

Elder abuse, addiction focus of work group gathering

by Sarah Frank
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What is effective and will help our elders to be safe? What is helping to prevent elder abuse now?

What is 'unconditional love'? What is co-dependency? How can we effectively help our addicted loved ones? And what can we do individually to have a positive impact?

These questions were posted on the walls at the Elder Abuse and Addiction Community Education class, held in June at the Social Hall.

The Warm Springs Meth and Opiate work group voted earlier on having the Elder Abuse and Addiction Community Education Class.

Wilson Wewa Sr. was asked to present, as being one knowledgeable on elder abuse in Indian Country.

Wilson shared some facts about elder abuse in Warm Springs. Marcia Minthorn shared a powerful testimony of her history of recovery, noting that her addiction affected her relationship with her mother atwai Gladys Thompson.

Delson Suppah Sr. shared his experience as an alcohol and drug counselor, and some history. Gary Wright intro-

duced himself as a new alcohol and drug counselor at Warm Springs Behavioral Health. He shared a part of his testimony.

Orie Made shared about the Healing Forest; while Edna Tufti and family cooked a delicious dinner!

Highlights from presenters were:

Say No! Get involved. File a report. Do not give out your pin number, and do not co-sign.

Positive energy. Care more and support. Spirituality. Share. Learn from our own teachings.

Take action on abuse. Walk in our ways gifted to us.

Highlights from 44 evaluations: Question: Do you have any suggestions on how to help with the Elder Abuse issue in Warm Springs?

Answers: Speak up and help protect elders. Hold classes on setting healthy boundaries.

Yes, We as people need to take a stand.

Advocate for elders could check on all elders maybe two to three times a week.

Speak to the abuser and let him or her know, some how.



Orie Made presents 'the Healing Forest'

Have a gathering to show the 'items to use drugs'—paraphernalia—so we can be informed.

Question: Do you have any suggestions on how we can help our families with addiction problems?

Answers: Don't make judgments over addiction, because that won't solve anything.

Practice hard, harsh in-

tervention.

Confidential phone calls or visits with the Warm Springs Police Department. Have a designated police officer visit the home.

Train the children and youth on alcohol and drug addiction, and they'll talk about it.

It start with the person's heart wanting the healing.

Tough love! We all know

who is dealing drugs, tell on them, turn them in.

We all need to work together—Family members, the police and court system, victims of crime, Tribal Council, departments, all of us.

We need immediate response when situations occur. We need our own drug rehab building.

We need emergency backup for 'high' people, to protect them from themselves and others.

More outreach: Sometimes if abuse is happening in the home, we tend to want to just stay in a safe place— maybe in our rooms and not answering doors.

Question: Do you have any suggestions for future meetings, topics and presentations?

Have a class for the younger people to understand elder abuse.

Have a victim of elder abuse talk.

Victims of crimes, and struggles of people from prisons, and family of people sent to prison.

Intervention with abusers and users. Do interventions with households.

Have a panel of elders who have been abused or

used, or know of the people who were.

Too many prescription drugs seem to be going to seniors, everyone.

Question: Any other comments?

I really loved the speakers. They opened up my eyes.

We need to unite, altogether, and combat these issues we face today.

Stages and levels of violations are killing the spiritual light of our people, each one. Bring the Spirit back into our people.

Very good food and speakers, and it was good to see the many people here.

Very good presenters. I enjoyed all the speakers. Thank you for your concern for elders.

Thank You Warm Springs Behavioral Health for providing the meal, and the Communication Grant provided by Alyssa Macy for door prizes.

We do plan to have future Meth and Opiate Work Group community education classes. Please join us. For more information contact Sarah Frank at 541-553-3205.

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