



# WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Building Strong Support for Elders



## June 15<sup>th</sup> is **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

The purpose of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older people by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect.

In addition, WEAAD is in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action acknowledging the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue.

In a society that values the just treatment of all people, WEAAD reminds us that elder abuse has implications for all of us, and so it's important to find the right solutions to it. WEAAD is a call-to-action for society's individuals, organizations, and communities to educate each other on how to identify, address and prevent abuse so we can all do our part to support everyone as we age.

**Join us in empowering older people and our communities this WEAAD!**

**Stopping Elder Abuse is  
Everyone's Business.**

**Visit us online for more resources**  
[everyonesbusiness.org](http://everyonesbusiness.org)  
[eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home](http://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home)

### **What is Elder Abuse?**

Elder abuse is the mistreatment or harming of an older person. It can include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, along with neglect or financial exploitation.

### **Who is at Risk?**

Elder abuse can occur anywhere – in the home, in nursing homes, or other institutions. It affects adults across all socioeconomic groups, cultures, and races.

### **What Should I Do If I Suspect Elder Abuse?**

Report your concerns! Remember, no matter how old we are, everyone deserves to live free from abuse. Most cases of elder abuse go undetected. If you notice some signs of abuse, it is our duty to report it to the proper authorities.

Learn the signs to build community supports and prevent elder abuse.

### **Plan!**

Talk with family members, friends, and professionals that you trust and plan for your future.

### **Be Cautious!**

Unscrupulous people like to target older adults.

Trust but verify, before you commit to anything.

### **Stay Connected!**

It's important to stay engaged as we age.

Keep in touch regularly with others, isolation can make you vulnerable to abuse. Call or visit your older loved ones and ask how they are doing.

### **Report!**

Act immediately if someone you know displays any signs of abuse.

### **Call 911**

If you or someone you know is in a life threatening situation.

### **Texas Abuse Hotline**

**1-800-252-5400**

**TxAbuseHotline.org**

When you suspect, abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation.



Texas Department of  
**Family and Protective Services**  
Adult Protective Services



# Indicators of Abuse, Neglect, and Financial Exploitation

Everyone at any age deserves justice. One of the most important ways we can support people's safety and wellbeing is to be on the lookout for warning signs.

## Physical Abuse Indicators

- Cuts
- Punctures
- Burns
- Bruises
- Welts

## Sexual Abuse Indicators

- Sexually transmitted disease
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Rectal Bleeding

## Verbal and Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Fear of perpetrator
- Low self-esteem
- Depression

## Signs of Physical Abuse

- Injury that has not been cared for properly
- Injury that is inconsistent with the explanation for cause
- Pain from touching
- Forced isolation

## Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Inner arm/thigh bruising
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Pregnancy

## Neglect Indicators

- Malnourishment
- Dehydration
- Over/under medication
- Lack of utilities
- Poor personal hygiene
- Disorientation

## Signs of Neglect

- Dehydration or malnutrition without illness or related cause
- Inappropriate administration of medication
- Frequent use of hospital or health care or "doctor shopping"
- Sunken eyes, cheeks or poor coloration
- Soiled clothing or bed
- Lack of personal effect, pleasant living environment, personal items

## Exploitation Indicators

- Unusual activity in bank account
- Caregivers name added to bank account
- Unpaid bills
- Alleged Victim unaware of monthly income

## Signs of Exploitation

- Caregiver refuses to spend money on the alleged victim
- Alleged victim unaware of reason for appointment with banker or attorney
- A recent change to a will when alleged victim seems incapable of writing a will

## Behavioral Signs Alleged Victim May Display

- Fear
- Anxiety, agitation
- Anger
- Isolation, withdrawal
- Depression
- Non-responsiveness, resignation, ambivalence
- Contradictory statements, implausible stories
- Hesitation to talk openly
- Confusion, disorientation

## Caregiver Warning Signs

- Prevents alleged victim from speaking or seeing visitors
- Anger, indifference, or aggressive behavior towards alleged victim
- History of substance abuse, mental illness, criminal behavior, or family violence
- Lack of affection toward alleged victim
- Displays inappropriate affections towards alleged victim
- Conflicting accounts of incidents
- Withholds affection
- Talks of alleged victim as a burden