

What is Elder Abuse?

2017 Title VI Cluster Training Billings, MT
August 17th, 2017



National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative
“Restoring respect and dignity by honoring Indigenous elders”

Elder Abuse

- ❖ According to the National Center on Elder Abuse (2013), elder abuse generally refers to any of the following types of mistreatment that are committed by someone with whom the elderly person has a special relationship (for example, a spouse, sibling, child, friend, or caregiver).



Elder Justice

Elder Justice- is defined as efforts to “prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect and exploitation [and] protect elders with diminished capacity while maximizing their autonomy.”

In response to growing concerns over elder abuse, Congress passed the [Elder Justice Act](#) (EJA) as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which was signed into law by President Obama on March 23, 2010. Read on to learn more about the purposes of the Act and how it protects seniors from abuse.



Elder Justice Act

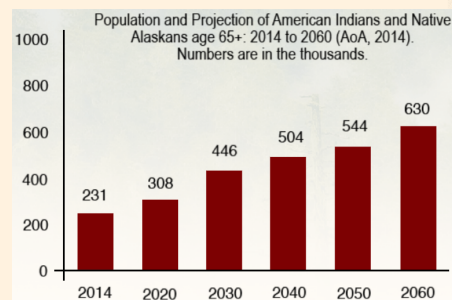
The Elder Justice Act (EJA) as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (commonly referred to as the Affordable Care Act) was enacted into law on March 23, 2010. The EJA sets forth provisions to address elder abuse, neglect and exploitation to protect elders living in community and institutional settings (National Health Policy Forum, 2010).

- Authorizing \$100 million in federal funding for state and local Adult Protective Service Programs. An additional \$25 million was authorized for APS demonstration programs for each fiscal years from 2011 through 2014 (National Adult Protective Services Association, 2016).
- Authorizing grants for training and improvement
 - Adult Protective Services (APS)
 - Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs
 - Federal and state surveyors of Medicare and Medicaid-certified Long-term care nursing facilities, who ensure compliance with federal laws and regulations.
- Providing grants for the development of elder abuse forensic centers, authorizes an Elder Justice Coordinating Counsel and Public Advisory Board, and requires reporting of crimes in long-term care facilities to law enforcement.

EJA defines elder justice activities as: “Efforts to prevent, detect, treat, intervene in, and prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation and to protect elders with diminished capacity while maximizing their autonomy.” (Subtitle H in Title VI of Public Act 111-148 PPACA, 2009)
https://ncea.acl.gov/resources/docs/Elder-Justice_Act-2010.pdf

Demographics

- ❖ In 2009, persons age 65 or older made up about 12.9% of the U.S. population, and it is estimated that at the current rate by 2030 they will make up 19% (AoA, 2014).
- ❖ Incidents of elder abuse and/or neglect are expected to increase with the growth of the elder populations.



Implications

- ❖ 90% of elder abuse is committed by a family member (Barton, 2012).
- ❖ Elders who have been abused are at a 200% higher risk of death than those who have not been mistreated (NCOA, 2014).
- ❖ Nationally, financial abuse costs older Americans \$2.9 billion year (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ The above numbers are thought to be underreported because of love for or fear of the abuser.

Types of Abuse

- ❖ According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, there are seven types of elder abuse:
 - Physical Abuse
 - Emotional or Psychological Abuse
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Financial or Material Exploitation
 - Neglect
 - Self-Neglect
 - Abandonment
- ❖ According to Duran and Duran (1995) colonization or abuse impacting the values and identity of a person is soul wounding. According to Henke (2006) this is spiritual abuse.

Physical Abuse

- ❖ Physical abuse is defined as the use of physical force that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ Types of physical abuse may include acts of violence such as striking, hitting, pushing, shaking, slapping, kicking, pinching, or burning. Additionally, inappropriate use of medication, physical restraints, force-feeding, and physical punishment of any kind may also be physical abuse.
- ❖ Physical abuse may not be obvious or easily visible.

Physical Abuse Examples

- Elder hit by adult child
- Elderly man with dementia hitting wife.
- Daughter hits elder stemming from stress of his needs & health
- Drug taking/alcohol use leads to yelling/hitting other family members

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

- ❖ Emotional abuse is defined as the infliction of anguish, pain, or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ This may include verbal assaults, insults, threats, intimidation, humiliation, harassment or disrespect.
- ❖ Examples include:
 - Elderspeak (talking to an elder like an infant)
 - Giving an elder the “silent treatment”
 - Forced isolation
 - Threats

Emotional/Psychological Abuse Examples

- Grown children moving in with elder—drinking, fighting, taking their money, chasing away caregivers
- Confining elder to one room/no interaction with family
- Verbal abuse by young family members
- Children threatening parents/grandparents with nursing home if they couldn't live with her.
- Not listening when elders speak.
- Treating them as if they don't matter any more.

Sexual Abuse

- ❖ Sexual abuse is non-consensual sexual contact of any kind (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ Sexual contact with any person who has not consented or is incapable of consent is considered sexual abuse.
- ❖ Examples include:
 - Rape
 - Unwanted touching
 - Molestation
 - Sodomy
 - Coerced nudity
 - Taking or distributing sexually explicit photographs or videos

Sexual Abuse Examples

- Grandma raped by male high on meth who broke into her house. Ashamed. Would not report or tell anyone. Finally agreed to go to hospital for exam.
- Grandma raped by nephew, wouldn't talk—ashamed
- Elderly woman raped and killed
- Leaving an elderly person exposed

Financial or Material Exploitation

- ❖ Financial abuse is defined as the illegal or improper use of an elderly person's funds, property, or assets (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ Examples include:
 - Cashing checks without authorization or permission
 - Forging a signature
 - Misusing or stealing money or possessions
 - Coercing or deceiving an older person into signing documents (e.g., contracts or will)
 - Improper use of conservatorship, guardianship, or power of attorney

Financial Exploitation Examples

- Granddaughter wiped out Grandma's bank account.
- Misusing elderly person's monthly check & not paying for food or bills for the one it is intended for.
- Family gambled away Grandma's only income
- Family takes Grandpa's personal items
- Family took Auntie's check
- Grandchildren pressured grandparent for money
- Family borrowed money and didn't pay back
- Granddaughter & boyfriend moved in and supported by elderly grandmother

Neglect

- ❖ Neglect is defined as the refusal or failure to fulfill any part of a person's obligations or duties to an elderly or disabled adult. Neglect may include failure of a person who has fiduciary responsibilities to provide care for a vulnerable adult (e.g., pay for necessary home care services) or the failure on the part of an in-home service provider necessary care (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ Examples include failure to provide necessities such as food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medication, comfort, personal safety, and other essentials included in an implied or agreed-upon responsibility to a vulnerable adult.

Neglect Examples

- Elderly uncle confined to home/family wouldn't provide support
- Failing to obtain proper medical treatment for grandma
- Family locks grandpa in a room at home
- Not visiting or taking grandparents to gatherings

Spiritual Abuse

- ❖ Spiritual abuse is defined as harmful interference with spiritual growth including the corruption of another person's value system. (Doble, R. D. 2006).
- ❖ Examples include:
 - Preventing Grandma from attending spiritual activities or ceremonies
 - Theft of an Grandpa's ceremonial items to sell or use without permission
 - Comments or activities which are damaging to the elderly person's spirit or sexual abuse as a spiritual activity

Abandonment

- ❖ Abandonment is defined as the desertion of an elderly person by an individual who has assumed responsibility for providing care for an elder, or by a person with physical custody of an elder (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ Signs and symptoms of abandonment include but are not limited to:
 - The desertion of an elder at a hospital, a nursing facility, or other similar institution
 - The desertion of an elder at a shopping center or other public location
 - An elderly person's own report of being abandoned

Abandonment Examples

- Family goes away leaving Grandma without food or drinking water.
- Grandpa is not left with any resources for personal hygiene.

Self-Neglect

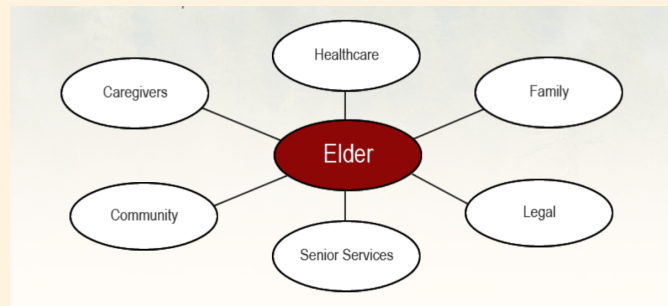
- ❖ Self-neglect is characterized as the behavior of an elderly person that threatens his/her personal health or safety. Self-neglect may manifest in an elderly person as a refusal or failure to provide him/herself with adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medication, and safety precautions (NCEA, 2013).
- ❖ The definition of self-neglect excludes a situation in which a mentally competent elderly person, who understands the consequences of his/herself decisions, makes a conscious and voluntary choice to engage in acts that threaten his/her health or safety.
- ❖ Examples include:
 - Lacking food or basic utilities
 - Refusing medications or hoarding

Elder Protection Team

- ❖ The Elder Protection Team addresses the issues of elder abuse and is dependent upon the resources of each specific tribe. Possible responsibilities of an Elder Protection Team may include:
 - Educating the community and conducting prevention activities
 - Building collaboration and trust among professionals, elderly and families
 - Providing empathetic listening
 - Implementing an effective method for responding to elder abuse while maintaining confidentiality
 - Reporting suspected abuse and intervening when necessary
 - Restoring respect of elderly

Members of an Elder Protection Team

- ❖ The Elder Protection Team always includes the elder. Due to the complexity of elder abuse, the makeup of the team is individualized, will vary and may include:



Elder Vulnerability

- ❖ Physical changes and old age reduce the ability to conduct activities of daily living and maintain independence.

Health	Cognitive	Social Isolation
Poor Vision Poor Hearing Declining Motor Skills Depression	Difficulty with: Processing Information Problem Solving Reasoning Flexibility in Thinking Declining Memory	Poor Health Retirement Loss of Spouse Loss of Friends Lack of Technology Skills

Levels of Prevention

- ❖ There are many ways to help prevent elder abuse and neglect. There are three levels of prevention, primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention.
 - Primary prevention involves education of everyone about what elder abuse is and how to prevent it.
 - Secondary prevention involves work done with elders who are at risk ~ this may include a range of preventative measures such fall prevention or safety scans of the elders home to setting up ways of preventing exploitation.
 - Tertiary prevention is how to prevent elder abuse that has happened to someone before from happening again.

Native American Elder Abuse Online Interactive Educational Modules

Identifying Problems and Concerns

- ❖ The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA, 2005), estimated that for every reported case of elder abuse, 14 cases will go unreported.
- ❖ Little is known about how widespread elder abuse is in Indian Country.
- ❖ No infrastructure or coordinated systems currently in place for prevention, protection, and support for the elder.
- ❖ Understanding of what constitutes elder abuse is difficult, as many elders may only consider victimization as physical abuse, increasing risks of other forms of abuse.



Native American Elder Abuse Online Interactive Educational Modules

NIEJI's Intended Purpose

- ❖ General consensus that people may not know what constitutes elder abuse or neglect.
- ❖ Produce information on how to define and recognize elder abuse in Indian Country.
- ❖ Educate **EVERYONE** on elder abuse and neglect, and learn ways on how to help prevent it.
- ❖ Creation of culturally relevant materials providing viewers with training tools and information about elder abuse and neglect. Specifically geared for formal and informal care providers, law enforcement, and elders themselves.

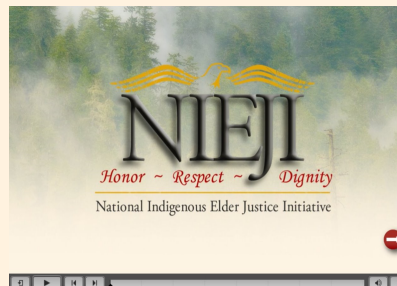


Native American Elder Abuse Online Interactive Educational Modules

On June 15th 2016, NIEJI launched the Native American Elder Abuse Online Interactive Educational Modules. Available at www.nieji.org

Designed for professional disciplines working with and caring for Native Elders in a variety of settings.

- Elder
- Caregiving
- Social Services
- Financial
- Legal
- Policy
- Healthcare





Native American Elder Abuse Online Interactive Educational Modules

- ❖ Modules contain valuable information to gain cultural understanding and best practices in the various disciplines addressing elder abuse and neglect in Indian Country.
- ❖ Each training module includes aims and learning objectives for professionals working closely with Native American elders.
- ❖ Ways for professionals to identify potential signs and risk factors for elder abuse and neglect, and how to report suspected abuse to proper authorities.
- ❖ Also included are culturally appropriate practices such as use of language while working with Native American elders. All of which will help the professional to address these concerns in a respectful manner which adheres to Native American traditional beliefs and practices.



Current Training Modules

Online educational modules on Elder Abuse and Neglect are located on the NIEJI website:

- We recommend users watch the “Elder” feather icon first as this is an introduction to all other modules.
- Three completed trainings for professionals in elder care fields; Social Services, Financial, and Caregivers.
- We are currently working on training modules for Policy, Legal, and Health Care workers.



Certificates of Completion

- ❖ Included is a certificate of completion at the end of each educational module.



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Resources

NIEJI PARTNERS

Elder Resource Centers

National Resource Center for American Indian, Alaska Native & Native Hawaiian Elders – University of Alaska Anchorage's mission is to increase and improve service delivery of health issues, long term care including in-home care, elder abuse, mental health, and other issues facing Native communities

<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/elders/>

Hā Kūpuna National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders – research on improving the health and increasing life expectancy of Native Hawaiian Elders

<http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/hakupuna/>

National Resource Center on Native American Aging – increasing awareness and advocacy for developing community-based solutions for Native American Elders

<https://www.nrcnaa.org/>

National Indian Council on Aging – advocating for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic well-being for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders

<http://niconc.org/>

Elder Abuse Resources

National Center on Elder Abuse – resource for policy makers, social services and health care representatives, law enforcement, and families

<http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/>

Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse and Neglect – University of California's "living laboratory" of innovative approaches to preventing elder abuse

<http://www.centeronelderabuse.org/>

Elder Financial Protection Network

<http://www.elderfinancialprotection.org/>

National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center – advocating for rights to residents in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities

<http://lombudsman.org/>



For More Information

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Thank You!

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