

Check on elders you know during Elder Abuse Awareness Month in June

Elder abuse is an under recognized problem with devastating and even life threatening consequences.

Every day, headlines throughout the U.S. paint a grim picture of seniors who have been abused, neglected and exploited, often by people they trust the most. Abusers may be spouses, family members, personal acquaintances or professionals in positions of trust, or opportunistic strangers who prey on the vulnerable.

How big is the problem? Research indicates that more than one in 10 elders may experience some type of abuse, but only one in 23 cases is reported. This means that very few seniors who have been abused get the help they need.

One thing is certain: Elder abuse can happen to any older individual – your neighbor, your loved one – it can even happen to you.

What is elder abuse?

In general, elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a caregiver or “trusted” individual that lead to, or may lead to, harm of a vulnerable elder.

Physical abuse, neglect, emotional or psychological abuse, verbal abuse and threats, financial abuse and exploitation, sexual abuse and abandonment are considered forms of elder abuse. In many states, self-neglect also is considered mistreatment.

Who is at risk?

Elder abuse can occur anywhere – in the home, in nursing homes or in other institutions. It affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures and races. Based on available information, women and “older” elders are more likely to be victimized.

Dementia is a significant risk factor. Mental health and substance abuse issues – of both abusers and victims – are risk factors. Isolation also can contribute to risk.

Types of elder abuse

- Physical abuse: Use of force to threaten or physically injure an elder
- Emotional abuse: Verbal attacks, threats, rejection, isolation or belittling acts that cause or could cause mental anguish, pain or distress to a senior

- Sexual abuse: Sexual contact that is forced, tricked, threatened or otherwise coerced upon an elder, including anyone who is unable to grant consent
- Exploitation: Theft, fraud, misuse or neglect of authority and use of undue influence as a lever to gain control over an older person’s money or property
- Neglect: A caregiver’s failure or refusal to provide for a vulnerable elder’s safety, physical or emotional needs
- Abandonment: Desertion of a frail or vulnerable elder by anyone with a duty of care
- Self-neglect: An inability to understand the consequences of one’s own actions or inaction, which leads to, or may lead to, harm or endangerment

Remember: You do not need to prove that abuse is occurring; it is up to the professionals to investigate the suspicions.

What can I do to prevent elder abuse?

Report suspected mistreatment to your local Adult Protective Services

agency or law enforcement. Although a situation may have already been investigated, if you believe circumstances are getting worse, continue to speak out.

Keep in contact – Talk with your older friends, neighbors and relatives. Maintaining communication will help decrease isolation, a risk factor for mistreatment. It also will give them a chance to talk about any problems they may be experiencing.

Be aware of the possibility of abuse – Look around and take note of what may be happening with your older neighbors and acquaintances. Do they seem lately to be withdrawn, nervous, fearful, sad or anxious, especially around certain people, when they have not seemed so in the past?

Contact your local area agency on aging office to identify local programs and sources of support, such as Meals on Wheels. These programs help elders maintain health, well-being and independence – a good defense against abuse.

Volunteer – Many local opportunities are available to become involved in programs that provide assistance and support for seniors.

Participate in Native youth survey

The Center for Native American Youth (CNAY) is calling on Native youth across the country to join our first Generation Indigenous Online Roundtable. Fill out this brief 5-10 minute survey, share your opinion, win cool stuff. It’s that simple.

Since its launch in 2011, CNAY has traveled to 23 states and connected with more than 5,000 Native youth to better understand their challenges, strengths and priorities in urban and reservation communities. This is your chance to be part of that conversation.

The Gen-I Online Roundtable is open to Native youth under 25 until September. Everyone who participates will be entered to win one of two full Nike N7 gear packages. Additional prizes will be awarded monthly, including gift cards, T-shirts and other cool stuff.

We’ll share the results of the survey widely so that Native youth, and those who serve them, can use the information to help raise money and educate their communities. Check out our blog to find more information.

Pull up a chair and join our online roundtable. We can’t wait to hear from you!

The CNAY Team – cnay.org | [@Center4Native](https://twitter.com/Center4Native)

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determination. Once determined to be a Native burial, then Tribes have the role of determining some of the next steps – Is the area a known village site and/or cemetery? If so, planning departments for county/city government should be informed so future proposed construction projects can be proactive in design/layout and utilities planning.

If additional ground disturbance work is needed/planned, then a determination is made as to if, how and when that can happen. This might include a planned approach as laid out in a work plan attached to a SHPO permit. Permit applications generally take 30 days of review time so all parties can respond. In these situations, however, an Expedited Permit Application can be sent out, in which reviewers are given 48 hours to respond.

Tribal reps are generally reasonable, experienced/seasoned staff who have seen lots of similar situations, know how to operate within the law and can work with land owners to make decisions that do not leave them hanging with uncertainty or unnecessary construction delays. Sometimes construction can resume as planned, sometimes it is determined that

ground disturbance does not need to go as deep and the sensitive area can be avoided. Sometimes plans need to shift more significantly. It all depends upon the situation and what can or cannot be avoided.

These situations are always upsetting to all involved on some level – someone’s or a whole crew’s work schedule is altered, a company’s project schedule is in question, a home owner has multiple issues to consider, and the state agencies and local law enforcement have their own perspectives.

Tribal folks do not automatically operate from a place of anger or resentment even in these situations, though these circumstances do bring up a remembrance of historical wrongs. The history of a place is not necessarily known or respected by modern residents or visitors of areas that once were exclusively ours, promised by treaty agreements to be always ours. These remains are likely those of someone forced to leave their homelands and come to this reservation in the 1850s, only to die 20 or so years later, then be buried in a place that has seen many changes since the early 1900s. The remains of their relatives and friends also likely lie nearby, if not intact, then strewn about by earlier construction activities.

Find farm stands, U-pick fields and more with Oregon’s Bounty directory

Use a smart phone to easily find farm stands, U-pick fields, on-farm festivals – and get driving directions – with Oregon’s Bounty at oregonfb.org.

Strawberries, asparagus, squash and salad greens – not to mention a vast array of bedding plants, flowering baskets and fresh-cut flowers – are just a few favorites of the agricultural bounty of spring. But if you want to buy directly from the source on a trip out to the countryside, where do you go?

“Everyone knows where their local farmers market is. But what about farm stands, U-pick fields and on-farm festivals out in rural areas? That’s where Oregon’s Bounty comes in,” said OFB Communications Director Anne Marie Moss.

Oregon’s Bounty at oregonfb.org is a searchable directory of more than 300 family farms and ranches that sell food and foliage directly to the public.

Easily navigable with a smart phone, Oregon’s Bounty allows visitors to search for specific agriculture products – like strawberries, cauliflower and eggs – and/or search for farms within a region of the state. Visitors also can do a search for “U-pick” or “events” to find farms that offer those activities.

Once a farm stand is located, visitors can get driving directions from their current location or another address.

“Oregonians love farm-fresh food. Thanks to the diversity of Oregon agriculture, we can buy an enormous variety of fruits, vegetables, meat, nuts, flowers and foliage directly from the families who raised it,” said Moss.

“Each of the farms listed in Oregon’s Bounty are owned and operated by Farm Bureau members, who are proud to share what they’ve raised with the public,” said Moss. “Spring is a great time to take a trip into the beautiful countryside and experience Oregon agriculture firsthand.”

Siletz News Letters Policy

Siletz News, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, is published once a month. Our editorial policy encourages input from readers about stories printed in *Siletz News* and other Tribal issues.

All letters must include the author’s signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. *Siletz News* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain profane language, libelous statements, personal attacks or unsubstantiated statements.

Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Siletz News*, Tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

Please type or write legibly. Letters longer than 450 words may be edited for length as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142.

Please note: The general manager of the Siletz Tribe is the editor-in-chief of *Siletz News*.

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