express themselves

The Challenge!

- Anecdotal rather than intensive evaluations compose most of the literature on the efficacy of AAI. That needs to change.
The Need for Outcome Assessment

- There needs to be a more appropriate bridge between clinical practice and best practice research.
- Practitioners are encouraged to pay closer attention to the need for program evaluation and documentation.

Generalization and Maintenance

- Generalization and maintenance represent the key considerations in any social skills training.
- Temporal Generalization – durability or maintenance if the behavior changes following the termination of the treatment.
- Generalization across settings – the display of the treatment changes in settings outside the initial therapeutic setting.

Current Functional Contingencies

- Connect behavior to the natural environment – Research by Gresham (1999) suggests training in contrived settings often doesn’t lead to generalization – has limited utility.

Important Outcome: Aggressively reinforce any occurrence of generalization.

Some Solutions to Consider:

- Strategies to help generalize skills beyond their therapeutic settings.

(Stokes, Osnes 1989; Stokes and Baer, 1977; Gresham et al., 2001 and Gresham, 1998.)
Trapping

Trapping involves developing behaviors that fall into the behavior trap by what happens in the environment when the behaviors are used.

Examples: Talking with others, accepting criticism, controlling anger, following rules, will all probably be reinforced more by significant people in that child's life. The youth is more likely to continue to use the behaviors after the training because others will reinforce them. (The behaviors learned need to be efficient and reliable).

The Value of Cognitive Mediators

Cognitive mediators help the youth identify and interpret social cues, predict what may happen next, select what skills to use next and to evaluate outcomes.

Wraparound Process

According to Eber (2002) "The wraparound process brings providers, families, and community representatives together to commit unconditionally to a way of conducting problem solving and planning that gives equal importance and support to the child and his or her family and other caregivers" (p.14).

Assessing Social Skill Deficits (Fine and Kotkin (2005) and Gresham 1993; 1998)

Three types of measures to consider in planning social skill interventions

- Social validity
- Observations of the child's behavior in the natural environment
- Measure component skills

Bottom Line

Generalization is most likely to be achieved when the training and practices occur in situations that are as similar as possible to the situations where the youth is expected to use the new skills! The skills learned need to be reliable and efficient.
II

Social Validity
- Predicts long-term outcomes important to society
- Measures
  - Peer acceptance
  - Friendship status
  - Parent and teacher judgments
  - Archival data
  - School attendance
  - Disciplinary referrals
  - School suspension

JJ

Observations in Natural Environment
- Objective observations
- Direct observational recording

KK

Observations in Natural Environment – cont.
- Did the child’s behavior change in a predicted direction?
- Objective observations in the natural setting indicates if the behavior did or did not change

LL

Measure of Component Skills
- A socially valid measure. This is a measure of how the child does in the following categories:
  - Role-playing tests
  - Problem-solving measures
  - Measures of cognition

MM

Do You Believe In Magic?

NN

Scarlet and Magic
- Scarlet, a tenth grader
- Challenges - Her impulsive reactions and her social immaturity cause difficulties with peers.
"There's a little Magic in Magic."

From Afternoon with Pussy. Fire and Emma (2008)

...So, to enhance the efficacy of AAI... not only believe in "magic" but demonstrate its efficacy.
Introduction

The basic good news about research on and evaluation of animal-assisted programs for youths at risk is that there is a great deal to be excited about. While we need to understand and document what works, for whom, under what circumstances, and why, there is a sense of “rightness” and promise about programs that partner adolescents with animals. This partnership seems to be a unique way to address the developmental and situational deficits that educational systems, social and family services and/or juvenile courts see in youths they characterize as being “at risk.” Those who use the animal-human bond to create and develop human and animal capacities are engaged in a mission that seems inherently uplifting and hopeful.

The study of animal-assisted activities for youths specifically and the animal-human bond in general appears to be a field of inquiry ready for sustained research. One way to move the field forward is to bring researchers with expertise in using both qualitative and quantitative methods and skill with experimental design together with program administrators to design studies that will help identify and replicate agents and processes of change. Another approach to drawing such programs into the field of science and evidence-based practices is to help program administrators themselves learn and incorporate some of the tools of research and analyses into program administration. Which approach will be most feasible and useful likely depends on several factors. Among these, animal-assisted program administrators will want to consider the longevity/durability of their program (Is it just getting started or does it have established administrative protocols and program processes that have been in place for a few years?); the resources available to support the training and assignment of administrative staff to undertake data collection and analyses; the resources to bring in professionals with evaluation and/or scientific expertise; and interest from university research or think tank institutions to work with program staff to increase in-house assessment capabilities or to attract external resources for planning and executing long-term, rigorous research studies with experimental design features. And as an emergent field of knowledge, animal assistance for youth development
has many dimensions and applications. It has room for contributions from practitioners and researchers of diverse professional backgrounds and expertise, including those new to the enterprise of outcome evaluation. It needs input from the scientific community for theory building, hypothesis testing, and replication. It needs funding resources from governmental agencies as well as private foundations. Above all, the field calls for the continued exchange of ideas, information, experiences, methods and models between those who have been studying the animal-youth bond for some time and those who are beginning to see, and be excited about, its potential to help youths thrive.

A Modest Start

Across social work, clinical psychology, humane education and the juvenile justice system, there is a wide range of programs and therapies that use animal-youth interactions. Some of these programs and therapies are well established and ready to plan for testing according to the hallmarks of scientific study and research. Others are at the beginning stages of structured activities to be assessed and evaluated. It is to practitioners with program administration responsibilities falling in this second category and who are interested in getting their programs on track for evaluation and, ultimately, effectiveness testing, that this paper is intended to address.

To those practitioners and administrators who feel daunted by the challenge of evaluation research and documenting a program's impact in shaping and changing the behavior of youths with social or clinical disorders, this paper hopes to provide encouragement. The tasks of documentation and evaluation may be both less arduous and more manageable than you might otherwise think. Offered in this paper are three concepts/planning areas that program administrators may use to prepare for the process of program documentation and assessment. These concepts/planning areas focus on identifying 1) an animal-assisted program's connection and contribution to a referring agency or system's overarching mission, 2) the contribution that the animal-assisted program makes to youth orientation and functioning in the context of a referring agency's mission, and 3) exploratory data collection activities and materials, which program staff might use for the creation of instruments to assess effectiveness.


An initial step for program administrators interested in planning for program assessment is consideration of the context in which their program operates: specifically, the mission and responsibilities of the larger youth-serving or community-serving systems that refer youths to animal-assisted programs. Why? It is in these other contexts and institutions — school system, family and social services, the local community, the family or juvenile court or juvenile correctional institution — that youths have shown cause for concern. It is their ability to return to these settings demonstrating desired behavior, attitudes, and skills which youths acquired and practiced with animals that helps establish and “prove” the effectiveness of an animal-assisted program.
The referring context and system can be a helpful source of information on three matters relevant to evaluating program effectiveness: 1) deficits and unmet needs deemed to be hindering/preventing/inhibiting at-risk youths from being able to meet conduct and knowledge standards; 2) standards for desired youth behaviors and competencies; and 3) relevant milestones that mark progress or achievement with respect to meeting standards.

Understanding what referring organizations and systems use as criteria for determining youths to "be at risk" and knowing what documentation and assessments exist that support this determination are relevant to an evaluation of a program's outcomes in working with these youths. Criteria and assessments that form the basis of a youth's may help direct program administrator's attention to what a youth has difficulty with and to what may change and improve as a result of participation in animal-assisted activities. These referral criteria and concerns also may help to pinpoint the types of skills, capabilities, and knowledge that youths need to function appropriately at home, in school, in the neighborhood and/or while under the jurisdiction of a social control agency such as the juvenile court.

What youths do, how they perform and what they learn while working within the animal-assisted program's environment and curriculum are important to process evaluations and to evaluating the integrity of a program — that is to say, is the program doing what it sets out to do according to its mission, goals, objectives and resources? But for purposes of program outcomes and questions of effectiveness, it is the relevance, transferability and application of what youths learn and acquire in an animal-assisted program to the ordinary or required environments that they are expected to function in — while in a program or after completing a program — that will ultimately need to be examined and measured.

Knowledge of the referring agency's definition of "risk" and deficits, standards for desired behavior and competencies, and yardsticks for noting progress may help administrators in two other ways: It may give administrators a head start with access to and use of "baseline" data on youths and their level of functioning and abilities prior to receiving a program's services and assistance. And it may also give animal-assisted program administrators some caché with the agency in terms of reciprocity. These systems and agencies have legal mandates that establish their mission. They also have executive, administrative, and/or judicial bodies to which they report their activities, efforts, successes and failures. Youth- and community-serving systems and agencies are expected to use evidence-based practices to justify their need for and employment of resources. Referring agencies may be open to exchanging information and providing
expertise with data collection and analyses when they see that animal-assisted programs are interested in demonstrating effectiveness and are capable of producing results that help a referring agency in achieving its missions and goals.

Table 1 displays generic and specific examples of missions and goals of four categories of referring agency/systems: educational systems (particularly alternative schools or community day schools in which youths not able to function in mainstream neighborhood school are placed); social and or family services, juvenile court/probation systems and juvenile correctional institutions. Mission language in these examples comes from legislative mandates and information that agencies make available to the public through brochures and Web sites. Most mission and goal statements present agency concerns in broad conceptual and abstract terms. Educational institutions show commitments to providing youths, "...challenging curriculum and individual attention to student learning modalities and abilities...community day school programs also focus on the development of pro-social skills and student self-esteem and resiliency..." Social and family services agencies seek to, "...ensure the safety, protection, and physical and emotional well-being of children who are at risk of (emotional, physical, sexual abuse or)...harm...by (providing) a full array of social and health services to help the child and family..." Juvenile court and probation systems seek to promote several interests simultaneously: the public's safety, crime victims' compensation and restoration, and the youthful offender's ability to be productive and crime-free. Similarly, juvenile correctional facilities focus on, "...hold(ing) youths accountable for their actions and provid(ing) youths with opportunities for treatment and reformation..."

Table 1: Sample Mission and Goals of Four Categories of Referring Agencies/Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referring System/Agency</th>
<th>Umbrella Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational System</td>
<td>•Maximize the opportunity for students to develop the positive values of self-reliance, initiative, kindness, spontaneity, resourcefulness, courage, creativity, responsibility, and joy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Schools/ Community Day Schools</td>
<td>•Recognize that the best learning takes place when the student learns because of his or her desire to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Maintain a learning situation in which maximum use is made of student self-motivation and in which students are encouraged to use their own time to follow their own interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Maximize the opportunity for students ... to continuously react to the changing world, including, but not limited to, the community in which the school is located....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...Community day schools... serve mandatorily assigned ...and other ... high-risk youths. The 360-minute minimum instructional day includes academic programs that provide challenging curriculum and individual attention to student learning modalities and abilities. Community day school programs also focus on the development of pro-social skills and student self-esteem and resiliency...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Social/Family Services

The Mission... is to support and promote the self-sufficiency of citizens and to protect vulnerable persons by providing services to assist families and children function effectively in the ... Community... by...

- Increasing community and interagency cooperation and collaboration to connect families and children with comprehensive, community-based services;
- Protecting vulnerable citizens in at-risk situations by providing preventative and intervention services to eliminate the threat of neglect, abuse and exploitation;
- Removing conditions and barriers which obstruct the development of healthy families and individuals and which impede their full participation in the community....

... The Administration for Children and Families (ACF)... programs aim to achieve the following:

- Families and individuals empowered to increase their own economic independence and productivity;
- Strong, healthy, supportive communities that have a positive impact on the quality of life and the development of children;
- Partnerships with individuals, front-line service providers, communities, American Indian tribes, Native communities, states, and Congress that enable solutions which transcend traditional agency boundaries...

... The purpose of the provisions ...relating to dependent children is to provide maximum safety and protection for children who are currently being physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, being neglected, or being exploited, and to ensure the safety, protection, and physical and emotional well-being of children who are at risk of that harm. This safety, protection, and physical and emotional well-being may include provision of a full array of social and health services to help the child and family and to prevent reabuse of children...

### Juvenile Court/Probation

... The law says the Court has to protect the public and minors who are in court. The judges have to think about ...

How to keep the public safe and protected,

How to help the victim, and

What is best for the minor.

The judge decides if the Court will take control of the minor's future. If it does, the judge has to think about what is best for the minor and how to make the minor take responsibility for his or her actions. Then, the Court decides how to take care of, treat and guide the minor. This can include punishment so the minor learns to obey the law. The Court wants the child to learn to be a positive member of his or her family and the community...

... The Probation Department provides protection to the community by ensuring that ... juvenile offenders on probation comply with court orders and obtain the resocialization skills needed to live crime-free and productive lives. Resocialization means identifying the offenders' root problems and matching them with the right treatment programs at the right time...The Department operates...correctional facilities that serve the dual function of preparing incarcerated juveniles for their successful and productive return to the community while at the same time protecting the community by providing highly structured and supervised residential settings...
The concerns of these referring agencies appear to fit into one (or more) of six areas: youths’ attitudes and values (“...positive values of self-reliance, initiative, kindness, spontaneity, resourcefulness, courage, creativity, responsibility, and joy...”); youth’s awareness of and respect for others (“...concerns of crime victims...”); youth’s knowledge and skills (“...development of pro-social skills ...”); services for vulnerable or needy youth (“...connect families and children with comprehensive, community-based services...”); “...provide maximum safety and protection for children who are currently being physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, being neglected...”; “...provide opportunities for treatment and reformation...”); preparation for adulthood/fit with larger society (“...self-sufficiency of citizens... full participation in the community...”; “...minor take responsibility for his or her actions...”; “...the child... learn(s) to be a positive member of his or her family and the community...”; “...economic independence and productivity...”); and youth’s beliefs about his or her potential (“...student self-esteem and resiliency...”). Table 2 presents these six areas of concern to educational systems, family/social services agencies, juvenile court systems and juvenile correctional institutions.
Table 2: Referring Agencies’ Areas of Concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Concern</th>
<th>Referring Agency/System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youths’ attitudes and values</td>
<td>Educational Systems, Juvenile Court System, Youth Correctional Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s awareness of/respect for others</td>
<td>Juvenile Court/Probation System, Youth Correctional Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s knowledge and skills (interpersonal as well as academic and vocational)</td>
<td>Educational System, Family/Social Services, Juvenile Court System, Youth Correctional Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for vulnerable or needy youth</td>
<td>Educational Systems, Family/Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s preparation for adulthood/fit with larger society</td>
<td>Educational System, Family/Social Services, Juvenile Court System, Youth Correctional Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s beliefs about his/her potential/assistance in achieving it</td>
<td>Educational System, Family/Social Services, Juvenile Court System, Youth Correctional Institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time, each animal-assisted program for at-risk youths has its own statement of mission and goals. Animal-assisted programs replying to the H.S.U.S.’ recent survey on best practices (Jackman 2007) with information about their mission statements are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Examples of Animal-Assisted Programs and Their Missions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal-Assisted Program</th>
<th>Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CV (Children’s Village)</td>
<td>Give the troubled youngsters who live at CV the opportunity to experience the unconditional love of a dog and at the same time to help others who are less fortunate than themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS A-DOGS (High Schooled Assistance Dogs)</td>
<td>Help at-risk teens train and place assistance dogs with disabled individuals; (through their work with dogs and their placement, youths) gain immeasurable self-esteem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP (Love, Empathy, Acceptance and Partnership)</td>
<td>Break the cycle of violence by creating attitudes of kindness, respect, caring, and responsibility, and offering tools to be successful in life for the participating youth and the dogs...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAL (People, Animals, Learning)</strong></td>
<td>Match at-risk kids with an animal for development of empathy, creativity, sharing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAWS (Paws and Think)</strong></td>
<td>Change the lives of at-risk youth through the connection they make with the canines they care for and train using positive reinforcement techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PC (Project Click)</strong></td>
<td>Use clicker training to help adjudicated teens socialize and train shelter animals (dogs and cats) for adoption and (through their efforts with shelter animals) help develop empathy for animals and their peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PP (Project POOCH: Positive Opportunities, Obvious Change with Hounds)-</strong></td>
<td>(Teach incarcerated) youth to care for and train shelter dogs for adoption, (and thereby) provide opportunities for youth in corrections to develop the personal and vocational skills they will need to become responsible, productive members of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHIP (Strategic Humane Intervention Programs)</strong></td>
<td>Interpersonal skills training using...) clicker training to...teach homeless shelter dogs good manners to help them become more adoptable; clicker training with the dogs is the delivery mechanism for teaching positive people interaction skills to battered mothers and their children...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TLC: (Teaching Love and Compassion)</strong></td>
<td>To prevent violence, encourage children to be kind, caring, and to have respect and compassion for animals and each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the programs utilize exposure to and/or interactions with animals as the method for developing youth capacities in one or more of five areas (not mutually exclusive). Table 4 presents these five capacity areas and specific animal-assisted programs that target them. The five areas are: attitudes and values (“...kindness, respect, caring...”; “...have respect and compassion for animals and each other...”); attachment, connection, and/or relationship with others (“...the unconditional love of a dog...”; “...change the lives of at-risk youth through the connection they make with the canines...”; “...teach... positive people interaction skills...”); knowledge and skills (“teens train .....dogs”; “...socialize and train shelter animals (dogs and cats) for adoption...”; “...develop... personal and vocational skills...”; “...teach homeless shelter dogs good manners...”); service to others (human and/or animal) (“...help others who are less fortunate...”; “...train shelter animals (dogs and cats) for adoption...”; “...become responsible, productive members of the community...”); and beliefs about one's potentials (“...gain immeasurable self-esteem...”; “...become responsible...”; “...be successful...”; “...change the lives of at-risk youth...”).

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Table 4: Youth Capacities Targeted by Animal-Assisted Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Capacity</th>
<th>Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes and values</td>
<td>All sample programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment, connection, and/or relationship with others s</td>
<td>CV, PAWS, SHIP,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and skills</td>
<td>All sample programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to others (humans/animals)</td>
<td>CV, SHIP, HS A-DOGS, PC, PP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about one’s potential</td>
<td>All sample programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5 suggests, the focal concerns reflected in the missions of these animal-assisted programs mesh very well with the concerns reflected in the missions of the agencies and systems that refer youths to animal-assisted programs.

Table 5: Referring Agency/Animal-Assisted Program Similarities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referring Agencies</th>
<th>Animal-Assisted Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s Attitudes and values</td>
<td>Attitudes and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s awareness of/respect for others s</td>
<td>Attachment, connection, and/or relation with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s knowledge and skills (interpersonal as well as academic and vocational)</td>
<td>Knowledge and skills (interpersonal and vocational)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Youth’s preparation for adulthood/fit with larger society</td>
<td>Service to others (humans/animals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for vulnerable or needy youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth’s beliefs about his/her potential/assistance in achieving it</td>
<td>Beliefs about one’s potential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In their response to the H.S.U.S.'s survey, animal-assisted program staff indicated how youths came to their programs. Table 6 groups sample programs and their missions according to the system that refers youth to them. This presentation is suggestive of what concerns program administrators might want to focus on in terms of how their program goals fit or are compatible with the objectives of a referring system.
Table 6: Referring Systems/Mission and Animal-Assisted Programs/Mission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referring System/Agency</th>
<th>Umbrella Mission</th>
<th>Referrals to Animal-Assisted Program/Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Educational System: Alternative Schools Community Day Schools | • Maximize the opportunity for students to develop the positive values of self-reliance, initiative, kindness, spontaneity, resourcefulness, courage, creativity, responsibility, and joy.  
• Recognize that the best learning takes place when the student learns because of his or her desire to learn.  
• Maintain a learning situation in which maximum use is made of student self-motivation and in which students are encouraged to use their own time to follow their own interests.  
• Maximize the opportunity for students to continuously react to the changing world, including, but not limited to, the community in which the school is located....  
... Community day schools serve mandatorily assigned ... and other ... high-risk youths. The 360-minute minimum instructional day includes academic programs that provide challenging curriculum and individual attention to student learning modalities and abilities. Community day school programs also focus on the development of pro-social skills and student self-esteem and resiliency... | PAL (People, Animals, Learning) program is designed to match at-risk kids with an animal for development of empathy, creativity, sharing.  
TLC: (Teaching Love and Compassion) is a violence prevention program that encourages children to be kind, caring, and to have respect and compassion for animals and each other.  
PAWS (Paws and Think) ... is a program designed to change the lives of at-risk youth through the connection they make with the canines they care for and train using positive reinforcement techniques |
The Mission... is to support and promote the self-sufficiency of citizens and to protect vulnerable persons by providing services to assist families and children function effectively in the Community... by...

- Increasing community and interagency cooperation and collaboration to connect families and children with comprehensive, community-based services;
- Protecting vulnerable citizens in at-risk situations by providing preventative and intervention services to eliminate the threat of neglect, abuse and exploitation;
- Removing conditions and barriers which obstruct the development of healthy families and individuals and which impede their full participation in the community....

... The Administration for Children and Families (ACF)... programs aim to achieve the following:

- Families and individuals empowered to increase their own economic independence and productivity;
- Strong, healthy, supportive communities that have a positive impact on the quality of life and the development of children;
- Partnerships with individuals, front-line service providers, communities, American Indian tribes, Native communities, states, and Congress that enable solutions which transcend traditional agency boundaries...

The purpose of the provisions ...relating to dependent children is to provide maximum safety and protection for children who are currently being physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, being neglected, or being exploited, and to ensure the safety, protection, and physical and emotional well-being of children who are at risk of that harm. This safety, protection, and physical and emotional well-being may include provision of a full array of social and health services to help the child and family and to prevent reabuse of children.

**LEAP** (Love, Empathy, Acceptance and Partnership) program is designed to break the cycle of violence by creating attitudes of kindness, respect, caring, and responsibility, and offers tools to be successful in life for the participating youth and the dogs...

**CV** (Children's Village) program gives the troubled youngsters who live at CV the opportunity to experience the unconditional love of a dog and at the same time to help others who are less fortunate than themselves.

**SHIP** (Strategic Humane Intervention Programs) program (is an interpersonal skills training program using...) clicker training to...teach homeless shelter dogs good manners to help them become more adoptable; clicker training with the dogs is the delivery mechanism for teaching positive people interaction skills to battered mothers and their children.."
The law says the Court has to protect the public and minors who are in court. The judges have to think about...

- How to keep the public safe and protected,
- How to help the victim, and
- What is best for the minor.

The judge decides if the Court will take control of the minor’s future. If it does, the judge has to think about what is best for the minor and how to make the minor take responsibility for his or her actions. Then, the Court decides how to take care of, treat and guide the minor. This can include punishment so the minor learns to obey the law. The Court wants the child to learn to be a positive member of his or her family and the community...

The Probation Department provides protection to the community by ensuring that... juvenile offenders on probation comply with court orders and obtain the resocialization skills needed to live crime-free and productive lives. *Resocialization means identifying the offenders' root problems and matching them with the right treatment programs at the right time.*

...The...Department operates... correctional facilities that serve the dual function of preparing incarcerated juveniles for their successful and productive return to the community while at the same time protecting the community by providing highly structured and supervised residential settings...

### HS A-DOGS

High Schooled Assistance Dogs program (is designed to help) at-risk teens train and place assistance dogs with disabled individuals; (through their work with dogs and their placement, youths) gain immeasurable self-esteem:

- PC (Project Click) program uses clicker training to help adjudicated teens socialize and train shelter animals (dogs and cats) for adoption and (through their efforts with shelter animals) develop empathy for animals and their peers.
### Juvenile Correctional Institutions

Our mission is to protect the public by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation. To achieve this we:

- Hold youth offenders accountable;
- Emphasize public safety;
- Provide certain, consistent sanctions for youth offenders;
- Support the concerns of crime victims;
- Provide comprehensive youth reformation programs;
- Promote and support juvenile crime prevention activities;

We value:

- Partnerships with local communities and other agencies...
- Provision of service in a fair, respectful, and humane manner.

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Correction enhances public protection by changing the delinquent thinking and behavior of juvenile offenders committed to the Department.

The Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) has a unique mission in serving Oregon’s youth offenders. This mission is two fold: to hold youth accountable for their actions and to provide opportunities for treatment and reformation.

### PP (Project POOC H: Positive Opportunities, Obvious Change with Hounds)- (By teaching incarcerated youth to care for and train shelter dogs for adoption, the program provides opportunities for youth in corrections to develop the personal and vocational skills they will need to become responsible, productive members of the community.

### HS A-DOGS (High Schooled Assistance Dogs) program (is designed to help) at-risk teens train and place assistance dogs with disabled individuals (through their work with dogs and their placement, youths) gain immeasurable self-esteem.

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Across animal-assisted programs, administrators and staff believe that it is through activities and relationships with animals that youths acquire or expand capacities for relationships with peers, parents, and authority figures; for pro-social attitudes such as caring and kindness and pro-social behavior such as self-control and compliance with rules; and for academic and personal learning. Capacity-building in these areas is part of the mission of larger socializing and welfare institutions and agencies that refer youths to animal-assisted program.

Animal-assisted programs for youths-at-risk also have elements of a mission that are worthy ends in and of themselves which involve humane education — developing knowledge about and respect and appreciation for animals as well as service to animals, by helping them become adoptable or specially trained, as in the case of shelter dogs or dogs that serve as companions and guides to those with disabilities or limitations. Even pursuit of these goals can be viewed as making contributions to youth competencies and connections to socially valued attitudes, knowledge and concerns.
Contributions to Youth Functioning: Short-Term and Long-Term Views

Some of the challenge of thinking about future directions of outcome evaluation comes from the very richness of animal-assisted activities for at-risk youths and the way these activities seem to reach youths. What is striking about Davis’ qualitative research on Project POOCH (Davis 2007), Arluke’s ethnographic study of five diverse animal-assisted programs (Arluke 2007), and Jackman’s survey work on best practices in programs using animal-assisted activities (Jackman 2007) is the profundity of the goals and missions of various programs — helping youths develop empathy, self-control, responsibility, problem-solving — and the transformations that occur in youths on these dimensions. As youth interact with animals and carry out the tasks of caring for and training animals, staff report “seeing” softening, openness, maturity, initiative, strength. Youths report feeling new levels of awareness, sensitivity, understanding, and connectedness. Such experiences entail skill and capacity-building at the affective and higher-order cognitive levels and would seem to go a considerable way in addressing the learning and self-management deficits that led agencies to refer youths to animal-assisted programs. It appears that animal-assisted activities offer a way to produce something that the family system, the school system, social services, religious organizations, neighborhoods, authority figures and the community as a whole have missed creating at all or missed nurturing in a fledgling state.

The aspirations and missions of many animal-assisted programs are quite high and ambitious when it comes to youth development and social mediation. The external and internal processes of change they intend to facilitate are multifaceted and complex.

To make the evaluation undertaking manageable, animal-assisted program administrators may want to take both a short-term view and a long-term view of the evaluation enterprise, with the short-term being what can be documented and assessed about the program features and activities that are related to youth behavior and skills while in the program. The long-term view would be what program administrators can help referring system administrators look for in following the behavior and performance of animal-assisted program participants in other arenas of their lives (classroom, home, in their living units if incarcerated) during participation in the program as well as afterward.

Many animal-assisted programs are already conscious of helping youths make connections and applications between what they learn, come to feel and to understand from caring for and training animals — especially dogs — to activities, behavior and relationships outside of the animal-assisted program. In their survey responses (Jackman 2007), programs gave examples from staff interviews and youth commentary of carryovers that youths are able to make from one setting and population to others; for example, applications of patience and consistency when parenting young children; of empathy and tolerance for other people in their neighborhood who are different in appearance, background, or abilities; of self-control by managing themselves, their speech and demeanor when around others when they feel angry or frustrated; of critical thinking and problem-solving by trying different approaches to accomplish a difficult task or to resolve an interpersonal conflict. Finding ways to systematically capture, document and quantify these carryover applications will help program administrators establish the credibility of
their efforts vis-à-vis referring systems and can also help guide the efforts of the latter when it comes to their data collection activities.

It appears that referring agencies and animal-assisted programs share common goals when it comes to the development of youth capacities. However, the amount of time and the setting in which animal-assisted programs have to work with youths to develop their capacities vary tremendously. As Jackman reports from best practices survey results, programs may work with youths for as few as seven hours or as many as 40 hours a week, several weeks or months in a year. At the same time, most referring agencies and systems often have long-term responsibilities for youths who they have identified as having special needs or as posing threats to themselves or others. These long-term responsibilities may cover the time from infancy to when a youth reaches the age of majority. Table 7 shows the different time frames that govern referring agencies’ responsibilities for youths compared to those that a sample of animal-assisted programs reported using to deliver their program activities.

Table 7: Time Frames of Agency Responsibility and Animal-Assisted Program Opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame of Referring Agency’s Jurisdiction or Responsibility</th>
<th>Time Frame of Animal-Assisted Program’s Work with Youths</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational System</strong></td>
<td>HS A-DOGS (High Schooled Assistance Dogs) 60 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades K-12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years – 17 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social/Family Services</strong></td>
<td>LEAP (Love, Empathy and Partnership) 60 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infancy through 18 years of age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or emancipation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Juvenile Court:</strong></td>
<td>PAL (People and Animals Learning) 45 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency (abuse/neglect):</td>
<td>PAWS (Pawsibilities, Pregnant Paws, Pawsitive Corrections) 7 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infancy through 18 years of age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or emancipation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency: 12 years though</td>
<td>Project POOCH (Positive Opportunities, Obvious Change Hounds) 8 hours/day; 5 days/week; until end of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years of age</td>
<td>sentence or transfer to adult prison</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering a program’s time frame and opportunity to work with youths might offer animal-assisted program administrators a larger perspective on the short-term as well as long-term contributions their programs might make to youth functioning. Programs that offer 60 hours of program/youth contact and interaction will have more opportunity to affect youth functioning than those with 10, 15 or 20 hours.
Diagram A illustrates how administrators might view their program’s contribution to youth experiences and abilities along a “continuum of contribution.” The left end of the continuum identifies the contribution as “Enrichment.” Animal-assisted programs that feature humane education and have limited time with youths may view their contribution as enriching youth lives and introducing experiences, much like field trips to zoos, parks, and concert halls that enrich and expand youths’ view of valued activities and beings in the world. Enrichment occurs through exposure to the values underlying the care and respect for animals, to positive role models of animal caretakers and trainers, to knowledge acquisition about animal behavior and needs, and to becoming interested in pro-social activities including learning more about animals and careers involving animal care. For some youths, this opportunity to learn about animals, their care and needs and to make a connection with an animal, brief as it may be, may constitute a moment of change in interests, motivation or awareness beyond oneself that, in turn, facilitates a desired orientation and attachment to school, learning, relating to others, envisioning a positive future. This type of change or awareness may assist a youth to function more appropriately in school or at home and to benefit from conventional approaches to capacity-building and socialization which referring systems offer.
Diagram A:

Enrichment/Transformation In Youth Functioning

Functioning Continuum

- **Enrichment:**
  - [45 hrs <]
  - Exposure
  - Knowledge
  - Acquisition
  - Interest

- **Enrichment +**
  - [75 hrs <]
  - Exposure+
  - Knowledge+
  - Acquisition
  - Interest+
  - Skill Building
  - Practice

- **Transformation**
  - [75 hrs >]
  - Immersion
  - Knowledge+
  - Acquisition
  - Interest+
  - Practice+
  - Skill Building+
  - Mastery

At the right end of the continuum, representing programs with maximal time with youths, contribution is defined as “Transformation.” Animal-assisted programs that fall at this end might be characterized as offering youths an immersion experience in which they are exposed to knowledge which they acquire and use; they are exposed to new interests and activities that give them skills that they practice and master (such as dog grooming or dog training); and with mastery, they experience competency in vocational skills as well as in the social skills and values imbedded in vocational skills. This might be likened to dance or music lessons through which youths master specific artistic skills and in doing so also learn the values of persistence, self-discipline, process, self-satisfaction, appreciation of excellence and so forth. Such immersion and transformative experiences may open doors to youths for self-sufficiency, economic independence, relationship-building and pro-social functioning that seemed unimaginable and distant. In settings like correctional institutions where, by definition, youths are disconnected from conventional avenues for relationships, achievement and encouragement, animal-assisted programs may make a difference between a youth having a vision of possibilities along with a set of skills to handle adversities, and a youth being resigned to the belief that a better life is beyond his or her grasp or imagination.
The middle of the continuum depicts a contribution labeled "Enrichment Plus" to capture programs in between the two ends. Animal-assisted programs with more, but still limited, time to spend with youths might see their contribution to youth functioning in terms of enrichment activities (exposure, knowledge, interest in animal care and humane treatment) as well as skill and competence building where youths have some opportunities to handle, care for and or train animals. These programs may be enough for some youths, involved in the juvenile justice system or at the edges of educational systems, to have a sense of competency or connection that enables them to receive assistance from conventional school programs and authority figures.

Planning for Data Collection and for Developing Measures of Effectiveness

Documentation and data collection to prepare for program evaluation may be burdensome for programs that have small staffs of paid workers, rely on volunteers, and or have limited budgets for external reviewers. Administrators will want to have a clear idea of participant starting points, program activities, and differences as a result of involvement or exposure to program activities, which they subject to measurement and assessment. To help in the development of assessment instruments that are appropriately tuned to program activities and effect, administrators may find it useful to engage in some exploratory data collection with program participants first. Obtaining structured, but brief, written reflections from youths in programs of short duration or portfolios containing reflections, progress notes, achievements, and commentary or observations by adults/parents/outside animal experts/adoptees of trained animals from youths in programs of longer duration may be efficient and pleasurable exercises for both youth and staff. Slides A and B in the Appendix suggest ideas for the content of these materials. In particular, the Five Fs exercise displayed in Slide B has two objectives: to help participants (and ultimately staff) identify and appraise program activities and interactions that introduce or add something to youth lives("firsts," "fun") and to assist youths in recognizing and processing emergent capacities and meanings ("faster," "finally," "feelings"). When reviewing reflective writings and portfolios produced by different participants, program administrators will want to look for patterns in descriptions of activities and reactions. Such patterns can be used then as the basis for developing assessment tools that can quantify, separate and aggregate discrete aspects of program activities and youth experiences with them.

Conclusion

Animal-assisted program administrators desiring to learn about a referring system or agency's mission and its specific concerns for the youth it has defined as "being at risk" may encounter mixed responses from that system. Staff for some agencies may be as new to maintaining data, producing reports, and showing results to governing bodies as animal-assisted program administrators are to the outcomes evaluation enterprise. Such agency staff may be reluctant to share information because of its disarray or because of confusion and disconnections within the agency itself with respect to its mission, goals, activities and services.
However, as evidence-based practices become the standard for program funding and legitimacy, youth-serving agencies in general — and not just those involving animal-assisted activities — will need to look at the sufficiency and usefulness of the data they collect and the measurements they use. Inquiries and interest from animal-assisted program administrators can provide opportunities for referring agencies to further clarify for themselves what information they have, what measurements and instruments they have or need, and what assessments they do to determine which clients are making progress or reaching benchmarks and through which interventions, services, or combination of services.

With their concerns for short-term and long-term program outcomes and familiarity with the youths their program serves, animal-assisted program administrators may serve as important catalysts in expanding a referring agencies capacity’s to document and track the progress of youths over which it has responsibility, including those that have participated in animal-assisted programs during and beyond the period of participation. For program administrators just starting the enterprise of outcome evaluation, comparing outcomes between youths engaged in animal-assisted programs and youths similarly situated but not engaged may appear to be a distant and difficult endeavor. But collaborative efforts with referring agency administrators in expanding their data collection and tracking systems in order to follow animal-assisted program youths and other youths under the agency’s umbrella may have large mutual payoffs in the future. Indeed, such efforts now may assure future progress in the scientific study of animal-assisted programs and the human-animal bond.

References

Additional Sources for Program Evaluation Planning
http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm

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APPENDIX

Slide A

Input for Measures of Program Effectiveness and Competency Building

- Have youth participants generate the data of their experiences and changes in reflective recording of the “Five Fs.”

- Have youth participants collect data through their creation and maintenance of portfolios.

Slide B

The Five Fs

- FIRSTS: What the youth did that was a first - held an injured wild bird

- FAST(ER): What the youth did faster than the day before -- administered the medicine into the bird’s throat without spilling

- FINALLY: What the youth accomplished after much trial and error – had the dog sit still while clipping the leash to the dog’s collar

- FUN: What the youth enjoyed the most in the day or session – petting the dog and seeing the dog wag its tail in response

- FEELINGS: What the youth felt when any of the above occurred – proud that patience paid off when the dog followed the sit and stay commands and allowed the leash to be attached to the collar.
APPENDIX S

Building Support: Community Partnerships, Funding, and Public Awareness

Facilitators: Rick Yount, Director of Therapeutic Interventions, Assistance Dog Institute
Carolyn Clark-Beedle, Executive Director, Assistance Dogs of the West

Best Practices from Program Surveys
- Close collaboration with community partners
- Outreach to constituents
- PR internal and external
- Program participation in community events
- Opportunities for student participation beyond educational programs
Building Support for Youth-At-Risk Dog Training Programs

- Program Development and Growth Strategies
  - How to identify, forge and maintain community partnerships
  - Pros and Cons of Fees for Service
  - Most Successful Fundraising Strategies
  - Community Visibility/Marketing Plans

- Best Practices from Program Surveys
  - Close collaboration with community partners
    - Memo of Understanding
    - Defined Roles & Responsibilities
    - Feedback Mechanism
    - Defined Evaluation Plan
      - Shared Objectives
      - Shared Processes
      - Shared Outcomes

- Best Practices from Program Surveys
  - PR Internal and External
    - General • Continuously Collect Great Stories
  - General • Continuously Update Program Materials
  - Materials look for end support if possible

- Best Practices from Program Surveys
  - Participation in community events
    - Door prizes for student and community organizations
    - Recruitment at Animal Services
cell
    - Recruitment at Local Service Club
    - Development of Student Groups
    - Development of Local Student Groups
    - Door prizes at pet store and service-related retail businesses
Building Support for Youth-At-Risk Dog Training Programs

- Program Development and Growth Strategies
  - Most Successful Fundraising Strategies
    - Community Visibility/Marketing Plan: 3 P's
      - Plan the Work/Work the Plan (Planning)
      - Do the Community Events (Participate)
      - Tell everyone you can about your program (PR/publicity)
  - Consistent and Regular Communications
  - Donor Recognition and Acknowledgement
  - Offer Multiple Support Opportunities
  - Don't Just Ask for $.
  - Always Explain Where the $ Goes - Programs, People, Place

- Program Development and Growth Strategies
  - Fees for Service Pros and Cons
    - P - "Guaranteed" revenue
    - P - Contract relationships
    - P - Sustainability demonstration to potential funders
  - Cost to "pay for" or "need to raise more $ to cover"