



Preserving the Human-Canine Bond

Investigative Reports
of
Dog Bite-Related Fatalities

2011

INTRODUCTION

Dog bite-related fatalities are exceedingly rare

Dog bite-related fatalities have always been exceedingly rare, yet they attract the kind of publicity that creates an impression they are more prevalent than they actually are. The annual total of such fatalities has risen and fallen with no discernible pattern or trend, even though the ratio of dogs to human beings (approximately 1 dog for every 4.4 persons) is among the highest in the world.

During 2011, the U.S. canine population exceeded 70 million. With a human population of more than 310 million, it is safe to estimate that there are billions of interactions between dogs and people every day. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports on its website that pets can decrease blood pressure, cholesterol levels and feelings of loneliness, and pets can increase opportunities for exercise and socialization. Dogs enrich and improve the lives of tens of millions of people every day. While no one can deny the shock and sorrow that accompanies the loss of life, perhaps it is our bond with dogs, and our amply justified confidence in them as “man’s best friend,” that causes a dog bite-related fatality to attract the disproportionate news coverage it often does.

Setting the record straight

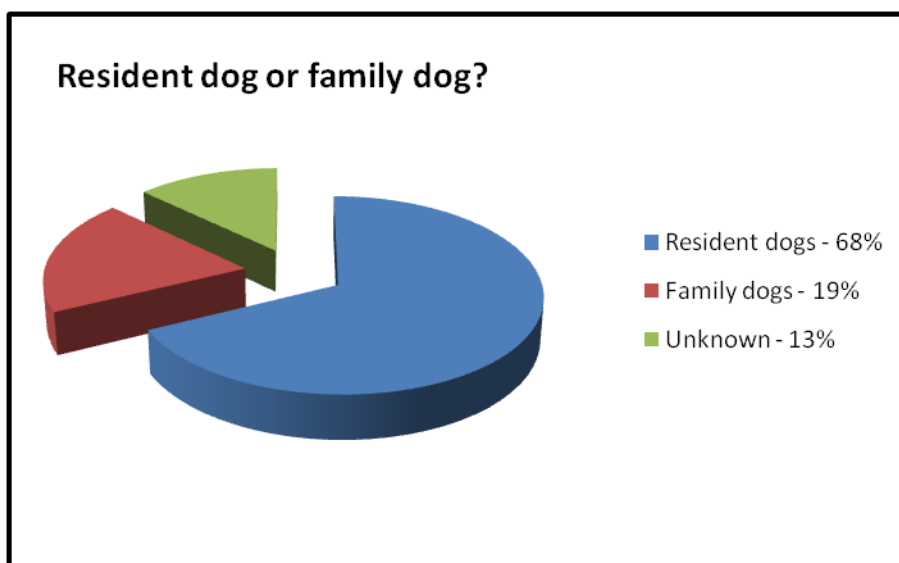
There were 31 dog bite-related fatalities in 2011.* NCRC contacted officials in each case in order to obtain the most accurate and comprehensive information available. We have re-interviewed sources the media has reached, and located others they have not, among whom may be police investigators, animal control officers, coroners, veterinarians, health department officials, dog owners, and eye witnesses. We have obtained incident reports, bite reports, human and animal autopsy reports, summaries of judicial proceedings, and crime scene data and photographs. While not all, or even any, of these sources and reports may be available with respect to each individual case, our experience has shown that official reports often do not agree with news accounts and/or contain important information that was either unavailable or not of interest to reporters. Many cases involved extensive investigation by local authorities, and as such, important information relative to the dog(s), owner, and/or victim was not available until the completion of those investigations.

We are issuing our 2011 final report only at the end of 2012 because accuracy takes time. Based on our 20 years of experience investigating dog bite-related fatalities, our final reports will supplement or correct initial media reports with relevant, material information in over 90% of the incidents.

The difference between a resident dog and a family dog

The majority of these isolated tragedies – 21 out of 31 – involved resident dogs, not family pets. Resident dogs are those, whether confined within a dwelling or otherwise, whose owners isolate them from regular, positive human interactions. Owners often keep resident dogs isolated on chains, in junk-yards, in basements, or allow them to roam unattended. Owners of resident dogs often fail to provide basic humane care for their dogs resulting in animals that suffer from malnutrition or chronic disease or illness.

Resident dogs cannot be expected to exhibit the same degree of social competence[#] as family dogs who are integrated into the family unit and afforded the opportunity to learn appropriate behaviors through positive and humane interaction with people on a regular basis.



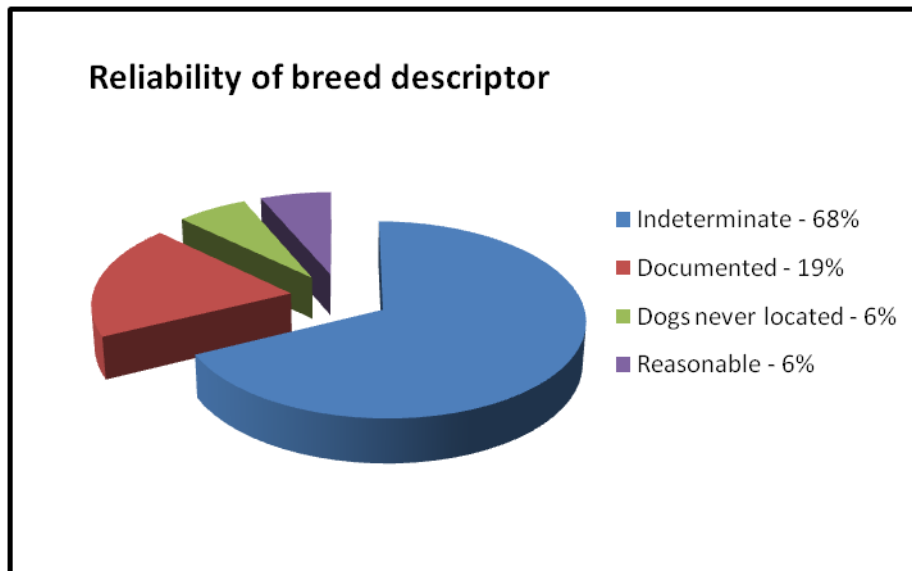
In only 1 of these 31 incidents, could we confirm that the owner had spayed or neutered the dogs.** In 10 of the 31 cases (32%), an owner and/or caretaker was charged with a crime in connection with the incident. In 8 of the 31 incidents, there was evidence of recent abuse or neglect of the dog(s) involved.

Unreliable media breed descriptions

Most of the dogs involved in fatalities in 2011, however they may have been described in the news, were dogs of unknown breed. In eight of these incidents there is documentation (n=6) or other reasonable evidence (n=2) of the dog's breed or genetic makeup. Six different breeds or types were identified in these eight incidents.

In the other 23 incidents, it was either not possible to assign a reasonably accurate breed descriptor to the dogs involved, or the dogs were never located. The breed was classified as

“indeterminate” when there was no documented or reasonable evidence to substantiate a breed attribution (n=21), or “none” when the dogs were never located (n=2).^{##}



Conclusion

Dog bite-related fatalities are exceedingly rare. In 2011, 31 fatalities occurred within a human population of more than 310 million and a canine population estimated at over 70 million. The interactions between dogs and humans are so numerous and complex that no one factor can possibly be considered, in isolation from any other factors, to be the sole cause. There is no scientific evidence that one kind of dog is more likely to injure a human being than another kind of dog. There is no evidence that, absent circumstances specifically associated with mating or maternal protectiveness, a dog being intact should be understood as a cause of aggressive behavior toward human beings. And for every dog that injured someone and who had been denied a positive human relationship, untold numbers similarly kept injured no one.

Inaccurate and misleading information is regularly published about dog bite-related fatalities. We issue this collection of reports in the interest of accuracy and completeness - the more deeply one examines these incidents, the more likely one is to appreciate their complexity.

These rare tragedies remind us that all dog owners have an unequivocal responsibility for the humane care (including proper diet, veterinary care, socialization and training), custody (including licensing and micro-chipping), and control of their dogs.

** Two incidents that may appear in other compilations do not satisfy the standard definition of a dog bite-related fatality, and are excluded here. A dog bite-related fatality is one where a human being died as a result of trauma, exsanguination or avulsions attributable to dog bites.*

*** One incident involved a six-year-old dog that had been neutered earlier the same day. For the purposes of this report, we have classified the dog as intact.*

Ethologists define the dogs' "social competence" as the sensitivity to human behavioral cues; the ability to adjust reactions according to the situation; and the flexible utilization of a range of behaviors to resolve situations successfully. These abilities enable dogs to fit in with human societies and to form peaceful mixed-species groups with us. It is clear that dogs have the capacity to learn this competence, and equally clear that we humans must honor our obligation to be the teachers.

In cases lacking documentation or other reasonable evidence of pedigree, if any photographs of the dogs were available, we submitted them to NCRC Advisor Amy Marder, VMD, CAAB. Dr. Marder is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine, and completed the University's first behavior residency. She currently serves as Director of the Center for Shelter Dogs at the Animal Rescue League of Boston. She is also a dog fancier, who showed Australian terriers.

Date: January 4, 2011
Location: Colusa County, California
Victim: Linda Leal Castillo, 51-year-old female

Circumstances: The media reported that Linda Leal Castillo was killed by her “pet” dog and that she was “very close to her dog.” The official investigation, that only concluded after the media had turned its attention to other matters, tells a very different story.

Investigators were told that Leal rarely went outside of her home and had almost no contact with the two dogs her husband kept in the yard.

Leal was now battling liver cancer, which had greatly weakened her.

At some point during the night of January 3rd, for reasons never explained, Leal walked out into the junk-strewn backyard. Her husband found her the next morning.

Toby, the only dog loose in yard at the time, suffered from cataracts. He had limited vision in one eye, which was “very gray and clouded over.”

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; dogs confined on the property were not well-cared for by Leal’s husband. Animal Control had been to the house previously and seized and euthanized a “very aggressive bitch and her emaciated puppies.”

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; maintained exclusively in yard.
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: No established relationship between victim and dog.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The media reported the dog to be a “pit bull” dog or a “mixed breed pit bull” dog, without citing any sources. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dog. Colusa County Animal Control only described the dog as a “mixed breed dog.”

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Date: January 12, 2011
Location: Waxhaw, Union County, North Carolina
Victim: Makayla Woodard, 5-year-old female

Circumstances: While playing in her great-grandmother’s backyard, Makayla was killed by two dogs, Daisy and Rebel, belonging to neighbor Michael Gordon. Gordon resided on the adjacent property.

Neighbors frequently tolerated Gordon’s dogs roaming loose. However, in November 2010, concern over obvious neglect of the “painfully thin” Daisy prompted a neighbor to call both 911 and Union County Animal Control. The neighbor reported Daisy “looked like a dead dog walking” and was “abused and should be taken from her owner.” A Union County Animal Control official told the neighbor they could do nothing because the County did not have a leash law. The town of Waxhaw did have a leash law, but County Animal Control had no authority to enforce that law; and the town had eliminated the animal control position nearly four years ago, leaving no dedicated town officer to handle calls or investigate charges.

In December, 2010, after the dogs were reported loose again, a police officer had gone to Gordon’s home and warned him about Waxhaw’s leash law.



Location where Daisy spent much of her life chained when not roaming loose.

Gordon has been arrested more than a dozen times since 2005 on charges ranging from traffic violations to assault. He has been convicted of resisting a public officer, possession of drug paraphernalia, assault and battery, reckless driving, and shoplifting. He had been released from prison in May 2010, after serving nearly eight months for felony breaking and entering.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; the owner's abuse/neglect of his dogs continued, even after neighbor complaints to authorities. Gordon repeatedly allowed his dogs to roam off property.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; when not chained, allowed to roam

Number of dog(s) involved: Two

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact; female, intact and had given birth to a litter of puppies less than 60 days earlier.

Unsupervised child: Yes; but child in her own yard

Other: For unknown reasons, Makayla's mother refused to assist police in implicating Gordon.

On September 27, 2011, eight and a half months after Makayla's death, the Town of Waxhaw adopted a new animal ordinance. The Waxhaw Police Department also added an animal control officer to its force, empowered to enforce all the provisions of Waxhaw's new ordinance.

Criminal Charges: Yes. Involuntary manslaughter; 20-24 month sentence

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The media reported the dogs as "pit bull" dogs. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dogs. NCRC submitted the photographs to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded the breed(s) of the dogs could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: January 24, 2011
Location: McCormick County, South Carolina
Victim: Kristen Lee Dutton, 9-year-old female

Circumstances: Earlier in the day, Kristen and her grandfather had walked the grandfather's newly acquired 100 lb. dog. Kristen's grandfather had obtained the dog less than three weeks earlier. After the walk, the dog was tied up to a trolley-type runner, near a 10x10 kennel.

Later in the afternoon, while Kristen was playing in the yard with some other children, her grandfather went inside to prepare dinner. The children then followed him in, but when Kristen saw that dinner was not ready, she went back outside to play with the dog.

About 15 minutes later one of the children was sent out to get Kristen and found her body near the dog.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Unknown; owned dog for less than 3 weeks.

Family dog or Resident dog*:	Resident: Chained dog
Number of dog(s) involved:	One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s):	Male, unknown

Unsupervised child: Though unaccompanied by an adult, she was 9 years old.

Other: Environment new to the dog; no established relationships.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be an Akita. NCRC was unable to obtain documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed reported. No photos of the dog were taken or available.

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Date: January 26, 2011
Location: El Paso, Texas
Victim: Howard James Paul, 76-year-old male

Circumstances: On the morning of January 26, deputies were called to a desert arroyo where they discovered the body of Howard James Paul. Paul was a transient, and had been living in make-shift shelter behind a nearby business.

Dog bites were later determined to be the cause of death.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; abandoned dogs.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; stray dogs

Number of dog(s) involved: Unknown

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Unknown

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Abandoned dogs

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: None

Details: Dogs involved were never located or identified.

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Date of Incident: January 26, 2011
Location: Pontotoc, Mississippi
Victim: Ronnie Waldo, 51-year-old male

Circumstances: Ronnie Waldo was a tenant in a trailer belonging to dog owner Casey Swanson. When Waldo and a friend needed a part for an appliance they were repairing, Waldo walked next door to Swanson’s house, barely 50 yards away. A short time later, the friend went looking for Waldo and found him in Swanson’s front yard being attacked by three dogs.

Swanson was indicted for manslaughter for allowing his dogs to run free when he knew of their propensity to be dangerous. He was also charged as a habitual offender. Swanson’s previous convictions include one for a burglary, for which he was at the time on parole, and another, several years prior, for the burglary and larceny of a dwelling.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; Swanson repeatedly allowed some of his dogs to roam loose and others to languish on chains. Serious abuse and neglect; Swanson failed to provide adequate food, water, shelter and medical care to his dogs.



One of the 6 abused/neglected adult dogs seized from Swanson’s property.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; maintained in yard, often on chains
Number of dog(s) involved: Three
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): 2 males, intact; female, pregnant

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Despite the documentation of abuse and neglect by Tupelo Lee Humane Society (emaciation, untreated medical conditions and failure to provide adequate food and water), no animal cruelty charges were filed.

Swanson owned four intact male dogs, two very pregnant female dogs, and two, twelve-week-old puppies, all showing varying degrees of neglect or abuse.

Criminal Charges: Swanson pled no contest to manslaughter. However, Circuit Judge Seth Pounds reduced Swanson's original charge from a crime committed by a habitual offender to one committed by a "non-habitual offender." Additionally, Judge Pounds allowed Swanson's manslaughter conviction to run concurrently with the time owed on the burglary conviction for which he was out on parole. In the end, Swanson was sentenced to 20 years, of which 15 years were suspended, so that he will serve 5 years.

Judge Pounds' leniency towards habitual offender Swanson may stem from his belief that this incident was a "breed" problem. Judge Pounds stated that he did not know "why pit bulls are allowed in Mississippi," and expressed his opinion that the "legislature should address the ["pit bull"] situation."

Judge Pounds appears to have been unaware or unconcerned with the suffering Swanson inflicted on his dogs and how the extreme abuse they suffered made them victims of Swanson as much as Ronnie Waldo was a victim of Swanson.

Less than a month after Waldo's death, a group of concerned citizens founded the Pontotoc County Animal Rescue and Shelter.

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dogs were reported to be a "pit bull" dogs. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dogs. NCRC submitted the photographs to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded the breed(s) of the dogs could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: February 17, 2011
Location: Dillon County, South Carolina
Victim: Sirlinda Hayes, 66-year-old female

Circumstances: Sirlinda Hayes was in her own yard when two loose dogs belonging to a neighbor, who also happened to be a relative, attacked her.

The dogs' owner, Shawn Samuel, was severely injured as he attempted to rescue Hayes and return his dogs to their cages.

Although the dogs had gotten loose many times before, none of the neighbors had filed complaints or had observed the dogs acting aggressively when they were loose.

In addition to the two dogs involved in the incident, Dillon County Animal Control removed two other dogs and a puppy that were caged on Samuel's property.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; Samuel's dogs repeatedly roamed loose in the neighborhood.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; dogs kept in yard and/or cages
Number of dog(s) involved: Two
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact; female, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: Victim was reported to have been afraid of the dogs.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate
Details: The dogs were reported to be "Rottweilers." NCRC was unable to obtain documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed. No photographs of the dogs were available.

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Date: February 19, 2011
Location: Kalamazoo, Michigan
Victim: Darius Tillman, 15-day-old male

Circumstances: Since the birth of her son on Feb. 4th, Mallory Wildig had been staying at her parents' home. She claimed she periodically returned to her home to let her dog Buster out and give him food and water, and that when she was unable to make it home, she had a friend or her father stop by to tend to Buster. However, Wildig was unable to give investigators a full account of which days, or exactly who or when Buster was being cared for during the two weeks she was staying at her parents' home.

Investigators noted that the basement concrete floor, where Buster was confined, was "found to have urine and dog feces throughout." Despite Wildig's claim that Buster had access to food and "clean water," investigators only found an empty food bowl and two mop buckets (containing a mop) with "dirty brown waste water" in the basement.

Wildig said that on Feb. 19 she, her infant son, Darius, and her 2-year-old son, Keylin, arrived at their house around noon and that her two-year-old son fed Buster.

Later, she laid Darius down for a nap in her bedroom. She then went into her other son's room and laid down with Keylin for a nap. When she awoke an unspecified length of time later, she went into her bedroom and found Darius on the floor. She claimed that Buster had pulled the infant out of bassinet which was atop a bassinet stand. However, the forensic evidence suggests that the bassinet had been on the floor, accessible to the dog.

She called her father for help then placed the deceased infant back in his bassinet, where he was found by officers.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; dog was left isolated in the basement for long periods of time without food or water (up to 18-24 hours at a time).

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; dog isolated in basement
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: Yes; and infant unfamiliar to dog

Other: Necropsy photos of Buster show a severely distended (bloated) stomach. The necropsy also noted that, more than eight hours after being fed, the dog's stomach was still "full of food." This suggests that Buster had been suffering from bloat

at the time of the incident. (Bloat is an extremely painful and often fatal condition.)

It appears that 59 lb. Buster, after 17+ hours of not being fed, rapidly ingested 4+ cups of dry food fed to him by 2-year-old Keylin, and developed bloat.

Criminal Charges: No; detectives requested charges of involuntary manslaughter and cruelty to animals against Mallory Wildig, but the Kalamazoo County Prosecutor's Office declined to authorize charges.

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be a "pit bull" dog. Contrary to initial statements from the family, the dog was NOT purchased from a breeder. Detectives, after tracking down the origins of the dog could find no evidence the dog was a purebred dog. NCRC obtained photographs of the dog. The photographs were submitted to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: March 5, 2011
Location: Delaware County, Iowa
Victim: Vanessa Husmann, 3-year-old female

Circumstances: While in the care of a teenaged half-brother, Vanessa wandered out into her family's fenced-in backyard. Two dogs, belonging to her uncle were being kept on the property. The one dog, a male, had only arrived on the property a few days earlier. The female dog had been on the property only a short time longer.

A neighbor heard a scream and witnessed the dogs on the back porch with Vanessa. By the time the neighbor reached the back porch, Vanessa had been fatally injured.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; dogs only recently brought to the property were left unattended.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident: normally kenneled; not household pets.
 Number of dog(s) involved: Two
 Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact; female, intact

Unsupervised child: Yes

Other: No established relationship between victim and dogs.

Criminal Charges: No

Reliability of breed attribution: Documented
 Breed attribution: Rottweiler
 Details: Pedigree (breeder/show) dogs

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Date: March 6, 2011 **** Dog Bites Not Listed as Cause of Death ****

Location: San Bernardino County, California

Victim: Jennie Erquiaga, 47-year-old female

Circumstances: A few years earlier, Jennie Erquiaga found an abandoned, dehydrated dog wandering in the desert.

Erquiaga took the dog to her home, a home that detectives described as a “flop house.” In addition to being suspected drug use inside the home, many of the residents were transients.

The dog had bitten another resident of the home approximately three months before. Two weeks prior to Erquiaga’s death, the dog had bitten her so severely that she had gone to the hospital for treatment. For unknown reasons, Erquiaga kept the dog, despite the fact that others urged her to “get rid of the dog” and despite Erquiaga’s admitting that she “did not like” the dog.

The day of the incident, the dog was inside the home and, through the window, had seen two other dogs in the front yard. The dog became excited. Those inside the home who witnessed the incident could not say if Erquiaga tried to restrain the dog, prior to the dog biting her. Erquiaga fled into a bedroom; but the dog pursued her and bit her again. Her housemates were unable to render effective assistance.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; the household was extremely unstable; dog had previously showed aggression towards the owner and others.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; no positive relationship between owner/dog

Number of dog(s) involved: One

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Cause of death was listed on death certificate as: “Underlying medical conditions, drug history, and **stress** from dog attack.”

Dog **bites** were **not** listed as cause of death. While dog bites were not the cause of death, the severity of the bites, along with the immediate death of the victim during the incident, meets NCRC’s protocol for inclusion as a dog bite-related fatality.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The media reported the dog to be a “pit bull” dog, or a “pit bull mix.” As the dog was found as a stray, NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation that would substantiate the breed of the dog reported by the media.

No photographs of the dog were available.

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Date: April 12, 2011
Location: Frankfort, Maine
Victim: Annabelle Mitchell, 7-month-old female

Circumstances: Police say Katrina Mitchell was intoxicated, and had been “passed out” on the living room couch for an unspecified length of time.

When she awoke, she found her 7-month-old daughter, Annabelle, lying on her back on the floor with claw marks on her body.

Mitchell’s blood-alcohol content tested at .30 percent: nearly four times the legal limit for driving a motor vehicle. According to court documents, Mitchell also tested positive for marijuana.

April 12 was not the first time Mitchell had been so intoxicated that she had passed out while caring for her children. She admitted having done so on at least two or three occasions. Mitchell told an officer that she would have known whether Annabelle was crying, according to that officer’s affidavit, notwithstanding her intoxication, because she, “had been drunk before and still heard her cry.”

The Medical Examiner determined that the child suffered from “extensive clawing injuries, possibly but not necessarily bite injuries, and associated blood loss. There was also evidence consistent with asphyxia, specifically evidence of compression of Annabelle [Mitchell]’s torso by the 89 lb. dog.”

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; dog acquired only four to six weeks earlier. Dog had access to infant, but no supervision by a competent adult.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Unknown
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male; unknown

Unsupervised child: Yes; and child unfamiliar to dog

Other: Environment new to the dog; no established relationships.

Autopsy results indicating that the infant’s death was a result of clawing injuries and asphyxia due to compression (i.e., the dog’s weight on the child) suggest canine behavior that may not have been aggressive in nature.

Criminal Charges: Yes; Mother charged with endangering the welfare of a child

Reliability of breed attribution: Reasonable

Breed attribution: Rottweiler

Details: The dog was reported to be a Rottweiler. NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dogs. Photographs were submitted to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded that it was reasonable to identify the dog as a Rottweiler.

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Date: April 22, 2011
Location: Ardmore, Oklahoma
Victim: Virgil Cantrell, 50-year-old male

Circumstances: Virgil Cantrell went to visit his neighbor Rick Grant, as he had on previous occasions. Grant was not home and Cantrell sat down on his front porch to wait for him. Chained to the porch was one of Grant’s dogs, Ike.

Witnesses told investigators that, prior to visiting Grant’s home, Cantrell had been drinking, and that he had appeared to be intoxicated. At approximately 7:30 p.m., a neighbor called police stating they saw the dog on the porch standing over Cantrell.

Grant and his wife Lisa Bloxham-Grant were later charged with owning a dangerous dog causing the death of human. Prior to Cantrell’s death, the Grants’ dog had bitten two neighbor children, though both of these incidents had occurred on the Grants’ property and no criminal liability had attached to either incident. Nevertheless, deputies had visited the Grant residence in connection with both incidents.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; the Grants kept the dog, with its bite history, chained on the front porch. The Grants also had a number of breeding bitches chained nearby.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; chained
 Number of dog(s) involved: One
 Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: Victim intoxicated.

Criminal Charges: Yes; owners found guilty of owning a dangerous dog causing the death of a human.

Reliability of Breed Attribution: Documented
Breed attribution: American Bulldog
Details: Pedigree

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Date: April 24, 2011
Location: Truth or Consequences, New Mexico
Victim: Margaret Salcedo, 48-year-old female

Circumstances: Margaret Salcedo was walking alone on the street when four dogs, which had escaped from a fenced yard at a private home, attacked her. Responding to the incident, a police officer shot one of the dogs. The other three dogs fled. Salcedo was taken to a hospital, where she died within hours.

The other dogs were later located. It was determined that they belonged to former Truth or Consequences police officer John Hardiman and his wife Angelica.

Six months after Salcedo’s death, the District Attorney charged the Hardimans with five felonies in connection with Salcedo’s death. Affidavits filed in connection with the couple’s arrest show that the evidence against them was revealed during prior supervised visits with CYFD Child Protective Services workers concerning the welfare of Angelica Hardiman’s child. During those visits, CYFD workers had heard or seen evidence both that the dogs were dangerous, and that the Hardimans were aware of it.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; the Hardimans permitted the dogs to roam loose off their property.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; dogs maintained in yard
Number of dog(s) involved: Three to four
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male & female, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: No

Criminal Charges: Yes; the Hardimans were both charged with four counts of having a dangerous dog, a 3rd degree felony, and with one count of conspiracy to commit a felony, 4th degree felony.

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dogs were reported to be “pit bull” dogs. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dogs. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dogs. Photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed(s) of the dogs could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date of Incident: May 27, 2011
Location: Brooklyn, New York
Victim: Jayelin Graham, 4-year-old male

Circumstances: “An accident waiting to happen,” is how neighbors and family members described the death of 4-year-old Jayelin Graham by his mother’s boyfriend’s dog.

Saquina Jubeark, Jayelin’s mother, was engaged to Damian “Dread” Jones, a self-proclaimed dog trainer. Jones had a history of run-ins with the law, and was known to intimidate his neighbors while walking his dogs. He bragged about how he created “monster” dogs through abusive and cruel training methods.

Jayelin’s family members say they had notified the New York City Administration for Children’s Services several times to report Jubeark leaving her children alone, and about the “unfit” living conditions inside the home. (Investigators later described the home as “disgusting.”)

On May 27th, Jubeark returned to her first-floor apartment with her four children. Jayelin and his half-brothers, ages 2 and 5, went into a bedroom where one of Jones’ dog, Machete, was loose. Jubeark claims she went back outside with her 10-month-old to get some keys, and only left the boys alone for “a minute or two.”

While alone “a minute or two” in the room with Machete, Jayelin’s 5-year-old brother became frightened when the large dog growled at him. The boy grabbed his 2-year-old brother and hid under the bed. The boy then tried to grab Jayelin and pull him under the bed, but the dog had already grabbed him.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; Jones trained dogs to be aggressive. Dog(s) were never intended to be companion animals. Jones confined the dog(s) in small crates in an apartment.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident: Dog trained to be aggressive.
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: Yes

Other: Machete had had at least 3 previous owners within the last 9 months. Jones had obtained him about 2 months prior to Jayelin’s death.

Criminal Charges: No

Reliability of breed attribution: Documented

Breed attribution: Cane Corso

Determined by: Pedigree

* **A Family Dog** is one whose owners interact with the dog on a regular basis in positive and humane ways.

A Resident Dog is one whose owners isolate the dog from regular, positive human interactions.

Date of incident: June 10, 2011 **Date of death:** June 15, 2011
Location: Putnam County, Florida
Victim: Roy McSweeney, 74-year-old male

Circumstances: According to reports from the Putnam County Sheriff's Office, the attack on Roy McSweeney was the third time dogs belonging to his neighbor Deanna Blich had injured a person.

On Jan. 13, 2010, two of Blich's dogs ran out from her yard and repeatedly bit a caretaker, Robert Floyd, at McSweeney's residence. Floyd was hospitalized with injuries to his mouth, left leg, and stomach. Court records show that Floyd has filed a civil suit against Blich and her boyfriend, Beau Surrency, alleging negligence and premises liability.

The same two dogs bit another man, Edward Cormier, when he entered the back door of Blich's home on May 13. Cormier told detectives that he was a friend of Blich's son and that the family had given him permission to come over. They had even left the back door unlocked for him, according to Cormier.

McSweeney was working in his yard on June 10th when he was severely injured by the dogs. He died from his injuries on June 15th.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; well documented history of dogs escaping owner's yard and/or inflicting serious injury on people.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; yard dogs
Number of dog(s) involved: Two
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Males, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: After the incident, Blich initially lied to authorities, claiming that she no longer owned the dogs

Criminal charges: Yes; Blich pleaded guilty to resisting an officer without violence, giving false information to law enforcement, and to two counts of attack by a dangerous dog. All are misdemeanors. She was sentenced to 90 days in jail.

As part of the plea agreement, Blich was prohibited from owning or acquiring any new dogs or having them on her property. She also was ordered to complete 150 hours of community service and pay \$4,750 in fines.

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dogs were reported to be “pit bull” dogs, or “pit bull mixes.” NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dogs. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dogs. Photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed(s) of the dogs could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: June 11, 2011
Location: Spotsylvania, Virginia
Victim: David Quyon Haigler, 38-year-old male

Circumstances: Over 100 media sources published stories describing this incident as a “pit bull killing his owner.” Many articles supported this allegation by quoting a neighbor who said: “Makes you wonder how you can raise a dog all the way from a puppy and love it and be in the house every day and what would make it turn on an owner like that.”

The investigation by Spotsylvania County Sheriff’s Office tells a disturbingly different story.

While David Haigler was serving a 7-year sentence in prison*, another man had moved in with Haigler’s wife Angela. This man had two dogs. Before Haigler was released from prison, the boyfriend moved out, leaving his dogs behind.

Haigler moved back in with Angela. Angela told the investigator that Haigler greatly resented the dogs because they had belonged to Angela’s boyfriend. He considered the dogs to “be that male’s dogs instead of his.” She also stated that Haigler physically disciplined the dogs.

Angela stated that Haigler was becoming increasingly angry, and that one dog in particular, was becoming increasingly aggressive when Haigler would “discipline the dog by hitting him with his sandal.” Between June 6th and June 11th the situation between Haigler, his wife, and the dogs reached a boiling point. Two altercations between Angela and Haigler had resulted in calls to the Sheriff’s Office. Angela separated from Haigler. In the days that followed, Haigler had to go to the emergency room after one the dogs bit him in the thigh.

On June 11th, Haigler was found dead in the living room from dog bite injuries.

Haigler had an extensive arrest record which included convictions for possessing a firearm as a convicted felon, possessing a firearm while in possession of cocaine, possession of cocaine, felony eluding, hit-and-run and driving on a suspended license.

*In 2003, Haigler was sentenced to seven years in prison after a high-speed chase ended with him repeatedly ramming a Spotsylvania deputy's cruiser, and then approaching the officers with a gun drawn.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; original owner abandoned dogs. New owner (Angela Haigler) allowed dogs to reside with her husband, who resented and abused the dogs.



Blood-stained prong collar found near the victim's body.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; dog maintained in a hostile environment

Number of dog(s) involved: One

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Second (male) dog was confined in another room.

Criminal Charges: No

Reliability of Breed Attribution: Documented

Breed attribution: American Pit Bull Terrier

Details: Registration Papers

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Date of incident: June 18, 2011 **Date of Death:** December 24, 2011

Location: San Diego, California

Victim: Emako Mendoza, 76-year-old female

Circumstances: Emako Mendoza had gone out at 6:30 a.m. to retrieve a newspaper from her driveway. As she walked around to the back of the house, her neighbor's two dogs, who had escaped through a hole in the fence, critically injured Mendoza in her own fenced-in backyard. Mendoza survived for six months, succumbing to her injuries on December 24th.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No. In December 2010, the same dogs had escaped from their yard and injured a man and his dog.

In 2006, a sanitation complaint was lodged against the dog's owners. When animal control officers inspected the premises, they found two adult dogs and three puppies.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; Owners were backyard breeders

Number of dog(s) involved: Two

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Females, intact; with puppies

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: One of the dogs had a large litter of 3-week-old puppies

Criminal Charges: Yes; both owners charged with involuntary manslaughter

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The media reported the dogs to be "pit bulls" dogs. NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dogs. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dogs. Photographs were submitted to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded that the breed(s) of the dogs could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: June 29, 2011
Location: Chesterfield, Virginia
Victim: Salvador Miguel Cotto, 6-month-old male

Circumstances: The baby and his mother were visiting her brother and his family. Salvador was in a common room of the house. Several adults were in an adjoining room when they heard the dog grunt.

The medical examiner reported the boy died from a cerebral edema as a consequence of a single bite to the head.

The dog, named Polar, had been adopted from an abuse and neglect case in Georgia. Its previous owners used rubber bands to cut off circulation to the dog's ears to crop them.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Yes

Family dog or Resident dog*: Family dog
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Female, spayed

Unsupervised child: Yes; and (visiting) child unfamiliar

Other: Dog was deaf, adopted from an abuse case, and had lived in at least five different homes or foster homes.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: Conflicting breed attributions: Dog was reported to be an American Bull dog, or mix; a Dogo Argentino or mix; or an American Bulldog/Pit bull mix.

NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. Photographs were submitted to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: July 3, 2011
Location: Tillamook County, Oregon
Victim: Michael Naglee, 11-month-old male

Circumstances: James Naglee and his wife, Michelle, brought their 11-month-old son, Michael to visit his paternal grandparents. James and Michelle brought along their 5-year-old dog, Duncan, whom they had adopted from a shelter four years previous. Michelle’s parents were also invited to visit.

James and Michelle went out, leaving the two sets of grandparents and an uncle to look after Michael. Louisa Farmer, Michael's maternal grandmother, was sitting on a couch in the living room, holding the baby, who started squirming. The baby wanted to get down, so Louisa put him on the floor.

The boy ran across the room to Duncan, who was resting about seven feet away, according to Michael Farmer, the boy's maternal grandfather. The dog knocked the boy down and then attacked him.

Three of the adults attempted to save the child but were unable to, and were injured in the process.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; the dog had shown his teeth to Michelle Naglee the day before. One grandparent noted the dog “has been aggressive in the past to others, but is usually docile.”

One grandparent informed police that James and Michelle “did not allow Duncan in the house when the baby was on the floor.” So while the Naglees may have exercised caution with the dog and the child in their home, and the grandparents were aware of that, it is unclear what the grandparents thought was expected of them when Michael and Duncan came to visit; or what the Naglees intended to do regarding this issue in the longer term.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Family; maintained as a pet.
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, unknown

Unsupervised child: No
Other: The Naglees had noticed problematic behavior in the dog.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be either a “135 lb. pit bull,” or a “135 lb. bulldog,” or a “150 lb. American Bulldog.” The UK paper, *The Daily Mail*, reported the dog to be a “150 lb. American pit bull.”

NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. Photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date of Incident: August 3, 2011 **Date of Death:** August 23, 2011
Location: Tucson, Arizona
Victim: Michael Cook, 61-year-old male

Circumstances: Neighbors saw Michael Cook in his yard being attacked by one of his dogs, Butch. Cook’s family believes that Butch was in pain and under the influence of medication, having been neutered earlier in the day. They believe the incident started inside when the family’s “miniature pinscher bit Butch.” When Mr. Cook tried to intervene, Butch redirected. When Mr. Cook attempted to get away, Butch pursued him to the yard, where neighbors responded.

Mr. Cook succumbed to his injuries on August 23rd.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Unknown

Family dog or Resident dog*: Unknown
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact for 6 years; neutered on the morning of the incident

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Not known what prompted Cook to neuter the dog after six years.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: Conflicting breed attributions; the dog was reported to be a “pit bull” dog or a “Labrador/pit bull mix.” NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. Photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: August 11, 2011
Location: Pacifica, California
Victim: Darla Napora, 32-year-old female

Circumstances: When Greg Napora returned home from work, he found his pregnant wife Darla unconscious, with one of their dogs, two-year-old Gunner, standing near her. Paramedics were unable to save Darla. She died from shock and loss of blood from dog bites.

The San Mateo County Coroner’s office, as well as two forensic odontologists, conducted tests, including evaluating teeth impressions and blood samples and determined that the couple’s other dog, a female named Tazi, did not participate in the attack, and that only Gunner was involved.

This is an extremely rare instance of a family dog killing an established owner. Absent an eyewitness, it is not possible to understand how or why it happened.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Yes

Family dog or Resident dog*: Family; companion animal
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: Rare case of a family dog killing an established owner

Criminal Charges: No

Reliability of Breed Attribution: Documented
Breed attribution: American Pit Bull Terrier
Details: Registration papers

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Date: August 12, 2011
Location: Ozark, Arkansas
Victim: James Dowling, 4-year-old male

Circumstances: James Dowling’s grandfather had recently moved into the home of a friend, bringing his dog with him. The dog was kept in an area of the backyard, enclosed by a four-foot chain link fence.

James was visiting his grandfather and was playing in a covered patio area near the back of the home. Though no one witnessed the incident, investigators believe the dog escaped/jumped the fence to get at the boy.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; four-foot fence too low to confine a large dog.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; maintained in kennel in yard
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, unknown

Unsupervised child: Yes

Other: No established relationship between victim and dog. Grandfather’s friend kept his own dogs inside the home.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be a Rottweiler. NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. No photographs of the dog were taken or available.

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Date: August 30, 2011
Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Victim: Carmen Ramos, 50-year-old female

Circumstances: In August 2011, five dogs were languishing in an uninhabited “crack/stash house” in North Philadelphia.

These dogs were a replacement of five dogs which had been seized by the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty towards Animals (PSPCA) in September 2009. Owner Jose Alvarez had been convicted of animal cruelty, of keeping his dogs in unsanitary conditions, and of failing to provide medical care. However, a simple recitation of the charges fails to convey the intense anguish Alvarez’s dogs suffered. One of the dogs that, according to the citation that was issued, “lacked medical care” suffered from an untreated broken back, was unable to walk, and only able to drag himself by his front legs, with his useless rear legs trailing behind him.

Initially, Alvarez had failed to appear in court to answer the 2009 animal cruelty charges, and a bench warrant had been issued for his arrest. While those charges were pending, Alvarez had acquired more dogs, including the five living at the row house on August 30, 2011. The bench warrant was still active on that day, the day Alvarez’s girlfriend, Carmen Ramos, entered the row house, it is believed, to feed the dogs. Alvarez later arrived to find one of the five dogs dead from stab wounds, and Ramos dead from dog bite injuries.

Carmen Ramos herself had an extensive criminal record, which evidenced a history of violent behavior, mental illness, and substance abuse. Investigators were unable to determine whether the deadly incident began with Ramos attacking the dog, or whether the dog had first bitten Ramos. In 2010, it was reported that the corpses of an unknown number of dogs were found in Alvarez’s basement at the same address. The five dogs living in the row house the day Ramos was killed were either the survivors of Alvarez’ new group of dogs, or a group he had obtained after the second group of dogs had died.

As a result of the death of his girlfriend, Alvarez was charged with four additional counts of animal cruelty, and with violating Pennsylvania’s dangerous dog law.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; Alvarez had a well-documented history of extreme abuse, neglect, and animal cruelty. It is believed Alvarez bred dogs for profit and/or trained them to be aggressive.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; abused, neglected, isolated dogs
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Unknown, intact.

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: On August 19th, four of the dogs had escaped their confinement, and one or more of them had injured two neighborhood residents. The animal control agency impounded the dogs at that time, but released them to Alvarez and Ramos three or four days later, just a week before Ms. Ramos was killed.

Criminal Charges: Yes; four counts of animal cruelty, and harboring dangerous dogs

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be a “pit bull” dog. NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. There are no available photographs of the dog determined to be involved in the incident.

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Date: August 30, 2011
 Location: Bladen County, North Carolina
 Victim: Addyson Paige Camerino, 9-day-old female

Circumstances: The 9-day-old infant daughter of Chelsea Brigman and Charles Camerino was killed by a dog(s) after being left unattended in the home of her grandparents, Linda and Nelson Camerino.

At the time of the incident, Addyson’s father, 21-year-old Charles Camerino, was incarcerated at the Cumberland County Jail.

A Sheriff’s Office incident report indicates that the child’s mother, Chelsea Brigman, 18, and grandfather, Nelson Camerino, were home at the time. They were both indicted and are awaiting trial (scheduled for 2013) on involuntary manslaughter charges.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; five dogs had access to an unsupervised infant.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Unknown; dogs appeared to have been kept both inside and outside of the home and were owned by different family members.

Number of dog(s) involved: Unknown: Investigators unable to determine which, or how many of 5 dogs were involved.

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Males & females, intact. One female dog was pregnant.

Unsupervised child: Yes

Other: Infant in home less than 10 days

Criminal Charges: Yes; both the mother and grandfather were charged with involuntary manslaughter.

Breed attribution: None

Details: Authorities were unable to determine which, or how many, of the dogs were involved. Seven different breed attributions were reported regarding the 5 dogs on the premises.

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Date: September 3, 2011
Location: Harris County, Texas
Victim: Brayden McCollen, 13-day-old male

Circumstances: Braydon’s 15-year-old mother had moved into her mother’s home one week earlier. The teenaged mother had that day placed the baby in a portable infant bouncer which was on the floor of the home’s office. She closed the French doors to the room and went outside into the front yard, where she spoke to her mother on her cell phone. She was able to watch the baby through a window. She turned away for a few minutes; and when she turned back and looked inside the window, she saw the family’s dog with Brayden. She ran back inside, but the infant had been fatally injured.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Yes; house contained a large crate for the dog and baby gates.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Family; dog maintained as a pet
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: Yes. Child had been left unattended a few moments. Mother incorrectly assumed that the dog did not have access to the infant.

Other: Infant in the home less than 1 week.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: Conflicting breed attributions; according to various sources the dog was described as: “a Labrador mix,” “a gray pit bull,” a “brown and white pit bull,” a “pit bull mix,” a “type of bulldog,” a “100 lb. pit bull,” and a “Presa Canario.”

NCRC was unable to obtain evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate any of breed(s) reported. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. Photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: September 16, 2011
Location: Valley View, Texas
Victim: Donna Conrad 71-year-old female

Circumstances: Donna Conrad had multiple business ventures, one being the breeding of Doberman Pinschers. On September 16th, she was found dead in the backyard of her Valley View home, near a hose that was still running and a bottle of shampoo. It appears Conrad had been attempting to bathe her 6-year-old dog. The dog was found loose in the yard with her.

Approximately 2 years earlier, Conrad had gone to great lengths to purchase and import the champion blood-line dog from Europe to be her new stud dog. The dog had been trained as a protection/attack dog, prior to his sale to Conrad.



The dog being trained in Europe before being sold to Donna Conrad.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Yes; although the dog was a trained attack dog and used for breeding purposes, the dog appeared to be well cared for.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident: Purchased to be a stud dog, not a pet.
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Investigators suspect that some act of Conrad's may have triggered the dog's previous training.

Criminal Charges: No

Reliability of Breed Attribution: Documented

Breed attribution: Doberman Pinscher

Details: Pedigree

* **A Family Dog** is one whose owners interact with the dog on a regular basis in positive and humane ways.
A Resident Dog is one whose owners isolate the dog from regular, positive human interactions.

Date: September 30, 2011
 Location: New Haven, Connecticut
 Victim: Nevaeh Bryant, 21-month-old female

Circumstances: On the afternoon of September 30, Erica Hobdy was watching her niece, Nevaeh, while the toddler’s mother helped a friend move. There were three dogs in the house belonging to Hobdy’s boyfriend. The dogs had lived with Hobdy since August.

Hobdy told police that she had locked the dogs in her bedroom because they were aggressive, especially the dog Trina, who, Hobdy told police, had had a “thing” for Nevaeh since she was a newborn. Hobdy has offered no explanation as to how the dogs escaped from the locked bedroom. Investigators believe that two of the three dogs killed Nevaeh.

In October 2010, Hobdy’s dogs King and Trina had allegedly killed a small dog as it was being walked on a leash. As a result, King and Trina had been placed on a “restraint order” due to their “aggressive nature.” Hobdy had been barred from walking them outside without a leash and muzzle.

Hobdy was arrested in connection with her niece’s death. The arrest warrant stated that Hobdy had a “long history of owning/keeping dogs that have been overly aggressive.”

Indeed, Hobdy had owned several “aggressive” dogs in the past, including a dog named Neo, who had bitten Hobdy’s 9-year-old neighbor in 2008. In 2009, a letter carrier sued Hobdy after Neo injured him as he attempted to deliver mail to Hobdy’s previous home in nearby Ansonia.

Hobdy also has several misdemeanor convictions, and is currently on probation for interfering and for possession of marijuana, officials said in court.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; documented history of aggressive behavior by previous and presently maintained dogs.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; dogs isolated because of aggressiveness
 Number of dog(s) involved: Two
 Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact; female, intact

Unsupervised child: Yes; and child unfamiliar to dogs

Other: Unknown

Criminal Charges: Yes; Hobdy charged with criminally negligent homicide, risk of injury to a minor and reckless endangerment.

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dogs were reported to be “pit bull” dogs. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dogs. No photographs of the dogs were available.

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Date of Incident: October 3, 2011
Location: Potter County, Texas
Victim: Mya Maria Maeda, 11-day-old female

Circumstances: Monique Hernandez was living with her parents in Amarillo. Early on the morning of October 3rd, she was sleeping on the couch in the living room, with her 11-day-old baby Mya in a bassinet directly beside her. Monique reached over to feel for the infant inside the bassinet. The baby was not in the bassinet. Monique found Mya, still breathing, on the floor near the family dog.

The infant was taken to the hospital where she later succumbed to her injuries.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Yes

Family dog or Resident dog*: Family; household dog
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: No; however, inactive supervision (mother was sleeping)

Other: Family had owned dog for over 8 years, but the infant was new to house hold.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be a Mastiff/Pit bull mix. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities that substantiate the breed attributions. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. Photographs were submitted to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded that the breed(s) of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date of Incident: November 9, 2011 **Date of Death:** November 15, 2011

Location: Harris County, Texas

Victim: Edna Dyson, 71-year-old female

Circumstances: Edna Dyson had gone to a rental property she owned in South Houston to tend to the yard. Investigators said the neighbors' dogs escaped through a gap at the bottom of a newly constructed fence and attacked Dyson. She managed to run/crawl to her car, climb inside, and wait for help. Investigators said she lost consciousness and had been in the car for at least two hours before a neighbor found her and called 911.

After police arrived, the owner of the dogs approached an officer and stated that he believed his dogs were responsible.

Ms. Dyson succumbed to her injuries 6 days later, on November 15th.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; owner failed to secure the bottom (spool a reinforcement wire) of a newly installed chain link fence.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; yard dogs

Number of dog(s) involved: Two

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact; female, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Edna Dyson's estate has filed a wrongful death suit against the owners of the dogs, Dolores and Adrian Garcia.

Criminal Charges: Harris County Grand Jury returned a "no bill."

Reliability of breed attribution: Reasonable

Breed attribution: Male dog: American Staffordshire Terrier
Female dog: Indeterminate

Details: Both dogs were reported to be "pit bull" dogs. NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner(s) or authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dogs. NCRC did obtain photographs of both dogs. The photographs were submitted to NCRC's expert advisor who concluded that it was reasonable to identify the 5-year-old male dog as an American Staffordshire Terrier, while the breed of the one-year-old female dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

* **A Family Dog** is one whose owners interact with the dog on a regular basis in positive and humane ways.
A Resident Dog is one whose owners isolate the dog from regular, positive human interactions.

Date of incident: November 18, 2011 **Date of death:** December 6, 2011

Location: Rockford, Illinois

Victim: Tonia Parks, 39-year-old female

Circumstances: The media reported that Tonia Parks’ dogs were fighting and that as she attempted to intervene, she suffered a seizure, at which point the dogs redirected at her.

The detective’s interview with Parks’ daughter, who witnessed the incident, revealed this to be a misrepresentation of the behavior of the dogs and the nature of the incident:

Tonia Parks had a history of seizure disorders. Her daughter heard a noise and came downstairs to find her mother seizing on the dining room floor. She ran outside to get help. When she came back inside, she saw one of the family’s two dogs, Rascal, biting her mother. The daughter stated that the second dog, Baby, was not biting her mother, but was biting Rascal.

Tonia Parks succumbed to her injuries on December 6th.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Yes

Family dog or Resident dog*: Family; household dogs

Number of dog(s) involved: One; (female dog on the scene did not participate)

Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A

Other: Even though the female dog, Baby, did not participate she was still euthanized.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The media reported the dog to be either “pit bull” dog or “American Bulldog.” Animal Control on the dog bite report listed the dog as an “American Bulldog, which looked like a Mastiff.” NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from authorities that substantiate the breed of the dog. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. Photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Date: December 3, 2011
Location: White County, Indiana
Victim: Joseph Hines, 58-year-old male

Circumstances: Four or five years earlier, Joseph Hines had taken a stray dog into his home. He lived alone in a small home on a farm in White County. A family member went to check on Hines and found his body Monday evening, December 5th. Authorities determined Hines died Saturday, December 3rd of dog bite injuries.

Neither family members nor detectives have advanced a theory as to what may have happened.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? Unknown

Family dog or Resident dog*: Unknown
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, unknown

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: Unknown

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported by the media to be a "pit bull" dog, without citing a source. As the dog was found as a stray, NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from authorities that substantiate the breed(s) of the dog reported by the media. No photographs of the dog were available.

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A Resident Dog is one whose owners isolate the dog from regular, positive human interactions.

Date: December 8, 2011
Location: Valdosta, Georgia
Victim: Misti Wyno, 40-year-old female

Circumstances: Misti Wyno walked to a neighbor's home, reportedly to borrow some grits. While crossing back across the yard on her way home, one of the neighbor's dogs broke loose from his cable and attacked her.

Wyno was transported to South Georgia Medical Center, where she was pronounced dead at about an hour later.

Did owner exercise humane care, custody, control of dog(s)? No; dog chained outside with serious unhealed (head and leg) injuries from previously being hit by a car.

No food or water bowls were found near where the dog was chained.



Location where (injured) dog was tied out, without food or water bowls.

Family dog or Resident dog*: Resident; chained dog
Number of dog(s) involved: One
Sex, reproductive status of dog(s): Male, intact

Unsupervised child: N/A
Other: Another of the owner's chained dogs had previously bitten a neighborhood boy when the child went to pick up one her puppies.

Criminal Charges: No

Breed attribution: Indeterminate

Details: The dog was reported to be a “pit bull” dog or a “bulldog.” NCRC was unable to obtain any evidence or documentation from the owner or authorities to substantiate the breed of dog. NCRC did obtain photographs of the dog. The photographs were submitted to NCRC’s expert advisor who concluded that the breed of the dog could not be reasonably determined from the photographs.

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Dog Related Incidents Not Determined to have Caused Fatality

Mabel Harrison McCallister, 84 yrs. old; Bradley County, TN

On December 18, 2011, McCallister was injured by a relative's dog. She was hospitalized for 4 days as a result of her injuries.

McCallister died in hospice on December 31, 2011.

There was no autopsy done of Mrs. McCallister.

The cause of death listed on her death certificate is: Intracranial hemorrhage.

Listed as Underlying Causes: Other significant conditions but **not** resulting in death: Hypertension, recent fall, recent dog attack

Maryann Hanula, 73 yrs. old; Maricopa County, AZ

On October 10, 2011, Maryann Hanula was severely injured by a neighbor's two loose roaming dogs. She was hospitalized in "fair condition," with severe leg injuries.

On May 12, 2012, an obituary reported that Hanula "passed away peacefully."

The Maricopa Medical Examiner's Office reports that no autopsy was done.

No copy of the death certificate is available as Arizona is a "closed state."

There is no evidence that Hanula's death was a result of the dog-bite injuries she had received 7 months earlier.