

FOR OUR ELDERS: HOW TO PREVENT ABUSE

Find a trusted advocate - someone who can help you stand up for your rights and find/access services.

Tell someone if you are being abused; get the help and support you need.

Ensure you understand documents before signing them, asking for advice from a trustworthy individual if necessary.

Protect your finances.

Plan for your future: outline your wishes - for health care decisions and financial decisions - early.

Tell someone if you are not happy with the care you are receiving.

Ensure your will is in place and review it periodically.

Do not give in to pressure for money.

Stay active and connected in your community.

Do not provide personal information to unauthorized individuals (in person or via phone or email).

Get informed: know which resources and support services are available to help.

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." ~ Isaiah 40:31 ~

WHERE TO REPORT

Chilliwack RCMP

- Emergencies: 9-1-1
- Non emergencies: 604-792-4611

To report financial abuse of a vulnerable adult:

- Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia
 - Phone: 604-660-4444
 - Email: mail@trustee.bc.ca
 - Website: www.trustee.bc.ca

To report abuse/neglect of an elderly person who cannot access support on their own:

- Fraser Health
 - 1-877-732-2808
 - Email: react@fraserhealth.ca

To report abuse or neglect of an elderly person at a licensed community care facility:

- Fraser Health (Central Intake will forward your call to a Community Care Facility Licensing Officer)
 - Phone: 604-587-3936

To report abuse of an elderly person at an assisted living facility:

- Assisted Living Registry
 - Phone: 1-866-714-3378

SOURCES/RESOURCES

For assistance/support or additional resources:

Seniors First BC/Seniors Abuse & Information Line (SAIL)

- 1-866-437-1940
- www.seniorsfirstbc.ca

Office of the Seniors Advocate British Columbia

- 1-877-952-3181
- info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca
- www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca

SeniorsBC

- 1-800-663-7867
- www.seniorsBC.ca

VictimLink BC

- 1-800-563-0808

Chilliwack Community Services

- 604-792-4267
- www.comserv.bc.ca/senior-services

Chilliwack Neighbourhood Helping Partners Society

- 604-798-2023

Government of Canada

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/prevention-resource-centre/prevention-resources-older-adults/elder-abuses-time-face-reality.html>



ELDER ABUSE

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Elder abuse refers to **any mistreatment of a senior or older person** by someone in a relationship of trust that **results in harm or distress** to that older person. Elder abuse can include actions or inactions.



WHO ABUSES ELDERS?

Elders are often abused **by someone known to them and trusted by them.**

(eg. spouse, son or daughter, family member, friend, paid caregiver, health care provider, etc.)

At times the abuser can be dependent on the older person for money, food, or shelter. In other situations, the elder may be reliant on the abuser.

Elder abuse can happen when the abuser wants to intimidate, isolate, control, or dominate another person.

TYPES OF ELDER ABUSE

Some common types of elder abuse include:

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Any act of violence or rough treatment that injures or risks injuring an older person.
eg. striking, hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate physical or chemical restraints, inappropriate use of medication, etc.
- Not all physical abuse results in visible injury.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- Any action that intentionally inflicts mental harm, anguish, suffering, or causes a decrease in an older person's self worth and dignity.
eg. name-calling, insults, forced isolation from others, threats, etc.

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any sexual behavior directed toward a person without their full knowledge and consent.
eg. sexual touching, acts, comments, use of pornography, etc.

FINANCIAL ABUSE

- The illegal or improper use of funds, assets, material possessions, property, or legal documents without the older person's knowledge or permission.
eg. misappropriating or stealing money or property, using force or deceit to sign or alter a will, exerting undue pressure to loan money, improperly utilizing legal guardianship or powers of attorney, sharing accommodations without contributing to expenses when requested, etc.

NEGLECT

- A lack of care, assistance, or attention that leads to inappropriate provision of food/water, shelter, clothing, medical help, or basic necessities.



WARNING SIGNS

Be alert for signs that may indicate elder abuse. Elders often **may not be able or willing to report** abusive behavior and may **suffer in silence.**

Potential warning signs may include behavioral, social, physical, or financial indicators such as:

- Sudden change in behavior, such as withdrawal from normal activities, a change in alertness, or unusual depression.
- Change in personality such as lowered self-esteem, decreased decision-making, or fear/anxiety/depression.
- Witnessed threats, insults, belittling, or undue control by caregivers.
- Change in interaction or relationship with a specific caregiver or individual.
- Frequent or unexplained injuries or bruising.
- Improper use of medication.
- The presence of bedsores, poor hygiene, unattended medical needs, poor nutrition, unusual weight loss, etc.
- Change in ability to meet financial obligations.
- Confusion about finances or new legal documents, such as a new will or mortgage.
- Disappearance of possessions.

HOW TO REPORT ELDER ABUSE

ALL SUSPECTED OR KNOWN ABUSE MUST BE REPORTED.

- If you are in immediate danger, call 9-1-1 or your local police.
- If you are not in immediate danger, confide in a trustworthy caregiver or professional.
 - Document what is happening.
 - Use available support services (see resources on back).
- Remember that you are not at fault. You do not deserve to be mistreated.