

Elder Abuse Awareness Lunch & Learn Series Session 3: Personal Safety and Advocacy for Older Adults

Tracey Siebert-Konopko, LMSW (she/her/hers)

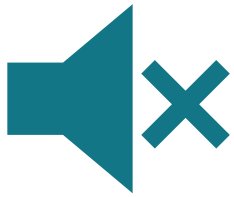
Upstate Elder Abuse Center

Lifespan of Greater Rochester Inc.

6/22/2022



Basic Housekeeping



Please keep yourself muted when not speaking.



Add questions in the chat.



This should be a safe place!

age

We'll help you take it on.

**Age brings opportunity
and challenges.**

Lifespan is a resource for people who
need guidance with the challenges and
opportunities of longer life.

585-244-8400



 LIFESPAN WELCOMES EVERYONE

Elder Abuse
Thrives in Silence



**You can help stop elder abuse
and mistreatment.**

Call Lifespan

585-244-8400

or outside Monroe County call

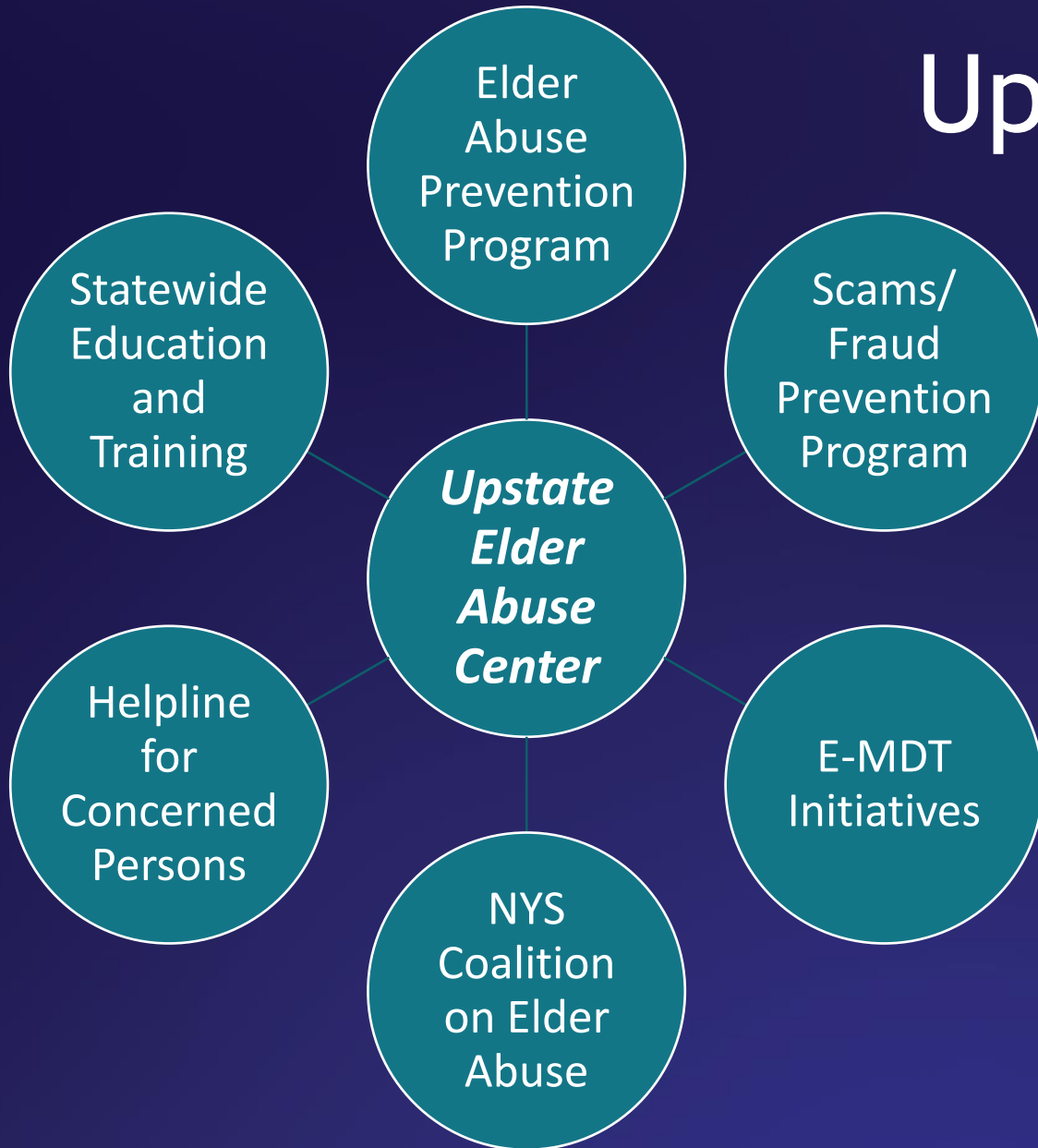
1-866-454-5110

or Adult Protective Services in your
local Department of Social Services.

BREAK THE SILENCE
Upstate Elder Abuse Center at Lifespan



UpEAC Core Programming



585-244-8400





You're their lifeline.
We're your helpline.

Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm

Elder Abuse Helpline for Concerned Persons



Helpline clinicians contact and assist concerned persons during regular business hours

Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm.

844-746-6905

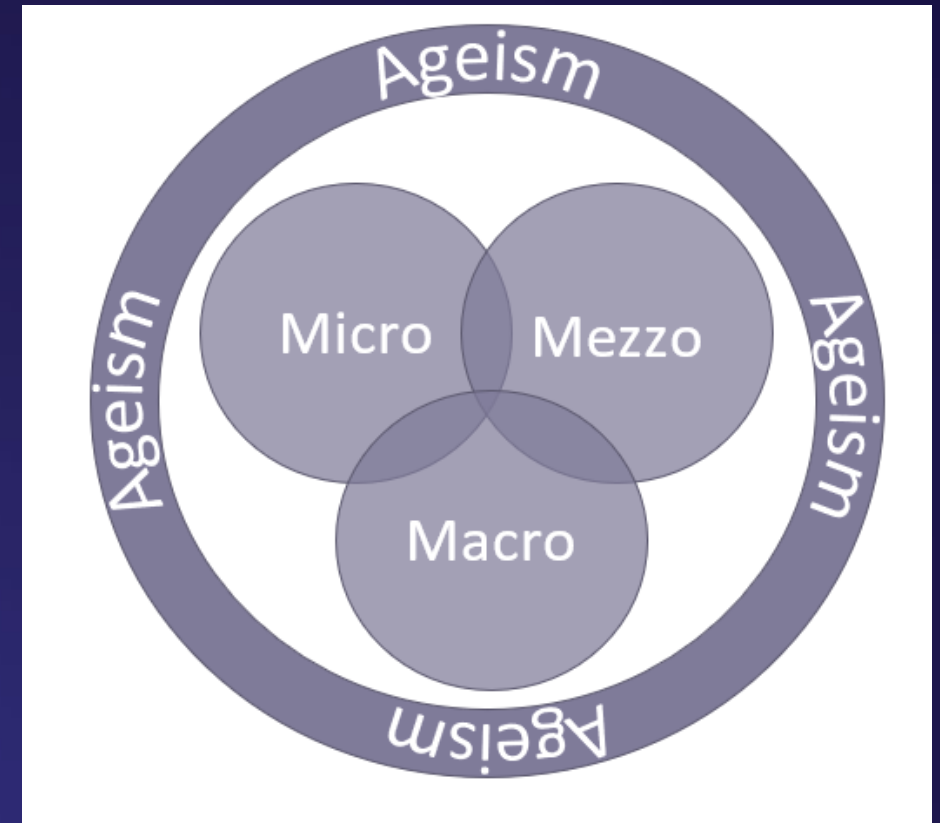
Calls are answered 24/7



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Recap from Last Two Sessions

- Ageism and ageist assumptions set the stage for elder abuse.
- There are 5 types of elder abuse, and adult children are the most likely perpetrators.



How are older adults harmed?

By people they know

By acquaintances

By Strangers

Today's Topics

- Connecting for safety
- Safety in your home
- Safety in your community
- Safety on the internet
- Finding help for yourself and those you care about

Connecting for Safety

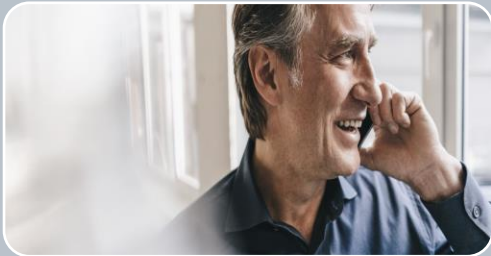


When do you call 911?

- 911 is for ***emergency situations.***
- An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police/sheriff, the fire department or an ambulance.
- ***If you are ever in doubt of whether a situation is an emergency, you should call 911. It's better to be safe*** and let the 911 call taker determine if you need emergency assistance.



911 – Demystified



If you don't
have a cell
phone, get
one!



Report
suspicious
conditions and
people.



Ask to remain
anonymous
(DNI – Do Not
Interview).



Remember to
breathe. The
operators are
there to help
you.

Additional Information to Know About 911

Don't be afraid to use 911! If you are legitimately concerned about an emergency, you are not tying up resources!

Stay on the line as long as possible. Even if you are unable to speak – an open line will assist first responders in tracing the call.

Call 911 before calling family or friends for assistance.

Additional Information to Know About 911

Ensure that your medical records/important paperwork are accessible to first responders; tape to refrigerator.

911 operators are trained to ask for your location first!

Call any time you have symptoms of a heart attack or stroke.



What Is a “Suspicious Person or Activity”

- Anything that is out of the norm.
- A person who is entering neighbor’s garages or other private property (particularly if they are entering multiple properties).
- Anyone with a visible weapon.
- A person you don’t recognize talking to neighborhood children.
- People who are claiming to represent a company but have no credentials.
- Yelling, shouting, audible swearing, fighting.

This list is a reference only and is not exhaustive.



Safety Inside Your Home

- Properly store firearms
 - Gun safe
 - Trigger locks
 - Permits
- Crimes using stolen firearms.
- What could be used against you?
- Avoid unsafe locations in the home.
 - Kitchens, bathrooms, and any room with only one point of egress (i.e. basements).



Safety Inside Your Home



Phones
everywhere!



Reduce
clutter. Have
an exit!



Working
smoke/CO2
detectors!



Know where
your keys
are!



Reduce cash
on hand!



Safety - Practice

*Your body will not go
where your mind has
not been.*



Safety Inside Your Home - Documents

- Know where your checkbook, banking, and Social Security cards are.
- Keep copies of important documents in a secure setting, such as a lock box or safety deposit box.
- Ensure that you have copies of your advance directives. Make sure that they are on file at the County Clerk's Office, your attorney's office, your PCPs office, etc.



Online Safety and Security

- Who uses social media the most? Who are those people to you?
- Best practice for passwords – should be complex, different, and changed reasonably often.
 - MUST be changed any time there is a breach.
- Annual credit report.
- Report to authorities immediately.
- Never engage with a scammer.
- Never pay the “ransom.”



Red Flags of a Scam

- Anyone claiming to be someone famous or a dignitary (particularly if foreign).
- Any unsolicited or unexpected interactions. Could be with someone you “know” or someone you don’t know.
- A romantic interest who you’ve never seen in person.
- Threats or intimidation are used.
- Foreign lotteries. They are illegal in the US.

Red Flags of a Scam

“Tech” companies asking to access your computer or mobile device(s).

Family member or friend who always needs money or always has an excuse why they can't afford their current lifestyle.

Family member or friend who is overly interested in your finances or provides unsolicited offers to help you manage finances.



Red Flags: Asking for Money

Asks you for money in the following forms:

- Cash through the mail or personal courier.
- Gift cards or gift card codes.
- Bitcoin or other cryptocurrency.
- Money wires through Western Union, Money Gram, or other.
- For goods or services that you have not specifically requested.
- 100% up front for contractors or other home repair/installation folks.



Avoiding the Scam

- Stop, drop, and roll. Nothing is so urgent that folks should be contacting you for immediate help or response. That is what 911 is for.
- Do not click on links in e-mails or texts. Instead, open a new tab on your browser and go directly to the site in question.
- If you make a mistake, immediately contact the authorities and take steps to place fraud alerts or credit freezes.
- No legitimate organization will EVER ask you for your account password.
- No legitimate organization will ever ask you to send cash, wire transfer, gift cards, or cryptocurrency.



Avoiding the Scam

Legitimate contractors will:

- Only ask for a down payment on services or ask for no money up front.
- Will quickly and courteously provide you with reference checks, customer reviews, license and/or certification information.
- Must put your down payment for services into a special account to be used for your project only. This is part of lien law.



Staying Safe In the Community

- Beware of your surroundings!
- Take a picture or mental or written note of where your car is located.
- Have your car keys ready when walking to your car.
- Attempt to stay in well-lit areas.
- Practice using the panic button on your car keys. Every second counts and distracting a would-be perpetrator could save you!
- Understand that you're more likely to be harmed by someone you know and trust than by a stranger.



Maintaining Healthy Boundaries in Relationships

- Relationships are not always permanent.
- Relationships fail for a variety of reasons.
- All relationships need work at times, but both parties must be willing and able to do the work.

Boundaries – Identifying Tactics and Triggers

Blame	Manipulation	Put-Downs
<p>Your adult child or family member persistently blames you for their problems and refuses to accept responsibility for their struggles and issues. Parents may think, “If I had just tried harder or did this instead of that, things would be different.”</p>	<p>Struggling adult children or other family/friends with distorted views may use manipulation tactics to make you feel that you “owe” them and therefore must support them.</p> <p>Alternately, they rely on what they do for you to get what they want from you. “I am the only grandchild who visits you. I hope you remember that.”</p>	<p>Criticism is common in relationships, even if unintentional. For parents of adult children, this could look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticism over your spending habits/comments about inheritance. • How you “favored” one child over the other(s). • Using your past as a weapon. • Statements regarding your mental health, physical health. • Ageism.

Setting Boundaries

Some examples include:

- “No.”
- “I’m sorry you’re struggling, and you owe it to yourself to be part of the solution.”
- “That’s enough.”
- “I’m not comfortable with that.”
- “My having money has nothing to do with whether or not it is best to give it to you.”
- “NO.”



Common Experiences When Setting Boundaries

- Guilt
- Second, third, fourth, and fifth-guessing yourself!
- Racing thoughts before and after setting a boundary.
- Doubting yourself.
- Excitement about setting a boundary!
- Readjusting boundaries. This includes changing them entirely.
- Being criticized by the person with whom you're setting a boundary.



Supporting Someone Who is Being Abused

- Being there – emotionally and/or physically.
- Offering to help connect them to additional support and services. This could include physically being with them when they decide to make a call. *HOWEVER, they should make the call if they physically can.*
- Asking how you can help.
- Not expecting them to make the changes you want.
- Setting your own boundaries.
- Listening.
- You do not need to fix the problems.

Resources to Help You

- 911
- Upstate Elder Abuse Center at Lifespan | 585-325-2800
- NY Connects at Lifespan | 585-325-2800
- Willow Domestic Violence Center | 585-222-SAFE (7233)
- RESTORE Sexual Assault Services | 585-546-2777
- Adult Protective Services | 585-753-6532



Getting Help For Someone Else

- 911
- Upstate Elder Abuse Center at Lifespan | 585-325-2800
- NY Connects at Lifespan | 585-325-2800
- Adult Protective Services | 585-753-6532
- Elder Abuse Helpline for Concerned Persons | 844-746-6905



Questions, Comments, Concerns?

Thank you!

Please fill out the follow up survey 😊

<https://forms.office.com/r/Sk5DREGtjp>

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