



Ontario Network for the
Prevention of Elder Abuse

Elder Abuse Accepting Responsibility in Everyday Practice

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The Ontario Network
for the Prevention of Elder Abuse





ONPEA'S VISION & MISSION

- Our **mission** is to create an Ontario that is free from abuse for all seniors, through awareness, education, training, collaboration, service coordination and advocacy

ONPEA oversees the implementation of **Ontario's Strategy to Combat Elder Abuse** in addition to a number of new initiatives.





Ontario's Strategy to Combat Elder Abuse

1. Co-ordination of Community Services

- To strengthen communities across the province by building partnerships, promoting information sharing and supporting their efforts to combat elder abuse

2. Multi-Sectoral Training for Front-Line Staff

- Specialized training initiative for front-line staff from various sectors, who work directly with seniors, to prepare and guide them in recognizing and responding to elder abuse

3. Public Education and Awareness

- A Province-wide, multi-media public education campaign to promote awareness about elder abuse and provide information on how to access services





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POWER OF 3

**ONPEA'S LEARNING
RESOURCE CENTRE**



ONPEA'S CORE CURRICULUM



**ONPEA'S ONLINE
TRAINING TOOLS**





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Contact Information

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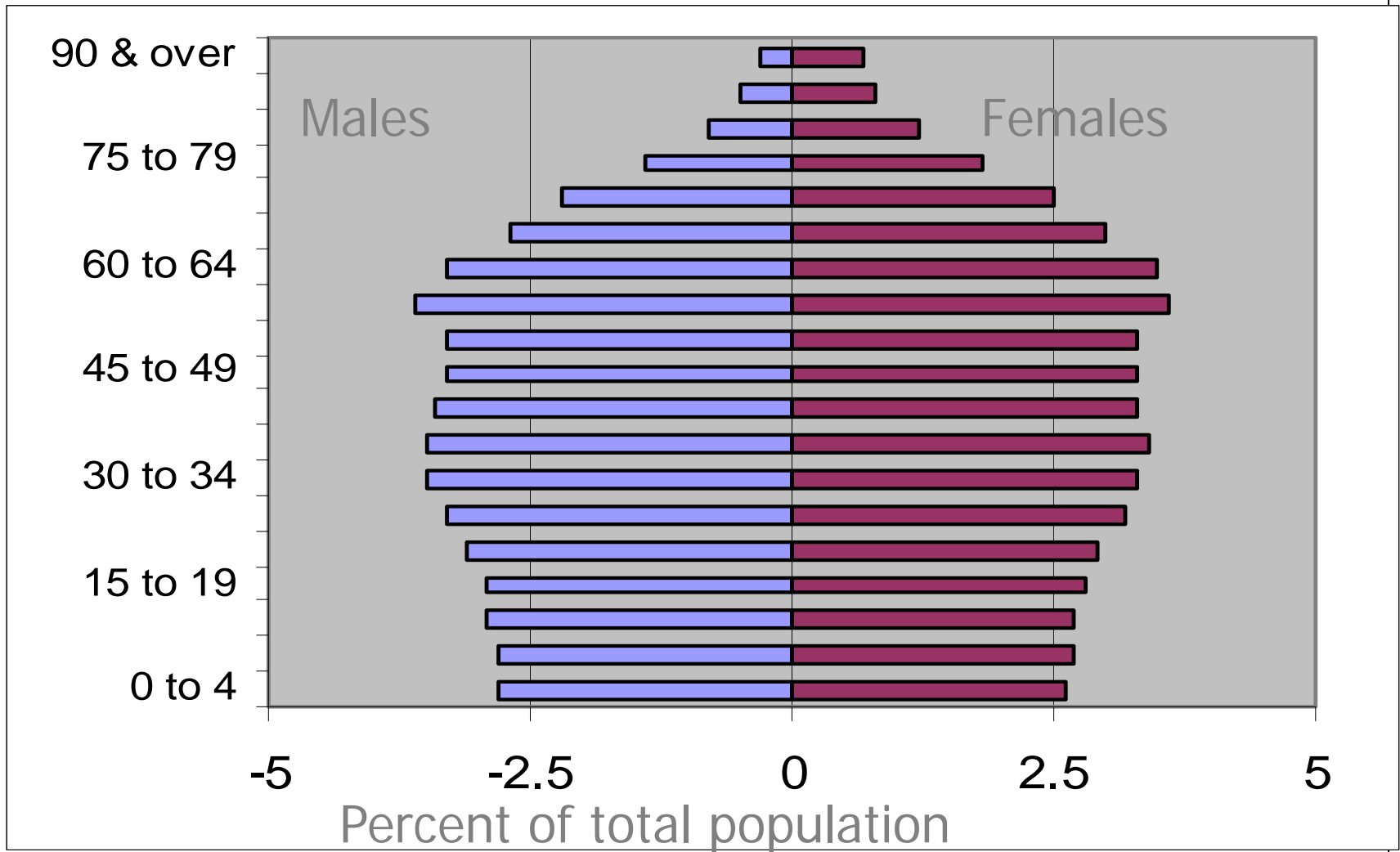
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**By 2026- Over 3 Million Seniors
1 out of four Canadians will be over 65 years-**





Prevalence

- Can happen anywhere, anytime, to anyone
- Occurs in all cultures & faiths
- Not a one time occurrence
- 4/5 cases never reported



Prevalence

3 common variables:

- ❖ **Unequal balance of power**
- ❖ **Dependency – 2 ways**
- ❖ **Isolation – hallmark feature**



Abuse Continuums

- **Abuse, if not addressed, can escalate with an increasing seriousness of harm.**
- **Physical abuse can go from “minor” neglect through to abuses where medical treatment would be necessary and on to death.**
- **Older adult victims are vulnerable to complications resulting from physical violence - can affect ability to function independently.**

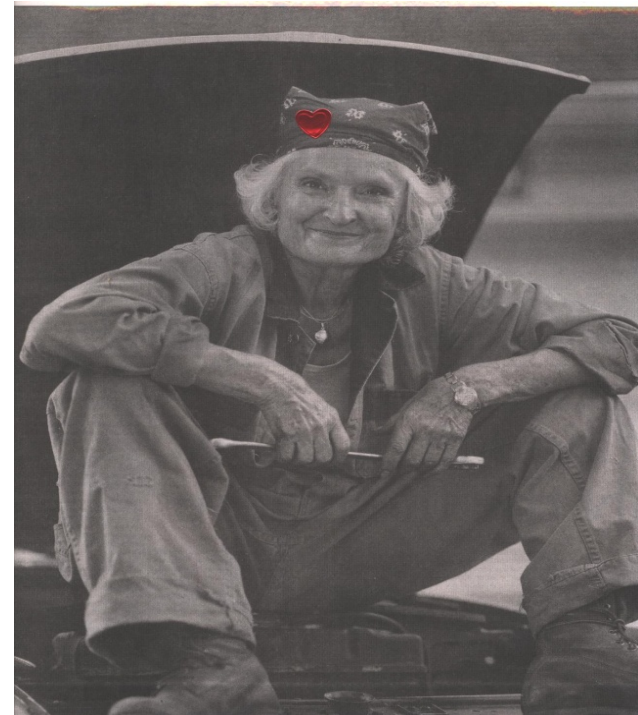


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How many seniors are abused?

**According to the WHO,
5% of seniors are
experiencing some form
of abuse.**

**It is estimated that this
can range from 2%-25%.
Most experts put it at
10%.**





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What is Elder Abuse?

Any action, or deliberate inaction,
by a person in a position of trust
which causes harm to an older person. The abuser can
be a spouse, child, family member, friend or paid
caregiver.

(World Health Organization, 2004)





Some Facts...

The majority of abuse is never reported!

- **Financial abuse takes away or reduces senior's choices of where & how to live**
- **Doesn't happen only to vulnerable adults.**
- **Abuse undermines senior's quality of life**

Sadly, 10% of seniors have more than one abuser.

(Spencer, C. 2000)





Why Should You be Involved?

- Abused seniors 3.1 times more likely to die
- Elder abuse associated with adverse life and health outcomes
- Elderly much more vulnerable to health complications
- Injuries sustained from abuse can negatively impact senior's health, independence, quality of life
- Clients may feel most comfortable speaking with you



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Types of Abuse

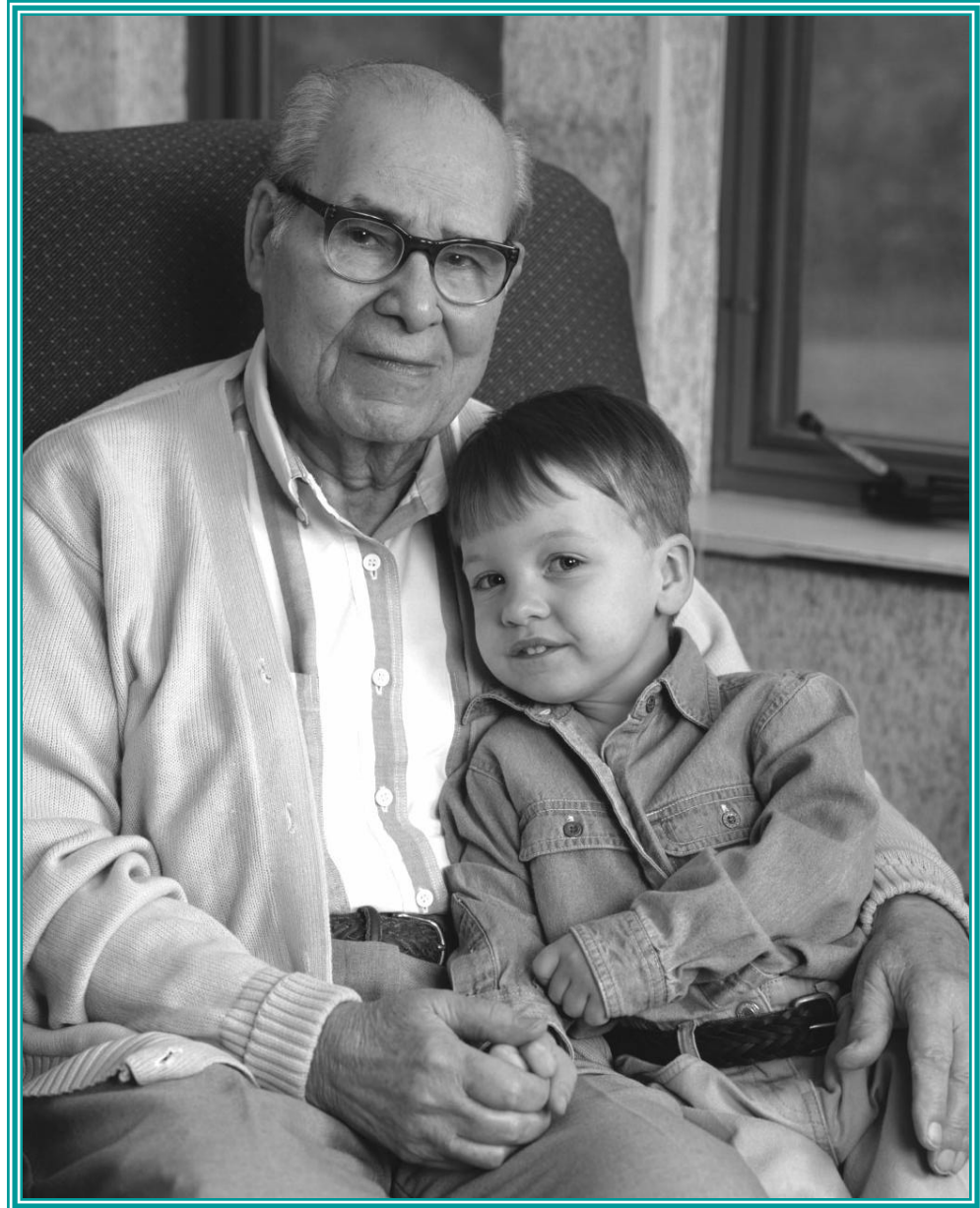
Physical

Sexual

Psychological

Financial

Neglect





RECOGNIZING ABUSE

PHYSICAL

- Any act of violence or rough handling that may or may not result in physical injury causing physical discomfort and pain.
- subtle





Sexual Abuse

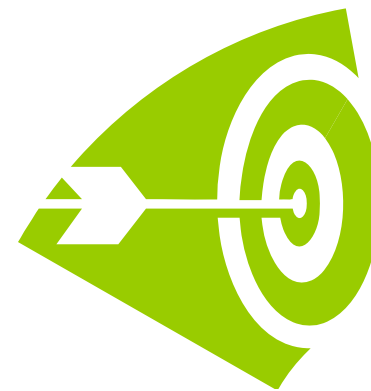
- any unwanted sexual behaviour directed toward an older person without their full knowledge & consent.
- Includes making sexual remarks, gestures and/or suggestions to another person



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PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL/VERBAL ABUSE

Any action, verbal or non-verbal, that lessens a person's sense of dignity and worth





Financial Abuse

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$



I, Peter Jones, name C. Jones as my
Power of Attorney for
Property.....

- Any act done without consent that results in the financial or personal gain of one person at the expense of another
- 1/12 Canadian seniors are financially abused , ~\$20,000



NEGLECT

Not meeting the needs of an older person unable to meet them for herself or himself

- Active Neglect: deliberate withholding of care or necessities of life.
- Passive Neglect: failure to provide proper care due to lack of knowledge, experience or ability.



Red Flags

- Delay between injury/illness & seeking medical attention
- History from victim and perpetrator differs
- Implausible or vague explanations
- Gross inattention to nutrition/hygiene
- You are never left alone with senior, senior not allowed to speak
- Doctor shopping

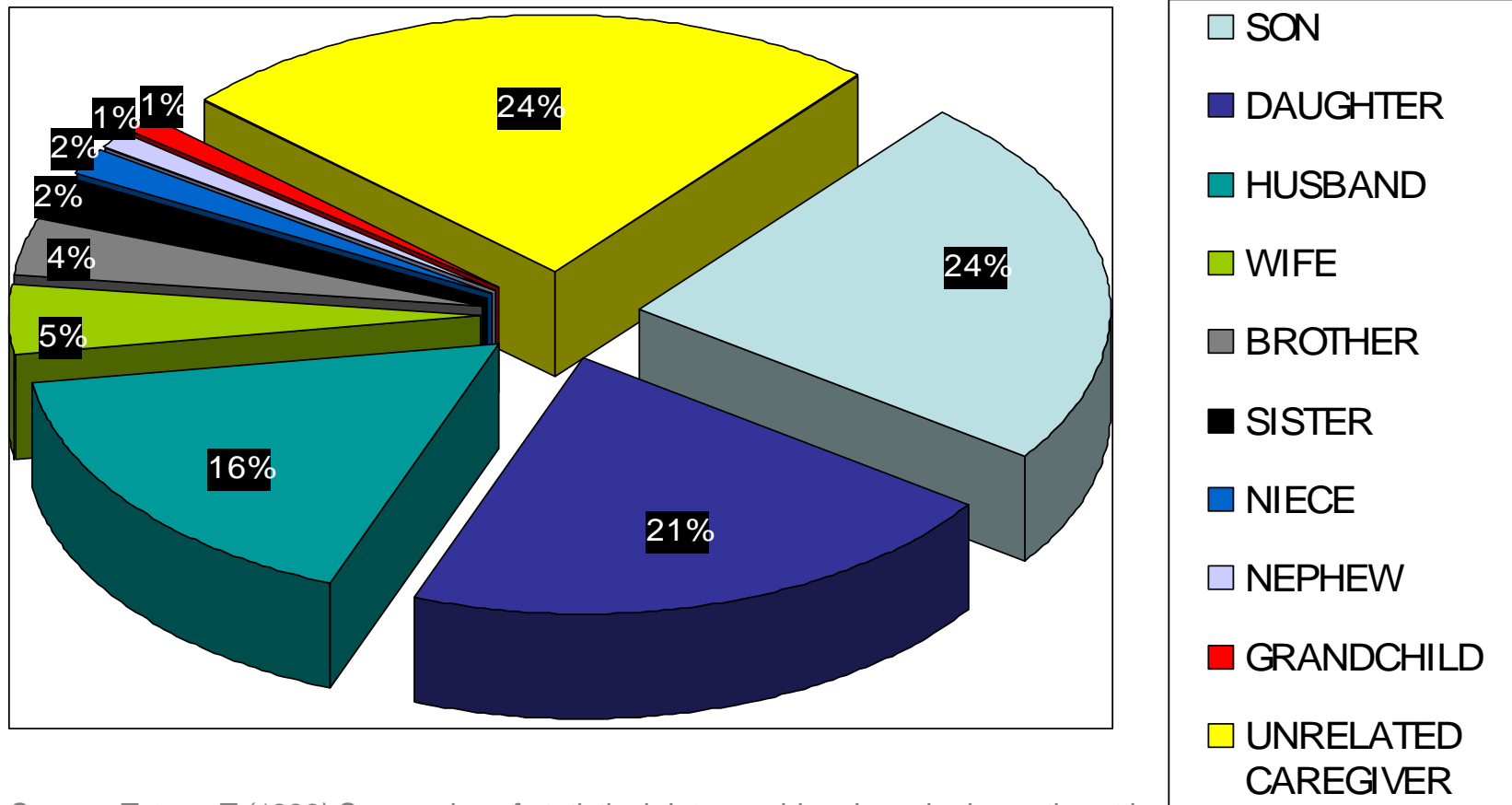
What is the most common form of abuse?
Does abuse happen more in the community or institution?



Are women targeted more frequently than men?
What age group is more vulnerable to abuse?



WHO ABUSES?



Source: Tataru, T (1993) Summaries of statistical data on elder abuse in domestic settings



Barriers to Disclosure

- 1. Fear more abuse, feel vulnerable**
- 2. Feel humiliated or ashamed**
- 3. Blame themselves for abuse**
- 4. Fear loss of affection**
- 5. Worry about what will happen to him or herself and/or the abuser**
- 6. Believe that family honour is at stake**
- 7. Believe that privacy is at stake**
- 8. History of Abuse**



Risk factors for abuse

- **Isolation**
- **Physical & cognitive frailty**
- **Addictions**
- **Dependency**
- **Finances**
- **Family history of abuse/domestic violence, mental health issues**
- **Ageism**
- **Abuse may occur without any of these factors present**

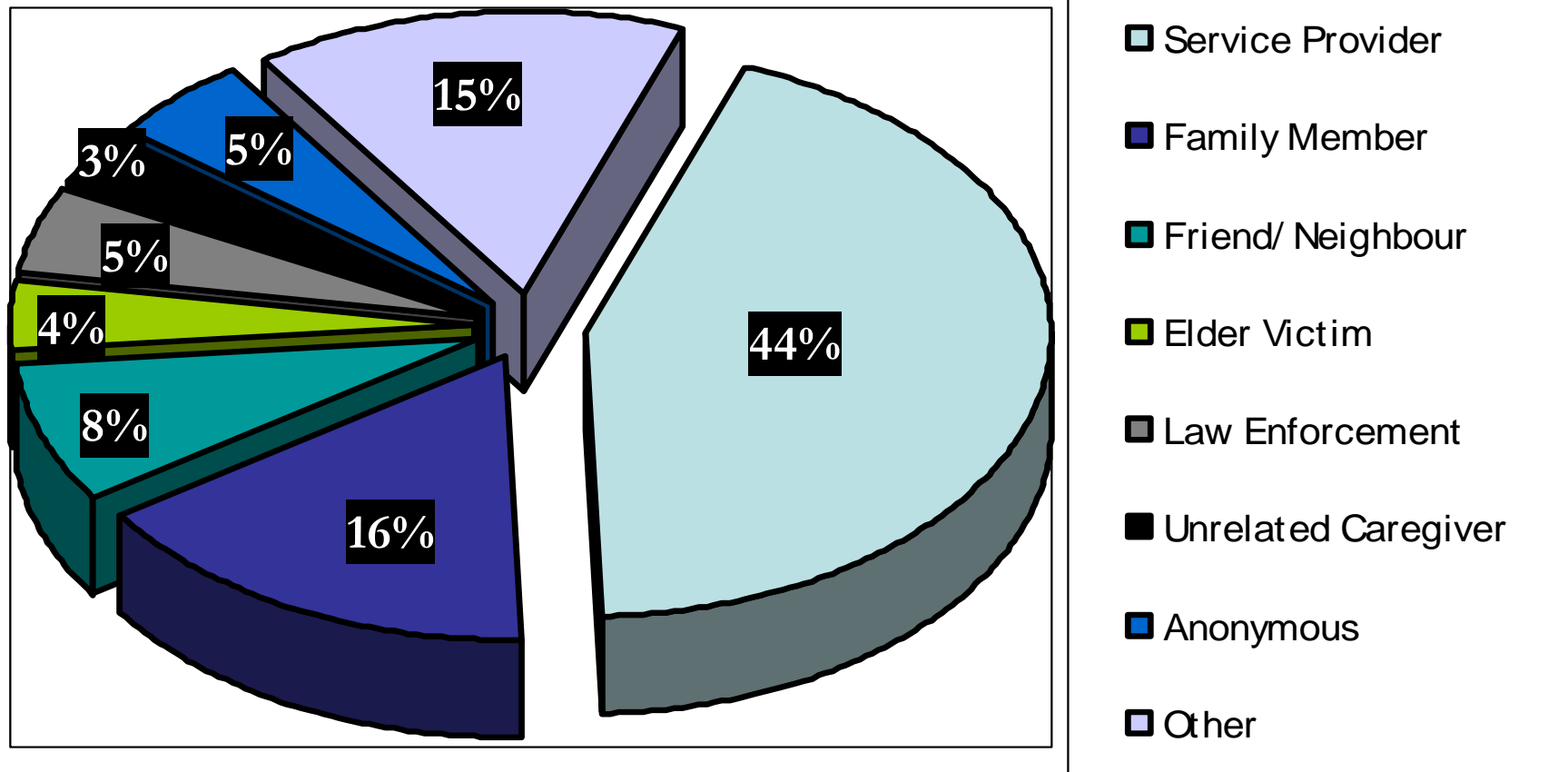


Barriers to Older Immigrants

- Isolated from friends (may not know others)
- Fear of being deported if sponsorship withdrawn
- Unable to communicate in English
- Lack of knowledge about Canadian system and laws; don't know how to get help
- Dependent on children
- Family matters are private



WHO REPORTS ELDER ABUSE?



Source: National Aging Resource Center on Elder Abuse, 1995



Barriers to reporting abuse

- Fear of retribution
- Fear of loss of job
- Lack of knowledge about elder abuse
- Do not know that something can be done
- Lack of knowledge about the law, fear litigation
- Fear of getting someone in trouble



Community Victim Profile

- ✓ **Most often, over the age of 75**
- ✓ **Widowed or living alone**
- ✓ **Socially isolated**
- ✓ **Under the control or influence of the abuser**
- ✓ **Experiencing some degree of mental incapacity**
- ✓ **Physically frail but mentally capable**

REMEMBER!

***Abuse crosses all borders
and can happen to anyone.***



Abuser Profile

- **Can be any age**
- **Someone who feels angry or feels owed**
- **Lack of self confidence**
- **Like to exert control and bully others**
- **Abuses drugs or alcohol**
- **Family problems**
- **Very anxious/unhappy**
- **Full of frustration, feel resentful**
- **Who is extremely worried about finances**
- **Feeling fearful or depressed**
- **Highly fatigued or unwell**
- **Stressed beyond ability to cope**
- **Behavioural problems – i.e. anger management**
- **No visible traits**



Institutional Profile

- Systemic Abuse
- Cultural Differences
- Burned out staff, no positive reinforcement
- Lack of administrative support
- High number of difficult to handle or aggressive residents
- Frustrated resentful staff
- Lack of knowledge



Signs of Abuse in Resident

- Shows fear, shame
- May be atypically depressed
- May act unusually passive
- Anxious, nervous
- Resident may have belongings missing or unexplained marks or bruises





Tips on Capacity

- Don't assume frail elderly incapable
- Listen to emotion
- Speak with them
- Recognize potential conflicts of interest and opportunities for abuse by SDM



Mandated Legislation

- **Anyone seeing or suspecting abuse in LTC legally obligated to report to supervisor/DOC, at 1-866-434-0144**
- **New legislation for LTC came into effect July 1, 2010**
- **Must be training for all staff in abuse recognition and prevention and written policies**
- **Homes must notify police for any suspected or actual incident which may be criminal**
- **Anyone seeing or suspecting abuse in a Retirement Home legally obligated to report to RHRA, at 1-800-361-7254**
- **Abuse & neglect provisions in effect now, full act not yet proclaimed**



Retirement Home Act

- July 1, 2012
 - ❖ RHRA issues licence, Bill of Rights , Zero Tolerance of abuse & neglect, Staff training, Whistle Blowing protection
 - January 1, 2013
 - ❖ Care Service standards, safety plans, care plans
 - January 1, 2014
 - ❖ Complete act in force
- *College requirements to report abuse*



What is my Role?

- **R. I. R.**
 - 1. Recognize indicators of abuse**
 - 2. Interact with the senior**
 - 3. Respond**



Identify YOUR Action!

- 1. What is your role in the chain of accountability?**
- 2. What are your responsibilities in that role?**
- 3. Have you been trained in your organization's policies and procedures?**
- 4. What are the organization's expectations from you?**
- 5. What are your expectations from your organization?**
- 6. Support of team?**
- 7. Support of supervisor?**



The 3 A's of Interacting: A Rights Based Philosophy

- **Active listening and reassurance**
- **Ask the older person what he/she wants**
- **Act according to wishes and follow-up**



Active Listening

- Listen carefully without interrupting
- Takes courage
- Explain any limits on confidentiality
- Believe what the person is saying
- They are not to blame
- Ask open ended questions



Ask

- What does senior want to do
- How can I help
- Do they want to share
- Do they know about options
- What if they refuse help?



Balance duty to report and rights

- Duty to protect vulnerable
- All citizens have right to self determination
- Older adults have right to make decisions that do not conform to social norms if they cause no harm to others
- Right to accept or reject services



Best Practice

- Do no harm
- Interest of senior is priority
- Avoid imposing personal values
- Respect diversity
- Involve senior in plan of care
- Recognize senior's right to make decisions
- Recognize right to live with risk



Act according to wishes and follow-up

- At imminent risk for harm—ensure senior's safety; call 911
- Support senior, keep listening
- Many ways to assist



Routine Screening Questions

- **Has anyone at home ever hurt you?**
- **Has anyone made you do things you didn't want to?**
- **Has anyone taken anything of yours without asking?**
- **Have you ever signed documents you didn't understand?**
- **Are you afraid of anyone at home?**

(Adapted from AMA, Diagnostic & Treatment Guidelines on EA & Neglect, Sept 9, 03)



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Onpea Resources



- **List serve**
- **Training Curriculum**
- **E-Tools**
- **Provincial Teleconference Presentations**
- **Annual Conferences**
- **Regional Conferences**



Screening Tools

- ONPEA Core Curriculum
- DESA: Geriatric Screening Tool for Disclosure/Evidence or Suspicion of Abuse
- NICE Tools:
 - Indicators of Abuse (IOA)
 - Brief Abuse Screen for the Elderly (BASE)
 - Caregiver Abuse Screen (CASE)
 - Elder Abuse Assessment & Intervention Guide



Prevention

- **Raise awareness for seniors & community**
- **Stay connected socially**
- **Think about having a will, assigning PoA**
- **Stay involved with finances**
- **Speak to bank about options**
- **Discuss issues with your family and older relatives**
- **Have information/tip sheets/resources for patients**



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SENIORS CRIME STOPPERS



**To anonymously report
crimes against seniors.**

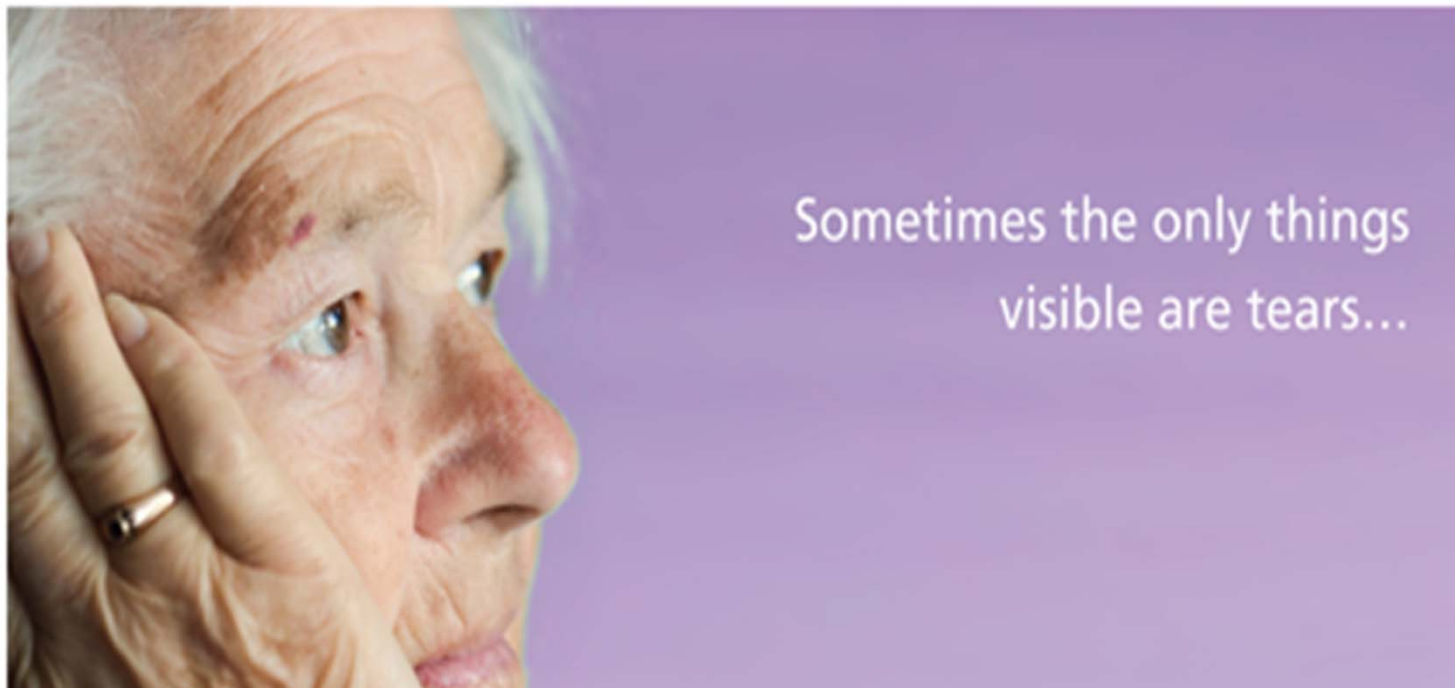
1-800-222-TIPS (8477)



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Seniors Safety Line

- Toll free, 24/7
- Answered by trained staff
- Can provide safety planning and referral to local resource
- Can answer phone in 150 different languages
- 1-866-299-1011



Sometimes the only things
visible are tears...

SENIORS
Are you being:
MISTREATED?
BULLIED?
NEGLECTED?



Call the new **SENIORS SAFETY LINE**
from anywhere in Ontario, and get help now,

1-866-299-1011

24 hours a day 7 days a week 150 languages

Stop Abuse. Restore Respect



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THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION



LA FONDATION
TRILLIUM
DE L'ONTARIO

 Ontario



Link to Community Resources

- CCAC's
- Family Physician
- Day Programs
- Legal Advice
- Mental Health & Addiction
- Local Geriatric Services i.e. RGP programs
- Public Guardian & Trustee
- Police/victim services
- Local elder abuse networks



How Will You Respond?

- Influenced by our own perceptions, attitudes, values and level of tolerance

**“It is not old age that is at fault but our
attitude toward it.”**

Cicero (106-43 BC)