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Archstone Foundation

SEXUAL ABUSE IN LATER LIFE

National Sexual Assault Conference

August 2016

Presenters

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- Bonnie Brandl, National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)
- Karla Vierthaler, National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)

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Why Focus on Abuse in Later Life

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**10,000 Americans
turn 65 every day.**

Acierno, R., Hernandez, M. A., Amstadter, A. B., Resnick, H. S., Steve, K., Muzzy, W., & Kilpatrick, D. J. (2010).

**Older women
comprise more than
half (55.8%) of the
adult population
age 65 and older.**

United States Census Bureau (2012).

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Racial and ethnic minority populations have increased from 5.7 million in 2000 (16.3% of the elderly population) to 8.5 million in 2011 (21% of the elderly).

They are projected to increase to 20.2 million in 2030 (28% of the elderly).

http://www.aaa.gov/Aging_Statistics/Profile/2012/docs/2012profile.pdf.



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1 in 10 community-residing older adults reported experiencing elder abuse in the past year.

Acierno et al. (2010).



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About 2/3 of
elder abuse
victims are
women.

Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., Weill
Cornell Medical Center of Cornell
University, & New York City Department
for the Aging. (2011).



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Madeline Kasper

Elders who
experienced
abuse, even
modest abuse,
had a 300%
higher risk of
death when
compared to
those who had
not been abused.

Dong X, Simon M, Mendes de Leon C, Fulmer T,
Beck T, Hebert L, et al. (2009)

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NativeStock.com/Angel Wynn

Gina Bower

Sexual Violence towards older adults can involve a range of offenses including “hand-on” behaviors such as rape and molestation, “hands-off” behaviors such as voyeurism, exhibitionism, sexual threats, or unwanted comments, and “harmful genital practices.”

Ramsey-Klawnsnik & Brandl, 2009



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Until recently, it has historically and widely been beyond comprehension and belief that elders are victims of sexual assault.

Burgess & Clements, 2006

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Elder sexual abuse is often embedded in a pattern of multifaceted elder abuse, whether it occurs in domestic or institutional settings.

Ramsey-Klawnsnik, 2009



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Statistics around sexual violence later in life are thought to be serious underestimates, and reliable data is not yet available.

Roberto & Teaster, 2005

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Most perpetrators of sexual abuse against people in later life have special access to victims, as family members, intimate partners, fellow residents, or care providers.

NSVRC, 2010



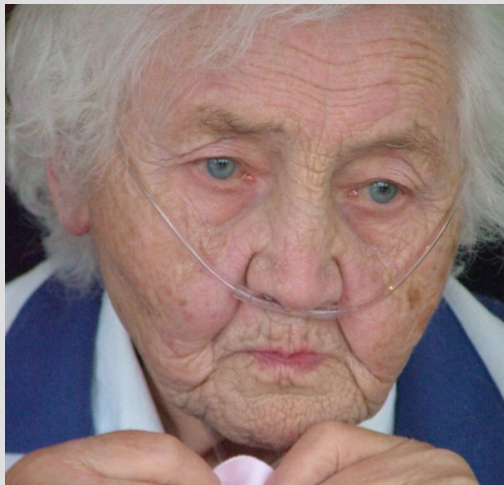
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Most identified older victims are female; however male victims have been reported in almost every study.

Burgess, Ramsey-Klawnsnik, & Gregorian, 2008;
Ramsey-Klawnsnik, Teaster, Mendiando, Marcum, &
Abner, 2008

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In the community, older victims of sexual abuse were violated most often by spouses/partners.

Aclerno, et al., (2010).

In facilities, employees responsible for care (43%) or other residents (41%) were most likely offenders.

Ramsey-Klawnsnik, H., Teaster, P. B., Mendiondo, M. S., Marcum, J. L., & Abner, E. L. (2008).

Many of those who experience sexual abuse in later life have health problems and disabilities, including cognitive and physical disabilities.

Elkert & Sugar, 2008



Due to age-related physiological changes, older victims tend to sustain more serious physical and psychosocial injuries during an assault than younger victims.

NSVRC, 2010



Gina Bower



Genital injuries occur with more frequency and severity in post-menopausal women than younger rape victims.

Poulos & Sheridan, 2008

Older victims are more likely to be admitted to a hospital following assault.

Elkert & Sugar, 2008



Sexual offenders who are older adults are typically not held accountable. National Institute for Justice Research demonstrated that the older a victim, the less likely the offender was found guilty.

Schofield, 2006

Miss Mary

NCALL, Terra Nova Films, OVC, OVW



Miss Mary

(Group discussion)

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- What surprised you about this case?
- Have you worked on any similar cases?
- What are some strategies you would use if you were working with a victim like Miss Mary?
- What are some challenges you might encounter?

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Mandatory Reporting and Confidentiality

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- Raise your hand if you are mandated reporter for elder abuse
- If yes, do you let victims know you may be mandated to report before talking with them?
- If you need to report, what steps do you take to address safety and autonomy?

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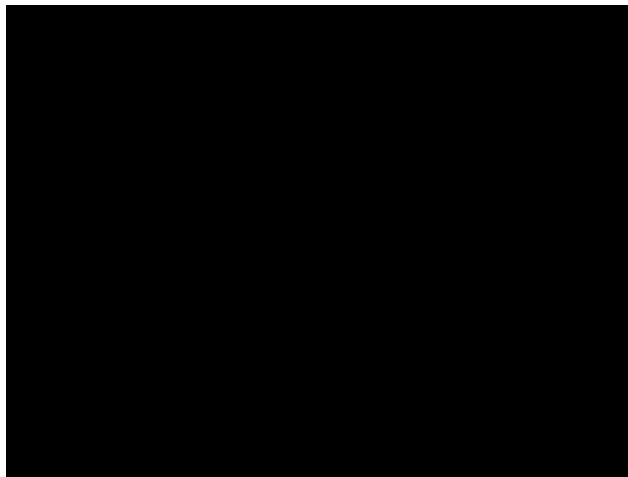
Sexual Abuse in Facilities

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Broken Trust: AI

Maine Public Broadcasting Network

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Sexual Abuse in Facilities

(Group discussion)

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- If you have worked with victims in facilities, what strategies have you used?
- If you have worked with older male victims, what have you found that has been effective?
- If you have worked with victims with cognitive limitations or dementia, what tips do you have for other advocates?

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Collaboration

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Collaboration

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- Adult protective services
- Aging services network
- Ombudsman
- Dept. of Health Services - Regulatory and Complaint Investigators

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Resources

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Thank You!



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