



Elder Abuse
Prevention
Ontario

Prévention de la
maltraitance envers
les aînés Ontario

Elder abuse can occur at anytime, anywhere to anyone, but the holidays present an even greater risk, for older adults. More often than not, older adults find themselves in the company of family or friends who may also be the ones committing the abuse. In fact, while the holiday season is typically a time for reconnecting with family and friends, for older adults it can also be a stressful or lonely time, leaving them feeling overlooked, isolated and vulnerable to abuse.

Social Isolation: is a known risk factor and can lead to neglect, feelings of anxiety or depression, which in turn makes seniors increasingly more vulnerable or at-risk of harm and abuse. But there are some steps we can all take to help safeguard seniors, whether family members, friends or family:

- ***Offer to visit an older adult and help them feel less isolated.***
- ***Check in on them if you are nearby or ask others to do so on your behalf.***
- ***Offer support to caregivers, when respite is needed to alleviate stress.***
- ***Start or continue conversations with older family members, to ensure their needs and wishes are respected and being met.***
- ***Abuse is a difficult and emotional topic to discuss. Make sure that seniors know they are not at fault and that they are not alone. Listen carefully to what they share with you and let them know you are there to support them and to help. Reassure them***

'Tis the Season... to Connect with Older Adults and Help Keep them Safe

that you will respect their confidence and decisions. Do ask them what they would like you to do about the abuse.

Financial abuse

Though there are many forms of abuse, financial abuse of older adults is the 2nd most prevalent in Canada.

Fraud is one of the most common forms especially this time of year when scammers are 'busy' preying on the generosity and financial assets of others. Here are some examples and measures to take to safeguard against these tactics.





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Email Scams

Email phishing scams are ideal for stealing personal information.

Seniors need to be on the look out for unsolicited emails, from suspicious or unknown sources.

Look for 'fake' addresses which contain typos or other errors that are difficult to detect at first.

A good rule of thumb is to never open an email unless you are certain it is from a trusted source.

Fake Apps and Loyalty Programs

Fraudsters frequently entice people with appealing deals. If it appears too good to be true, it probably is!

Online shoppers are often drawn in to use 'fake apps' which claim to offer substantial savings as they impersonate well-known retailers.

Before downloading any apps, ensure the company is legitimate. Avoid offers of gift cards that ask you to click a link in the email or app provide personal information.

That one click is all they need to get at your personal information.

Grandparent Scams

Scammers, posing as a grandchild in distress, for example will target a senior who is anxious about wanting to connect with family members. The caller will claim they are experiencing a financial difficulty and only need some quick funds for legal fees or to get home. As your "grandchild", they will insist that you not inform their parents, for fear of repercussions. Do not feel pressured to act. Take the time to verify the information they offer. *Speaking with your relatives will quickly expose the fraudster and should be done BEFORE you wire any funds.*

Fake Charity Scams

Con artists, posing as representatives of a reputable charity, will try to solicit donations for a 'fictitious cause'. *Before you*

write a check or give out your credit card information, make sure the charity is legitimate and that your donation is going to the right place. Avoid any solicitation for donations at your door, instead go to the organization's website to confirm safe ways to donate. Do not feel pressured to act, Take time to investigate before sending any funds.

To learn more about ways to help safeguard older adults visit: www.eapon.ca and check out the many resources:

- www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en
- www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/report-signalz-eng.htm
- www.ontario.ca/page/consumer-protection-ontario

Stay connected!

Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario

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