

ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION

March 2024 is Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Awareness Month!



**Abuse Hotline:
(888) 633 - 1313**

**WHO CAN I
REPORT
ABUSE/NEGLECT
/EXPLOITATION
TO?**

Hotline
Your Supervisor
EMC

**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING,
SAY SOMETHING!**

Don't forget, **YOU ARE A MANDATED REPORTER**⁷

REFRESHER:

ABUSE: The *knowing* infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain, or mental anguish.

NEGLECT: Failure to provide goods or services necessary to avoid physical harm, mental anguish, or mental illness which results in injury or probable risk for serious harm.

EXPLOITATION: Actions including, but not limited to, the deliberate misplacement, misappropriation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of belongings or money, WITH OR WITHOUT the consent of the person receiving services.

Serious Injury of Unknown Cause: An injury that requires assessment and treatment beyond basic first aid that can be administered by a lay person, the cause of which is unknown.

Suspicious Injury: An injury that may have been the result of abuse/neglect or is not consistent with the explanation provided.

Unexpected/Unexplained Death: A fatality occurring under unexpected or unexplained circumstances.

⁷ T.C.A. 71-6-103(b)

SAVE THE DATE(S) & JOIN US FOR GAMES

March 15th

Join us for a breakfast gameshow!

- 9am
- Breakfast foods provided
- For day program staff

Tuesday, March 12th

@12pm

Companions, see a prize you like? Answer the trivia questions to redeem a prize.

March 6th

Smart Store Volunteers, join us via Zoom for a quick round of games & prizes!

- 7pm

March 11th

Join us for an egg hunt!

Collect enough eggs from each category & win a prize!

- for residential staff
- 2pm-3pm

Thursday, March 28th

Come play from the comfort of your own home - join via Zoom!

Win the game & win a prize.

- for ECF/FMP staff
- 7pm

Curious?
Prizes available to win:
-gift cards
-electronics
-gas cards
& more



WHY ARE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELDERLY¹ AND/OR HAVE A DISABILITY³ MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO ABUSE² ?

- Functional dependence/disability, and sometimes poor physical health
- Many experience cognitive impairment, and poor mental health
- Predators may perceive them as weak, or less likely to report abuse, making them easy targets
- They are often isolated and dependent on a small circle of friends or caregivers for critical support, including assistance with basic physical needs. These same caregivers are often the abusers, which poses a difficult decision for the victim who is required to choose between the potential for continuing abuse and an uncertain future
- Many live in segregated environments, such as group homes/nursing homes, where abuse can occur – and be hidden – more easily. In addition, victims who are abused in group settings may have limited access to police, advocates, medical or social services representatives, and others who can intervene and help
- People with limited communication abilities and/or cognitive disabilities may find it difficult to report abuse effectively
- Many are afraid that they will not be believed when they do report abuse
- Many have been verbally abused, resulting in low self-esteem and, in some cases, a belief that the abuse is somehow deserved
- It is easier to abuse someone if you inherently believe that elderly people and/or people with disabilities are less human, less valuable or don't contribute to society
- Disadvantaged by level of sex education, if any
- Socialized to accept being touched by anyone, especially someone labeled as “staff”
- Required at work/home to be compliant; compliance is considered “normal behavior”

¹ defined as 60 or older

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abuse-of-older-people>

³ <https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/victimswithdisabilities/stateguide/risk-factors.html>

HOW OFTEN DOES IT HAPPEN?



You might be surprised at how often elderly people are victimized!

- 1 in 6 people 60 years or older experienced some form of abuse in community settings over the past year.
- 1 in 10 people aged 60 years or older experienced some form of abuse - including neglect and exploitation - in their home
- From 2002 to 2016, more than 643,000 older adults were treated in the emergency department for nonfatal assaults, and over 19,000 homicides occurred
- Rates of abuse of older people are high in institutions such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities, with 2 in 3 staff reporting that they have committed abuse in the past year.
- Abuse of older people can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences.
- Abuse of older people is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly ageing populations.
- Abuse of older people is an important public health problem. A 2017 review of 52 studies in 28 countries from diverse regions estimated that over the past year 1 in 6 people (15.7%) aged 60 years and older were subjected to some form of abuse.

How often are people with disabilities victimized?

- Persons with cognitive disabilities had the highest rate of violent victimization (83.3 per 1,000) among the disability types measured.
- Sixty-six percent (66%) of people with I/DD have been the victim of abuse and neglect. Of these: 8 out of 10 were the victim of verbal/emotional abuse More than half were physically abused
- Over 1/3 were sexually abused on more than one occasion
- Only 1/3 of these people reported the abuse
- Why didn't people with disabilities report their abuse?
 - 58% believed nothing would be done
 - 38% said they had been threatened or were scared
 - 33% did not know how or where to report it

HOW CAN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Recognize the warning signs of abuse/neglect⁴:

- Unexplained changes in sleeping or eating patterns
- Injury going unassessed or untreated
- Missing money or belongings – including medication
- Sudden fearfulness, flinching, and covering
- Presence of suspicious injuries (injuries can be suspicious because of their shape, size, or location on the person's body – also when the explanation for how the injury occurred does not match the injury).
- **REPORT** any concerns to your supervisor. If you cannot reach them, call their supervisor (Director of Programs, Director of Employment Services, Executive Director). If you cannot reach them, **DO NOT WAIT...CALL THE ABUSE HOTLINE!** You can report anonymously!!!



Keep your eyes peeled. If you see something that doesn't seem right, say something. **You do not have to have “evidence” to report abuse/neglect.** If your gut tells you something is wrong, **SAY SOMETHING.**

Acknowledge that abuse is a reality; even though we may prefer not to think about it, statistics show it happens more frequently than one might anticipate.

HOW DO WE KNOW ABUSE HAPPENS?



LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE RESEARCH!

A 2012 research study surveyed 7,289 people from California, about instances of, responses to, and attitudes about abuse or crime victimization of people with disabilities (all ages). It was the first of its kind. Dr. Norah Baladerian and two colleagues published the findings. From the overview of the findings section of the report:

“These findings should serve as a wake-up call to families, service providers, protective services workers, law enforcement personnel, victims rights agencies, and advocates for disability rights. The bottom line is that abuse is prevalent and pervasive, it happens in many ways, and it happens repeatedly to victims with all types of disabilities.”

Research Findings

Sixty-six percent (66%) of people with I/DD have been the victim of abuse and neglect. Nearly half of victims with disabilities did not report abuse to authorities. Most thought it would be futile to do so. For those who did report abuse, nearly 54% said that nothing happened. In fewer than 10% of reported cases was the perpetrator arrested.” More than 70% of abuse is inflicted by someone the person with disabilities knows.



Dr. Norah Baladerian

The US Department of Justice also studies data about the victimization of people with disabilities. The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. Their data can show how often people with disabilities are criminally victimized.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



In 2019, the rate of violent victimization against persons with disabilities was nearly four times the rate for persons without disabilities. Since July 2016, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) has asked all respondents their disability status, allowing rates by disability status to be generated solely from NCVS data

The following information is from their November 2021 report titled, “Crime Against Persons with Disabilities 2009–2019 – Statistical Tables⁵.”

highlights

- Persons with disabilities were victims of 26% of all nonfatal violent crime, while accounting for about 12% of the population.
- The rate of violent victimization against persons with disabilities was almost four times the rate for persons without disabilities.
- One in three robbery victims had at least one disability.
- Persons with cognitive disabilities had the highest rate of violent victimization among the disability types measured.
- Nineteen percent (19%) of rapes or sexual assaults against persons with disabilities were reported to police, compared to 36% of those against persons without disabilities.



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT - CONTINUED



Violent Crime by Type of Crime

- The rate of violent victimization against persons with disabilities was nearly four times the age-adjusted rate for persons without disabilities during 2017–19.
- For persons with disabilities, the rate of violent crime, excluding simple assault, was more than four times the rate for persons without disabilities. The rate of simple assault against persons with disabilities was more than three times the rate for persons without disabilities.
- Although persons with disabilities accounted for 12% of the population, they were victims in 26% of violent crime incidents.
- Thirty-three percent (33%) of robbery victimizations involved a victim with a disability, which was higher than the percentages of aggravated assault, rape/sexual assault, and simple assault victimizations against those with disabilities.



Violent Crime by Disability Type

- Among the disability types measured, the rate of violent victimization was highest for persons with cognitive disabilities.
- Persons with cognitive disabilities had a higher rate of violent victimization, excluding simple assault, than other disability types.

Violent Crime by Reporting to the Police

- Violent crime against persons with disabilities was less likely to be reported to the police
- Violence against those with cognitive disabilities was less likely to be reported to police than violence against those with no disabilities
- Nineteen percent (19%) of rapes or sexual assaults against persons with disabilities were reported to police, which was lower than the percentage for victims without disabilities.
- Robberies and simple assaults against persons with disabilities were less likely to be reported to police than robberies and simple assaults against persons without disabilities.

MORE RESEARCH

According to a 2017 study in The Lancet Global Health:⁶

- Elder abuse seems to affect 1 in 6 older adults worldwide, which is roughly 141 million people.
- A 2014 study in the Journal of General Internal Medicine, in which researchers studied nearly 4,000 older residents of New York state. They found that financial abuse afflicted nearly 5% of them during their lifetime, with Black people at higher risk.

PER THE AUTHORS:

“If a new disease entity were discovered that afflicted nearly one in 20 adults over their older lifetimes and differentially struck our most vulnerable subpopulations, a public health crisis would likely be declared,” the authors write. “Our data suggest that financial exploitation of older adults is such a phenomenon.”

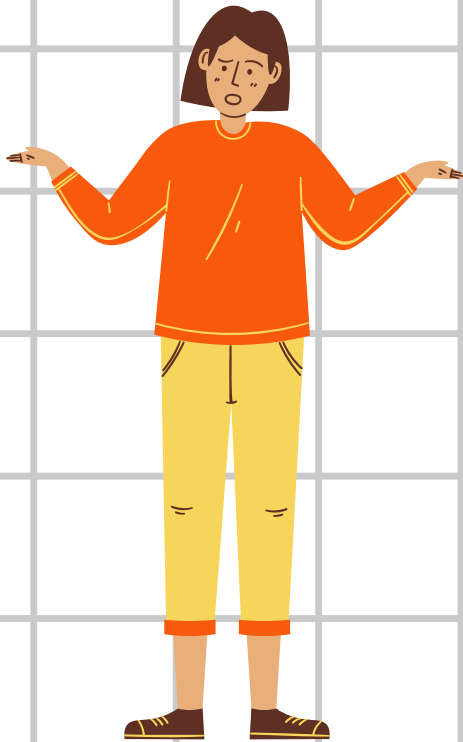
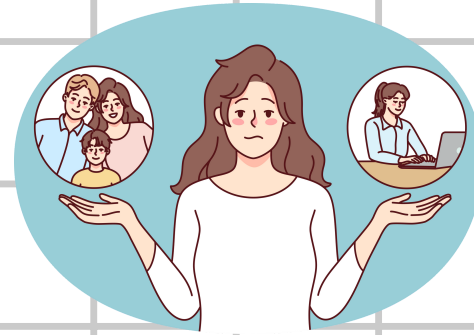


In another study conducted by, Yongjie Yon, et al., “Elder abuse prevalence in community settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis,” a meta-analysis of 52 international studies in 28 countries was conducted:

- The authors report that “elder abuse seems to affect 1 in 6 older adults worldwide, which is roughly 141 million people.”
- Psychological abuse was reported most often, followed by financial abuse, neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse.
- The authors report that if the proportion of elder abuse cases remain constant through the aging global population, they expect elder abuse victims to number 330 million by 2050.

DIGNITY OF RISK

Like us, individuals we support have the right to make choices, take risks, and experience the consequences of their own choices - **EVEN IF those choices may result in failure or harm.**



Your Role:

While it is your job to keep people safe, it is **NOT** your job to make choices for the people you support. You are responsible for educating the person you are supporting so that they can make an informed choice.

EXAMPLES:

The person you support **LOVES** bowling, but is unsteady on their feet. You can educate the person supported about the potential risks of bowling while being unsteady on their feet.

“The floor is slick when you bowl, you are unsteady on your feet, so you might fall. Is this still something you want to do?”

The person you support wants to learn how to ride a bike. You’re concerned because to learn to ride a bike means falling a lot. You can educate the person on the potential risks of falling off a bike, and then ask them if that is still something they want to do.

“Learning how to ride a bike can be hard, and you might fall off a lot and potentially hurt yourself. Is this still something you want to do?”

Educate the person supported about potential risks/harm resulting from their choices.

Make sure that you are **respecting the persons choice.**

INFORMED CHOICE



Informed choice emphasizes the right of individuals to make decisions based on comprehensive, transparent, and unbiased information.

Informed choice serves as a cornerstone for autonomy, respecting individuals as capable decision-makers in matters that impact their lives.



INFORMED CHOICE & DIGNITY OF RISK GO HAND IN HAND

EXAMPLE:

An example of making an informed choice is when a patient is presented with different treatment options, including potential risks & benefits. The patient is then able to make an informed choice - they have all the information needed to understand the risks and benefits of each treatment plan.

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**THANK YOU FOR LEARNING MORE ABOUT ABUSE,
NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION FOR ANE AWARENESS
MONTH! PLEASE BE SURE TO JOIN THE SCHEDULED
ACTIVITIES THIS MONTH!**



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