The Center of Excellence in Elder Abuse and Neglect believes that this world can exist. Our mission is to promote aging with joy and to eliminate aging in fear.

Elder abuse diminishes the very spirit of our society. Elder abuse causes wounds, physical, emotional, and financial, that may never heal. It affects millions of older adults in America every year and leads to severe consequences: nursing home placement, depression, and even death.

Through direct service, research, advocacy, public awareness, and education, the Center of Excellence in Elder Abuse and Neglect serves victims of abuse, their loved ones and professionals. Based in the Program in Geriatrics at the University of California, Irvine School of Medicine, this Center was established in 2005 and has already helped thousands of people in the United States.

Additional Resources

What is Adult Protective Services?

Adult Protective Services or “APS” is the social services program that receives and investigates reports of possible abuse of seniors and/or adults with disabilities. APS, or a similar program that might go by a different name, exists in almost every county in the U.S.

APS staff are social workers and nurses. They are not law enforcement or immigration enforcement. APS’s goal is to make sure the older person is safe and being respected. They listen to the needs of the elder or adult with a disability and work with them to meet their goals.

For the APS program nearest you, call 800-677-1116 (toll free) or go to www.ncea.aoa.gov.

For more information or to make a donation, please visit us online at www.centeronelderabuse.org or give us a call at 714-456-5530.

Thank you!

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The Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse and Neglect believes that a world without elder abuse can exist. Our mission is to promote aging with dignity and to eliminate aging in fear.

ELIMINATING AGING IN FEAR…

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Why does elder abuse occur?

What we know about elder abuse:

- Abuse is perpetrated by family members in 90 percent of all cases.
- Abusers often exhibit risk factors such as substance abuse, mental illness, and financial dependence on the elder.
- Adult children and spouses are most often in a position to abuse or neglect.
- Many cases of elder abuse occur behind closed doors.
- It is estimated that for every one case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect reported to authorities, about five more go unreported. (National Elder Abuse Incidence Study, 1998)
- Depending on the type of abuse, 0.5 to 10 percent of older Americans have experienced mistreatment by a caregiver or a close contact (National Research Council, Bonnie & Wallace, eds., 2003.)
- Unfavorable attitudes toward older adults, not knowing where to report abuse, and not wanting to get involved all impede calls to Adult Protective Services.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ELDER ABUSE

Things to watch out for:

GENERAL: Reluctance to provide access or answer questions; implausible, vague or conflicting explanations for situation; irregular pattern of behavior.

HOME: Newspapers/mail accumulating; lack of attention to house; large numbers of people using home; drug activity; odd noises; bad odors.

FINANCIAL: Irregular pattern of spending/withdrawals; frequent purchases of inappropriate items; withdrawals made in spite of penalties; bills not paid; utilities turned off; presence of “new best friend.”

What do I do if I suspect elder abuse?

Calling Adult Protective Services or LTC Ombudsman with your suspicions is a courageous and ethical thing to do. You could save a life. Even if you are not sure – just worried. You will not get in trouble if you report suspected elder abuse in good faith. Go to www.centeronelderabuse.org for more information and to find links to these organizations.

Every citizen can take action to fight elder abuse! Here’s how:

- Learn about elder abuse’s warning signs. Know where to call to get help for an abused elder in your area. To find out how to report suspected elder abuse in your area, call 1.800.677.1116.
- Stay in touch with older loved ones. Isolation can make seniors more vulnerable to predators. Calling and visiting often can help to prevent abuse.
- Support your local Adult Protective Services and Long-term Care Ombudsman programs. Adult Protective Services (APS) is the county program that receives and investigates reports of elder abuse. The Ombudsman program receives reports of abuse in licensed facilities like nursing homes. Both programs are chronically underfunded even though they provide life-saving services to some of the most vulnerable in our society.