Over 90% of victims who utilized the Ahimsa House program agree that our services make it easier to get their pets and themselves to safety.
In families affected by domestic violence, pets are also at risk. Abusers threaten, injure, and kill family pets to terrorize others in the home--yet most domestic violence shelters are unable to allow pets to accompany their owners to safety. Nearly 50% of individuals delay escaping the abuse because of concern about their pets. Ahimsa House, meaning "nonviolence," is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the links between domestic violence and animal abuse. Anywhere in Georgia and at no charge, Ahimsa House provides emergency pet safehousing, veterinary care, pet-related safety planning, legal advocacy, a 24-hour crisis line, outreach programs, and other services to help the human and animal victims of domestic violence reach safety together.

A world where humans and animals live free from domestic violence.
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EMERGENCY, confidential housing of the pets (any type!) of domestic violence victims who are seeking safety. 
SAFE transportation of pets to foster homes and veterinarians. 
PREVENTIVE veterinary care, as well as treatment for illnesses or injuries due to abuse. 
24-HOUR crisis line for victims and advocates, providing crisis intervention, community referrals, and safety planning.
**Legal Advocacy** to assist victims in including their pets on temporary protective orders **Pet Supplies**, pet food, payment of pet deposits, and other assistance victims may need in order to move forward with their lives together with their pets after reaching safety. **Training** for human services and animal protection agencies on the links between animal abuse and domestic violence. **Direct Outreach** to the public to raise awareness.

**Up to 71% of victims entering domestic violence shelters report that their abusers threatened, injured, or killed the family pet.**
A Message from the Board President

Why Ahimsa House?

The Georgia Commission on Family Violence notes that in 2015 there were 140 domestic violence-related deaths in Georgia, and unfortunately that is the highest number since the commission began recording them ten years ago. We know that, according to a study of domestic violence shelters, that half of all victims of domestic violence delay seeking safety from an abusive situation because of concerns about their beloved pet—and this number increases dramatically if their abuser has threatened, harmed, or even killed their pet in the past. In Georgia, Ahimsa House’s wraparound services are working towards lowering these numbers in order for more people and pets to seek safety together.

First, Ahimsa House offers a state-wide 24-7 hotline that is open to domestic violence victims and their advocates. Our hotline connects callers to trained volunteers and staff who can offer crisis intervention, safety planning, and referrals to domestic violence shelters. Often these crisis calls involve a victim looking for help to placing their pet. While there are currently only 4 shelters that even accept animals in the entire state—which are limited to using exterior kennels when Georgia weather is safe and habitable for companion animals—Ahimsa House offers a solution via their network of safe, anonymous foster homes and veterinary and boarding partners that will house pets of victims while the victims themselves seek shelter. By offering this service, Ahimsa House has taken away one big reason why victims state they stay in an abusive relationship—they don’t want to leave their animals behind or lose
them all together. Ahimsa House's services prevent the pets of victims from being abandoned, abused, or even surrendered to animal shelters to be re-homed.

Secondly, the pets of victims stay with Ahimsa House for approximately 60 days, during which time we evaluate their health and provide the necessary preventive and emergency veterinary care. All animals are up to date on annual vaccines, spayed or neutered, provided much-needed flea and heartworm preventive, and treated for injuries related to abuse. Ahimsa House strives for each pet to be healthy so that when they are reunited with their families they can lead happy and fulfilling lives.

Lastly, Ahimsa House offers services to ensure that our clients are re-claiming their pets in a sustainable manner and are all set for their new and safe futures. We provide pet deposit assistance and help with pet supplies such as food, beds, collars and leashes. We also partner with domestic violence agencies across the state so that clients who need outreach and follow-up services have access to local advocates.

This triple aim approach ensures that humans AND their pets get safe and stay safe. Without Ahimsa House, over 200 pets and their loving families may not have left their abusers last year. Thanks to us, they are all living happier, safer lives... together.

There are over 38,000 registered 501(c)(3) non-profits in Georgia. And I have no doubt that every single one of them works hard to improve the education, health and wellness of our state. But I hope that when you look to offering financial or volunteer support this next year, that you’ll think of Ahimsa House and the difference we are making to end domestic violence in Georgia and making a safer community for us all. Thank you.

--Carrie Montagna-Ward, Board President
2015 Program Statistics

2011 Crisis Calls

127 New Direct Service Clients

123 Dogs Received

64 Cats Received

14 “Other” Animals Received

9364 Safe Nights Provided
The call came in to the Ahimsa House crisis hotline at 11:22 pm. On the other end, a law enforcement officer described the scene at a hotel where he and his partner had been dispatched to respond to a domestic violence dispute.

Brittany and her husband Gary were arguing in the parking lot and when the officers arrived, Gary jumped in his eight-wheel truck to flee, taking Brittany’s vital medications with him. Instinctively Brittany lunged toward the vehicle to retrieve the medications but her husband didn’t stop; instead, he jerked the truck forward, quickly accelerating and running her over.

The hours that followed to this day remain a blur for Brittany. She was rushed to the hospital and into her first of several surgeries to save her leg and the better part of the left side of her body. But even amidst the trauma she was experiencing, Brittany’s only concern was for her two shih tzu dogs, Yin and Yang. The sisters truly were her babies.

The law enforcement officer immediately contacted the local domestic violence agency that would be able to help Brittany, and the victim advocate knew to enlist the help of Ahimsa House to assist with Yin and Yang. The officers kept the two dogs safe in their patrol car while an Ahimsa House staff member and crisis line volunteer jumped into action. Despite it being the middle of the night, a desperate plea on social media for an emergency foster home for Yin and Yang erupted with tremendous support and offers to help. Ahimsa House’s online community – and many outside of it – came together to support this survivor in her time of need. Within the hour, the officers had personally delivered the two dogs to the Ahimsa House foster volunteer who graciously took them in for the night.
Today, Brittany is well on the road to recovery. Ahimsa House staff members had the privilege of escorting Yin and Yang to visit her for a heartfelt reunion; the first time Brittany had seen her precious dogs since that night in October. Ahimsa House will care for her pets until Brittany is physically able to reclaim them permanently. Until then, we will continue to be inspired by Brittany’s story – a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the magnitude of what can be done when we join together to serve survivors of domestic violence.
2015 FINANCES

2015 EXPENDITURES

- Program: 89.1%
- General & Administrative: 5.5%
- Fundraising: 5.4%

Average Cost Per Case

- $100: Preventive Veterinary Care for One Pet
- $250: Pet Deposit
- $500: Cost Per Case
- $1000: Average Cost Per Emergency Surgery
- $5000: One Month of Boarding and Veterinary Care for All Program Animals
**WE DID IT! 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**The 2015 Annual Gala** was a huge success, raising over $53,000 and taking place for the first year ever at The Venetian Room in Downtown Atlanta.

**Appeared as a guest** on the Bruce & Hobbes podcast to raise awareness of our services and the link between domestic violence & animal cruelty.

**Presented at the** Animal Law Source’s Animal Law & Enforcement / Animal Shelter Symposium.

**Hired** a fourth staff member to serve as Outreach Advocate, and gained funding to hire a fifth in 2016!

**Reached a record number** of new pets in one month: 38 total dogs, cats, guinea pigs, and parrots!

**Brand-new, pet-friendly** floors for our administrative office were installed at no cost to Ahimsa House (both the floors and labor were donated).

**Utilized GoFundMe** to raise money for a much-needed storage shed for pet supplies, food, and outreach materials, which was erected in December.
In addition to all of our other accomplishments, at the Georgia Commission on Family Violence 2015 Annual Family Violence Conference Ahimsa House was rewarded Task Force Member of the Year. That is just one way Ahimsa House has excelled in community outreach in the past year.

Total outreach efforts completed

- Professional trainings, meetings, and consults
- Community events (presentations, booths at outreach events, and an interview with People TV)

Outreach efforts to non-Metro counties

Counties to go!

Ahimsa House serves the entire state of Georgia, and we are dedicated to increasing community and professional awareness of our services to underserved rural areas.
2015 Staff

Myra Rasnick
Executive Director

Shannon Oxford
Program Services Coordinator

Sally Terrell
Victim Services Advocate

Sarah Overton
Outreach Advocate
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carrie Montagna-Ward, President
Marketing Manager, McKesson

Cheri Fulginiti, Vice President
Engineering, UPS

Heather Siler, Treasurer
Director, Business Analysis,
Guidant Group

Kendra Westphal, Secretary
Executive Recruiter, AquantUs, LLC

Ana Minter
Director, Financial Solutions,
Guidant Group

Christi Burton
Sales Consultant, Vera Bradley

Lisa R. Bugni, Esq.
Partner, Alston and Bird

Mary Ann Downey
HR Metrics Coach
Shoot the Moon Services, LLC

ADVISORY COUNCIL

David Bressman, DVM
Owner, Lenox Pet Hospital

Joey Brooks
Animal Cruelty Investigator
Gwinnett County

Emily Christie
Founder, Ahimsa House

Christine Cox, Esq.
Attorney

Melinda Merck, DVM
Senior Director of Veterinary Forensics
Anti-Cruelty Initiatives, ASPCA

Annamarie Keck
Community Member

Stephen Walker
Owner, S. R. Walker Designs

Kelly Trogdon, DVM
Owner, Faithful Friend Mobile
Veterinary Clinic

Merrie Rennard, LMSW
Ph.D. Fellow, Veterinary Social
Work Program, University of TN

Shawn Ellen LaGrua, Esq.
Inspector General, Office of Secre-
tary of State Karen Handel
Walk, Wag, N’ Run 5k and fun run raised over $16,000 for victims of domestic violence and their pets. Thank you to our participants, volunteers, sponsors, and vendors!

For the first year ever, Ahimsa House hosted a t-shirt design contest. Utilizing social media, the contest attracted several designs and hundreds of votes. Congratulations to Kirk Wells of Modo Modo, the designer of the winning shirt!
Carol Neal Rossi, who is pictured below with her family at the 2014 race, has been a volunteer with Ahimsa House for years. She says,

"It is an absolute joy to support and volunteer with Ahimsa House. On the Walk, Wag 'n Run committee, I get to combine all of my favorite things: my love of animals, running, working with dedicated community members, and supporting violence prevention. It's a fun way to give back and stay healthy and connect with new volunteers.

“I first learned about Ahimsa House at a Walk, Wag, 'n Run 4 years ago and now I chair the event and serve on its Board. This organization, and the people who work there and the volunteers who serve its mission, fulfills an incredible need in our community: Helping people and pets escape domestic violence and reach safety together. Come and figure out where your talents can fit. We'll find a way that you can help and you won't be sorry!!”

2015 COMMITTEE

Carol Neal Rossi          Sara Wiles
Cheri Fulginiti          Myra Rasnick
Meghan Farley            Shannon Oxford
Cathy McMahon-Fowlkes    Sally Terrell
Lauren Vickers           Sarah Overton
In 2015, 92% of pets in our program were successfully reunited with their owners!
LEND A HAND

24-HOUR CRISIS LINE
Assist staff by answering calls from victims in need of Ahimsa House services and callers across the state.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Represent Ahimsa House at local festivals and rescue events to spread the word about our services and find supporters.

TRANSPORT ANIMALS
Safely transport pets to veterinary appointments, foster homes, and reunifications on your availability.

FOSTER PETS
One of the greatest gifts you can give an animal in need is love and a safe place to be. All supplies and costs are covered.
### WISHLIST

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**DONATE TODAY**

**Donations from compassionate people** help us continue our lifesaving work. Ahimsa House relies heavily on our donors to provide care for the pets in our program. Your donation ensures that pets like Yin and Yang can be with their owners for a fresh start, that their owners don’t have to make the dangerous decision to delay leaving or even stay in an abusive situation for their pets’ sakes, and that victims of domestic violence across the state of Georgia have a resource that they can count on to keep their family safe and together.