



Why We Should Care About Elder Abuse

NIJII
National Indigenous
Justice Information Inclusion

What Is Elder Abuse?

Elder Abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person.¹ Elder Abuse can show as neglect or abandonment; physical, sexual, psychological, and emotional abuse; financial exploitation; spiritual abuse; and/or loss of dignity and respect.

Reasons Young Adults Care About Elder Abuse



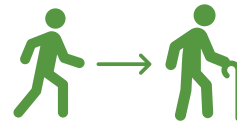
Elders impart knowledge and history



Elder Abuse is an issue that may apply to your major



Elder Abuse is a widespread public health crisis

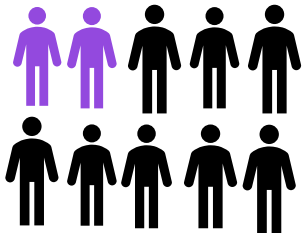


Each of us will be an elderly person facing elderly issues



Silence enables abuse

Did You Know?



Almost 20% of the population are elderly & they are the fastest growing population^{2 3}

1 in 10

Elderly have been subjected to at least one form of abuse⁴

1 in 5

Few cases of elder abuse are reported⁵

1 in 4

Older adults identify as racial or ethnic minority⁶

“Those who respect the elderly pave their own road toward success”

¹World Health Organization. (2024, June 15). *Abuse of Older People*. Retrieved February 2026. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abuse-of-older-people>

²United States Census Bureau. (2024 December). *U.S. Population Grows at Fastest Pace In More Than Two Decades*. Retrieved February 2024. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2024/12/populationestimates.html>

³United States Census Bureau (2025, June). *Older Adults Outnumber Children in 11 States and Nearly Half of U.S. Counties*. Retrieved February 2026. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases-2025/older-adults-outnumber-children.html>

⁴National Council on Aging. (2024, July). *Get the Facts on Elder Abuse*. Retrieved February 2026. <https://www.ncoa.org/article/get-the-facts-on-elder-abuse/>

⁵*ibid*.

⁶Administration for Community Living. (2024, May). *2023 Profile of Older Americans*. Retrieved February 2026. https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/Profile of OA/ACL ProfileOlderAmericans2023_508.pdf

What are signs of Elder Abuse?

Emotional, Behavioral, & Spiritual Signs



Withdrawn
from normal
activities



Isolation
from
Friends &
Family



Increased
fear or
anxiety



Unusual
changes in
sleep
patterns



Not attending or
participating in
spiritual or religious
ceremonies or
activities

Physical Signs



Unexplained
injuries like
bruises, cuts,
and sores



Unusual
weight
loss or
dehydration



Personality
changes,
cultural
disruptions



Torn,
stained,
bloody
clothing



Non-
consensual
sexual
contact

Financial Signs



Fraudulent
signatures on
financial
documents



Unusual or
sudden changes
in spending
patterns



Unpaid bills

“All Elderly Persons Deserve Dignity and Security”



More to Know

Who are Tribal Elders?

Tribal Elders are Cultural Stewards
 Tribal Elders are Wisdom Keepers & Guides
 Tribal Elders are Intergenerational Historians
 Tribal Elders are Family Anchors
 Tribal Elders are Vital Community Figures



Important to Know

20%
13%

Increase in Tribal Elder
 population from 2012
 to 2030⁷



1 in 3 tribal elders
 report
 mistreatment⁸



A family member is the
 perpetrator in 80% of
 tribal abuse cases⁹

Key Risk Factors



Extreme Poverty



Depression & PTSD



Intergenerational
 Trauma

“We will be known forever by the tracks we leave” - Dakota

⁷National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. *Elder Abuse*. Retrieved February 2026. <https://www.nicoa.org/elder-resources/elder-equity/elder-abuse/>

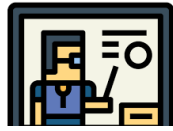
⁸Stahlmann, N. (2024, June 14). *Calling Attention to End Elder Abuse in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities*. Indian Health Service. Retrieved February 2026. <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/ihs-blog/june-2024-blogs/calling-attention-to-end-elder-abuse-in-american-indian-and-alaska-native-communities/>

⁹National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. *Elder Abuse*. Retrieved February 2026. <https://www.nicoa.org/elder-resources/elder-equity/elder-abuse/>

What can you do to help prevent Elder Abuse?



Organize
Awareness
Campaigns



Help them
become
computer
literate



Support
integrating
Native
American
studies



Volunteer
with elderly
and tribal
elder
organizations



Host
Workshops



Offer
Practical
Assistance

What to do if you suspect Elder Abuse



**CONTACT
ELDERCARE
LOCATOR**

Call 800.677.1116
Or
Visit
Eldercare.acl.gov



**CALL A
HOTLINE IN
YOUR AREA**

For tribal & other hotline
info. Visit
NIJII.org



**Adult Protective
Services (APS)**

find your local
APS, contact:
[www.napsa-
now.org/help-in-
your-area/](http://www.napsa-now.org/help-in-your-area/)



**REPORT ABUSE
TO AUTHORITIES**



**Don't Stand By, Stand Up to Elder Abuse.
You can make a difference.**

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