



Wyoming
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of Health



Elder Abuse Awareness

Presented by the Aging Division - Wyoming Department of Health

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[Aging Division Website](#)
[Aging Division Facebook Page](#)



Objectives

- **Identify the signs of elder abuse.**
- **Understand the reporting process when abuse is suspected.**
- **Learn the steps you can take to prevent elder abuse from happening.**



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Providers are Mandated Reporters

Stay Alert – Improve Lives.



Statistics on Elder Abuse

- **About 1 in 10 Americans age 60+ have experienced abuse.**¹
- **Elder abuse is underreported.**
The New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study found that **for every 1 elder abuse case known to programs and agencies, 23.5 were unknown.** In the same study, they examined different types of abuse and found for each case of financial exploitation that reached authorities, 44 cases went unreported. The national elder abuse incidence study estimated that **only 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse ever comes to the attention of authorities.**⁴
- **The impact of elder abuse is felt by people of all ages.**
The costs of elder abuse are high for the affected individuals and society alike. **Elder abuse reduces older people's participation in the life of our communities.** It also creates health care and legal costs, which are often shouldered by public programs like Medicare and Medicaid.³

- **Elder abuse costs victims billions of dollars each year.**
The annual financial loss by victims of elder financial exploitation **was estimated to be \$2.9 billion in 2009**, a 12% increase from 2008.⁵
- **Elder abuse is associated with increased rates of hospitalization in the community population.**
Older adults who experienced abuse or neglect were twice as likely to be hospitalized than other older people.²

Without accessible, quality health and public services, our population becomes more at risk for abuse as we age.



Signs of Elder Abuse

Emotional & Behavioral

- Unusual changes in behavior or sleep
- Fear or anxiety
- Isolated or not responsive
- Sadness
- Unable to answer for themselves
- Threats to family, friends and pets.
- Degrading remarks such as name-calling.

Physical

- Broken bones, bruises, and welts
- Cuts, sores or burns
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Sexually transmitted diseases without clear explanation
- Poor living conditions
- Dirtiness, poor nutrition or dehydration, resisting bathing
- Missing daily living aids (glasses, walker, and medications)
- Unnecessary use of restraints
- Sleep disturbances
- Untreated ulcers

Financial

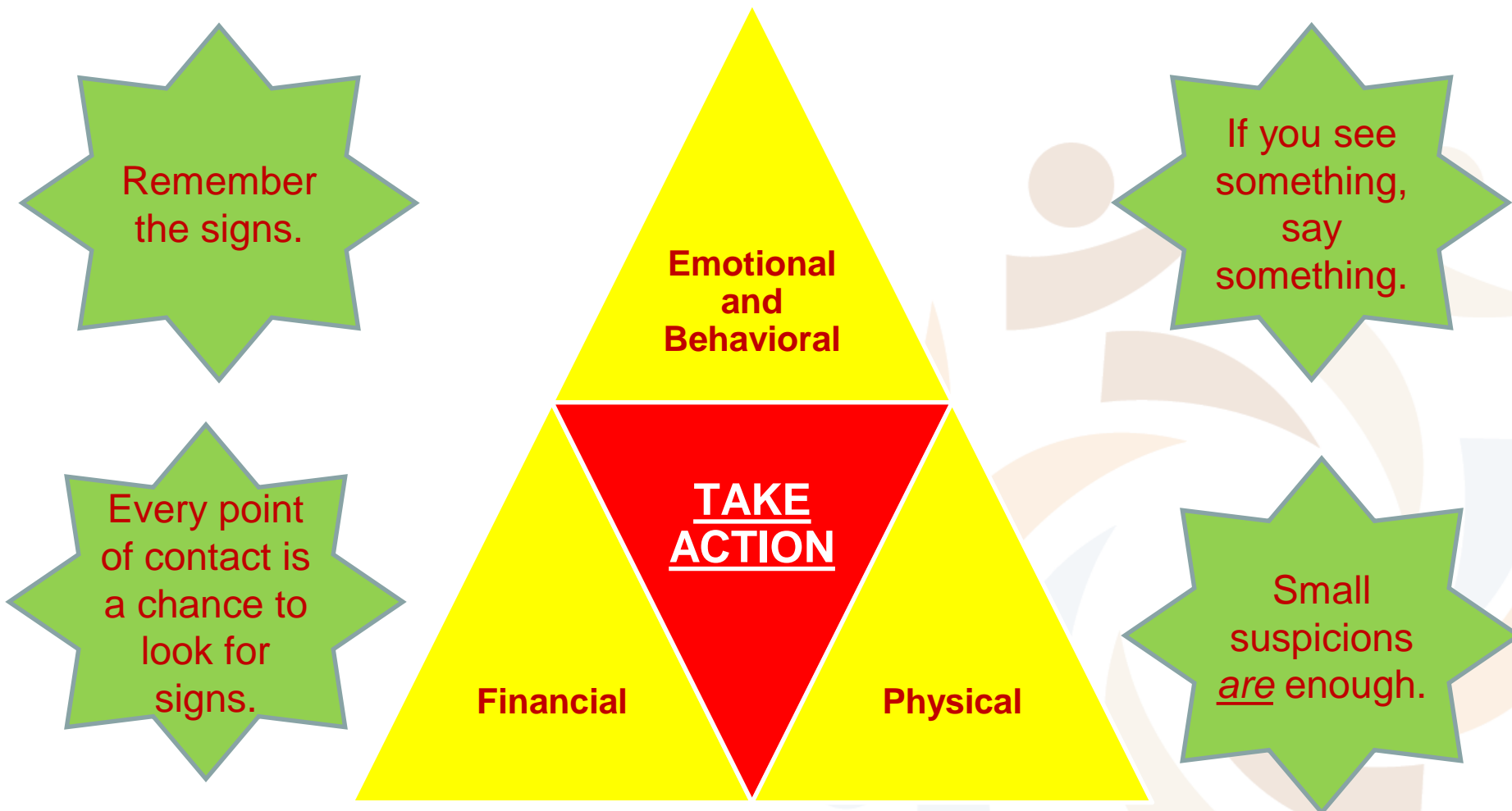
- Fake signatures on Financial documents
- Unusual or quick changes in a will or other financial documents
- Unusual changes in bank account or money management
- Unpaid bills
- Scams

Any Sign May Be A Crime: Report It.





Remember the Signs





How Should We Report It?

“Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult is being or has been abused, neglected, exploited, abandoned, intimidated or is committing self-neglect, shall report the information immediately to the Department of Family Services or a law enforcement agency, such as the police, sheriff’s department, highway patrol, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, or Department of Criminal Investigation. Anyone, who in good faith makes a report, is immune from civil liability for making the report.”

From the “Elder Abuse Information” brochure created by the Ombudsman department.



The Reporting Process:

- Reporter contacts the local Department of Family Services (DFS) office of the county where the concern is taking place. Local Law Enforcement can also be contacted to make a report.
- Reporter must have identifying information of the vulnerable adult, such as name and location (physical address), as well as the nature of the concern.
- DFS will then screen the report to see if it meets the statute and policy definitions of abuse/neglect/self-neglect of a vulnerable adult.
- A case is opened (depending on the above screening process) and the vulnerable adult will be contacted within 3 days of the report being made unless an immediate response is needed (if the vulnerable adult is in imminent danger).
- As a reporter you have the right to remain anonymous and you are exempt from civil or criminal liability in making a report on a vulnerable adult, unless it's a false report.
- DFS cannot call a reporter back to let them know what occurred based on their report due to confidentiality restrictions per Wyoming state statutes.
- In all cases/reports/referrals, the vulnerable has the right to choose how they want to live and DFS does not have the authority to force the adult in question to make a different decision.



What Can Providers Do?

Report Elder Abuse by calling:

**Adult Protective Services Hotline:
(800) 457-3659**

**Your Local Department of Family
Services Office or be re-routed by:
(307) 777-7921**

**Your local law enforcement
non-emergency line.**

Emergency: 911

dfs.wyo.gov/about/contact-us/





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WYOMING DEPARTMENT
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DFS County Offices

Albany County Office 3817 Beech St., Suite 200 Laramie, Wyoming 82070 (307) 745-7324	Big Horn County Office 616 2nd Ave. N. Greybull, Wyoming 82426 (307) 765-9453	Campbell County Office 551 Running W. Drive Gillette, Wyoming 82718 (307) 682-7277	Carbon County Office 215 W. Buffalo, Suite 359 Rawlins, Wyoming 82301 (307) 328-0612
Converse County Office 219 N. Russell Douglas, WY 82633 (307) 358-3138	Crook County Office 102 N. 5th Sundance, WY 82729 (307) 283-2014	Eastern Shoshone Office PO Box 945 or 104 Washakie St Fort Washakie, WY 82514 (307) 332-6591	Fremont County Office 201 N. 4th Lander, WY 82520 (307) 332-4038
Goshen County Office 1618 E. "M" St. Torrington, Wyoming 82240 (307) 532-2191	Hot Springs County Office 403 Big Horn Thermopolis, WY 82443 (307) 864-2158	Johnson County Office 381 N. Main Buffalo, Wyoming 82834 (307) 684-5513	Laramie County Office 1510 E. Pershing Blvd Cheyenne, WY 82001 (307) 777-7921
Lincoln County Office 631 Washington Street Afton, Wyoming 83113 (307) 886-9232	Natrona County Office 851 Werner Court, Suite 200 Casper, Wyoming 82601 (307) 473-3900	Niobrara County Office 905 S. Main Lusk, Wyoming 82225 (307) 334-2153	Northern Arapaho Office 17 Great Plains Road Arapahoe, WY 82510 (307) 857-5728



DFS County Offices (Cont)

Park County Office

1301 Rumsey
Cody, Wyoming 82414
(307) 587-6246

Platte County Office

1556 Progress Court
Wheatland, WY 82201
(307) 322-3790

Sheridan County Office

247 Grinnell St. Suite 100
Sheridan, Wyoming 82801
(307) 672-2404

Sublette County Office

217 N. Sublette
Pinedale, WY 82941
(307) 367-4124

Sweetwater County Office

2451 Foothill Blvd, Suite 103
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901
(307) 352-2500

Teton County Office

115 W. Snow King
Jackson, Wyoming 83001
(307) 733-7757

Uinta County Office

350 City View Drive, Suite 302
Evanston, Wyoming 82930
(307) 789-2756

Washakie County Office

1700 Robertson
Worland, WY 82401
(307) 347-6181

Weston County Office

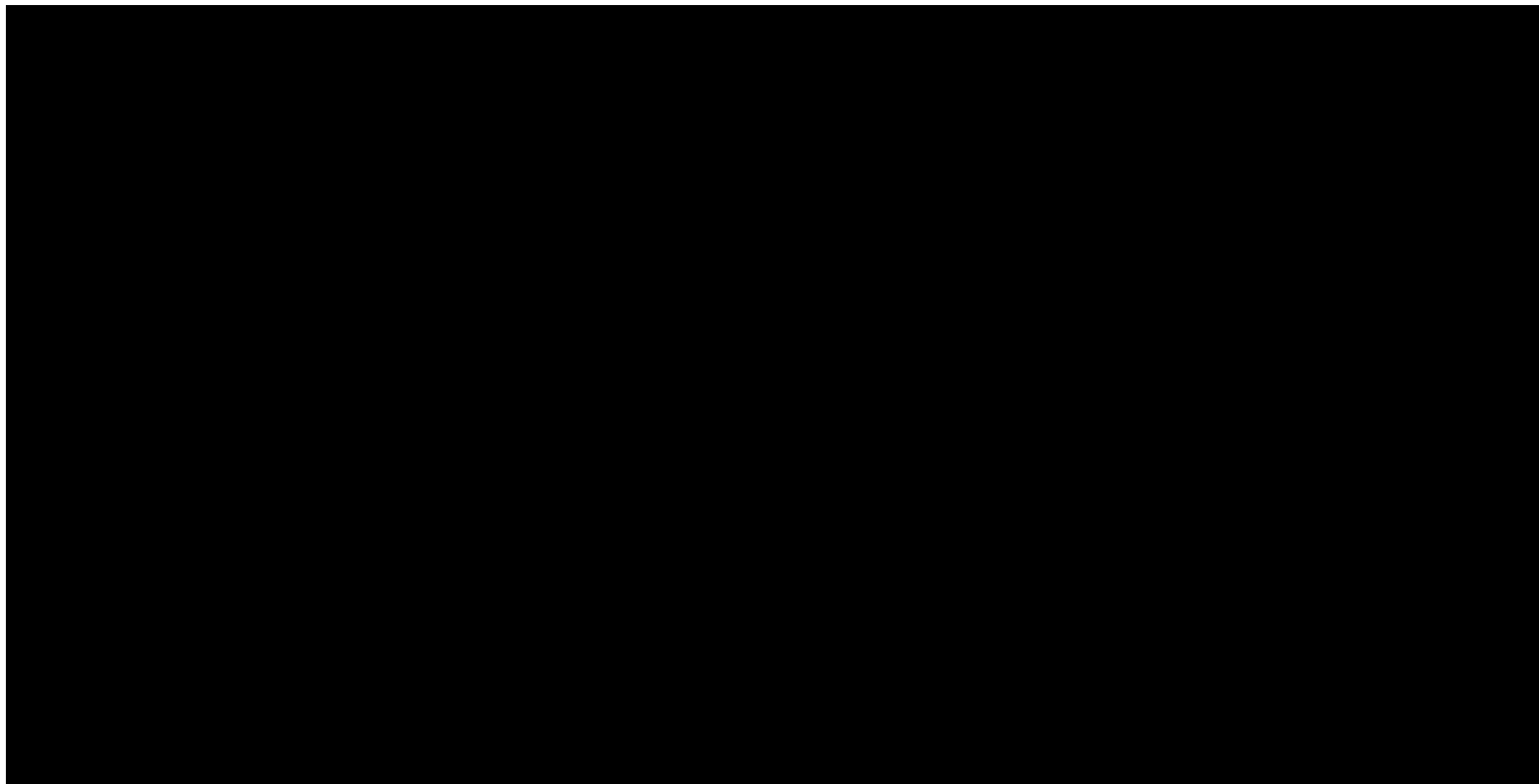
22922 Hwy 85, Suite 200
Newcastle, Wyoming 82701
(307) 746-4657



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NCEA
National Center on Elder Abuse

Donna's Story





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Linda's Story

When he was finished with me, he put me back on the bed.



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Tammy's Story

It got to a point where he was really strong-
arming me, you know, like he'd take my arm
and twist it

12 Things Everyone Can Do to Prevent Elder Abuse

1. **Remember the signs** of elder abuse and neglect, especially how we can collectively solve the issue.
2. **Volunteer** to be a friendly visitor to a nursing home resident or to a homebound older person in our communities.
3. **Prevent isolation** by calling or visiting older adults and asking them how they are doing regularly.
4. **Send a letter** to a local paper, radio or TV station suggesting that they cover World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15) or Grandparents Day in September.
5. **Join Ageless Alliance**, an organization that connects people of all ages, nationwide, who stand united for the dignity of older people and for the elimination of elder abuse. Visit agelessalliance.org

12 Things Everyone Can Do to Prevent Elder Abuse

6. **Provide respite breaks** for caregivers.
7. **Encourage local bank managers** to train tellers on how to detect elder financial abuse.
8. **Educate doctors** to ask all older patients about possible family violence in their lives.
9. **Contact a local Adult Protective Services or Long-Term Care Ombudsman** to learn how to support their work helping older people and adults with disabilities who may be more at-risk.
10. **Organize an “Aging with Dignity” essay or poster contest** in a local school.
11. **Ask religious congregation leaders** to give a talk about elder abuse at a service or to put a message about elder abuse in the bulletin.

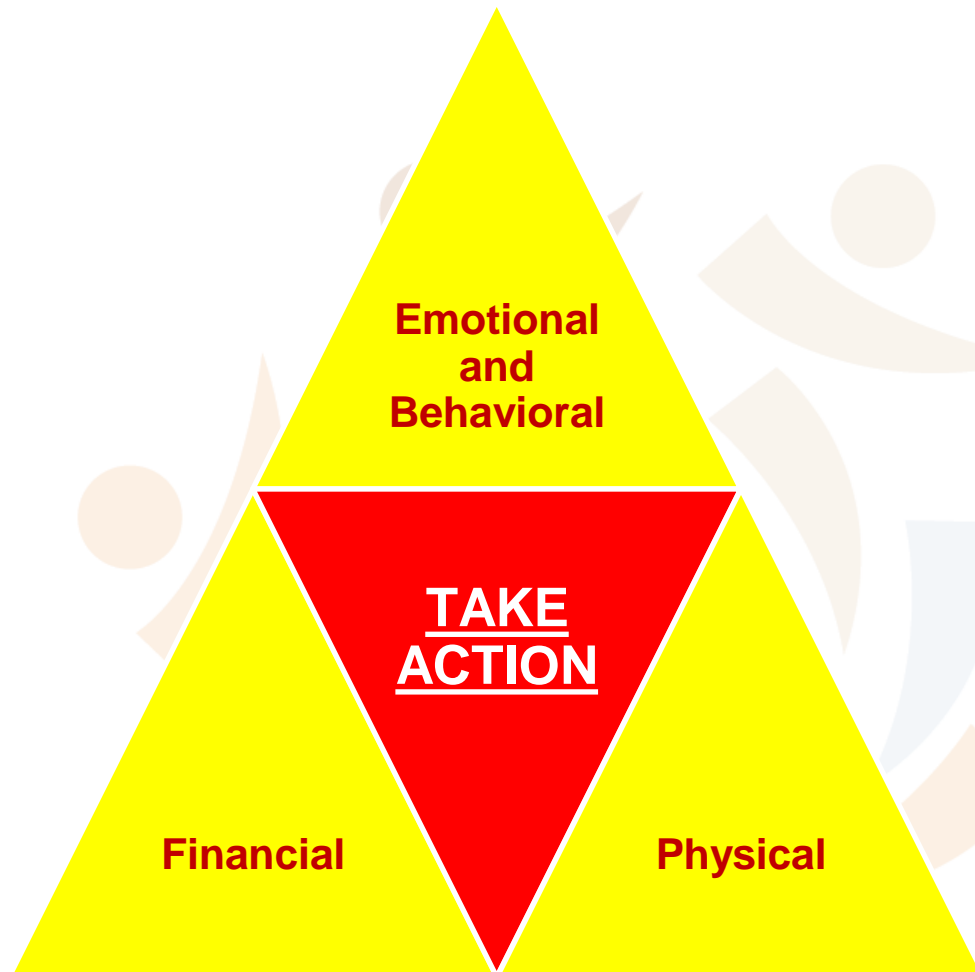
12 Things Everyone Can Do to Prevent Elder Abuse

- 12. Talk to friends and family members** about how we can all age well and reduce abuse with programs and services like improved law enforcement, community centers, and public transportation.

It is up to all of us to prevent and address elder abuse through our employees and family members.

Elder Abuse Awareness

**Any sign may
be a crime:
Report it.**





Elder Abuse Awareness

Every point
of contact is
a chance to
look for
signs.

Learn the
signs and
reporting
process

Communicate
regularly with
participants to
spot changes

Respite Care
for Caregivers
and
Participants

Networking
(Doctors,
Banks,
Volunteers,
Ombudsman)

Knowledge Check

1. What are the signs of elder abuse?

Knowledge Check

2. Who do I report suspected abuse to?

Knowledge Check

3. Give examples of action you can take to prevent elder abuse from occurring?

References and Resources

- 1) Acierno, R., Hernandez, M.A., Amstadter, A.B., Resnick, H.S., Steve, K., Muzzy, W., & Kilpatrick, D.G. (2010). Prevalence and correlates of emotional, physical, sexual, and financial abuse and potential neglect in the United States: The national elder mistreatment study. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(2), 292-297. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2009.163089
- 2) Lachs, M.S., & Pillemer, K.A. (2015). Elder abuse. *New England Journal of Medicine, 373*(20), 1947-1956. doi:10.1056/NEJMra1404688
- 3) Dong, X., & Simon, M. (2013). Elder abuse as a risk factor for hospitalization in older persons. *JAMA Internal Medicine, 173*(10), 911–917. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2013.238
- 4) Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Weill Cornell Medical College, & New York City Department for the Aging. (2011). *Under the radar: New York state elder abuse prevalence study, Self-reported prevalence and documented case surveys*. Rochester, NY: Authors. Retrieved from <http://lifespan-roch.org/documents/UndertheRadar051211.pdf>
- 5) National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, Virginia Tech, & MetLife Mature Market Institute. (2011). *The MetLife study of elder financial abuse: Crimes of occasion, desperation and predation against America's elders*. New York, NY: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Retrieved from <https://ltcombudsman.org/uploads/files/issues/mmi-elder-financial-abuse.pdf>

Special thanks goes to the National Center for Elder Abuse ncea.acl.gov for their resources and videos that were used in the creation of this presentation. WEAAD resources and trainings are also available from: [USC](http://usc.edu).



Elder Abuse
Information



5 Things to
Prevent Abuse



12 Things to
Prevent Abuse



Facts of Elder
Abuse



Red Flags of Elder
Abuse



Signs of Elder
Abuse



Statistics of Elder
Abuse



WEAAD Factsheet
FAQ's



IORC Abuse Fact
Sheet

References and Resources

In partnership with Wyoming Department of Family Services, State Ombudsman, and the Wyoming Department of Health – Aging Division.

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WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Building Strong Support for Elders

Thank you for joining this training on spotting and preventing elder abuse.



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