

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Nebraska Toolkit



See more at: <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/WEAAD>

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) encourages your organization to hold activities on and around June 15th that spotlight the mistreatment of older adults, and to communicate with the public how individuals, organizations and communities can take action **NOW**. The need is obvious:

- **One in 10 Americans aged 60+ have experienced some form of elder abuse**, neglect or exploitation (National Council on Aging, 2017).
- As few as **1 in 14 cases of elder abuse come to the attention of authorities**, making elder abuse significantly under-identified and under-reported (Elder Abuse Statistics and Facts, 2017).
- Due to the rapidly increasing 60+ population (as “Baby Boomers” continue to enter the elder population), it is estimated that **5 million elders are abused every year** (NCOA, 2017).
- **By 2030, almost 20 percent of our population** will be 65 or older – nearly twice as many as in 2007.
- The **85-plus population is projected to triple** (a 208% increase) between 2015 and 2050 (Across the States Profiles of Long-Term Services and Supports, AARP 2018).
- It is estimated that **financial abuse costs elders around \$36.5 billion each year**.
- Financial exploitation is self-reported more than all other forms of abuse (NCOA, 2017).
- Seniors are living longer, but not necessarily better. **Elders are more vulnerable to victimization due to decline in cognitive and physical functions.**

For these reasons, it is imperative that your office, organization or agency become involved in the statewide effort to get the word out. Included in this **toolkit** are ideas to assist you in planning effective activities to catch the attention of residents in your community, build a greater awareness of elder abuse and inform the public of what they can do.

Every year, we shine a spotlight on elder abuse when we observe **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day** (“**WEAAD**”). This **Toolkit** provides ideas to help you plan effective events in your area. Included here are materials, resources, a news release, proclamation and social media messages, as well as information on other sources of support. Copies of these materials can be found at: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/World-Elder-Abuse-Awareness.aspx>.

We invite you to use the **toolkit** to achieve year-round awareness of elder abuse and to focus on what the public can do. No effort is too small to be counted in an awareness campaign, and the more often we put this critical message in front of the public, the greater the impact.

Activity Ideas – Of course, in 2020, many of these events may have to be VIRTUAL

Reach Out to a New Audience

During the week preceding **WEAAD**, June 15th, hold an event in key communities each day for widespread awareness and impact. Visit: <https://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home/> for additional resources and ideas.

Sponsor Presentations or Discussions about Elder Abuse

Host a presentation on elder abuse and neglect and how to prevent, recognize and report. **Contact local civic organizations - Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists, Lions, Sertoma, etc.** - several weeks in advance and ask to present to them. Consider using the PowerPoint and the talking points in this **toolkit**. Outreach can be made to other targeted groups using the following resources:

- **Women:**
 - Churches, beauty salons, widowed persons’ services
 - Every Woman Matters Program, 1-800-532-2227, <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Every-Woman-Matters.aspx>
- **Residents in long-term care facilities:**
 - Nebraska Health Care Association, www.nehca.org
 - Nebraska's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Aging-Ombudsman.aspx>
- **Caregivers:**
 - Caregiver support groups, local grandparent resource centers, caregiver fairs and Retreats.
 - Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) 402-444-6536, <http://enoa.org>.
- **Low-Income Individuals:**
 - Social Security offices
 - Rural and urban health clinics
 - Nebraska Telephone Assistance Program for low-income individuals (800) 526-0017

- Seniors in Congregate Meal sites
Nebraska's 9 Community Action Agencies,
<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Commodity-Supplemental-Food-Program.aspx>
- Rural housing program, www.rd.usda.gov/ne
- Senior transportation program, <https://www.nebraskatransit.com/>
- NDOT transit manager, 1400 Highway 2, Lincoln, NE 68509; phone: 402-479-4694
- Weatherization program, <http://www.neo.ne.gov/wx/wxindex.htm>
- **Homebound Persons:**
 - Meals on Wheels programs through AAAs
 - Visiting nurses
 - Mail carriers
 - Home companions (senior companion programs through AAAs).
- **People with Limited English Proficiency:**
 - Centers: Asian, Hispanic, Vietnamese, Intercultural Senior Center
 - Radio and television programs
 - Nebraska Appleseed, www.neappleseed.com
- **Individuals with physical and mental disabilities:**
 - ARC, www.arc-nebraska.org
 - Easter Seals, <http://www.easterseals.com/ne/our-programs/senior-services/>
 - Behavioral Health Regions, <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Behavioral-Health.aspx>
 - Vocational Rehabilitation offices, <http://www.vr.nebraska.gov/>
- **Native Americans:**
 - Native American Senior Centers, Urban Indian Centers and **Native American Tribes:**
 - *Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition* Elder Program "Tired Moccasins," 402-346-0902, <http://www.nuihc.com/>
 - *Omaha Tribe of Nebraska*, PO BOX 368, Macy, Nebraska, Phone: 402-837-5391
 - *Ponca Tribe of Nebraska*, <https://www.poncatribene.org/>
 - *Santee Sioux Nation*, 425 Frazier Ave N. Suite 2, Niobrara, Nebraska, 68760, Phone: 402-857-2302, FAX 402-857-2307, www.santeedakota.org/santee_sioux_tribe_of_nebraska.htm
 - *Winnebago Tribe Elder Abuse Prevention Program*, P.O. Box C, Winnebago, NE 68071, Phone: 402-878-2231, Ext. 1315
- **Veterans:**
 - Veterans' Homes (Bellevue, Grand Island, Norfolk, Scottsbluff),
 - Veterans Service Centers <https://veterans.nebraska.gov/>
 - American Legion <http://www.nebraskalegion.net/>

- **Victims of Domestic Violence:**
 - Domestic Violence Program, APS service offices, http://www.nebraskacoalition.org/get_help/
- **Visually Impaired Individuals:**
 - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, <https://ncbvi.nebraska.gov/>
 - Library Commission talking books and Braille services, <http://www.nlc.nebraska.gov/>
- **Hearing Impaired Persons:**
 - Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, www.ncdhh.nebraska.gov
- **General Population:**
 - Banks, doctors' offices, medical societies, ministries

In this **toolkit** are **talking points** for a presentation. You may use all the information or segments of it depending on the length of your presentation. It provides background information on elder abuse; screening, response and safety planning; services and community partners; as well as federal legislation and programs.

Resources for speakers include:

- Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance (Investment and Securities Fraud)
 - Claire McHenry, Deputy Director, Securities Bureau, 402-471-2171, claire.mchenry@nebraska.gov
- Adult Protective Services Program Specialist (mandatory reporting and red flags for abuse, neglect or exploitation)
 - Local APS Supervisors
 - Toni Bonsera, DHHS Division of Children and Family Services, APS - 402-219-2515, antonia.bonsera@nebraska.gov
- Legal Aid of Nebraska
 - Go to <http://www.legalaidofnebraska.org/> for the office in your area
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman (residents' rights)
 - Go to <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Aging-Ombudsman.aspx>
 - Penny Clark, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman - 402-471-9345
- Area Agencies on Aging
 - AARP <https://states.aarp.org/nebraska/>
866-389-5651

- Office of Public Guardian
 - Michelle Chaffee - 402-471-8885
- Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) <https://nebraska.arounja.org>
 - 1-844-843-6364
- Local Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Service providers (abuse in later life, resources for victims) Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence
 - Go to http://www.nebraskacoalition.org/get_help/ to locate your local domestic violence sexual assault provider
- **WEAAD** partners to help you reach out to target groups and minorities:
 - DHHS Office of Health Disparities and Health Equity - Phone: 402-471-0152
<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Health-Disparities-and-Equity.aspx>
Email: dhhs.minorityhealth@nebraska.gov

Host an Open House

... At your facility and/or the local senior center...

- Provide information about elder abuse and neglect, such as the information in this **toolkit**.
- Make a presentation during the open house about elder abuse and neglect.
- Invite the public to the local senior center for an hour-long lunch and presentation or discussion.
- Invite the public to your facility or the local senior center for an ice cream social and presentation or discussion.

Write a Letter to the Editor or Op-Ed

- Newspapers accept feedback from the community on topics of concern to their readers. Describe the importance of respect, dignity and caring throughout people's lives, or illustrate an incident where the rights of older adults were not protected and their needs were not being met.
- Following are two approaches:
 - (1) Newspaper policies regarding letters to the editor may vary, but providing a well-written, succinct letter that contains useful information could be accepted for printing.
 - (2) Newspapers also consider op-eds from the community, which are longer and usually placed in a position of greater prominence on the editorial page. You may need to contact local editors for their agreement to run your op-ed piece.
- Sample letters to the editor, op-eds and other resources to enhance awareness of your agency's observation of **WEAAD** are available at <https://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home/tools-and-tips/>

Public Service Announcements

DHHS makes a public service announcement (“PSA”) available for radio stations across the state. Radio stations run PSAs as a public service and at no cost. Call your local radio stations and ask them to consider running the PSA. A video version is also available at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/weaad>. In addition, you may request a 30-second PSA for non-profit organizations about **WEAAD...** with a mention of your agency.

- Nebraska PSA: Did you know that there is a silent crisis from east to west and north to south in Nebraska? Elderly Nebraskans may fear retribution, lack of care, or embarrassment! June 15th is **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**, an opportunity to consider the financial exploitation, neglect and physical abuse of vulnerable or senior adults living in silent fear. For more information, visit www.dhhs.ne.gov/WEAAD. To report elder or vulnerable adult abuse, neglect or exploitation, call **1-800-652-1999**. Brought to you by your Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.
- **WEAAD** organization PSA: Every day, seniors are victims of financial exploitation, neglect and physical or emotional abuse. Your elderly neighbors could be suffering out of fear of retribution, because of a lack of care, from embarrassment, or concern about institutionalization. They may be afraid to speak out because the abuser is a member of their own family, a caregiver on whom they depend, or someone they know. If you suspect someone is a victim of elder abuse, call **1-800-652-1999**. It can be done anonymously. On behalf of (*your agency*) thank you for caring. Again, call **1-800-652-1999**.
- Several PSAs, flyers, sample press releases and other resources to help make your agency’s observation of **WEAAD** are available at <https://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home/tools-and-tips/>.

Hold a Dedication or Announcement

If you have moved into a new building, added to your building, launched a new program or have other note-worthy changes, consider holding a dedication or announcement and **CELEBRATE**. This would provide the opportunity to bring attention to all your activities as well as to elder abuse and neglect issues.

Use the Internet and Social Media

- Post information on the front page of your **website** leading up to and following **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day** with a link to further information, such as DHHS’ Adult Protective Services site: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Adult-Protective-Services.aspx>, the State Unit on Aging <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Aging.aspx> and the nation-wide Administration for Community Living <https://www.acl.gov/>.
- Also post information on your social media sites, such as **Facebook** and **Twitter**. Social networking is an excellent way to engage your community around this important and timely subject. Following are guidelines for social media postings:

- Keep this year’s theme in mind: **“Building Strong Support for Elders”**
- **Twitter** is a fast-paced social network where users share brief posts that usually accompany photos, links, and/or hashtags. What are **hashtags**? Using the # symbol, or “hashtag,” makes the word or phrase that comes afterward searchable. It is a great way to enter or create a larger conversation. Remember that Twitter posts may contain a maximum of 280 characters.
- **Hashtag Ideas:**
 - #WEAAD
 - #ElderAbuse
 - #Eldercare

- **Some tips for composing effective Facebook and Twitter posts**

- Have a clear and concise message.
Make your posts a call to action. Turn your followers into effective advocates by giving them a clear action to take.
- On Twitter, spell out the word “retweet” if you want others to share your post; this practice has been found to be more effective than typing “RT.”
- When retweeting or reposting, add value to the post by adding your own commentary or add a link to additional media on the subject.
- Use popular hashtags, but use them in moderation. Using more than two hashtags can muddle your message and is not recommended.
- Add something visual to your post to increase interest. A photo or a link with a thumbnail or video can generate significantly more attention. Check out the logos from our **toolkit**.
- If you are planning a **WEAAD** event, post about it!

- **Twitter Post ideas**

Below are some sample posts that you can customize and use. Use the **WEAAD** theme and hashtag when posting: **#WEAAD** or **#WEAAD**:

Be a part of a nation united to stop elder abuse! Retweet to raise awareness.
#WEAAD

What can one person do? One person can change the world. **#WEAAD**

Share a picture of an older adult you admire. Write about what you respect about them? Abuse cannot thrive where respect resides! **#WEAAD**

Building strong support for elders! **#WEAAD**

Protecting our elders begins at home. Check on the older adults in your life today! **#WEAAD**

I'm rocking my purple ribbon! What are you doing to raise awareness about elder abuse today? #WEAAD

Abuse cannot survive where respect resides! Act to protect elders! #WEAAD

Facebook Posts – Facebook has expanded its features over the years to include the ability to follow organizations, and public figures, but it still maintains a more personal, somewhat slower-paced user environment.

- Host a Facebook challenge inviting people to share pictures of elders they admire and share why they respect them. *Abuse cannot survive where respect resides.* We invite you to share our challenge post below along with our other sample posts.