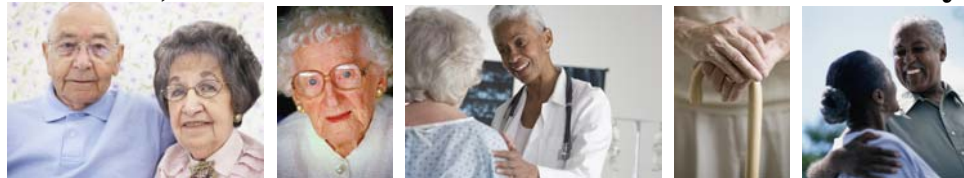


## June 15, 2009 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day



Each year, more than two million vulnerable and older adults are victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Research has shown that older adults who are abused, neglected and exploited are three times more likely to die within ten years than those who are not. According to national statistics, elder abuse is grossly under reported because vulnerable and older adults who are being abused find it very difficult to tell anyone due to shame and fear. Elder Abuse affects men and women of all ethnic backgrounds and social status; it occurs in private residences and in facilities.

In 2008 there were more than 15,300 reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable and older adults made to North Carolina's 100 county departments of social services. Reports are made not only by doctors and other professionals but by family members and concerned citizens in our communities. Anyone who suspects that a vulnerable or older adult is in need of protection is required by North Carolina General Statute (GS 108A-102) to report this information to the department of social services in the county where the adult resides.

We all have a responsibility to support the safety, welfare, and dignity of North Carolina's vulnerable and older adults. We urge all citizens to work together to help protect adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It is imperative that North Carolinians refuse to tolerate the indignity of Elder Abuse.

### **Take an active role in protecting vulnerable and older adults**

\* **SPEAK OUT**- Don't ignore this problem-it's not going away. Advocate for the passage of legislation like the federal Elder Justice Act

\* **REPORT**- suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation to Adult Protective Services in the North Carolina county where the adult lives. Contact information for County Departments of Social Services is at this website: [www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local)

\***VOLUNTEER**- in local programs that provide assistance and support for vulnerable and older adults in your community and long term care facilities

\***EDUCATE**- yourself, family, and community about Elder Abuse by visiting the following websites:

Elder Justice Coalition website [www.elderjusticecoalition.com](http://www.elderjusticecoalition.com)

National Center on Elder Abuse website [www.ncea.aoa.gov](http://www.ncea.aoa.gov)

National Adult Protective Services Association website [www.apsnetwork.org](http://www.apsnetwork.org)

National Long Term Care Ombudsman Association website [www.itcombudsman.org](http://www.itcombudsman.org)

North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services at [www.ncdhhs.gov/aging](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/aging)

**Show the world that you care.**

**Wear something purple on June 15, 2009.**