



Elderly Maltreatment in Rural Communities and Indian Country: How Is It Different?

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Virginia Legal Aid Conference

"Restoring respect and dignity by honoring Indigenous elders"



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Objectives

- ❖ NIEJI Resources
- ❖ Common rural & indigenous issues
- ❖ Indigenous specific issues
- ❖ Rural specific issues
- ❖ Next steps

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NIEJI Resources



"Restoring respect and dignity by honoring Indigenous elders"



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Resources - Elder Abuse Codes State/Tribal Hotlines Training

Restoring respect and dignity by honoring Indigenous Elders



National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative

If this is an emergency, call 911. To report elder abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation, view the [State/Tribal Hotlines page](#).

Most cases of elder abuse are undetected, under reported, and unresolved resulting in injury, financial decimation, and even death. The National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative (NIEJI) was created to address the lack of culturally appropriate information and community education materials on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation in Indian Country.



COVID-19 Resources

These [COVID-19 Tribal Elder Resources](#) will help to inform your communities on how to prevent the spread, protect your elders and loved ones, and prevent falling for [scams](#).

Elder Abuse Warning Signs

- Learn more about the [types of abuse and the warning signs](#)



News

June 15 was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)


- [Watch Protecting Our Elders During COVID-19 Presentation](#)



Certificate Program

The [National Adult Protective Services Certificate Program](#) has training materials that will improve the safety of vulnerable adults and persons with disabilities who are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

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Native Elder Protection Team Toolkit

A [step-by-step guide](#) for developing a successful model for addressing elder abuse in Indian Country. The [Toolkit](#) is designed to help you identify and implement a tribal elder protection team.

Online Interactive Education

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

Learn more



Funder

NIEJI is funded by the [Administration for Community Living](#) to provide research, education, and training for the identification and prevention of elder abuse in Indigenous communities. This program serves American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian elders in an effort to improve their quality of life. The project is housed at the University of North Dakota [Center for Rural Health](#).

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NIEJI Resources

- ❖ **Elder Abuse** Types of elder abuse and the warning signs
- ❖ **Tribal Elder Protection Team Toolkit**
A step-by-step guide for developing a successful model for addressing elder abuse in Indian Country
- ❖ **News & Events** News, events, conference and seminars
- ❖ **Publications**
- ❖ Newsletter articles, research reports and other documents
- ❖ **Presentations**
Presentations/poster presentations from related meetings and conference
- ❖ **Product Examples**
- ❖ Items created by elder abuse prevention grantees
- ❖ **Websites & Tools** Related websites

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Posters, factsheets, placemats

Don't let your money fly away
 Fill in the blanks with the following letters:
 A I A D A U C I R

E L _ _ E R
F _ N _ N _ _ _ L
F _ _ _ D

Answers on back!

Spot scams from a mile away.
 Find these five common scam types:

- fraud
- contractor
- free lunch
- identity theft
- tech support

Answers on back!

Ways to Love Our Elders

LISTEN • Hug them • Be **PROUD** of them • Tell them you **LOVE** them • Take them out to eat • Open the door • Snuggle them so they won't fall • Brush their hair • Have them teach you **TRADITIONS** • Spend time with them • Make them a cup of tea • Cook their favorite food • Take them to a movie • Take them out for a meal • Sing together • Dance • Sweep the floor • Wash their clothes • Take out the trash • Be **PATIENT**, let them take their time • Clean their yard • Talk with them • Spend your own money on them • Make sure they are dressed warmly for the weather • Bring children to **VISIT** • Play games together • Pray with them • **RESPECT** their spiritual beliefs • Give birthday gifts • Remember them on holidays • Tell them the latest news (gossip) • Shake their hands • Make their bed • **HELP** them get dressed for the day • Clean out the stove • Check their windows & doors • Fix the fence or gate • Feed the dogs & horses • Make fry bread • **RESPECT** their history • Ask about their childhood • Ask them to tell you a story • Tell a story • Talk about what you did today • Read the newspaper • Be **KIND & RESPECTFUL** • Include them in your family plans so they won't be alone • Let grandma relax at gatherings instead of cooking • Tell a good **JOKE** • Clean their jewelry • Make jewelry, do bead work, weave or sew • Check to see if they are okay • Chop & haul wood • Offer to pay their utility bill • Buy some groceries, potatoes or flour • Play their favorite song • Wash the vehicle • Take **CARE** of their medications • Let them keep & enjoy their gifts • Bring them your favorite food • Treat grandma like a lady, open doors for her & let her go first • Give their change back, when they ask you to buy something for them • Give a cheerful greeting, say "Hello, Goodnight, I **LOVE** you."

LEARN to make traditional foods • Offer to interpret forms • Give them pictures of yourself • Let them be themselves if they want • Make sure they have a first aid kit • Make sure their house is a safe place to be • Return **HELP** with farm belongings after

you use them • **RESPECT** their opinions • Sit with them • Buy a flashlight with batteries • Buy hair color if they want it • Take them to the sales • Make a sack lunch when they are traveling • **HELP** them watch their diet, less sugar, less fat, & less salt • **VISIT** elders in the nursing homes • Watch a movie together • **LEARN** Native words • **HELP** them find the restrooms at a restaurant or store • Go for a walk together • Take them to senior centers, special events, fairs, tribal meetings, & pow wows • Wear them Klans, Vicks, eye drops, or Ben Gay • **LEARN** from their teachings • Clean their eyeglasses • **HELP** them remember

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NIEJI Training Modules

NIEJI Restoring respect and dignity by honoring elders

National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative
Online Interactive Educational Modules

It is recommended to use Internet Explorer or Google Chrome browsers

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Elder Abuse



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What is Elder Abuse?

- ❖ "Any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or a serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult."

NCEA, 2013

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Types of Elderly Abuse

- ❖ Physical
- ❖ Emotional/Psychological
- ❖ Sexual
- ❖ Neglect
- ❖ Self-Neglect
- ❖ Abandonment
- ❖ Spiritual

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Where is the Research?

- ❖ Rural Elder Abuse & Neglect, 2005
 - Depression & Caregiver Burden among Rural Elder Caregivers
 - Maine, 62 caregivers At-Risk, Isolation
 - Rural Vs. Urban Victims of Violence: The Interplay of Race & Religion
 - Illinois 1990-1995; similar needs, but rural more extensive with Transportation, education, and services than urban
 - Rural Physician Attitudes Toward the Elderly: Evidence of Ageism?
 - Florida, 212 practitioners, ageist perceptions of nursing home residents and those over 85 years

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Native Elder Maltreatment Survey

- ❖ Data from 5 tribes, 27 different tribal affiliations
 - 373 Completed Surveys
 - Ages 50-101 years
- ❖ Native Elderly indicate greater Financial Exploitation and Neglect than Psychological and Physical abuse.
- ❖ Women show more neglect and financial exploitation.

Wheeler & Gray, 2019

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What Are the Numbers?

- ❖ Unexplained falls:
 - 39% of elders have fallen in the past year
- ❖ Malnourished/Inadequate Food:
 - 1 in 6 Native elders report eating less than 2 meals/day
- ❖ Unable/no help to shop/cook/feed self
 - 1 in 9 Native elders report they are unable to shop, cook or feed themselves
 - 1 in 8 Native elders report they do not have the money to buy food.

NRCNAA, 2015

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What Are the Numbers?

Native Elders report they need help with:

❖ Errands/shopping	22.8%
❖ Money	41.5%
❖ Housekeeping/Chores	33%
❖ Business/Financial Advice	48.7%
❖ Companionship	19%

NRCNAA, 2015

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Elderly Resources/Services

Service	Now Use	Would Use
Elder Abuse Prevention	1.1%	12.7%
Financial Assistance	3.4%	27.1%
Legal Assistance	2.2%	23.5%
Caregiver	6.0%	32.4%
Personal Care	2.6%	20.5%
Home Health Care	4.2%	32.6%
Home Modification	2.5%	27.7%
Transportation	9.5%	35.2%
Home Delivered Meals	14%	36%

NRCNAA, 2015

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Who Commits Elder Abuse?

- ❖ Intimate partners
- ❖ Adult children and other family members
- ❖ Caregivers
- ❖ Fiduciaries
- ❖ Others who are or put themselves in positions of trust or authority
- ❖ Strangers

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Why Does Elder Abuse Occur?

Persons motivated by:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ❖ Greed | ❖ Good intentions
(caregivers who cause harm even if trying to provide care) |
| ❖ Benefits of predatory behavior
(sexual/ financial) | |
| ❖ Power & Control dynamics (similar to younger domestic violence) | ❖ Physical/mental health conditions
(cannot control behavior) |

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Rural & Indigenous Issues

- ❖ Response
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Lack of Caregivers
- ❖ Access to Services

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Who Are the Victims?

- ❖ Any older adult (generally 60+ but depends upon tribal definition)
- ❖ Disproportionately affected:
 - Persons who are isolated, living in poverty or who have cognitive impairments (e.g., dementia)
 - Women (2/3)
 - Residents of long-term care facilities

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Indigenous Issues

- ❖ Elder Abuse Codes
- ❖ Cross Jurisdictional Issues
- ❖ Restorative Justice Approaches
- ❖ Spiritual Abuse

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Native Elder Abuse: The Basics

- ❖ Many times Native elders do not consider themselves abused.
- ❖ The terms more often used are
 - Disrespect
 - Mistreated
- ❖ A “Native Elder” is...
 - Varies from tribe to tribe, but usually
 - Over 55 years of age
 - Knowledgeable of the culture
 - Wisdom from life or education
- ❖ “Elderly” only addresses the person’s age

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Why to Native Elderly?

❖ Native Values such as...

- Generosity
- Take care of today.
- Family Role or position
- Respect for Elders

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Vulnerability of Native Elderly

- ❖ Dependence upon others for assistance.
- ❖ Don't want caregivers to go to jail.
- ❖ Forgiving of family members.
- ❖ Spent their lives taking care of family so vulnerable to family needs/expectations holding greater importance.
- ❖ IHS – seeing different providers every time they go in for health care.

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Rural Non-Indigenous Issues

❖ Transportation

❖ Education

❖ Services

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Next Steps

❖ Research/Data

❖ Cross-Cultural Training

❖ Cross-Jurisdictional Agreements

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❖ Thank You (English)
❖ Wado (Cherokee)

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