

From: Administration for Community Living <acl@public.govdelivery.com>
To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov
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Subject: Observing the 10th World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

June 15, 2015

Observing the 10th World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Today is [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day](#) (WEAAD). Established by the United Nations in 2006, WEAAD brings together people from around the globe to shine a spotlight on the mistreatment of older adults.

Each year in the U.S. alone, hundreds of thousands of older people are abused, neglected, and exploited. Our seniors lose an estimated \$2.6 billion or more annually to financial abuse and exploitation, depriving them of funds that could have been used to pay for basic needs such as housing, food, and medical care.

Unfortunately, no one is immune to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It occurs in every demographic, and can happen to anyone—a family member, a neighbor, even you. Yet it is estimated that only about one in 24 of those crimes are ever discovered.

Every year on June 15, communities and people around the world participate in WEADD to increase awareness of the problem and encourage and empower more people to help solve it. For example:

- President Barack Obama issued [a proclamation](#), stating in part: "Often under-identified and under-reported, elder abuse is a public health crisis that crosses all socioeconomic lines, and it is an affront to human rights around the world. Today, we once again take this opportunity to raise awareness of this injustice, and with the international community, we recommit to ending this abuse, supporting those who are victims, and holding perpetrators accountable."
- This morning, Assistant Secretary for Aging and ACL Administrator Kathy Greenlee spoke about the global crisis of elder abuse and U.S. efforts to raise awareness of the issue around the world at a WEAAD event organized by the National Adult Protective Services Association, the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.
- In [a guest blog post for the New York City Elder Abuse Center](#), Asst. Sec. Greenlee describes the need for all of us to work collaboratively and bring unexpected allies to the fight against elder abuse. She highlights the impact of everyday people, the emergence of multi-disciplinary teams, and efforts to align and maximize federal actions that support elder justice.

There was a lot happening in the weeks leading up to WEADD, as well. The AoA-funded National Center on Elder Abuse organized a 10-week countdown in which ACL participated. This included:

- A series of #WEAADweekly Twitter chats generating engaging and important discussions on topics including [building awareness](#), [diversity and inclusion](#), [multidisciplinary approaches](#), and [long-term care](#).
- A May 22nd webinar featuring a retrospective on a decade of accomplishments, pilot findings from the international Worldwide Face of Elder Abuse study, and a lively panel discussion. Video and a transcript of the webinar are available [here](#).

Additional WEAAD events are going on around the country, and across the world. [Learn more about local events](#) and tell us about yours!

Of course, the fight to end elder abuse continues far beyond just one day. Looking for ways to get involved, or information to share with people who want to get involved? Check out these [tools and tips](#) and [suggestions for taking action](#).

As this year's theme makes clear, it only takes one action, and one person, to make a difference. Let's stop elder abuse together!

[BACK TO TOP](#)

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