

Abuse in Later Life Wheel



Created by the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL), a project of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WCADV)
 307 S. Paterson St., Suite 1, Madison, WI 53703 608-255-0539
www.ncall.us/www.wcadv.org

This diagram adapted from the Power and Control/Equality wheels developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN

Permission to Adapt 2006

Central Virginia Task Force on Domestic Violence in Later Life
 MCV Campus Po Box 980229 Richmond VA 23298-0229
 For training and info contact Lisa Furr, Project Coordinator
FurrL@vcu.edu 804-828-1525

Abuse in Later Life Wheel Development

In early 1980, the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project asked women attending domestic violence educational groups to describe their experiences of being battered by their male partners. The Duluth Power and Control and Equity wheels were created using the most commonly repeated tactics. There are many additional abusive behaviors experienced by women that are not on the wheel due to the small space available.

In 1995, NCALL staff asked facilitators of older abused women's support groups to have participants review the Duluth wheel. These older women were asked if their experiences of abuse in later life were different or similar to younger victims/survivors. Participants from a handful of groups in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois generously provided feedback. The older women's suggestions were used to create the Family Abuse in Later Life wheel by NCALL.

In 2005, NCALL took the Family Abuse in Later Life wheel back to older survivors, and asked them to review the wheel once again. Over 50 victims from eight states responded, many telling us that the wheel reflected the abuse in their lives, however, it did not adequately represent the ongoing psychological & emotional abuse they experienced throughout their relationships. The attached wheel illustrates this reality.

The outer rim of the wheel defines violence or the threat of violence that is evident in the relationship. The violence may be frequent or very limited, but fear and threats are present. The abuser uses threats to maintain power and control. Each of the pie pieces represent the different tactics abusers may use in a relationship. Abusers may not necessarily use all of the tactics or they may use one tactic more often. Any combination of tactics can be used to maintain power and control.

This wheel makes a distinction between emotional and psychological abuse. Emotional abuse is specific tactics, such as name-calling, put-downs, yelling and verbal attacks, used to demean the victim. Psychological abuse is the ongoing, manipulative, crazy making behavior that becomes an overriding factor/tactic in abusive relationships. Sometimes it can be very subtle, sometimes it is very intense and invasive.

The center represents the goal or the outcome of all of these behaviors...power and control.

Tactics Used by Abusers

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Slaps, hits, punches
- Throws things
- Burns
- Chokes
- Breaks bones
- Creates Hazards
- Bumps and/or trips
- Forces unwanted physical activity
- Pinches, pulls hair & twists limbs
- Restrains

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Makes demeaning remarks about intimate body parts
- Is rough with intimate body parts during care giving
- Takes advantage of physical or mental illness to engage in sex
- Forces sex acts that make victim feel uncomfortable and/or against victim's wishes
- Forces victim to watch pornography on television and/or computer

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- Withholds affection
- Engages in crazy-making behavior
- Publicly humiliates or behaves in a condescending manner

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Humiliates, demeans, ridicules
- Yells, insults, calls names
- Degrades, blames
- Uses silence or profanity

THREATENING

- Threatens to leave and never see elder again
- Threatens to divorce or not divorce
- Threatens to commit suicide
- Threatens to institutionalize
- Abuses or kills pet or prized livestock
- Destroys or takes property
- Displays or threatens with weapons

TARGETING VULNERABILITIES

- Takes or moves walker, wheelchair, glasses, dentures
- Takes advantage of confusion
- Makes victim miss medical appointments

NEGLECTING

- Denies or creates long waits for food, heat, care or medication
- Does not report medical problems
- Understands but fails to follow medical, therapy or safety recommendations
- Refuses to dress or dresses inappropriately

DENIES ACCESS TO SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS/EVENTS

- Denies access to ceremonial traditions or church
- Ignores religious traditions
- Prevents from practicing traditional ceremonies/events

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON ABUSE IN LATER LIFE (NCALL)

copyright 2006



Tactics Used by Abusers

USING FAMILY MEMBERS

- Magnifies disagreements
- Misleads family members about extent and nature of illnesses/conditions
- Excludes or denies access to family
- Forces family to keep secrets
- Threatens and denies access to grandchildren
- Leaves grandchildren with grandparent without honoring grandparents needs and wishes

RIDICULES PERSONAL & CULTURAL VALUES

- Ridicules personal/cultural values
- Makes fun of a person's racial background, sexual preference or ethnic background
- Entices or forces to lie, commit a crime or do other acts that go against the victim's value system

ISOLATION

- Controls what victim does, whom they see, and where they go
- Limits time with friends and family
- Denies access to phone or mail
- Fails to visit or make contact

USING PRIVILEGE

- Treats victim like a servant
- Makes all major decisions
- Ignores needs, wants, desires
- Undervalues victim's life experience
- Takes advantage of community status, i.e. racial, sexual orientation, gender, economic

FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

- Steals money, titles, or possessions
- Takes over accounts and bills and spending without permission
- Abuses a power of attorney
- Tells elder money is needed to repay drug dealer to stay safe

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON ABUSE IN LATER LIFE (NCALL)

copyright 2006



DOMESTIC ABUSE IN LATER LIFE TIPS ON WORKING WITH VICTIMS

ASK ABOUT ABUSE

Lead into questions about abuse with a statement such as: “Because many of the people I work with are hurt by family members, I ask questions about relationships and abuse.”

The questions may include:

- How are things going with your spouse (or adult child)?
- Are you getting out with your friends?
- Are you afraid of your spouse (or other family member)?
- Have you ever been hit, kicked, or hurt in any way by a family member? Does anyone threaten you or force you to do things you do not want to do?
- Have you ever been forced to do sexual acts you did not wish to do? Is this going on now?

IF YES, ask for more information and ask questions such as “how are you staying safe?”

IF NO, state that if a family member ever does hurt you or you know someone who is being hurt, there are people who can help. Feel free to contact me for information if you ever need it.

RED FLAGS (Things to listen and watch for)

From a potential victim

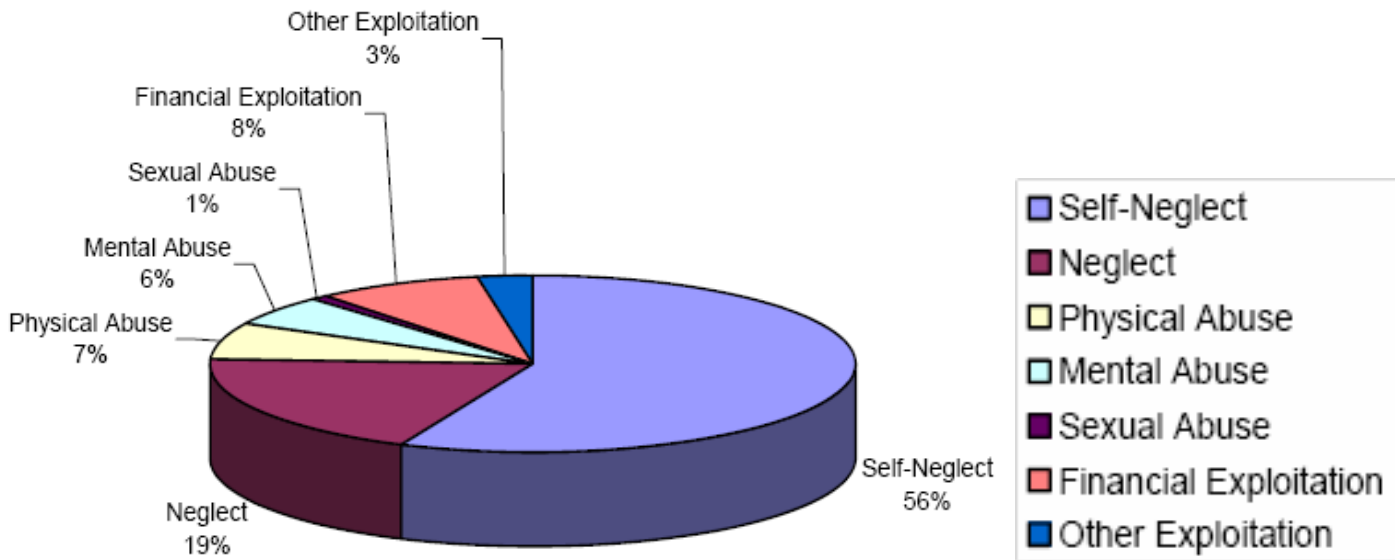
- Has repeated “accidental” injuries
- Appears isolated
- Says or hints at being afraid
- Considers or attempts suicide
- Has history of alcohol or drug abuse (including prescription drug)
- Presents as a “difficult” patient or client
- Has vague, chronic complaints
- Is unable to follow through on treatment plans or medical care. May miss appointments.
- Exhibits severe depression

From a potential abuser:

- Is verbally abusive to staff in public, or is charming and friendly to service providers
- Says things like “he’s difficult,” “she’s stubborn,” “he’s so stupid,” or “she’s clumsy”
- Attempts to convince others that the family member is incompetent or crazy
- Is “overly attentive” to the family member
- Controls the family member’s activities
- Refuses to allow interview or exam to take place without being present
- Talks about the family member as if he or she is not a person



Substantiated Reports by Category for Adults 60+



THREE YEAR REVIEW OF APS REPORTS

	2007	2008	2009
Total Reports Received	13,515	14,314	15,625
Reports Investigated ⁹	11,802	12,150	13,629
Total Reports Substantiated ¹⁰	7,615	7,482	8,076
Unfounded	4,187	4,668	5,553
Pending ¹¹	829	807	157
Invalid ¹²	884	1,357	1,839
<i>Percent of Reports Substantiated</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>62%</i>	<i>59%</i>

DISPOSITIONS OF SUBSTANTIATED REPORTS

Needs and Accepts Services	4,237	4,174	4,440
Needs and Refuses Services	1,259	1,259	1,314
Need No Longer Exists	2,081	2,039	2,322

Table 11-APS REPORTS: LOCATION OF INCIDENT OF ABUSE, NEGLECT, OR EXPLOITATION

SFY 2009 APS REPORTS: Location of Incident						
Location	Central	Eastern	Northern	Piedmont	Western	State
Own House/Apt	60%	60%	63%	62%	70%	63%
Other's House/Apt	12%	14%	9%	9%	11%	11%
Nursing Facility	9%	9%	11%	13%	7%	10%
Assisted Living Facility	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Other	5%	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%
BHDS Facility or Group Home	4%	5%	4%	4%	1%	4%
Hospital	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Homeless	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Day Treatment Center	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Transportation Provider	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Shelter	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Adult Day Care	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Adult Foster Care	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Sheltered Workshop	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Senior Center	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

Table 7-SOURCE OF APS REPORTS

SFY 2009 Reporter Type	# of Reports
Relative (includes ex-wife/ex-husband)	2005
Social Worker	1718
Other	1384
Nurse	910
Law Enforcement Officer	768
Friend/Neighbor	716
Nursing Home Administrator/NH Staff	672
Self	613
Hospital Staff	584
Home Health Provider	567
ALF/Group Home Staff	414
EMS Personnel/Fire Department	408
Mental Health Provider/Psychologist/Counselor/Psychiatrist	405
CSB Staff	362
Physician/Primary Physician/Physician Assistant	258
DBHDS Staff	225
Area Agency on Aging Staff	221
Agency Provider-Home Based Care/EDCD/Personal Care Provider	167
Departments of Social Services Staff	151
Financial Institution	88
Hospice	77
Licensing Programs Staff	67
Other Healthcare Professionals(PT/OT/RT/CNA/SLP)	60
Power of Attorney	56
Adult Day Care Staff	52
Public Housing Staff	47
Guardian/Conservator	42
Health Department Staff/Public Health Nurse	40
Attorney	39
Workshop Staff	35
Long-term Care Ombudsmen	21
Domestic Violence Program Staff	18
Clergy	16
Transportation Provider ⁷	16
Shelter Staff	12
Department for the Aging Staff	7
Optometrist	5
Adult Foster Care Provider	3
Dentist/Dental Office Staff	2
Total	13,251⁸

⁷ Mandated reporter if employed by services organization or receiving Medicaid reimbursement.

⁸ Source: ASAPS. Reflects underreporting.

RESEARCH ON ABUSE IN LATER LIFE

THE UNITED STATES GROWS OLDER

- The population of persons 65+ in 2030 is projected to be twice as large as in 2000. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005)
- Persons reaching age 65 have an average life expectancy of an additional 18.5 years; 19.8 years for females and 16.8 years for males. (2005 Profile of Older Americans, US DHHS, AOA)
- The three fastest-growing 5-year age groups in the United States since the last census were 50-54 year-olds at 55%, 45-49 years olds at 45%, and 90-94 year-olds at 45%. (US. Census Bureau, 2001)
- 52% of elderly live in nine states - CA, NY, FL, PA, TX, IL, MI, OH, and NJ. (2005 Profile of Older Americans, US DHHS, AOA)
- Projections indicate that by 2030, the composition of the older population will be more diverse: 72% non-Hispanic White, 11% Hispanic, 10% Black and 5% Asian. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005)

GROWING OLDER IN THE UNITED STATES

- About 415,000 grandparents aged 65 or more had the primary responsibility of their grandchildren. (2005 Profile of Older Americans, US DHHS, AOA)
- The median income of older persons in 2004 was \$21,102 for males and \$12,080 for females. (2005 Profile of Older Americans, US DHHS, AOA)
- For one-third of Americans over 65, Social Security benefits constitute 90% of their income. (2005 Profile of Older Americans, US DHHS, AOA)
- 3.6 million elderly persons or 9.8% lived below the poverty level in 2004; another 2.2 million or 6.4% were classified as "near poor." (2005 Profile of Older Americans, US DHHS, AOA)

REPORTED CASES OF ELDER ABUSE ARE INCREASING

- In 2003, 565,747 cases of abuse and neglect were reported to adult protective services throughout the United States. This represents a 19.7% increase from the 2000 survey. (NCEA, 2004)
- For every case reported to authorities, five more go unreported. (NCEA, 1998)
- Only an estimated 30% of sexual assaults against the elderly ever get reported to the authorities. (Burgess, Clements 2006)

ELDER ABUSE IS OFTEN FAMILY VIOLENCE

- According to the Adult Protective Services Survey done in 2004, 89.3% of elder abuse reports occurred in domestic settings. (NCEA, 2004)
- A 1999 study also found that many victims had difficulty taking care of themselves and that family members were the primary perpetrators of sexual abuse. (Teaster, 2000)

A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF ELDER ABUSE IS SPOUSE/PARTNER VIOLENCE

- A study of 257 older women ages 50–79 found that 32% had experienced physical abuse or threat from their partners at some point in their lives. (Mouton, 1999)
- In a 5-year study done of 1057 victims 65 and over receiving domestic violence program services, 71.2 % reported physical abuse. (Lundy, Grossman, 2004)

ABUSE IN LATER LIFE TURNS DEADLY

- 8% of all women in single female victim/single male offender homicides reported in 2003 were 65 years of age or older. (Violence Policy Center, 2005)
- Each year more than 500 homicide-suicides or 1,000 deaths occur in persons 55 years and older, which means that nearly 20 older Americans die each week in a homicide-suicide. (Cohen, 2001)
- A Florida study found that persons age 55 and over had homicide-suicide rates almost twice that of persons under age 55, 75% involve a husband who kills his wife before killing himself. (Malphurs, Eisdorfer, Cohen, 2001)
- Abused elders are more likely to end up dead at the end of a 13-year follow-up period than self-neglecting or elders who are not abused. (Lachs, Williams, O'Brien, Pillemer, and Charlson, 1998)
- 25% of homicide-suicide perpetrators age 55 years and older have a history of domestic violence. (Mulphurs, Cohen, 2005)

SEXUAL ABUSE OCCURS IN LATER LIFE

- A study of 284 cases of sexual assault against victims age 60 and older revealed that 70% of the victims were assaulted in their homes; 23.2% were assaulted while living in an institution, and 4.8% were assaulted in other locations. (Burgess, 2006)
- Of the 284 victims in this study, 261 (93.5%) were female elders and 19 (6.5%) were male elders (4 of the 284 victims did not identify a gender). There were 210 male offenders and 20 female offenders in cases with data. (Burgess, 2006)
- More than 60,000 rapes of women older than 50 years of age are reported annually. (NCEA, 2005)

ABUSERS ARE OFTEN DEPENDENT ON THEIR VICTIMS