

Elder abuse

Elder abuse is any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well-being of an older person. An act of harm or the neglect resulting from a failure to act is especially detrimental when inflicted by those in a position of trust, power or responsibility.

Like other forms of abuse, elder abuse is a complex issue, one that is easy to form misconceptions about. For many, the term "elder abuse" evokes images of frail or mentally diminished individuals living in nursing homes. It might bring to mind neglected seniors who live all alone without care or relatives dropping by for a visit. While these images do fall within the spectrum of elder abuse, it isn't just a problem of older people living on the margins of everyday life.

Elder abuse can happen to any older person, regardless of:

- cultural or ethnic group
- physical or mental health
- socio-economic group

It's important to raise the awareness of this issue and how unacceptable it is, and to inform people in the community that things can be done to improve their life situation.



If you or someone you know is experiencing elder abuse and would like some information and help, contact the resources below:

In case of emergency, call 9-1-1 – Do not hesitate to call the police if you suspect a crime has been committed or that someone is in danger. If there is no immediate danger, call your local police to discuss your concerns with a police officer.

- **Calgary Kerby Elder Abuse Line**
Phone: 403-705-3250 (24 hours)
- **Edmonton Seniors Abuse Help Line**
Phone: 780-454-8888 (24 hours)
- **Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization**
Phone: 403-320-2222 (Ext. 25)
- **Medicine Hat Community Response to Abuse and Neglect of Elders (CRANE)**
Phone: 403-529-4798
- **Red Deer Seniors Outreach Abuse Resources S.O.A.R.**
Phone: 1-877-544-1641 (24-hour seniors abuse resource information line)
Phone: 403-341-1641 (day time local calls)
Ask to speak to an advocate.
- **Alberta Family Violence Info Line**
Phone: 310-1818 toll-free (24 hours) for information, advice and referrals.
- **Protection for Persons in Care**
Phone: 1-888-357-9339
To report abuse or safety concerns for seniors in publicly funded care facilities including hospitals, seniors' lodges and nursing homes.

Go on our website and click on Getting Help and your specific city sections for further resources and contact information. www.albertaelderabuse.ca

Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network (AEAAN)



ALBERTA
ELDER ABUSE
AWARENESS
NETWORK

Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network (AEAN)

The Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network is a province-wide network of professionals dedicated to the prevention of elder abuse by increasing community awareness, developing resources and promoting the well-being of older adults.

The AEAN believes:

- ▶ Every senior is a valuable member of society and has a right to be free of abuse.
- ▶ Elder abuse is intolerable and unacceptable.
- ▶ Increased awareness is key to addressing elder abuse.
- ▶ Front-line professionals and caregivers need to be given adequate tools to address abuse of the elderly.

The AEAN's Vision is that all Albertans understand elder abuse and are aware of, and have access to, resources available to address it. Our Mission is to increase awareness and support a community response to elder abuse.

Towards that end our network has completed the following initiatives:

- ▶ An awareness-raising campaign in 2003 that featured a new television commercial (produced in partnership with CTV and Justice Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy).
- ▶ A website to be used as an educational and awareness raising resource for professionals that provides easier access to resources, knowledge and tools for use in programs and practices.
- ▶ In 2005, the work of the AEAN culminated in the development and distribution of a community resource kit. The kit, containing CD-ROM and VHS videos, includes:
 - ▶ two PowerPoint presentations with comprehensive speaking notes
 - ▶ an elder abuse training video
 - ▶ a listing of Alberta resources to deal with elder abuse
 - ▶ several key online links
 - ▶ other national resources
- ▶ The Network supports the promotion of June 15th as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Since the Day was established in 2006, the Network has collaborated with Seniors and Community Supports to develop:
 - ▶ FACE IT Elder Abuse Happens posters,
 - ▶ Financial Abuse Fact Sheet for service providers,
 - ▶ "rack card" for seniors with information about how to protect oneself from financial abuse and
 - ▶ Service Provider Screening Guide for Elder Abuse.

The AEAN's belief is that no one organization has a broad enough scope to address the complex issue of elder abuse in its entirety. A truly effective community response involves many stakeholders working in collaboration.

This is why AEAN is a network of Albertans, with each group building on its own unique strengths for a common purpose. The network is a partnership of these dedicated groups:

- ▶ Alberta Children & Youth Services
- ▶ Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying
- ▶ Alberta Seniors and Community Supports
- ▶ Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security
- ▶ Alliance to End Violence (Calgary), Action Group on Elder Abuse
- ▶ Calgary Police Service
- ▶ The City of Calgary, Community & Neighbourhood Services Senior Services Division
- ▶ The City of Edmonton, Community Services
- ▶ Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Family and Community Services
- ▶ The City of Lethbridge, Family and Community Support Services
- ▶ The City of Medicine Hat, Veiner Centre
- ▶ Golden Circle Seniors Resource Centre (Red Deer)
- ▶ Dr. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre (Cold Lake)
- ▶ Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team
- ▶ Edmonton Police Service

Each member, in turn, is connected to a local network of providers in their respective community.