

## WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a caregiver or trusted individual that lead to, or may lead to, the harm of a vulnerable elder. It takes many forms:

- Physical (including domestic violence)
- Financial exploitation
- Caretaker neglect or abandonment
- Emotional, psychological, or verbal
- Sexual
- Self-neglect

## WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

### The elder:

- Seems isolated or withdrawn
- Experiences unusual weight loss
- Has a sudden change in financial situation
- Has bedsores, unattended medical needs, or poor hygiene
- Has bruises, pressure marks, broken bones, abrasions, and/or burns
- Seems fearful or confused.

The caregiver's behavior toward the senior is belittling, threatening, or overly controlling.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT ABUSE?

Call Elder Protective Services at the Aging Services Access Point or Area Agency on Aging that assists seniors in your community:

**Greater Lynn Senior Services – 781-599-0110**  
**North Shore Elder Services – 978-750-4540**  
**Senior Care – 978-281-1750**

Or call the Executive Office of Elder Affairs' 24-hour hotline: 1-800-922-2275.

Call 911, if you need immediate help.

*All calls are confidential and the name of the reporter is protected. Remember, the elder's rights—including the right to refuse help—and wishes will always be respected.*



## SPONSORED BY GREATER LYNN SENIOR SERVICES

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) is the Area Agency on Aging and Aging Services Access Point providing assistance to elders, adults of all ages with disabilities, and their caregivers in Lynn, Lynnfield, Nahant, Saugus, and Swampscott. Since its inception in 1976, the Agency has developed a reputation for innovation in the field of aging and disabilities services and offers as many as 20 different programs to provide choice in meeting a broad range of consumer needs.

Among GLSS' award-winning advocacy initiatives is the unique Older Battered Women's Program, serving women over 50 throughout the North Shore and Cape Ann who are the victims of abuse by an intimate partner or spouse. To learn more about GLSS and its services, visit [www.glss.net](http://www.glss.net) or call 781-599-0110.

The Elder Justice Network was initiated by a grant from the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, one of six partners that make up the federally funded National Center on Elder Abuse. To learn more about elder abuse, visit [www.preventelderabuse.org](http://www.preventelderabuse.org).

Your tax-deductible donations are gratefully accepted to help sustain the Elder Justice Network. Checks can be made payable to GLSS, with a memo "Elder Justice Network."



**Greater Lynn Senior Services**  
8 Silsbee Street Lynn, MA 01901 [www.glss.net](http://www.glss.net)

## THE ELDER JUSTICE NETWORK OF THE GREATER NORTH SHORE

Because  
every senior  
deserves to  
live in safety  
and be treated  
with dignity  
and respect



A multi-disciplinary coalition aimed at increasing awareness about and preventing elder abuse and neglect in our area sponsored by



**Greater Lynn Senior Services**



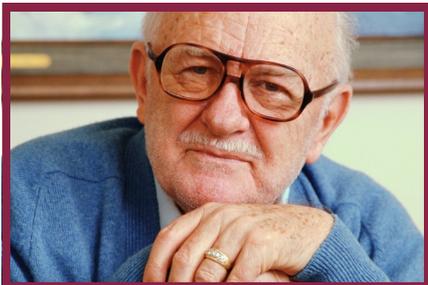
You don't really have to know a lot about elder abuse to understand that it's wrong and want to do something about it. Together, we can break the silence about this growing problem.

### What is the Elder Justice Network?

Our multidisciplinary coalition, sponsored by Greater Lynn Senior Services, is made up of people from a variety of backgrounds, age groups, and professions, all with a common interest: ensuring that seniors in our communities are living in safety and being treated with dignity and respect.

### Elder abuse is a complex problem, but our mission is simple.

We want to raise awareness about this growing, highly under-reported problem by speaking to as many people and groups as possible—from local senior centers and libraries to faith communities and garden clubs—to name just a few. Elder abuse is a complex problem, but breaking the silence about it is probably the best way to make a difference and help prevent it.



### How can I help?

Lend your voice to our growing community of concerned citizens by joining us. Or invite us to make a presentation to a group you belong to.

But probably the most important thing you can do is—if you suspect abuse or neglect—don't be afraid to report it! All reports are confidential, and the name of the reporter is protected. Remember, the elder's rights—including the right to refuse help—and wishes will always be respected.



### What happens when a report is made?

Elder Protective Services investigates all reports and, when needed, works with seniors, their families and caregivers, and service providers to resolve problems and improve quality of life, with the ultimate goal—*always*—of maintaining the elder's dignity. Simple things—services like Meals on Wheels, homemakers, caregiver support, or referrals to adult day programs—can often make a real difference.

### WHY DOES ELDER ABUSE HAPPEN?

Elder abuse and neglect are growing problems in our world, as people live longer and need help—often from family, friends, neighbors, or other caretakers—to remain living independently.



As we age, changes in health or financial status or the loss of a spouse or caretaker—to name just a few—can cause family dynamics to shift in ways we don't always anticipate. Increasingly, grown children are helping to care for ill or aging parents—some-times from great distances away—and often while also juggling the demands of their own children and careers. It's easy to see how—even in families where good communication exists—power and control can easily become unbalanced.

There aren't any easy answers to the problem of elder abuse, but one of the best ways to stop it is to raise awareness about the problem, help people recognize the warning signs, and talk about ways to develop and maintain healthy relationships as we age.

### Where can I get more information about the Elder Justice Network?

To join the Network or to schedule a time for one of our members to make a presentation to your community group, contact Program Coordinator Elizabeth Cochran at 781-586-8511 or by e-mail at [ecochran@glss.net](mailto:ecochran@glss.net).