

Courthouse Facility Dogs: Improving the Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes Against Children

National Prosecutor's Conference on
Child Abuse and Neglect
Salt Lake City
October 24, 2019



COURTHOUSE DOGS®
FOUNDATION



Seattle







How I learned to cross-examine witnesses



“Stressing a person makes it more difficult for them to lie about what happened.”

- Judges
- Prosecutors
- Defense attorneys



“Witnesses shouldn’t be nervous if they are telling the truth.”

- Jurors



“I like it when my witness
cries because it engenders
sympathy from the jury.”

- Prosecutors

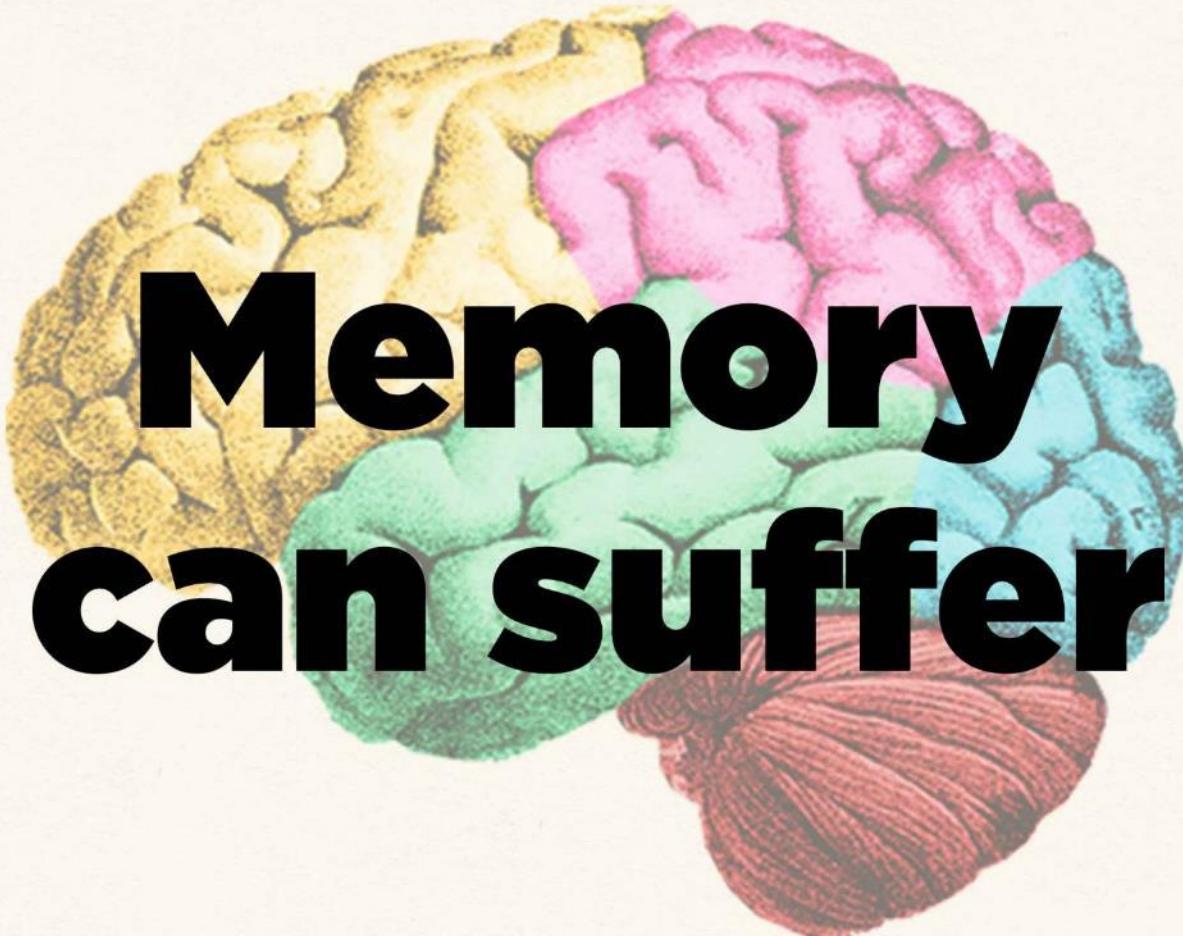


“The police questioning was so stressful that it caused the suspect to confess to something that he didn’t do.”

- Defense attorneys







**Memory
can suffer**



Noticeable effects.

Pupils Dilate

Mouth goes dry

Shoulder and neck
muscles tense.

Heart beats quickly

Breathing is fast
and shallow as
oxygen is needed
for muscles

Sweating

Hidden effects.

Brain gets body
ready for action

Adrenaline
produced for flight
or fight

Liver releases
glucose to provide
energy for muscles

Blood pressure rises





King County Courthouse



Salvador Aleman Cruz – serial child rapist

Rape victim's threat to jump off courthouse roof may derail case

November 4, 2010

By Jennifer Sullivan

Seattle Times staff reporter



A 21-year-old child-rape victim who was set to confront her alleged attacker in a Seattle courtroom Thursday afternoon, made her way onto the roof of the King County Courthouse and spent about three hours threatening to jump before she was led to safety.





Inmate was at hospital hours before jumping from Seattle courthouse window

November 30, 2010

By Mike Carter and Jennifer Sullivan
Seattle Times staff reporters

A 29-year-old Auburn man who jumped to his death from the 11th floor of the King County Courthouse

Tuesday morning had been at Harborview Medical Center the night before because of deepening depression, according to his family.







Dogs and humans have a symbiotic relationship

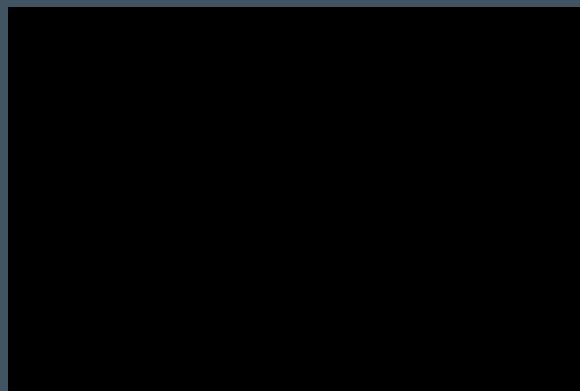




Dogs reduce stress in humans







Courthouse Facility Dogs at Child Advocacy Centers



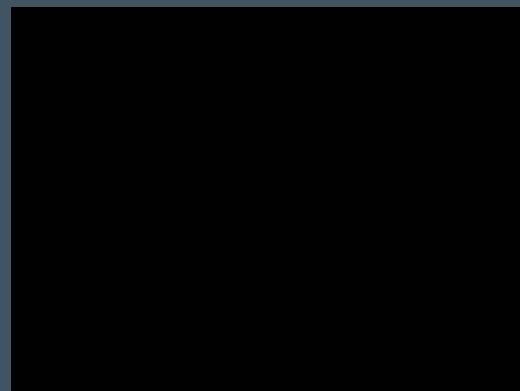
Dogs usually appeal to children of all ages



Establishing rapport





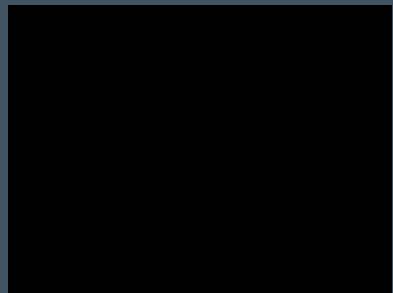




Facility dogs in forensic interviews

Jeeter knows what to do.







“I love you, Petra. You really are a good dog. I’ve told you more than I’ve ever told anybody. I hope when you die, you go to heaven.”



Examining the Effects of a Service-Trained Facility Dog on Stress in Children Undergoing Forensic Interview for Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse

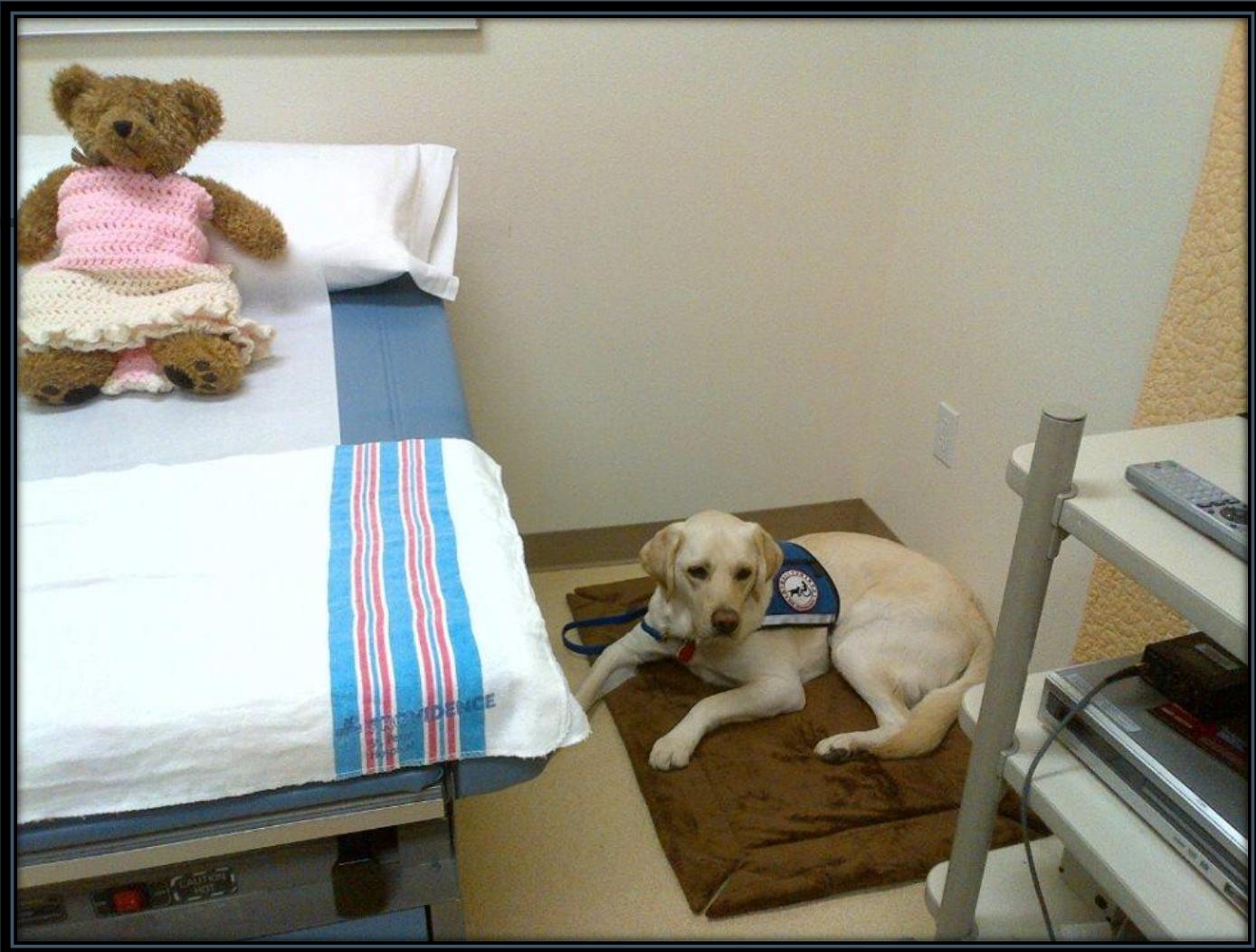
Cheryl A. Krause-Parello^a, Michele Thames^b, Colleen M. Ray^c, and John Kolassa^d

^aCollege of Nursing, University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus, Aurora, CO, USA; ^bSafeSpot Child Advocacy Center, Fairfax, VA, USA; ^cDepartment of Sociology, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, USA; ^dStatistics, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ, USA

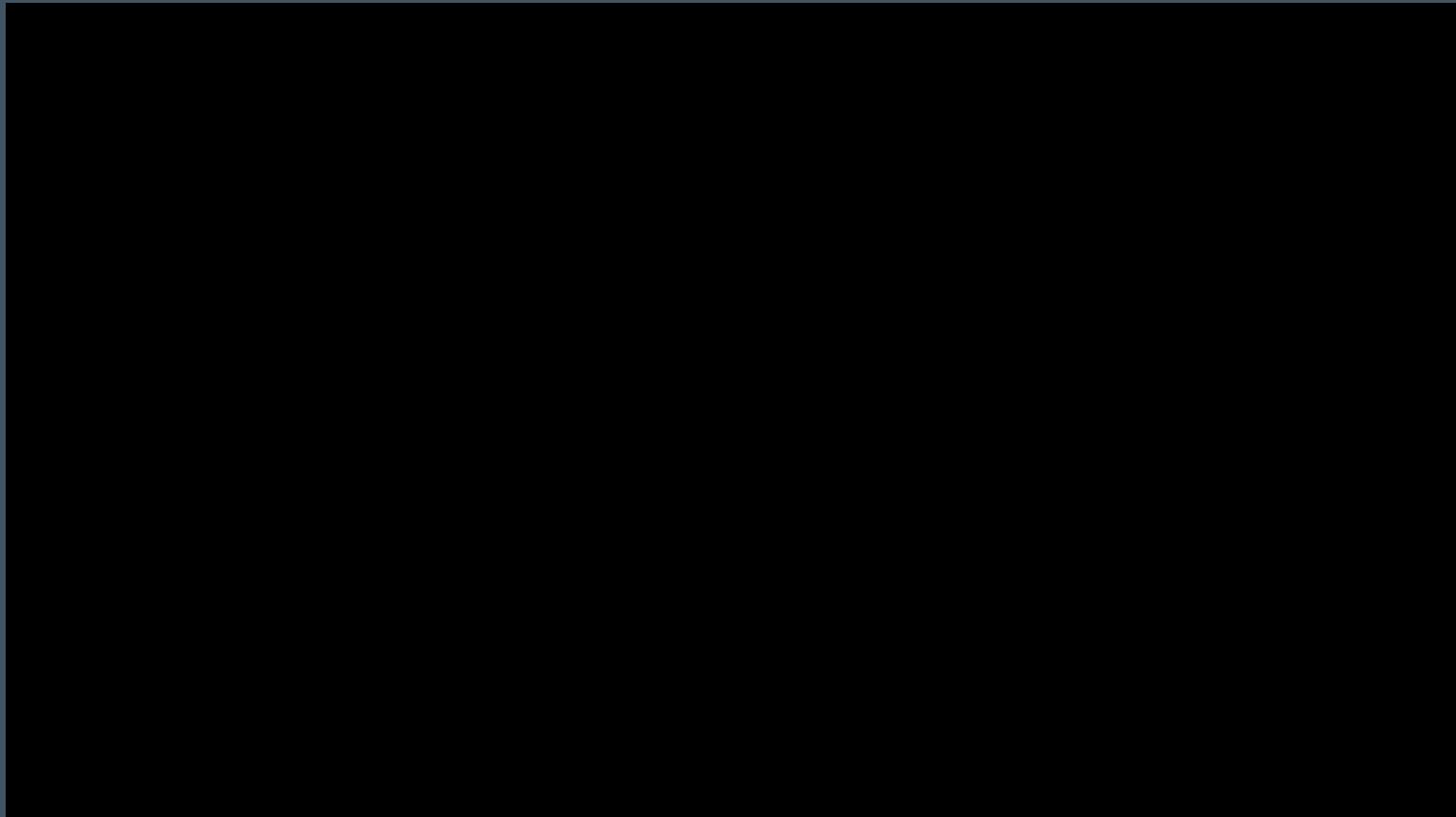
The results of this study support the stress reducing effects of a service-trained facility dog for children undergoing forensic interviews for allegations of child sexual abuse.



Medical Exams









Daze

Daze Thank You for being here
and sleeping on my leg. You made it
a lot easier to talk about what happened.
You gave me comfort and made it
more comfortable to talk. Thank You!



Sand Tray



Sand Tray





Courthouse Facility Dogs Assisting in the Prosecution of Crimes



“Indeed, if one set out intentionally to design a system for provoking symptoms of posttraumatic disorder, it might look very much like a court of law”
- Judith Herman (2003), a child trauma authority



Developmentally and Trauma-Sensitive Courtrooms

Journal of Humanistic Psychology
2019, Vol. 59(6) 779–795

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Abstract

Courtrooms in the United States whether family court or criminal court fall far short of being either developmentally or trauma sensitive. While there is growing recognition that vulnerable child witnesses are at risk of retraumatization by court procedures and some judges have used their



Child Witness in the Courtroom

*Policy Statement from the
American Academy of Pediatrics*

February 2017



PEDIATRICS®

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

"studies have clearly established that children experience anxiety surrounding court appearances and that the main fear is facing the defendant. Other fears include being hurt by the defendant, embarrassment about crying or not being able to answer questions, and going to jail. The more frightened a child is, the less he or she is able to answer questions."





Seven-year-old testifying
against his mother



Wimbush
Trial

Child
Abuse
Case

Day 1: Wimbush
Questions Her Son

1280 x 720

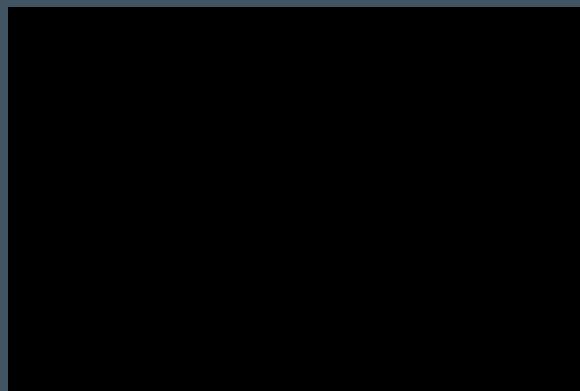
Parents cross-examine own
children in child cruelty trial

January 24, 2017



Douglas Lare with Ellie





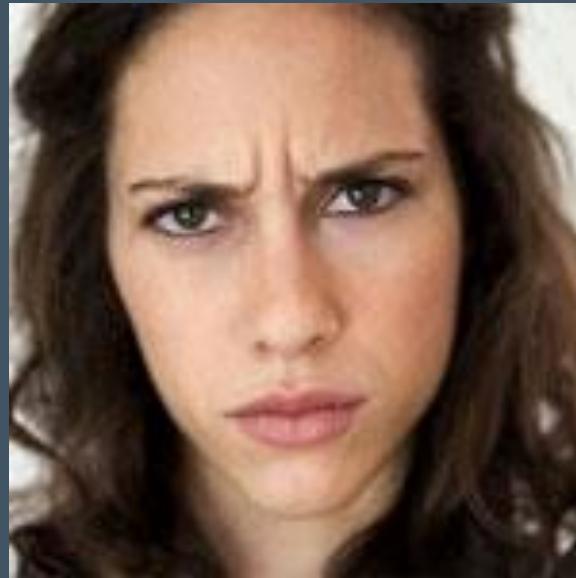


Factors to consider during pretrial hearing





Defense objections



Facility Dogs in the Courtroom: Comfort Without Prejudice?

Criminal Justice Review

1-22

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Kayla A. Burd¹ and Dawn E. McQuiston²

Abstract

Courthouse facility dogs are expertly trained canines that assist individuals with psychological, emotional, or physical difficulties in a myriad of courtroom situations. While these animals are increasingly used to assist young witnesses in court, it is not yet known whether they are prejudicial to defendants or the witnesses they accompany during trial. Across two studies utilizing mock trial paradigms involving child witnesses, we explored the impact of courtroom accommodations (facility dog vs. teddy bear vs. no accommodation) on mock jurors' judgments about the defendant and child witness. In Experiment 1, teddy bears, but not facility dogs, were prejudicial to defendants, while in Experiment 2, neither facility dogs nor teddy bears were prejudicial. Further, mock jurors' perceptions of the child witness were not influenced by courtroom accommodations. Evidence from both studies suggests that, contrary to various legal arguments concerning due process, facility dogs may not influence verdict, verdict confidence, or sentencing.

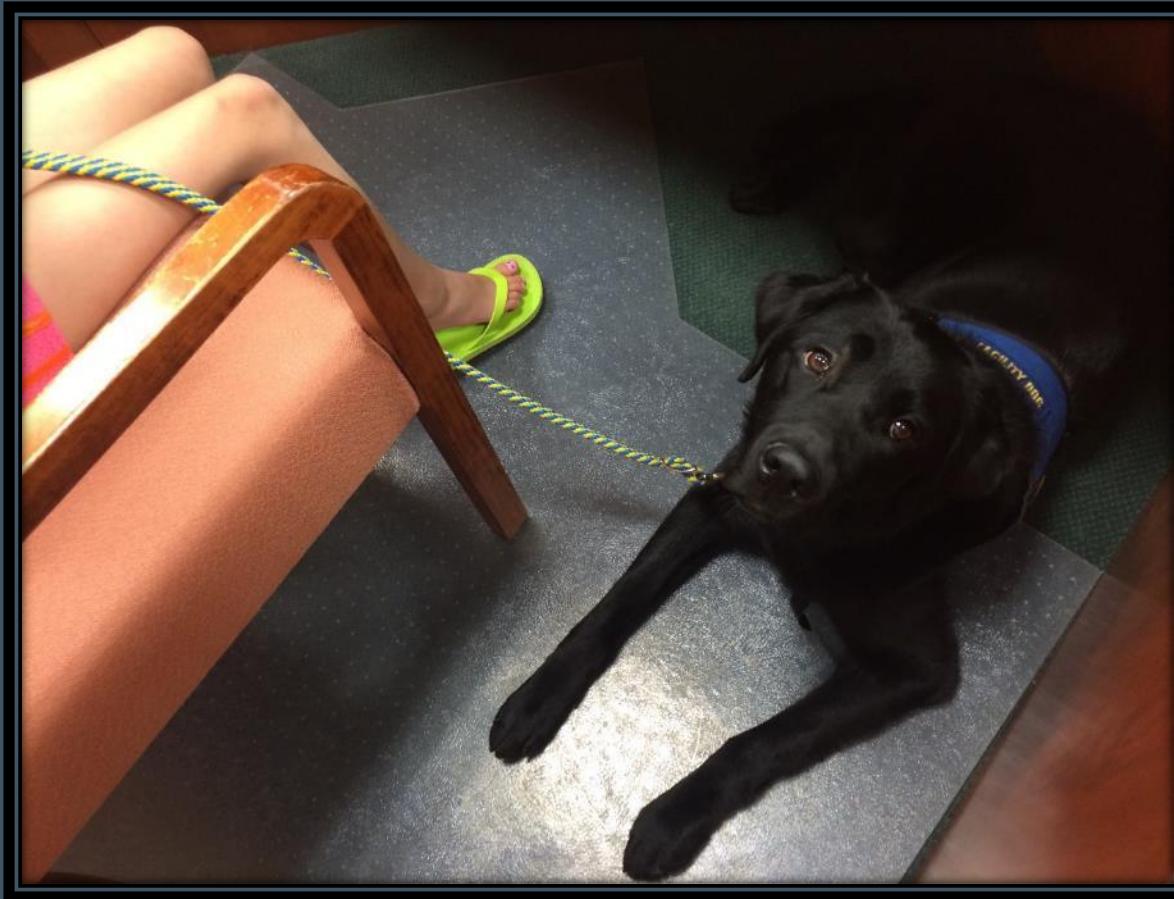


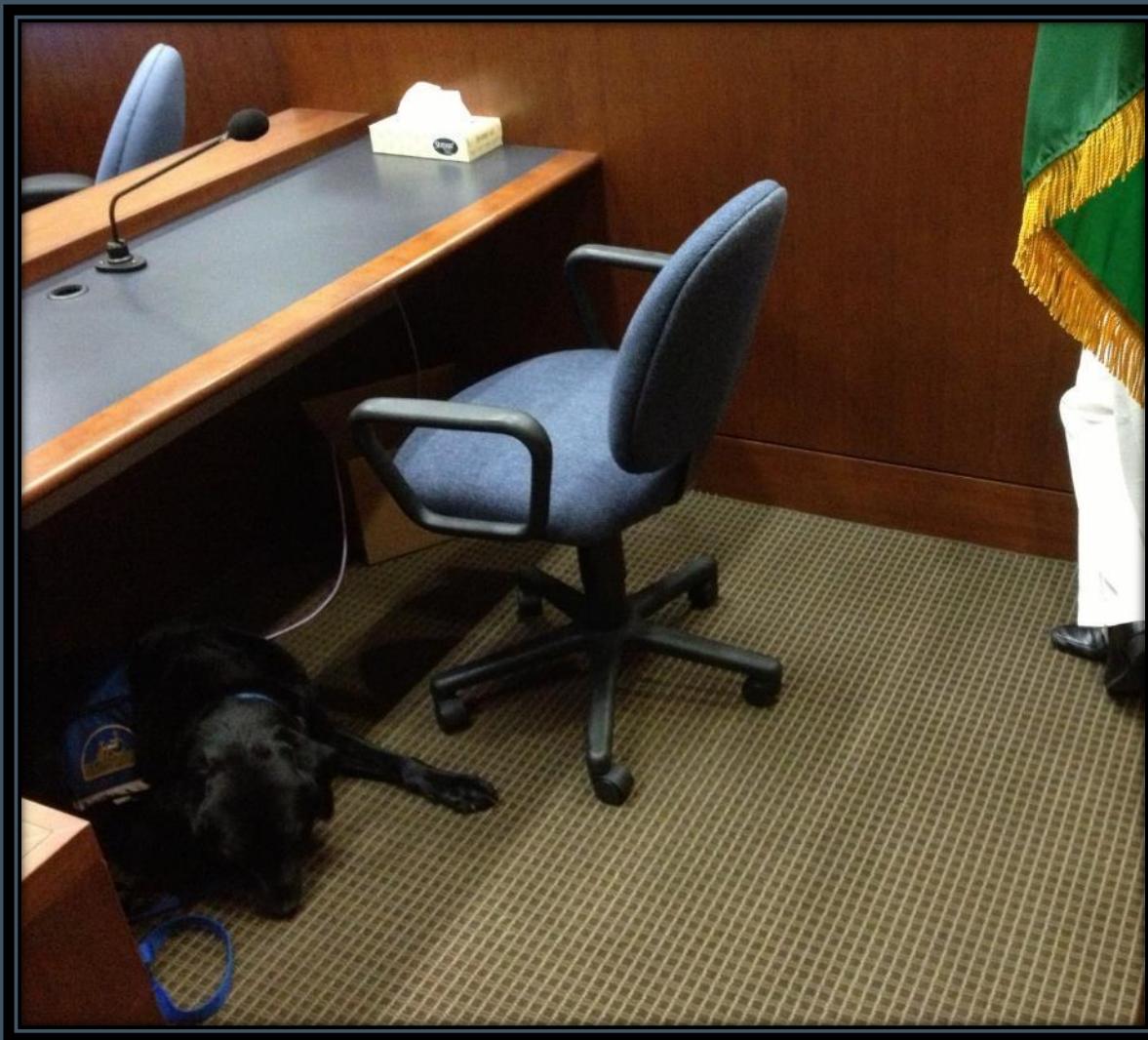
Pretrial motion – minimizing prejudice to the defendant

- Dog in the gallery
- Have dog and witness enter and exit outside the presence of the jury.
- Have dog concealed in the witness box as much as possible.



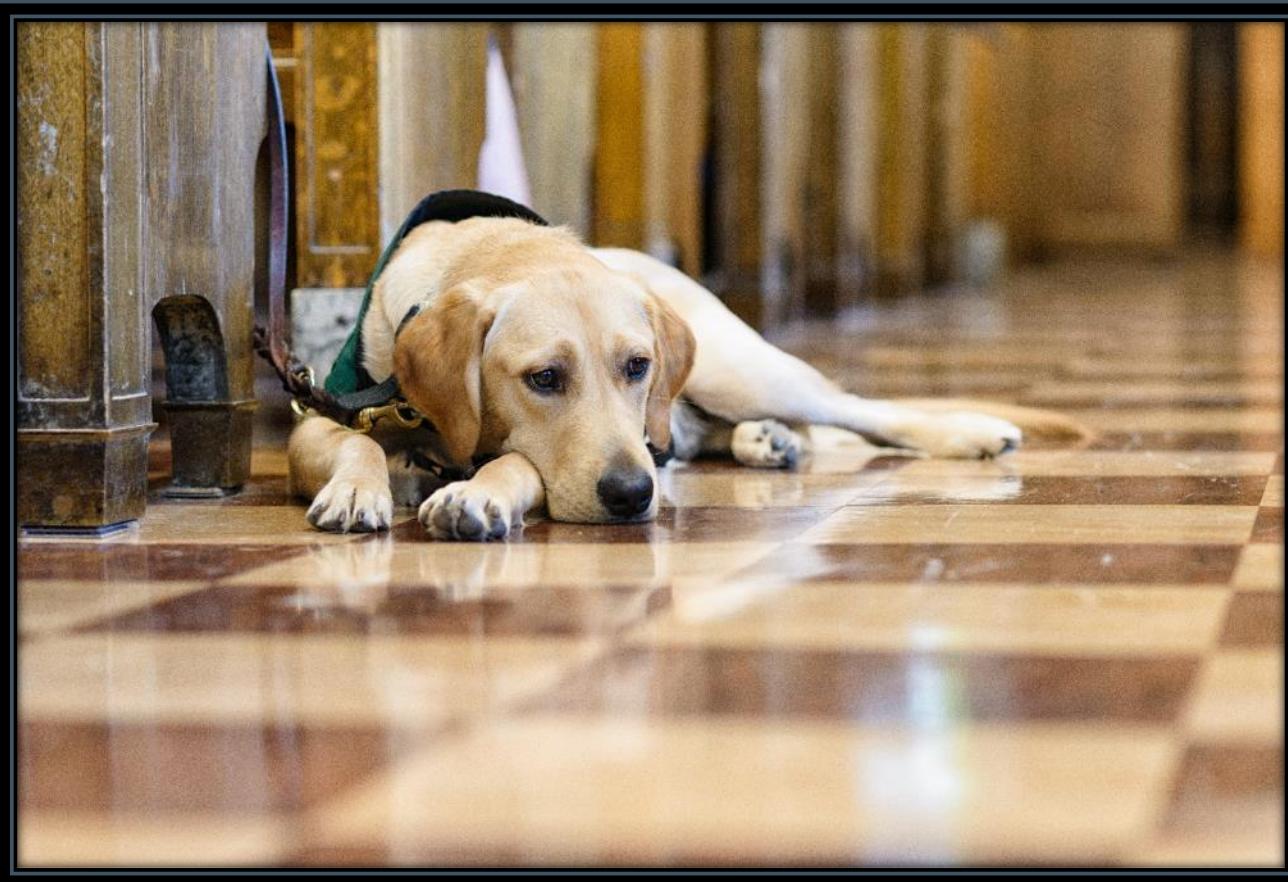
Child and facility dog in witness box







Dog in the gallery





Appellate Court Decisions



Washington
California – 2
New York
Connecticut
Ohio – 2
Michigan - 2
Tennessee
Texas
Arizona



Nine states have laws limiting this practice to facility dogs.

Arizona

Illinois

Arkansas

Louisiana

Colorado

Virginia

Hawaii

Washington

Idaho



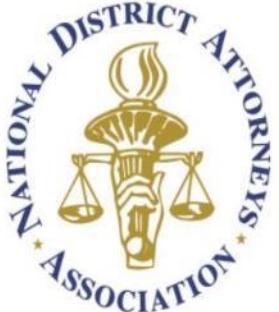


ASSOCIATION OF
PROSECUTING
ATTORNEYS

Courthouse Facility Dog Resolution of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys

The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) is a national association dedicated to supporting and enhancing prosecutors in their efforts to create safer communities. APA supports the use of facility dogs as a model practice for providing quiet companionship to vulnerable individuals during the investigation and prosecution of crimes and other stressful legal proceedings.





National District Attorneys Association
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www.ndaa.org

2018 Resolution of The National District Attorneys Association

The National District Attorneys Association (NDAA) supports the use of courthouse facility dogs to aid in the investigation of crimes involving young or vulnerable victims and witnesses and in situations where these animals would aid in the preparation for, or during trial or hearing testimony.





USA- 221

Canada- 44

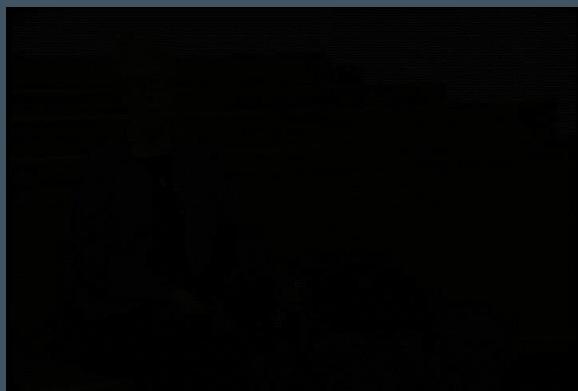
South America-1

Europe- 4

Australia-1









www.courthousedogs.org

Courthouse Dogs Foundation

