

## Volume 13 No. 1-2 – July-August 2010

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### Fifth Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Generates Attention, Activity, and Commentary from Coast to Coast and Beyond

From the Republic of Gambia to Belgrade, Serbia, community organizations, government agencies, coalitions, and others marked World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) 2010 with a wide-ranging spectrum of events and initiatives. According to the [International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#), the organization that initiated WEAAD in 2006, the observance was recognized in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and Oceania, making a truly global statement that elder abuse is never acceptable.

Senior centers, youth clubs, universities, Main Streets and malls, town halls and other government forums were among the venues for balloon lifts, shred-a-thons, art and essay competitions, professional conferences, senior

expos and health fairs, press events, and proclamations. Students, seniors, workers, volunteers, and groups both large and small demonstrated creativity, dedication, and enthusiasm as they raised awareness among the public and professionals alike.

In this issue, we open with a recap of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day observance which, by all indications, was a resounding success. We take a look at how the internet and increased media coverage was integral to this year's success. We also highlight a new national collaboration among financial professionals, APS, and medical professionals that launched on WEAAD to combat elder financial exploitation. State and local events in the U.S. not previously featured in the E-News are included in this edition, along with an update from the United Kingdom. Finally, we look to the future, considering how to harness the energy of WEAAD to aid in the fight against elder abuse year round.

### Technology Advances the Message

The internet was a vital channel for spreading the word about WEAAD 2010 and elder abuse in general. Announcements appeared in press releases, electronic newsletters, email blasts, on web pages, social marketing networks, and in blogs. Along with print media coverage, television and radio also broadcast features alerting their audiences to the risks of elder abuse and resources to address it.

### Leveraging the World Wide Web

Commentaries and event invitations were not only carried on aging network and health organization internet sites (such as those of OWL, the Academy on Violence and Abuse, and the National Council on Aging) but also by major communication channels including CNN's blog, [Paging Dr. Gupta](#).

The online editions of many state, national, and international newspapers carried articles and editorials relating to various aspects of elder mistreatment, ageism, and tips for safeguarding seniors.

Notably, the [White House Blog](#) recognized WEAAD in its June 15<sup>th</sup> Seniors and Social Security commentary. The blog linked to news of the [first federal WEAAD commemoration](#) hosted by the Administration on Aging (AoA) and other Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Justice agencies.

For profit organizations also used the internet to focus attention on elder mistreatment. For example, *Page 1 Solutions*, an internet marketing firm whose client portfolio includes legal services, rallied a number of their clients to feature blogs on elder abuse awareness and prevention. Tara Dunn, former marketing specialist for the company, sent NCEA links to over a dozen blogs posted by Page 1 clients throughout the country. According to Ms. Dunn, the firm also observed WEAAD in-house by wearing purple and sharing lavender-frosted cupcakes. The company intends to expand upon efforts to raise elder abuse awareness through their network in the future.

### Radio, TV, Satellite, and Film Extend Coverage

Many NCEA contacts reported on interviews and PSAs that were aired on local stations throughout the month. But a number of more extensive and coordinated initiatives, both regional and national, were launched to draw attention and humanize the issue.

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, NBC aired the 30-minute documentary [“Be Wise, Be Aware, Prevent Elder Financial Abuse”](#) throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. The video was produced by the [Elder Financial Protection Network](#).

In Nebraska, the University of Nebraska-Omaha Television produced a 30-minute segment of the program “Consider This...” featuring Nebraska Adult Protective Services. The discussion panel included an APS Supervisor, an APS Program Specialist, and an Omaha Attorney. The segment aired twelve times on Nebraska Educational Television NET1 and NET2, and The Knowledge Network from June 17<sup>th</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup>. It was also available on-demand on The Knowledge Network throughout that week.

Nationally, on June 15<sup>th</sup>, *Link TV* broadcast [“An Age for Justice,”](#) the video created by [WITNESS](#) and the [National Council on Aging](#) and featuring the voices of elder abuse victims, their family members, and prevention advocates. [Link TV](#) is an independent, non-commercial network devoted to global issues. It is available in 32 million U.S. households through DIRECTV and the DISH Network and is accessible on many college campuses and through internet streaming. This coverage was in addition to dozens of “live” public screenings of the video taking place as part of WEAAD community observances throughout the U.S. and reported in the E-News.

Also on a national scale, for the second year, the [NCEA Elder Abuse Information Piece](#) featuring actor William Mapother was shown before movie trailers in select theaters throughout the country. The 15-second video announcement ran from May 28<sup>th</sup> through June 24<sup>th</sup>, encompassing not only WEAAD but the Memorial Day weekend which traditionally generates vigorous theater attendance.

The enhanced use of technology and more widespread media coverage surrounding WEAAD provide a springboard for engaging the public in elder abuse prevention efforts year round.

## National Partnership Launched to Address Elder Financial Exploitation

In conjunction with WEAAD, the Investor Protection Trust (IPT) released the results of the national [“IPT Elder Investor Fraud Survey”](#). The survey reveals that 7.3 million older Americans (or one in five seniors) have been financially exploited. Findings further suggest that many adult children worry about their older parents' ability to handle their finances.

IPT also announced the launch of the [Elder Investment Fraud and Financial Exploitation Prevention Project](#), a partnership with the North American Securities Administrators Association and the National Adult Protective Services Association, and also involves the American Academy of Family Physicians, the National Area Health Education Center Organization, and the National Association of Geriatric Education Centers. The partnership is intended to aid medical professionals and APS in identifying the signs of financial abuse targeting seniors and reporting these suspicions to state securities regulators.

## U.S. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Events

Each year, more and more communities organize events and activities to observe World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. This year was no different. While state and community events remain the pillar of WEAAD observances, this year the United States federal government organized two events in observance of WEAAD. Below are highlights from the federal events, as well as summaries of community events held this year. The community activities in this issue are in addition to the more than 50 U.S. events that have been highlighted in the [May](#) and [June NCEA E-News](#).

## Federal Observances

### *Washington, D.C.*

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ) and Health and Human Services collaborated to present the first federal WEAAD commemoration in Washington, DC. Panelists included Cindy Padilla, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging, (AoA); Mary Lou Leary, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, (DOJ); Tony West, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Division, (DOJ); Kathleen Quinn, Executive Director, National Adult Protective Services Association; Page Ulrey, Senior Prosecuting Attorney, King County Prosecutor’s Office, Seattle, Washington; and Bob Blancato, National Coordinator, Elder Justice Coalition. Presentations highlighted not only the challenges facing the public health, social service, and criminal justice communities, but federal efforts to prevent and address the problem. ([Click here to read the speakers’ commentaries.](#))

### *Anaheim, CA*

Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) Director Carbon and Counsel to the Associate Attorney General Mala Adiga joined Anaheim Chief of Police John Welter; the Anaheim Family Justice Center; the University of California, Irvine’s Elder Abuse Forensic Center; the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL); Human Options (the local victim service provider); and the Archstone Foundation for a discussion about promising practices and community collaborations for working with elder abuse survivors. NCALL also announced the release of the film, *Walking in Our Shoes*, an OVW-funded national elder abuse training video produced through a grant to the National District Attorney’s Association. The film features an introduction from *The View’s* Barbara Walters, a member of the Justice Department’s “Join the List” campaign, a group of more than 100 celebrities including actors, musicians, and athletes, who have lent their names to the

department's effort to raise awareness. (Source: [Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs Press Release.](#))

## State and Local Events

### *Delaware*

Members of the Delaware Attorney General's Senior Protection Initiative (SPI) reported that the task force focused on a number of strategic communications efforts. Posters were distributed and displayed widely in senior centers, public buildings, and in private businesses throughout the state. Government and other organizational web sites promoted awareness messages, reporting numbers, and urged everyone to wear purple. The state's Department of Health and Human Services marquis once again featured headlines on WEAAD and elder abuse prevention. Media coverage included op-eds in local newspapers, radio interviews throughout the week, and a rolling message on cable access TV. SPI members Margaret Bailey and Maureen Monagle targeted hospitals and health care centers with information to disseminate through their respective channels.

### *Florida*

Chrystal Holmes of [Elder Options](#) reported on the following activities taking place in her region:

Lake County sponsored a community forum at Hammocks Promise focusing on the increased vulnerability of adults with dementia, featuring speakers from the Alzheimer's Association as well as other health care and legal professionals.

The Ocala/Marion County Adult Protective Services Unit attended the Marion County Commissioner's Meeting for the signing of the Proclamation of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and then hosted an Open House and distributed brochures and literature on elder abuse and elder services.

Staff members were also on hand to answer questions.

A Senior Safety Summit was held in Lecanto at the Citrus County Resource Center on June 15<sup>th</sup>, presented by the Citrus Alliance Against Adult Abuse (C4A). The event featured law enforcement, APS, and other professionals discussing safety strategies, crime prevention, and wellness issues.

The Alachua County SALT Council held Senior Safety Summit 2010 at the Thelma Boltin Center in Gainesville, featuring law enforcement, APS, and other professionals discussing safety strategies, crime prevention, and wellness issues. Also, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners marked the day with a proclamation.

### *Maine*

In Maine, Governor Baldacci signed a proclamation on WEAAD, and recognized the efforts of state employees, other professionals, and advocates who work to enhance the safety of older citizens throughout the state.

### *Massachusetts*

Gillian Suslow, Community Relations Intern for [Ethos](#), reported that their organization hosted a public screening of [An Age for Justice](#) in Boston on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The event, which took place at the Boston Police Department, was followed by presentations from Dan Conely, Suffolk County DA, Sandy Hovey, Director of Ethos Protective Services, and the Boston police. Ethos is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting independence, dignity, and well-being of the elderly and disabled through quality home and community-based services.

Teresa Kourtz of [Old Colony Elder Services](#) shared news of a community forum that took place at the Brockton City Hall. Speakers included: Anne



Hartstein, Secretary of Elder Affairs; Deb Fogerty, Director of Protective Services; Diane DiGiorgi, Executive Director of Old Colony Services; Timothy Cruz, Plymouth County DA; and Police Officer/Elder Officer Tom Donahue. The event also featured Intake Worker Pat Foley who provided statistics on elder abuse and read actual stories of elders who had survived abusive situations and continued on afterwards, successfully, with the help of the protective services department. According to Ms. Kourtz, the day was accented with purple; participants donned purple and violet balloons and ribbons were distributed along with educational materials on reporting abuse. Ms. Kourtz also publicly recognized the dedicated professionals for their unselfish work in the area of investigating abuse and gave each one a purple carnation.

#### **Missouri**

According to Marta Fontaine, APS planner and legal services developer from Jefferson City, despite prior statewide outreach initiatives, many senior center participants previously appeared uninformed about elder abuse. Therefore, in conjunction with WEAAD 2010, the Missouri Health and Senior Services Department hosted information sessions at 20 senior centers throughout the state to discuss the signs and symptoms of elder abuse, provide state reporting information, and outline available resources. For more on this series of events, including a listing of presentations, [Click Here](#).

#### **Montana**

In conjunction with WEAAD, the *Billings Gazette* recognized the efforts of the Partnerships for Elder Protection (PEP) with a *Golden Pen Award*. PEP was created by the [Prevention of Elder Abuse](#), a program of Big Sky Senior Services, Inc. and consists of representatives from 35 community organizations. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, PEP held its first fundraising event, a shred-a-thon, at the King Avenue Walmart. Shredding personal financial documents is one way to reduce the risk of

financial exploitation and identify theft. [Click here](#) for more information on PEP's Golden Pen Award.

#### **New York**

[Equinox, Inc.'s](#) *Elder Abuse Project* provides community education and case management services including: assistance with health, housing, transportation, and financial needs; legal advocacy; counseling; and coordination of services. This year, the community services organization joined forces with Pirro Law Firm, LLC and Martin, Harding and Marzotti Law Firm, LLC to sponsor the *Elder Empowerment Walk* on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The event, part of the Freihofer Community Walk, took place in Washington Park in Albany. Empowerment walkers raised donations to support emergency services for elder abuse victims.

#### **Nebraska**

Madhavi Bhadbhade, SMP Director and Legal Services Developer from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services reported on a full spectrum of WEAAD observances that were spearheaded by the Nebraska State Unit on Aging and state and local APS agencies. In addition to the extensive airing of the University of Nebraska-Omaha Television production on elder abuse described previously, they collaborated with other organizations to sponsor their own two-week run of the NCEA Elder Abuse Information Piece on 24 screens at the Omaha Oak View AMC. Ms. Bhadbhade also described the following additional activities that took place throughout the state.

Print and multi-media were used extensively to raise public awareness. A 15-second radio PSA ran statewide on June 15<sup>th</sup> on Nebraska Education Telecommunications public radio, and a 30-second PSA aired in different regions on WEAAD. A news release was sent to newspapers with information on elder abuse prevention. A poster and fact sheet on elder abuse were adapted from NCEA materials

and distributed by various partners such as APS, Domestic Violence Programs, and Area Agencies on Aging. WEAAD posters were also sent to 22 sexual assault programs throughout the state. The State Ombudsman Program hosted several screenings of [An Age for Justice](#) at senior centers and long term care facilities throughout the state. A student intern from the Adult Protective Services Southeast Service Area created and distributed flyers and bookmarks to area churches and smaller restaurants in the area.

Multidisciplinary partnerships were also leveraged extensively. The State Unit on Aging partnered with the Nebraska Health Care Association and Nebraska Assisted Living Association to observe WEAAD in long term care facilities. Adult Protective Services Western Service Area One staff members participated in a training session for volunteer Ombudsmen that also included a number of consumers, as well as staff members, from the Golden Living Nursing Home in Scottsbluff. Adult Protective Services Northern Service Area Bright Horizons domestic violence program and the local Area Agency on Aging program submitted a Letter to the Editor discussing WEAAD and providing their hotline number.

#### **Nevada**

With support from the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) and the [Administration for Native Americans](#), the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribal Senior Center hosted an elder abuse awareness day in the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribal Gymnasium on June 8<sup>th</sup>. The event featured an elder abuse panel discussion with representatives from local, state, and tribal authorities and agencies. Presenters discussed the complexities of elder abuse and provided information about their services and programs. The day also included lunch and a prize raffle.

#### **North Dakota**

The [National Resource Center on Native American Aging](#) at the University of North Dakota's (UND) Center for Rural Health and the [Colorado Injury Control Research Center](#) teamed up to host a free dinner and community event on the UND campus in Grand Forks. Presentations focused on themes of traditional values and bridging generational cultural gaps. The evening also included an End Elder Abuse T-shirt designing activity.

#### **Ohio**

Gerry Van Noy, information and assistance specialist at the [Area Agency on Aging 8](#) in Ohio, reported on a spectacular series of events that took place in the region. For the second year, the AAA organized a balloon release at the O'Neill Senior Center in Marietta, but this year expanded efforts to include two new sites, City Park and Belpre Senior Centers. At each venue, the balloon release capped off proclamations by government dignitaries and presentations made by aging services, law enforcement, and other professionals.

The ribboned balloons were donated by an area vendor who provides balloon art for senior expos and other regional events. At each site, 50 purple balloons were distributed to seniors, staff members, and others in attendance, many also clad in shades of purple, the official color of WEAAD. The balloons were released simultaneously at 12:30 PM. Ms. Van Noy hopes to increase participation in this event so that ultimately all eight counties served by the AAA will take part. [The events created a brilliant display of solidarity.](#)

#### **Oregon**

In Oregon, Governor Theodore Kulongoski and Secretary of State Kate Brown signed proclamations recognizing June 15<sup>th</sup> as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The Multnomah County

Board of Commissioners also proclaimed the observance. [Elders in Action](#), a volunteer organization whose mission is to "assure a vibrant community through the active involvement of older adults" urged residents to wear purple on June 15<sup>th</sup>, and to view the [Multnomah County's elder abuse awareness video online](#).

### **Pennsylvania**

Erie County provides an excellent example of how young people can make an impact in the fight against elder abuse. After being shocked by a research assignment describing the hidden but devastating nature of elder abuse, a handful of social work majors in Erie County decided to mount the area's first WEAAD event.

Amanda Merski, entering her senior year at Edinboro University this fall, informed NCEA about [Stepping Out Against Elder Abuse](#), a project that she and fellow students Julee Gilbert, Kimberly Phillips, and Mariya Sokolyuk initiated this spring. The rally took place on June 19<sup>th</sup> at Perry's Square in Downtown Erie. The students gained the support of the local APS agency, the District Attorney's Office, and the Sheriff's Department's Triad. The event featured the Erie County DA Jack Daneri, and Sgt. Joe Spusta, who works with the DA's Elder Abuse Task Force. They discussed risk factors, potential signs and symptoms, and perpetrator characteristics of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as well as how to report suspected mistreatment.

The students also sold event T-shirts to raise money to benefit the task force's efforts. Old cell phones were collected for the Triad's emergency cell phone project. According to Ms. Merski, the organizers received a great deal of media coverage. The rally was featured in three TV news broadcasts, the local newspaper, and on five radio stations. The group is already planning to expand the effort for WEAAD 2011!

### **Texas**

In San Antonio, the Coalition of Advocates for Adult Protective Services (CAAPS) hosted a public forum, "Elder Care Around the World." The event featured representatives from several different cultures who discussed the issues of elder care and elder abuse from their respective backgrounds. The mission of CAAPS, affiliated with Texas APS Region 8, is to enhance the quality of seniors' lives through education and advocacy.

### **Thank You!**

NCEA would like to extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to the many E-News readers who generously contributed reports on WEAAD efforts during the past several months. We invite you to share news of how your community is working to address elder abuse at any time by sending us an [email](#).

## **WEAAD Around the World and an Update from the United Kingdom**

The purpose of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is to raise awareness of the abuse, neglect and exploitation of older people, wherever it may occur. Since its inception in 2006, an increasing number of communities around the world are reporting they are taking part in the global effort to draw attention to, and raise awareness of, the many different forms of abuse that elders may experience. Many varied activities occurred this year at regional and local levels in many different countries. Conferences, rallies, and seminars took place. Literature was distributed and balloons released. Coffee mornings and sponsored events were held to mark the observance.

### **International Observances**

WEAAD was observed at the international level on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in Toronto, Canada. Led by the [International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#) (INPEA), the organization that initiated

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the aims of the day were to discuss events and initiatives, current research, and progress reports about elder abuse throughout the world.

[WEAAD Around the World Global Reports 2010](#), available from the INPEA website, features news of international observances. Please visit the INPEA website on a regular basis as the year progresses to obtain information about forthcoming global events in relation to WEAAD and elder abuse more generally.

## Reports from the United Kingdom

### *Policy Developments in the U.K.*

In England and Wales, policy guidance for health and social service professionals responding to allegations of abuse of vulnerable adults was introduced in 2000. Elder abuse is covered within the policy guidance which is in the process being reviewed and updated. There has been active discussion about whether there should be legislation in this area in the form of one single consolidating Act, similar to Scotland's "Adult Support and Protection Act, 2007." The Act, introduced in the autumn of 2008, requires, among other things, the establishment of committees or "boards" on local levels responsible for safeguarding adults who are at risk of harm.

In the spring of 2010, it appeared that such legislation may have been forthcoming in order to ensure that statutory Adult Safeguarding Boards were in place at local levels. Adult Safeguarding Boards are multi-agency committees that consist of representatives of all the different organizations (public, private and voluntary) that might be concerned with adult protection in that locality. The Boards meet on a regular basis to ensure that there are appropriate arrangements, systems, and processes in place to safeguard vulnerable adults in that local area. Boards are also responsible for developing and implementing strategic level

direction for organizations involved in adult protection, and for monitoring and reviewing these arrangements on a regular, at least annual, basis. However, due to the change of government in May 2010, we are currently awaiting more information in relation to this issue.

The existing policy guidance in England and Wales (two different policies) provides a framework for protection and responding to allegations of abuse of a vulnerable adult and the government's Adult Social Services have the lead role at the local level for the co-ordination of responses. The policy recommends a multi-agency approach to responding to and intervening in abusive situations at the local level. Where it works well and effective inter-agency partnerships have been developed, effective local systems for response have also been established.

However, because it is not mandatory for all statutory agencies to comply with the guidance (it is guidance, not an absolute legal requirement), because there is no ring-fenced finance for the development of systems and services, and because there is no mandatory training for all professionals and para-professionals working in this area, developments on the ground have been somewhat patchy.

Interventions have been developing and a range of possible service responses exists. This includes a national charity, [Action on Elder Abuse](#), established in 1993, which runs a telephone helpline and lobbies government for change/action in this area. Research is being undertaken in the field on a regular basis and the range of publications and awareness raising materials that have been produced is impressive. Across the country, *Action on Elder Abuse* coordinates events and reports on the WEAAD activities across the UK



### **WEAAD 2010 in the U.K.**

WEAAD is seen throughout the U.K. as a time for celebration of the development of responses to elder abuse and a key opportunity to raise awareness at local, regional, and national levels. In previous years, since WEAAD began, the range of activities that have taken place across the U.K. has been remarkable and 2010 was no exception. Over 350 events took place throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

All regions and areas of the country were covered and events were held by many organizations including local hospitals and health centers, police and probation services, banking and other financial institutions, and voluntary organizations such as [Age Concern](#) (now known as AgeUK since July 2010), as well as housing associations, residential and nursing care homes, in-home health and personal care services, day care centres, local social services, and other organizations. The range of events was extraordinary, from coffee mornings to fancy dress or non-uniform days, sponsored events and barbeques, tea and garden parties, charity walks, and balloon releases. Awareness raising, information stalls, and other community events were held in numerous locations. Staff wore purple clothing and purple ribbons were widely distributed, as well as information about the range of issues involved in this area of work.

Professionals and advocates look forward each year to joining colleagues around the world in the celebrations that take place throughout the day and the days surrounding this time.

Special thanks to Bridget Penhale, Reader in Gerontology at the University of Sheffield and European Board Member of INPEA, for contributing the international and U.K. report. Ms. Penhale is also Co-Editor of the [Journal of Adult Protection](#).

### **Editorial: Looking to the Future**

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is not only an opportunity to educate the public about the threat of elder abuse and the resources to prevent or combat that threat. It also provides an opportunity to forge new alliances to strengthen the response to elder abuse, like the [Elder Investment Fraud and Financial Exploitation Prevention Project](#). It is a time when we recognize not only the issues of elder mistreatment, but honor older individuals and those who work to enhance their health, well-being, and independence. However, WEAAD also provides an opportunity to reflect on the field at large, to consider what we have accomplished, and what remains to be done.

WEAAD has evolved over the years and is now more widely observed, and its capacity to engage people in the cause has also grown. Yet, despite this increased attention and involvement, recent research suggests that approximately 11 percent of seniors in the U.S. (not including those with cognitive impairment) have experienced some form of elder abuse (Acierno et al., 2010). As the Baby Boomers age and life expectancy increases, greater numbers of elders will be at risk. Although it would be unreasonable to expect to generate and sustain this level of attention every day, it is important to realize that the need to raise awareness, and the opportunities to do so, exist year round.

Grandparent's Day is September 12<sup>th</sup>. [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#) is observed throughout October. Both are relevant times to voice concerns and take action.

Tools such as the video [An Age for Justice](#) and the NCEA's [Join Us in the Fight Against Elder Abuse](#) campaign materials are valuable at any time, not only for WEAAD.

Technology and social media provide ongoing opportunities to stay involved and informed, such as the [Light the White House Purple for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15<sup>th</sup>](#) Facebook page. Letters to the Editor can be penned whenever an elder abuse case is in the news.

And last, but certainly not least, when everyone's had a chance to catch their breath after the hustle and bustle of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2010 subsides, let's remember that it's never too early to start planning for next year!

Reference:

Acierno, R., et al.

*Prevalence and Correlates of Emotional, Physical, Sexual, and Financial Abuse in the United States: The National Elder Mistreatment Study.*

American Journal of Public Health; Vol. 100(2), 292-297; 2010.

## In Memoriam: Robert Butler, Physician and Activist

On July 4, 2010, Robert Butler, MD, founder of the [International Longevity Center](#), died at the age of 83.

Dr. Butler became the first director of the [National Institute on Aging](#), where he made the study of Alzheimer's disease a national priority. He later founded the first geriatrics department in the U.S. at the [Mount Sinai School of Medicine](#) in New York, an institution that has long invested in cultivating awareness of elder abuse among medical professionals. In 1990, he established the International Longevity Center-USA, an organization dedicated to advancing healthy aging, promoting productive engagement throughout the lifespan, and combating ageism.

In the 1960's, Dr. Butler coined the term "ageism." In his Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Why Survive:*

*Being Old in America* (Harper & Rowe, 1975) he defined the term as:

A process of systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender. Old people are categorized as senile, rigid in thought and manner, old-fashioned in morality and skills....Ageism allows the younger generations to see older people as different from themselves; thus they subtly cease to identify with their elders as human beings....(pp12-13)

Many in the field of elder abuse prevention and response believe that ageism contributes to the under recognition of the issue, the tendency to blame the victim, and the insufficient allocation of resources to address these problems. Dr. Butler's contributions have benefited generations of older adults and their families, and his legacy will no doubt impact generations to come.

For more on the topic of ageism, see the CANE Annotated Bibliography: [Ageism](#), or visit [CANE](#) online to search for additional references.

## Hoarding by Elders

Recently, the phenomenon of hoarding has been gaining national attention. Television shows promote the spectacle of outrageously cluttered homes, but the complexity of the disorder and its treatment is often ill defined. Understanding hoarding within the elderly population is particularly important because, as a form of self-neglect, it creates unique dangers and challenges specific to elders, their families, neighbors, and social service professionals.

Three problems interact to create the disorder of hoarding: collecting too many items; an inability to get rid of the items; and disorganization. Hoarders are often unable to make decisions or remain attentive to tasks; may experience perfectionism, which can hinder task accomplishment; may be slow in completing tasks; and may be late to appointments. Depression, worry, and social anxiety often co-occur as well (Turner, Steketee, and Nauth, 2010). For most hoarders, the excessive clutter that hoarding creates impairs the use of living spaces and may severely weaken functioning (Frost, Steketee, and Williams, 2000; Kim, Steketee, and Frost, 2001).

Recent studies have shown that clinically significant hoarding is projected at four percent of the general population (Ayers, Golshan, Saxena and Wetherall, 2010). However, compulsive hoarding appears more prevalent in older, rather than younger, age groups. A study by Frost and colleagues found that 40 percent of all complaints about hoarding to health departments required involvement from elder service agencies. (Frost, Steketee, and Williams, 2000). While clinical identification of hoarding symptoms typically occurs in middle age, it is unusual for a person to begin hoarding later in life. Instead, hoarding symptoms are present beginning in childhood or adolescence with the severity increasing with age (Ayers et al., 2010).

Because hoarding is a disorder experienced throughout one's lifetime, older hoarders are more likely to have ingrained hoarding behaviors and amassed great amounts of clutter which combine to make treatment challenging. Also making the provision of treatment challenging is the age-related mental and physical decline, financial stress, and loss of family members and friends that many elders may experience (Ayers et al., 2010). Among the physical dangers for elders who hoard are increased risk of falls, food contamination, fire hazards, social isolation, and medication mismanagement.

Dr. Catherine Ayers, PhD, is Program Director of the Anxiety Disorders Clinic at the VA San Diego Healthcare System and Assistant Clinical Professor at University of California, San Diego. She received a grant in 2008 from the International Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Foundation to study psychotherapy treatment response in older adults with compulsive hoarding behaviors.

Dr. Ayers' treatment model is a specialized cognitive behavior therapy developed by psychologists Randy Frost and Gail Steketee. The preliminary data suggests that older hoarders benefit more from behavioral rather than cognitive therapy. The evaluation of thoughts and the generation of different hypothesis required in cognitive therapy may be difficult tasks for the elderly. With behavioral treatment, older hoarders are exposed to the practice of discarding items and the distressing emotional responses that this elicits. The goal is that over time, they will learn to tolerate and handle their distress.

As more attention and study is given to the disorder and treatment of hoarding, communities will hopefully become more equipped to meet the needs of older hoarders. As it is, responses to hoarding from local and state organizations are often fragmented. Some communities throughout the country have adopted coordinated responses to hoarding by equipping those who may come in contact with older hoarders, such as social service providers, with knowledge regarding appropriate agency resources available.

For more information, visit the [International OCD Foundation Hoarding Center](#) online, review the CANE Annotated Bibliography: [Compulsive Hoarding: A Form of Self-Neglect](#), or visit [CANE](#) online to search for additional references on the subject.

Special thanks to Katie Wolinsky, formerly of the Center for Community Research and Service at the University of Delaware, for contributing this article.

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Turner, K., Steketee, G., and Nauth, L. *Treating Elders with Compulsive Hoarding: A Pilot Program* Cognitive and Behavioral Practice; in press, 2010).

## Call for Promising Practices

Would you like your program to appear as a featured promising practice in the NCEA E-News? If the answer is yes, the first step is to submit the program to the NCEA [Promising Practices Clearinghouse](#)!

The NCEA Promising Practices Clearinghouse is an online tool that helps locate program models and information resources around the country related to elder abuse prevention, intervention, and public education. The database allows academics, advocates, and practitioners to search for and learn from established programs in order to strengthen their respective prevention and intervention strategies. It is also a valuable networking source.

The database is a work in progress, and the NCEA periodically updates existing programs and adds new ones. [The National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse \(NCPEA\)](#), a partner of the NCEA, is the entity charged with updating the database. The current focus for information concerns evidence-based practices, projects, or training that is based on research.

If your program is currently listed, we would greatly appreciate a review of the current posting. If you have already done so, we thank you for your help. If you know of other programs that should be listed in this database, please [send us](#) their contact information and we will send them a Promising Practice Information template. If your organization has an additional program to include, or if your program is not currently listed, please [contact us](#) for an information template. (Please note that the information you submit via the template will be posted verbatim, with the exception of grammar, spelling, and punctuation edits.)

Thank you so much for your participation, and we look forward to hearing from you!

Special thanks to Frances Vorsky of the University of Kentucky Graduate Center for Gerontology for submitting this article. Please [contact Ms. Vorsky](#) for more information or to obtain a Promising Practices Information Template.

## Call for Presentations: The 2011 Academy on Violence and Abuse Scientific Conference

The 2011 Academy on Violence and Abuse (AVA) Scientific Conference will be held April 14-16, 2011, in Minneapolis, Minnesota with the theme: *The Developing Science of Violence and Abuse: Toward a New Understanding*. AVA is now soliciting proposals for long papers, short papers, poster



presentations, and breakfast roundtables. Preference will be given to submissions that address the following topic areas:

- Research on the biological pathways through which exposure to violence and/or abuse affects physical and/or mental health;
- New findings from neuroscience and biochemistry of changes resulting from abuse;
- Promising ways of modifying or reversing health effects of exposure;
- Clinical approaches to treating abuse issues such as improving the health care response;
- Health care costs related to exposure to violence and abuse;
- Health professional education, including evidence-based practice;
- Curriculum issues related to education on violence and abuse (such as eliciting an abuse history as part of history-taking or interviewing)
- Cross-discipline curricula, engaging faculty leaders, or core competency development.

Deadline for proposals is October 15, 2010. For more information: [Click Here](#).

## **AoA Awards \$700,000 for Enhanced Legal Services for Seniors**

AoA has awarded \$700,000 to seven states to help at-risk older Americans have better access to legal services. Alaska, Delaware, Georgia, Massachusetts, Texas, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia were each awarded \$100,000 grants to develop statewide legal service delivery systems for seniors. These were the most recent demonstration grants awarded through the [Model Approaches to Statewide Legal Assistance Systems \(Model Approaches\)](#) initiative. To date, AoA has funded 30 states and the District of Columbia to develop Model Approaches projects.

The Model Approaches project is designed to assist states in integrating help-lines and other low-cost legal assistance mechanisms as critical, permanent, and sustained components of comprehensive legal services delivery programs across the country. The collaborations developed and enhanced through these grants are intended to provide greater access to affordable legal assistance to underserved seniors, particularly low-income, minority, rural, homebound, Native American, and limited-English speaking elders. These legal services can be vital to protecting the independence, well-being, and economic security of older individuals.

## **News from the Office of Victims of Crime**

### **Nominations Sought for Crime Victims' Service Awards**

As part of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW), the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) honors outstanding service providers and programs. Recipients will be honored at an awards ceremony in Washington, DC, on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Nominations are now being solicited for the 2011 awards in the following categories:

- National Crime Victim Service Award
- Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services
- Special Courage Award
- Allied Professional Award
- Ronald Wilson Reagan Public Policy Award
- Volunteer for Victims Award
- Crime Victims Fund Award
- Federal Service Award

Deadline for submission is September 15, 2010. For more information or to submit a nomination: [Click here](#).

## Register Now for 2011 NCVRW Resources

Now is the time to start preparing for NCVRW 2011. [Register online](#) to receive electronic announcements regarding events and materials such as the Resource Guide and poster, as well details about the annual prelude events.

## National Training and Technical Assistance Needs Assessment Survey

OVC invites you to provide feedback on the training and technical assistance needs of the victim services field. The online survey will be accessible through August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010. To participate, [Click Here](#).

## Online Resources: Tools for Health Care, Aging Services, and Others

A number of new publications, training materials, reports, and other resources have recently been posted on online for use by health care personnel, aging services professionals, and others:

The [Nursing Response to Elder Mistreatment Curriculum](#), produced by the International Association of Forensic Nurses with funding from OVC, provides a comprehensive, online training curriculum to better prepare nurses to identify, assess, and address elder abuse among their patients. This continuing education course integrates nursing and forensic science approaches to cover such topics as screening and assessment, documentation, photo documentation, multidisciplinary treatment, and discharge planning. The course also provides an overview of legal and ethical concerns.

In conjunction with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) unveiled a new information packet: ["Sexual Violence in Later Life."](#) All materials,

including a fact sheet and technical assistance resources, are available online. The packet, developed by Holly Ramsey-Klawnsnik, PhD in conjunction with NSVRC, pulls together what is known about sexual abuse of older individuals and includes a number of publications to assist professionals and advocates working with this special population.

[Changing Substance Abuse Patterns among Older Admissions: 1992 and 2008](#), a recent report released by the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), reveals a significant increase in substance and alcohol abuse treatment admissions among older Americans. In 2008, Americans aged 50 and over accounted for 12.2 percent of all substance abuse treatment admissions, nearly double the proportion of admissions from 1992. Alcohol abuse remains the primary cause for the majority of admissions among this cohort, but there has also been a steep increase in admissions related to illicit drug abuse. An additional concern is that an increasing percentage of admissions were precipitated by substance abuse initiated later in life, notably abuse of cocaine and prescription drugs.

The [Toolkit for Serving Diverse Communities](#), produced by the Administration on Aging, is now available. The Toolkit consists of a four-step process and questionnaire to assist professionals, advocates, and volunteers in evaluating the culturally diverse needs of older adults within their communities and then designing and delivering services to meet those needs. The core principles of the Toolkit include respect, inclusion, and sensitivity.

The Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics recently released [Older Americans 2010: Key Indicators of Well-Being](#). The publication reports on 37 indicators of well-being among five broad categories, including population, economics,

health status, health risks and behaviors, and health care. PowerPoint slides detailing relevant findings are also online. The Forum is comprised of fifteen federal agencies including the Administration on Aging, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the National Institute on Aging, and provides statistical information for use by researchers, policy makers, and others.

## Calendar of Events

### **August 16-18, 2010**

[2010 Florida Conference on Aging: Better Together: Life After 55](#)

Caribe Royale Hotel  
Orlando, FL

### **September 13-16, 2010**

[American Society on Aging East Coast 2010 Conference on Aging](#)

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Conference Center  
Philadelphia, PA

### **September 14-16, 2010**

[National Center for Victims of Crime – 2010 National Conference](#)

Hilton Riverside New Orleans Hotel  
New Orleans, LA

### **October 19-22, 2010**

[35th NCCNHR Annual Meeting and Conference](#)

Caribe Royale All-Suite Resort & Convention Center  
Orlando, FL

### **October 26-29, 2010**

[27th Annual Texas Adult Protective Services Conference: Empowering, Enriching, Protecting Lives](#)

Holiday Inn Select San Antonio International Airport  
San Antonio, TX

### **November 8-10, 2010**

["Healing the Culture of Abuse"](#)

21st Annual NAPSA Conference in partnership with the University of California, Irvine  
Westin Gaslamp Quarter San Diego  
San Diego, CA

### **December 9-11, 2010**

[2010 National Aging and Law Conference: The Changing Face of Aging](#)

Westin Hotel  
Alexandria, VA

## Credits and Contact Information

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To **subscribe** to the NCEA E-News, go to:

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- National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse
- Clearinghouse on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly, University of Delaware (CANE-UD)

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