



Disclaimer: Persons depicted are models and used for illustrative purposes.

COMMEMORATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH: CENTERING OLDER SURVIVORS IN YOUR WORK

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

Welcome!

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- Housekeeping
- Chat Box
- Resources

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Presenters

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- Juanita Davis, J.D.
NCALL Associate Director
- Lisa Furr, M.A.
NCALL Program Manager

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Acknowledgements

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National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

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NCALL is committed to creating a world that respects the dignity of older adults and enhances the safety and quality of life of older victims and survivors of abuse. We engage communities to foster a collaborative, inclusive, survivor-centered response to abuse in later life.



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Abuse in Later Life is the nexus between domestic violence, sexual violence, and elder abuse.

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Webinar Agenda

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- Commemorating DVAM 2019
- Why focus on older survivors?
- How NCALL can support your work
- Resources
- Closing

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Polling Questions



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Poll #1: Who Is Here?

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- DV/SA Community Advocates
- System-Based Advocates
- Attorneys (Civil and Criminal) and Courts
- Aging Services/ APS
- Faith Community
- Health Care
- Other TA Providers
- Other?

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Poll #2: How many older survivors have you served?

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- Less than 5
- 6 – 20
- 21+

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Poll #3: How many older survivors have you served?

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- 50 – 60 years old
- 61 – 70 years old
- 71 – 80 years old
- 81 – 90 years old
- 90 + years old

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Commemorating DVAM 2019



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Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM)

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- DVAM began in 1981 by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Connecting survivors and advocates who were working to end violence against women and their children.
- For more information:
 - www.ncadv.org
 - www.nrcdv.org


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Why Focus on Older Survivors?



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10,000 Americans turn 65 every day.

Acierno, R., Hernandez, M. A., Amstadter, A. B., Resnick, H. S., Steve, K., Muzzy, W., & Kilpatrick, D. J. (2010).

Older women comprise more than half (55.8%) of the adult population age 65 and older.

United States Census Bureau (2012).

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Racial and ethnic minority populations have increased from 5.7 million in 2000 (16.3% of the elderly population) to 8.5 million in 2011 (21% of the elderly). They are projected to increase to 20.2 million in 2030 (28% of the elderly).

http://www.aoa.gov/Aging_Statistics/Profile/2012/docs/2012profile.pdf.

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1 in 10 community-residing older adults reported experiencing elder abuse in the past year.

Acierno et al. (2010).

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About 2/3 of elder abuse victims are women.

Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., Weill Cornell Medical Center of Cornell University, & New York City Department for the Aging. (2011).

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For every 1 case of elder abuse that comes to the attention of a responsible entity another 24 cases never come to light.

Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., Weill Cornell Medical Center of Cornell University, & New York City Department for the Aging. (2011).

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Violence against older women is largely unaddressed because it exists in the margins between two fields: domestic violence and elder abuse.

Straka and Montminy, (2006); Dunlop et al., (2005).

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Based on emergency room data violence against older adults has increased.


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Older victims experience unique barriers that prevent them from seeking help and further complicate the process of addressing the abuse once it has been reported.

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Lack of services that are culturally appropriate can impede service and increase vulnerability to abuse for older adults from other cultures.

Henderson, E. (2011).

Smithsonian Institution

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24 How NCALL Can Support Your Work



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OVW Abuse in Later Life National Resource Center

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- Training, technical assistance, consultation
- Resources and information
- Website: www.ncall.us

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OVW Abuse in Later Life Program

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- Approximately 8 – 9 communities a year
- Address elder abuse by:
 - Providing training and cross training
 - Creating or enhancing a CCR team
 - Developing victim services

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Eligible Entities

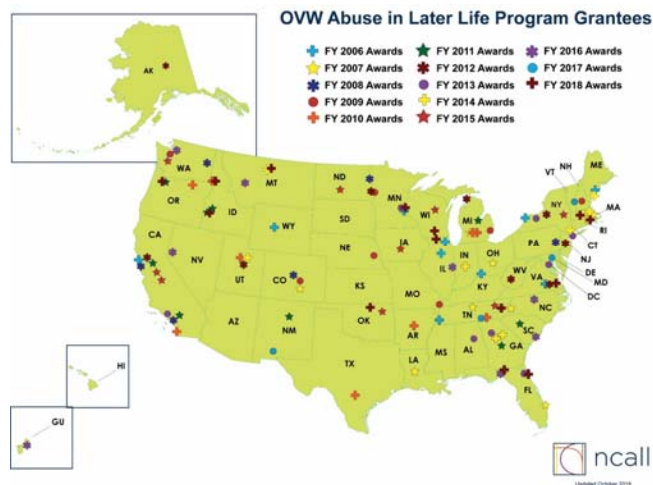
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- States and territories, Indian tribal governments and tribal organizations, units of local government, and nonprofit, nongovernmental victim services organizations with demonstrated experience in assisting elderly women or demonstrated experience in addressing sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

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OVW Abuse in Later Life Program Grantees

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Enhancing Services to Older Survivors in Your Work

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- Civil legal system:
 - <https://www.ncall.us/for-professionals/civil-attorneys/>
- Tribal Communities:
 - <https://www.ncall.us/for-professionals/professionals-working-in-tribal-communities/>
- Transitional and Emergency Housing
- Benefits
- Other?

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National Resource Center on Reaching Victims

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- Funded by Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)
- Focused on underserved populations of crime victims, including older adults
- Provides technical assistance, training, consultation, mini-grants
- Website: www.reachingvictims.org

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Lifting Up Voices Resources

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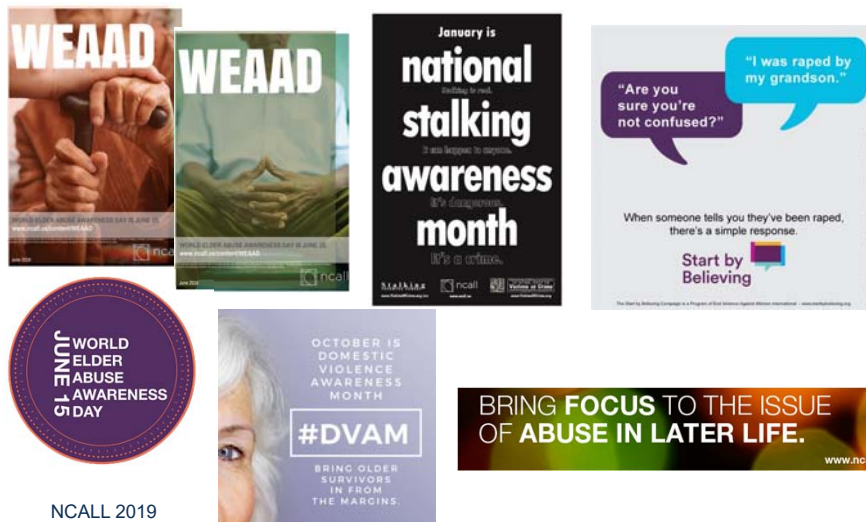


Lifting Up Voices
Action Guide

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Awareness/Outreach Materials

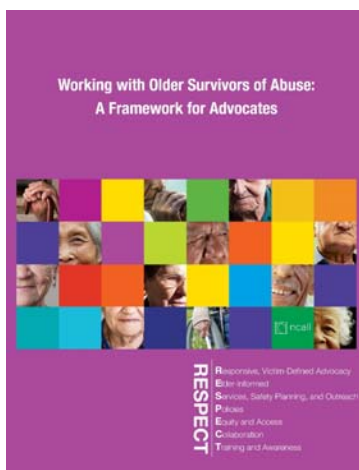
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Working with Older Survivors of Abuse: A Framework for Advocates

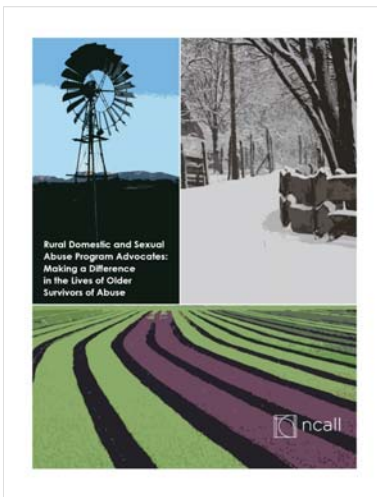
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Rural Toolkit

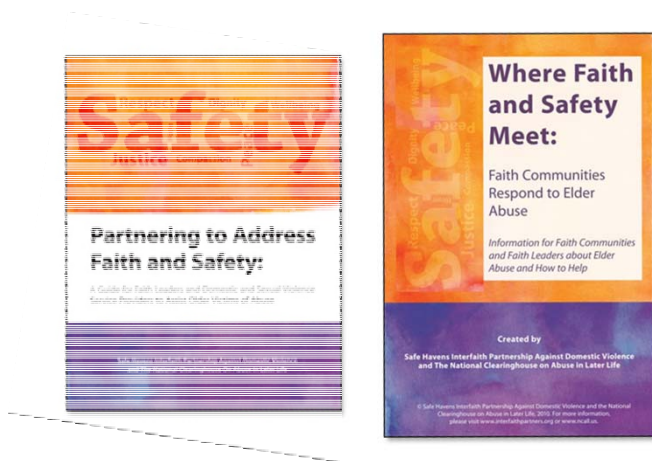
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Faith Toolkits

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Abuse in Later Life Info Sheets

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Unique Challenges in Abuse in Later Life Cases

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Older victims experience unique factors that prevent them from seeking help and further complicate the process of addressing the abuse once it has been reported. Understanding older victims, abuse tactics, and creating systemic barriers to critical when developing effective responses to abuse in later life cases.

Understanding Older Victims

- Intervene:** Older victims may be reluctant to report abuse because of their fear for the perpetrator or the belief that the perpetrator will change for the better, especially with help. This sentiment may be influenced by generational, cultural, and/or spiritual values that stress the importance of commitment to family, particularly to spouses or partners (Henderson et al., 2017). These values and their contribution to a sense of guilt, self-blame, or shame may further discourage them from disclosing the abuse.
- Proctor/Chambers:** Older victims may feel a sense of powerlessness for an abuser, especially an adult child. The older victim may worry about a grown or adult child going to prison or becoming homeless (Henderson et al., 2017).
- Isolation:** Older victims may have been killed or seriously injured if they try to leave. They may also find being alone or being independent (e.g., being placed in a residential care facility, work in a nursing home, or being discharged from care by family members) if they reach out for help.
- Ageism:** When abuse has occurred throughout the duration of a relationship, the patterns of abuse and victimization have likely become well established, making change seem nearly impossible for the victim (Henderson et al., 2017). Furthermore, victims may be reluctant to seek out if prior experience wasn't helpful (Henderson et al., 2017).
- Financial Concerns:** Some older adults are unable to work due to age or disability which often may lack the job skills necessary for finding employment. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or Social Security is available to some, but these do not qualify for financial assistance. These victims of abuse in later life may lack the financial means to live independently, separate from their abuser. A shortage of affordable or transitional housing for older adults compounds this problem. Further, some older adults may need medical care or long-term support services and may not have the means necessary to cover these expenses.
- Health Issues:** Some older victims may need more time to heal physically and emotionally. Older adults may be more likely to have vision, hearing, or mobility limitations that can impact safety planning or their options to live independently. Victims in these scenarios may be at increased risk for elder abuse (Wright et al., 2016).

Working with Victims of Abuse in Later Life

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A Victim-Centered Approach

Victim-centered advocacy systems centered on victims. The greater the age of the victim, service providers should maintain a victim-centered approach when planning services. The advocate works to explore options with older victims, to help them identify and remove obstacles, and to honor and support their decisions, taking into account age-related generational and cultural values.

When there are concerns about an older adult's cognitive capacity, a team-centered approach includes working with health care providers to assess the individual's situation. In some cases, what appears to be forced or diminished cognitive capacity can be a temporary condition due to the onset of memory, temporary medication side-effects, or lack of sleep, food, or fluids.

For more information on victim-centered advocacy, please see the book, *Survivor Planning with Behavioral Medicine: Complete Case Studies & Exercises*.

Guiding Principles for Working with Older Individuals

Focus on victim safety.

- Recognize that victims are resilient and have often engaged in strategies to keep themselves safe. Advocates should build on the strategies older victims are already using.
- Create a safety plan with older victims, taking into consideration any physical and cognitive limitations. For safety planning tips, please visit www.ncall.org/elder/safetyplanning.

Be aware of and avoid assumptions about what is best for victims.

- Assess assumptions or opinions. Don't assume all older adults are frail, mentally incompetent, and/or senile. Approach older victims with the same respect, sensitivity, and open-mindedness afforded to all victims.
- Intervene and build upon older victims' strengths and skills.
- Respect cultural and religious traditions and recognize the importance of these values and beliefs in shaping older victims' lives and decisions.

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Elder Justice Roadmap Report

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The Elder Justice Roadmap

A Stakeholder Initiative to Respond to an Emerging Health, Justice, Financial and Social Crisis

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NCALL website: www.ncall.us



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[NCALL YouTube](#)

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Final Questions/Comments?

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National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life,
a project of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin:
(Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence)

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Thank You!



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