

Staying Connected:

Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness News

June 2021

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A YEAR IN REVIEW FISCAL YEAR 2020

Over the past year we have focused on the following lofty goals.

- Goal 1: Continue to Connect with Adults being abused, neglected or exploited.
- Goal 2: Connect the Council's great work to positive outcomes for Adults.
- Goal 3: Connect agencies that serve Adults through enhanced communication.
- Goal 4: Connect Adults with the right services to meet their needs.
- Goal 5: Connect Service Providers to help fill gaps and provide wrap around services.

We have made significant progress on these goals and have learned many valuable lessons for the year ahead. Councils have transitioned from in-person to virtual to a hybrid plan, which has allowed for more individuals to participate on a more regular basis. APS staff have continued to meet with clients in varying forms to ensure they are free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The newsletter has helped bring awareness to resources, educational opportunities, and a familiarity of each agencies roles.

Let us continue the great momentum and continue to make progress towards ending elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) was established by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) in June 2006. The United Nations General Assembly officially recognized this day with resolution 66/127 in December 2011.

WEAAD is an opportunity to bring awareness to abuse, neglect and exploitation that happens every day to our elderly population.

This year, Kentucky was blessed with an installation of purple flags on the garden lawn of the Capitol. These flags were planted in the shape of an awareness ribbon.

Governor Beshear, Lt. Governor Coleman, Personnel Secretary Whethers, CHFS Secretary Friedlander, DCBS Commissioner Miranda-Straub and DAIL Commissioner Elridge made remarks and assisted in the installation process. Also in attendance were members of the statewide Elder Abuse Committee, DCBS leadership, the Adult Protection Branch and DAIL Leadership.

The display will remain on the Capitol grounds until June 30th. Feel free to visit, take pictures and share on social media to help spread awareness.

Across the state, the Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Abuse have been holding events throughout the month.

The Barren River Elder Abuse Council participated in an interview with local station WBKO.

They also coordinated social media blasts with Kentucky Legal Aid, BRADD and United Way.

KIPDA Rural Elder Abuse council gave out 450 bags to seniors in the rural counties. The bags included information about WEAAD, scams and elder abuse and exploitation.

The Bluegrass Elder Abuse Prevention Council (BEAPC) obtained a proclamation from the Governor. Candy Pettry (Eldercare Navigator from UK, a representative of BEAPC and the Statewide Elder Abuse Committee) rang a hand bell 120 times in the Capitol rotunda on June 15th, in honor of WEAAD.

The Northern Kentucky Elder Maltreatment Alliance (EMA) conducted a virtual training/ workshop about elder abuse prevention and EMA on June 15th. They also assisted with partnering agencies to display lawn signs and purple pinwheels (Encompass Health, Brighton Center, NKADD and Helping Hands NKY).

This represents a small snapshot of all the wonderful things that have been done and will be done in the month of June to help bring awareness to elder abuse. Feel free to send pictures and info about your event to cliff.bryant@ky.gov.

Remember if you see something, say something. Call **1-877-597-2331** any time of day to report your suspicions. If you would prefer to report non-emergency suspicions online click web referral.





Over the past year we have introduced you to the Department of Community Based Services staff that help protect our vulnerable adults in Kentucky. You met some dedicated individuals from your first contact with our Central Intake team, to your frontline Adult Protective Services workers and supervisors to the policy writers/ consultative branch staff.

So now let's take some time to

get to know all of the individuals on our Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Abuse. These groups are the grassroots, boots on the ground, advocates in your local community.

It is the hope that by sharing compositions of different councils this will give you information to advocate for your own council, or motivate you to join one to fill in any gaps in knowledge they may have.

"One person can make a difference. You don't have to be a big shot. You don't have to have a lot of influence. You just have to have faith in your power to change things."

- Norman Vincent Peale



Elder Abuse -Through the Years!

In 1974, the United States Congress amended the Social Security Act to require that all states establish adult protective services (APS) units for adults aged 18 and older.

Kentucky quickly passed the Adult Protection Act (KRS 209) in 1976 to require reporting known or suspected incidences of adult abuse, neglect or exploitation. This act was amended in 1978 to include a mandatory reporting provision.

By 1981, all states had established APS units. The federal government did not appropriate any specific funding for these programs, so the states were allowed to utilize some of their social service block grant funds.

Over the years, the U.S. Senate, House and the Government Accountability Office have conducted hearings and authorized studies to look in to elder abuse issues. Early on it was believed that "caregiver stress" was the primary cause of elder abuse. The models formulated on this assumption led to many victims being removed from their home and placed in to nursing homes.

In the late 1980s the Older American's Act authorized the creation of the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA). Unlike APS programs, Congress appropriated funding to NCEA for activities that would include information dissemination, research, technical assistance and training.

In 2010 and 2017, Congress passed the Elder Justice Act (EJA) and the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act (EAPPA) respectively. Again, these acts were passed without authorization of any funding for the activities and programs that were authorized. Many federal agencies have found ways to fund some of these activities and programs through alternate methods.

An amendment to the Violence Against Women Act authorized and appropriated some funding that could be used specifically for training about abuse of women in later life and persons with disabilities.

Although funding has been limited through the years, agencies have managed to move things around in their approved budgets, to start tackling issues. There has been substantially greater training and involvement of criminal justice system professionals, but this varies widely from community to community because of challenges with limited resources.

Multidisciplinary responses have also started to proliferate across the U.S. These responses are currently considered as best practice. Multidisciplinary responses can include interdisciplinary teams, task forces, coordinating councils, fatality review teams and forensics centers.

Continue to advocate for additional funding to address continued issues.