



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

DFPS News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 1, 2015

Stopping Elder Abuse is Everyone's Business

Confirmed cases of abuse & neglect are on the rise again

May is Elder Abuse Prevention Month, a time to learn about elder abuse and what you can do to help. It's everyone's business to help prevent abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of those who are elderly or have disabilities.

Texas Adult Protective Services (APS) is involved in a grass-roots effort, throughout the month, that brings together community, civic, and professional groups to focus attention and resources on preventing and stopping elder abuse. This includes conferences, presentations, and other events that increase understanding and cooperation in addressing the issue.

See a list of events around the state at EveryonesBusiness.org and please share them with your friends, neighbors, congregations, and co-workers.

"Preventing elder abuse becomes more important every year as our state ages," said Beth Engelking, DFPS assistant commissioner for APS. "There are more than 3 million people in Texas who are 65 or older. Everyone needs to know how to recognize and respond to the signs of elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation."

State law requires anyone who suspects abuse, neglect, or exploitation to report it. You can do that by calling the Texas Abuse Hotline at **1-800-252-5400** or report online at www.TxAbuseHotline.org.

Last year, APS completed 81,681 investigations involving people living at home and confirmed 54,731 of them were victims of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation. Sixty percent of those victims were elderly and the rest were younger adults with disabilities. After a downtick in 2013, the number of validated cases was on the rise again 2014, and that upward trend is expected to continue as our population ages.

Less than a year ago, APS put new tools in place that help its caseworkers determine how to address their client's situations in the best way possible.

"It's a series of assessments that provide structure and help caseworkers determine if clients are safe, what services they need, and how to keep them from suffering abuse or

neglect in the future," Engelking explains.

APS Facts and Figures

- Adult Protective Services (APS) is a division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Its mission is to protect adults who are elderly or have disabilities from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. APS does this by investigating allegations and by providing or arranging for services to alleviate or prevent future maltreatment.
- APS serves Texas residents 65 years or older, and those ages 18 to 64 with a disabling condition.
- There are more than 3 million Texas residents who are 65 or older and 1.7 million people with a disability (ages 18-64).
- More information is available in the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services' [2014 Annual and Data Book](#) on the DFPS website. Also see a multi-year comparison of key APS data and statistics at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Reports_and_Data/Data_and_Stats/adult_protective_services/default.asp