

# 5 things EVERYONE can do to prevent Elder Abuse:

## 1. **Listen**

Listen to older people and caregivers to understand their challenges and provide support

## 2. **Educate**

Educate one another about the signs of abuse and how to get help

## 3. **Report**

Report suspected abuse or neglect as soon as possible

## 4. **Build**

Build a community that fosters social connections and supports

## 5. **Reach out**

Reach out to professional services for support where available

# Building Community Supports to Prevent Elder Abuse



*This brochure was created in conjunction with:*



**US Aging**  
usaging.org



**National Center on Elder Abuse**  
855-500-3537  
ncea.acl.gov



**Elder Abuse is preventable** – and everyone has a role to play.

This material was completed for the National Center on Elder Abuse situated at Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California, in partnership with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and is supported in part by a grant (No. 90ABRC000101-02) from the Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Grantees carrying out projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Therefore, points of view or opinions do not necessarily represent official ACL or HHS policy.

**Keck School of Medicine of USC**

## What is Elder Abuse?

Elder Abuse, the mistreatment or harming of an older person, is an injustice that we all need to prevent and address.

Elder Abuse can occur in both community and institutional settings and can take many forms, including:

**Physical**

**Emotional/Psychological**

**Sexual**

**Financial**

**Neglect**

*Multiple forms of abuse can occur at the same.*

## What Causes Elder Abuse?

Elder Abuse can occur when strong social supports are not in place to keep us connected as we age. While anyone is potentially at risk of abuse, some factors can increase one's risk of experiencing abuse:

- social isolation
- lack of access to support services and community resources
- physical, mental, or emotional needs in carrying out daily activities

## Signs of Elder Abuse



### Emotional & Behavioral Signs

- Increased fear or anxiety
- Unusual changes in behavior or sleep
- Isolation from friends or family
- Withdrawal from normal activities



### Physical Signs

- Dehydration or unusual weight loss
- Missing daily living aids (glasses, walker, or medication)
- Unexplained injuries, bruises, cuts, or sores
- Unsanitary living conditions and poor hygiene
- Unattended medical needs
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Sexually transmitted diseases without clear explanation



### Financial Signs

- Fraudulent signatures on financial documents
- Unpaid bills
- Unusual or sudden changes in spending patterns, will, or other financial documents

## Reporting Abuse

Programs such as Adult Protective Services (APS) and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman are here to help.

**Report suspected abuse or neglect in the community setting:**

**Report suspected abuse or neglect in long-term care facilities:**

*For serious and immediate emergencies, CALL 911.*

