



Keeping Healthy and Safe



No one is immune to elder abuse — it can happen to anyone, at any time, and anywhere. Often a silent problem, elder abuse can rob older adults of their dignity and security and leave them feeling fearful, depressed, and alone. Sadly, 10 percent of Americans over the age of 60 have experienced some form of elder abuse in the last year, and many researchers expect this number to rise with the growth of the aging population.

Elder abuse is an intentional act, or failure to act that causes or is likely to cause harm to an adult. The six most common categories of elder abuse are described as:

Physical. Inflicting, or threatening to inflict, physical pain or injury on vulnerable elder, or depriving them of a basic need.

Emotional or Psychological. Inflicting mental pain, anguish, or distress on an elderly person through verbal or nonverbal acts.

Sexual. Non-consensual sexual contact of any kind or coercing an elder to witness sexual behaviors.

Neglect. Refusal or failure by those responsible to provide food, shelter, health care, or protection for a vulnerable elder.

Abandonment. The desertion of a vulnerable elder by anyone who has assumed responsibility for care or custody of that person.

Financial/Exploitation. Illegal taking, misuse, or concealment of funds, property, or assets belonging to a vulnerable elder.

The most common form of elder abuse in Kansas is financial abuse, and one of the common ways perpetrators carry out this abuse is through scams. Scams that target older adults are prevalent in today's world and can be financially devastating for high- and low-income victims. Determining the legitimacy of operations can be challenging because scam artists will work tirelessly to gain your trust and are skilled at persuasion. Before sending money or providing social security, account, or credit card numbers, you should talk with a trusted family member or friend to ensure its legitimacy. If their offer seems too good to be true, it probably is. The top 10 most reported scams targeting older adults are:

1. Telemarketing, phone, charity, or imposter scams.
2. Grandparent scams
3. Medicare or health insurance scams
4. Internet fraud
5. Funeral and cemetery scams
6. Sweepstakes, prizes, or lottery scams
7. Home repair or reverse mortgage scams
8. Investment schemes
9. Counterfeit prescription drug sales
10. Fraudulent anti-aging products

To prevent being a victim of a scam, use caller ID, screen calls from people you don't know, do not answer a phone call if the caller ID shows your own phone number (this is called spoofing), delete suspicious emails, and hang up on pushy telemarketers or salespersons. Also, be wary of sharing personal information. You can sign up for the Do Not Call Registry (donotcall.gov; 1-888-382-1222), though be aware that con artists may still access your information in other ways.

Coming in April - "Healthy Body, Healthy Brain" programing in the District.
April 18th in Sharon, 29th in Goodland and 30th in St. Francis, all at Noon.