

Abuse Can Happen to People of Any Age



If You Are Being Abused...

If you are being abused, you need to know

- You are not to blame for the violence or the threats.
- You do not deserve to be abused.
- You have a right to live without fear.
- You have the right to a safe, healthy relationship and to have your own life.
- You cannot control the abuser's behaviour.
- Abuse often gets worse over time.

If you are not ready, or do not want to do anything right now, that is your choice - it is okay.

But you can find out information about what you need to know, or do, if you decide to leave at a later date. Information gives you personal choice and personal power.

What can you do?

If you live in the community...

- Tell someone what is happening to you.
- Ask others for help if you need it.
- Find out more from community resources about your options to take care of your financial security and personal needs.
- If someone is hurting or threatening you, or if it is not safe for you where you are, call the police.
- Call for counselling and support.
- Make a safety plan in case you have to leave quickly:
 1. Set aside an extra set of keys, I.D., glasses, bank card, money, address book, medication, and important papers. Keep this outside of your home.
 2. Find a safe place with friends and family so you have a place to go to in an emergency.
- Considering obtaining a restraining order to protect yourself.

If you live in a place such as a nursing home, care home, seniors' lodge or assisted living facility...

- Tell someone what is happening to you.
- Ask others for help if you need it. Staff members have a responsibility to see that abuse stops and that you get the help you need.
- If someone is hurting or threatening you, or if it is not safe for you where you are, call the police.

If You Know Someone Who is Being Abused

First...

If you think an adult needs help, talk to them first to find out how you might assist. Ask:

- Are you having some trouble? Can I help you?
- Is there someone I can put you in touch with who can help?
- How would you like to be assisted?



Ask the advice of someone you trust who might know where to get the kind of help the adult needs.

If you are the friend or family of someone who is being abused*...

- **Believe the abused older person.** Even if the abuser seems nice, even if the abuser is also your friend.
- **Listen to the abused older person without judging.** Do not give advice, do not express pity; reinforce that you care and will support the abused person with whatever she or he needs.
- **Educate yourself.** Realize that battering exists in your own community and to ignore and deny that fact further isolates the survivor.
- **Understand** that leaving an abusive relationship is difficult. Allow abused older people to make their own decisions and to take back control of their lives at their own pace.
- **Offer** the abused older person a place to stay.
- **Encourage** the abused older person to seek support and assistance.

Sources: Public Guardian and Trustee BC www.trustee.bc.ca/abuseneglect.htm * Adapted with permission from the Nova Scotia "Fact Sheet on Elder Abuse" www.gov.ns.ca/coms/files/facts7.asp