

How to Help

Listen - be an attentive and believing listener and hear what the elder or dependent adult wants to share with you. Listen to other safe care providers who might also have suspicions of abuse taking place.

Observe - notice what the person is experiencing, it might be helpful to keep notes on what you are observing.

Address Concerns - talk with the elder or dependent adult. If it feels appropriate, follow guidelines to reporting the abuse. Remember that you do not need proof that abuse is occurring; it is up to the professionals to investigate the situation. Call (707) 476-2100 to make a report.

Take Care of Yourself - abuse not only affects the person experiencing the abuse, it affects the support system as well. It can be helpful to make space and time for yourself.

There can be many barriers to talking about and/or reporting abuse. If the perpetrator is a family member or someone close to the family, that can complicate the situation. Also, feeling helpless and not knowing what to do is a very common barrier. The North Coast Rape Crisis Team is here to support friends and loved ones, feel free to reach out to us over our 24-hour hotline to get support for yourself.

Resources

NORTH COAST RAPE CRISIS TEAM

Collect calls are accepted

Humboldt 24-hr hotline: (707) 445-2881

TTY (M-F 8:30-5:00): (707) 443-2738

Business Office: (707) 443-2737

Del Norte 24-hr hotline: (707) 465-2851

TTY (M-F 8:30-5:00): (707) 465-2031

Business Office: (707) 465-6961

Area 1 Agency on Aging

(707) 442-3763

www.a1aa.org

Adult Protective Services - DHHS

24-hr Abuse Hotline (707) 476-2100

National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)

ncea.acl.gov

National Adult Protective Services Association

www.napsa-now.org

Redwood Coast Regional Center

(707) 445-0893

www.redwoodcoastrc.org

Humboldt Community Access and Resource Center

(707) 443-7077

www.hcar.us



Abuse of Elders and Dependent Adults

North Coast Rape Crisis Team

"Imagine a world without violence"

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Business Line: (707) 443-2737

www.ncrct.org

Who is a dependent adult?

A dependent adult is...

- Anyone over 18 who is permanently or temporarily disabled to a degree that they are vulnerable to abuse and cannot make choices or take actions to protect themselves.
- Anyone over 18 who is permanently temporarily or housed in a medical, nursing, rehabilitation, or similar facility.
- Anyone over 18 who is conserved.

Who is an elder?

In many ways, this may be determined by culture and custom. From the perspective of the State of California, an elder is anyone age 65 or older.

What is Adult Protective Services?

Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates reported incidents of elder and dependent adult abuse. APS responds to reports of abuse from social services and health providers, law enforcement, clergy, and other mandated reporters as well as any concerned individuals. Reports of abuse are **confidential** and are based on the reasonable suspicion of the reporting party that abuse or neglect is occurring. APS may be housed within a county or Tribal Human Services Department.

Types of Abuse and Indicators

Physical Abuse:

- Inadequately explained bruises, fractures, cuts, sores, burns, etc.
- Pressure sore or bed sores
- Medications given in excess or inappropriately

Sexual Abuse:

- Rape, anal rape, oral copulation, sexual battery
- Any unwanted, unwelcome, non-consensual sexual attention
- Remember, **consent must be freewill and knowing**

Neglect:

- Lack of basic hygiene, adequate food, or clean and appropriate clothing
- Lack of medical aids (glasses, walker, medications, hearing aid, dentures, etc.)
- Home cluttered, filthy, in disrepair, fire hazards
- Condition of home presents health/safety hazards
- Home without appliances
- Lack of basic hygiene—body, clothes, linens
- Mentally disabled person left alone/unsupervised
- Bed-bound person left without proper care

Financial Abuse:

- Lack of amenities the person could otherwise afford
- Caregiver or person in trust is found to be using the person's financial resources for their own needs
- Person "voluntarily" giving inappropriate financial compensation for personal care or companionship
- Person has signed property transfers, Power of Attorney, quit claim deeds, or created a new will when they are unable to comprehend this transaction

Isolation or Mental Suffering:

- Abuser isolates person by restricting or preventing visits, mail, phone calls, and other contacts and/or refuses to allow others into the home or to speak directly to the person
- False imprisonment and/or physical restraint
- Caregiver is controlling, uncaring, threatening, aggressive, violent, or dealing with addictions which impair judgement
- Fear, agitation, confusion, severe depression or other forms of emotional distress brought about by intimidating behavior, threats, harassment, deception, or false or misleading statements made with malicious intent

Abandonment:

- Desertion or willful forsaking by anyone having care or custody when a "reasonable person" would continue to provide care
- Removing the person when they lack the capacity to consent to the removal

Undue Influence:

- Manipulation or deception used to gain assets without true consent through the use of a relationship that has been carefully constructed by the perpetrator, as well as the result of the person's susceptibility to manipulation
- When an elder or dependent adult lacks ability to resist undue influence and is unable to give true consent, a conservatorship may be appropriate

WHEN DO I REPORT?

When you suspect an elder or dependent adult is in danger and cannot protect themselves.