



Partnership

for Families, Children and Adults

Partnership for Families, Children and Adults Elderly Services

Victims of Crime and
Abuse
December 2009

Dear Partners,

As our "graying" population continues to grow, it is estimated by mid-century senior adults will outnumber younger adults for the first time in history. A baby boomer joins the ranks of the elderly population every 7 seconds. As these numbers increase so does the possibility of an increase in crimes against this population and the potential for abuse or neglect. The **Elderly and Disabled Victims Program** is available to assist elderly and disabled victims by providing free services to help resolve their issues related to abuse, exploitation, or criminal assault. However, very often victims will deny they are being abused or neglected, making it difficult for our services to be implemented.

Read below to understand why someone would deny abuse or resist our help.

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Why can't they admit they are being abused?

Very often a victim may deny abuse out of fear of retaliation or public exposure, or involvement with police and the courts. Typically most abuse or neglect is perpetrated by a family member or caregiver causing them to fear the loss of that relationship. Or they may hesitate to admit the abuse/neglect to protect their own family member from facing charges or prosecution. They may feel shame or embarrassment because they believe it is their fault or their children/spouse would not be treating them abusively or neglecting their care. And then there is the possibility of having to leave their home or being put in a nursing home.

Sometimes they just don't believe that things can change. They have lived this way most of their life and they have no hope that the situation will get better. They may even believe the options are worse and the perpetrator

"..but he is my great grandson"



An elderly grandmother was rocking her great-grandchild the day we visited her home. The little boy quickly fell asleep cradled in the arms of this loving lady. I listened as the caseworker discussed the stressed financial situation with her client who was recently manipulated into handing over crumpled dollar bills to the little boy's mother to buy diapers.

Unfortunately this was an everyday occurrence by the mother of the little boy who did not work, but consistently took money from the grandmother and threatened to take the baby and leave if she didn't.

The caseworker is continuing to help the grandmother understand she does not have to continue supporting the granddaughter who is capable of working. But she kept repeating, "he is my great grandson, who will take care of him?"

Financial exploitation is

is, after all, someone they love and they "just can't help the way they are treating me."

Because they may not be aware of services or resources available to them, they continue to deny that anything is wrong.

How can the Partnership help?

Our caseworkers are trained and skilled in areas related to helping clients understand they have rights as victims. Many victims are not aware:

- They have the right to be treated with respect, dignity, compassion, and respect.
- They can be free from harrassment, fear, intimidation, and abuse.
- If necessary, they have the right to contact the police or have an offender removed from their home.
- They can be informed and a part of all legal proceedings.

It's hard to imagine that someone would not be aware of these basic rights, but most abuse victims believe the abuse is their fault or the perpetrator is not to blame.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ridge

Elderly Services

Partnership for Families, Children and Adults

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the number one abuse faced by our elderly population.

VOCA Caseworkers in Elderly Services help our elderly victims resolve these types of issues related to abuse.

How can you help?

If you have reason to suspect an elderly person is being financially exploited, contact our office at

755-2870.

A trained and qualified caseworker from Elderly Services will get involved.

Your call will be kept in confidence.

Help us help elderly victims!

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