



Breaking the Silence: Raising Awareness for Elder Abuse Prevention!



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As you grow older,
you will discover
that you have two
hands, one for
helping yourself,
the other for
helping others.

— Audrey Hepburn

As you may or may not know, I have been caring for my aging parents over the past five years and recently experienced their end-of-life journey. This process has been one of my life's most difficult yet fulfilling experiences — challenging, sweet, tender, heartbreaking, and insightful. It has made me appreciate the importance of family, community, and connections, especially regarding elder issues and end-of-life care. It also made me keenly aware of how vulnerable they are.

Elder abuse is an unfortunate reality in our society, and we all should be aware of the risks involved, especially if parents require support from people outside the family. As caregivers, we must commit to protecting them from any form of harm and be vigilant when it comes to monitoring their care providers and online activity — thus ensuring our elderly parents feel safe and secure and have the resources to help them live with dignity and respect.

I want to bring your attention to the statistics and tools to help. Approximately 5 million American seniors experience some type of abuse every year.* Financial exploitation is the most reported form of elder abuse in the United States. Financial elder abuse not only robs older adults of their security and finances, but also their dignity. Some of the top financial scams targeting older adults include:

- 1. Impersonation scams:** Scammers pose as government officials, bank representatives, or utility company employees, tricking older adults into providing personal information or sending money to resolve fabricated issues.
- 2. Grandparent scams:** Scammers pretend to be a grandchild in distress, often claiming to be in legal trouble or needing urgent financial assistance.
- 3. Romance scams:** Fraudsters establish relationships with older adults and manipulate them emotionally to extract money or personal information.
- 4. Sweepstakes and lottery scams:** Scammers inform older adults that they have won a substantial prize but must pay taxes or fees upfront to claim the winnings.
- 5. Investment fraud:** Fraudulent investment schemes promise high returns with low risk, targeting older adults looking to grow their retirement savings. These scams often involve unregistered or fake financial advisors and illegitimate investment opportunities.

It's important to note that scam techniques evolve constantly, and new scams may emerge over time. In honor of Elder Abuse Awareness Day, we aim to shed light on this issue and encourage discussions that lead to meaningful change. **For more information, email Patti and in the subject line type "RESOURCES".**

Let's create a safe and supportive environment for our loved ones.
We'd love to be of service to you! — PK

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*Statistic taken from the
National Council on Aging.

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