

## What You Can Do about Web Sites that Promote Animal Cruelty

The Humane Society of the United States frequently receives correspondence from individuals concerned about sites on the Internet that celebrate and encourage the exploitation of animals. In many cases, what appears to be illegal activity is actually protected under the law as free speech.

If you see a web site that promotes or glorifies animal cruelty or exploitation, take these steps:

**1. Do not contact the person running the site.** In many cases, creators of offensive web sites are encouraged by the negative attention they receive in response to their site. For this reason, we discourage people from e-mailing or otherwise contacting the individuals who run offensive web sites.

**2. Contact the Internet Service Provider (ISP) hosting the site.** In response to complaints they receive from concerned visitors, ISPs have in many cases removed sites because they determined that the sites' content violated the ISP's User's Agreement. See the links below to find the ISP for a site that ends in the domain .com, .net, and .org, or in an international domain (such as .uk and .ch).

**3. Submit the web site to the "Animal Cruelty Action List."** In response to the rising number of sites that promote, glamorize, or trivialize cruelty to animals, a group of animal welfare professionals and pet lovers have joined together to stop this encouragement of animal abuse. The goal is to coordinate the efforts of the online community through targeted, legal, and time-sensitive methods so that such sites are removed quickly, thus frustrating the purpose of the sites' creators: to draw attention to themselves and their sites. Submitted web sites are reviewed and, if their content encourages acts of animal cruelty, are added to an Animal Cruelty Action List. Companies hosting the sites and/or pages are asked to remove the content in question and are presented with petitions showing them public support for this action. For more information, please visit the Hugs for Homeless Animals web site at the link below.

The HSUS shares your concern and frustration over the content of sites that promote animal suffering or otherwise glorify the exploitation of animals. The HSUS consistently works to increase public awareness of many animal exploitative issues, including those encouraged by offensive web sites. Thanks for your concern and active participation in monitoring potentially harmful sites.