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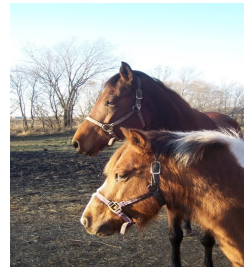
March 8, 2010 (/full-blog/2010/03/equine-abuse-and-neglect-educational.html)

Equine Abuse and Neglect Educational Program in Kentucky (/full-blog/2010/03/equine-abuse-and-neglect-educational.html)

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(<http://i619.photobucket.com/albums/tt273/xjennx426/012.jpg>)

g) **By: Katie Shultz, Staff Member**



In Kentucky, an educational program designed to help law enforcement officials detect equine abuse and neglect is being conducted by Speak Up For Horses. Speak Up for Horses is a non-profit organization that came into existence in 2006. Its primary mission is "to educate the public on the plight caused by an unknowing public, by inadequate horse welfare laws, and by the woeful enforcement of existing laws at the federal, state, and local levels." Speak Up For Horses, <http://speakupforhorses.org/about.lasso> (<http://speakupforhorses.org/about.lasso>) (last visited Mar. 3, 2010). The program, although primarily geared towards law enforcement and elected officials, is open to the public in an effort to encourage awareness and action. As part of the program, the Henneke Horse Body Condition Scoring System is taught as a means by which an official can decide whether intervention is necessary. This system is used throughout the country and provides one of the more uniform methods of determining horse abuse and neglect. The scoring system rates a horse from one to nine in terms of body fat and is viewed by many as an objective method. Equine Protection Network, *Henneke Body Condition Scoring Chart*, <http://www.equineprotectionnetwork.com/cruelty/henneke.htm> (<http://www.equineprotectionnetwork.com/cruelty/henneke.htm>) (last visited Mar. 3, 2010). It is

also accepted by courts when such cases are litigated. *Id.*

Another aspect of the program is the discussion of animal cruelty law in Kentucky. Jared Nelson, *Horse Abuse Case Prompts Training*, The Times Leader Online, June 14, 2009, <http://speakupforhorses.org/timesLeader.pdf> (<http://speakupforhorses.org/timesLeader.pdf>). Kentucky law provides, in part, that a person is guilty of animal cruelty to animals in the second degree when through intentional or wanton behavior, a four-legged animal is subject to beating, mutilation, torture, torment or a failure to provide adequate food, drink, space, or health care. Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 525.130(1)(a) (2009).

Because the law does not criminalize negligent behavior, this program is particularly helpful in instances where the abuse or neglect stems from lack of knowledge as to how to properly care for horses. Of course, in instances where the behavior *is* intentional or wanton, the program also equips those most often called to the scene with useful methods of ascertaining the situation, which can eliminate confusion and prompt greater enforcement of the anti-cruelty provisions.

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