



Administration for Community Living



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

“Elder abuse is wrong. To fight it effectively, we need to build and sustain research, prevention, law enforcement and services.”

Assistant Secretary on Aging Kathy Greenlee

National Center on Elder Abuse

“Any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or a serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult.”

Elder Abuse can include:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse
- Neglect
- Financial Exploitation
- Self-Neglect
- Spiritual Abuse

Examples of Physical Abuse

- Intoxicated son hits elderly parent
- Elder hit by adult child
- Assault/battery on grandpa—wouldn't give grandson keys to the truck.
- Elderly man with dementia hitting wife.
- Daughter hit elder because of his needs & health
- Granddaughter slapping elder
- Drug taking/alcohol

Emotional Abuse

- Drunk/mad relatives enter elder home yelling, scaring the elder
- Grown children moving in with elder—drinking, fighting, taking their money, chasing away caregivers
- Family violence—elder afraid to testify
- Confining elder to one room/no interaction with family
- Elderly mother contacting police to remove intoxicated adult children from home.

Emotional Abuse – p.2

- Children abuse alcohol in elder's home
- Verbal abuse by young family members
- Yelling mean things to parents
- Children threatening parents/grandparents with nursing home if they couldn't live with her.
- Verbal abuse to elderly parents
- Not listening when elders speak.
- Treating them as if they don't matter any more.

Neglect

- Elder confined to home...family wouldn't provide support
- Elder complains of loneliness ...is left alone
- Family not checking on elder unable to take care of self
- Family goes away leaving elder without food
- Failing to obtain proper medical treatment for elder
- Family locks elder in home
- Lack of family care & attention
- Family too busy to take care of elders
- Not visiting or taking elders to gatherings
- Lack family care and attention

Sexual Abuse

- Grandma raped by nephew, wouldn't talk—ashamed
- Elder raped and killed
- Elder “courted” by young mother. Elder flattered and bestows gifts and loans on young woman and children. When elder realizes what has happened he is broke and too ashamed to seek help.

Exploitation

- Granddaughter wiped out grandma's bank account.
- Misusing elder's monthly check & not paying for food or bills for elder.
- Family gambled away elder's only income
- Family takes elder's personal items
- Family took elder's check

Exploitation p.2

- Grand child took elder's car & wrecked it.
- Grandchildren pressured elder for money
- Family cashed elder's checks & locked elder in their room.
- Family borrowed money and didn't pay back
- Granddaughter & boyfriend moved in and supported by elder
- Taking advantage by relatives..using their homes to park grandchildren to feed, clothe, babysit, etc.

Spiritual Abuse

- Not taking elders to ceremonies
- Taking elders regalia and personal items

- *Wounding my Spirit* (Yakama Nation Elder Abuse Awareness, 1985)

What Causes Elder Abuse and Neglect?

- Loss of culture?
- Caregiver Stress?
- Violent society?
- Entitlement?
- Greed?
- Ageism?
- Power and control?
- All of the above?

Why does it happen?

- Trusting nature
- Perceived to be easy to fool or con
- Have steady source of income
- Isolation
- Other?

Financial Affects of Elder Abuse

- Restitution often not forthcoming or too late
- No time to rebuild assets
- Loss of choices for older adult; loss of independence
- Reliance on others for financial support
- Intergenerational transfer of wealth impacted
- More quickly spending down to Medicaid

High Risk Situations

- People with inadequately treated mental health and / or substance abuse problems are more likely to be abusive
- People who feel stressed / burdened / resentful are more likely to be abusive
- Providing care for an older adult who is physically combative and/or verbally abusive

Screening for Abuse

- Best practice: all clients should be screened at intake
- Normalize talking about a difficult topic
- Potential to catch abuse in its early stage and prevent it from escalating

Ask the Elder

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Financial Abuse...Ask the Elders

- Planning Ahead
- Staying Connected
- Being Cautious
- Reporting Their Suspicions

Now...what can we all do?

- Join with NIEJI & NCEA to address Elder Abuse in Indian Country
- Work with tribal government to get elder abuse into tribal code.
- Spread the word—share information about elder abuse, signs, resources.
- Assist in identifying the problem locally
- Support elder abuse prevention & community awareness

National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative

- The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) and the Administration on Aging (AoA) offered first-time funding for elder abuse prevention/ research in Indian Country
- Establish NIEJI
- Website: www.nieji.org
- E-Mail: nieji@med.und.edu
- Phone: 701-777-2023/855-834-1572
- Develop Resources —
- Tribal/State Resource with interactive map
- Contacting all tribes about Elder Abuse Code
- Develop Focus Group protocol

NIEJI — Year One

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NIEJI – Year 2

- Conduct focus groups •
- Indigenous elders representative from IHS regions
- Develop model elder abuse codes •
- Model codes will be regionally specific
- Prepare relevant journal articles on elder abuse •
- Make available on website

NIEJI -- Year 3

- Develop model elder abuse code toolkits
- Will be regionally specific
- Available online
- Technical Assistance for tribes
- Native American Restorative Justice Conference
- Present findings from focus groups
- Provide training for stakeholders
- Focus on respecting and honoring our elders

NIEJI Staff

- **Principal Investigator-Twyla Baker-Demaray, MS, –**
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Cherokee, Choctaw
- **Research Director -Paula Carter Ph.D., –**
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Elder Abuse Prevention Intervention Grants

- Grants are intended to develop or test elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation prevention interventions in Indian Country.
- Federally Recognized Tribes eligible to apply under Option 2
- Due Date: July 31, 2012
- Approximately \$500,000 available for 2 – 3 cooperative agreements
- Three year project period
- Program Announcement and FAQs:
<http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/index.aspx>

Contact Information

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