

Do Something

Challenge Ageism & Prevent Elder Abuse

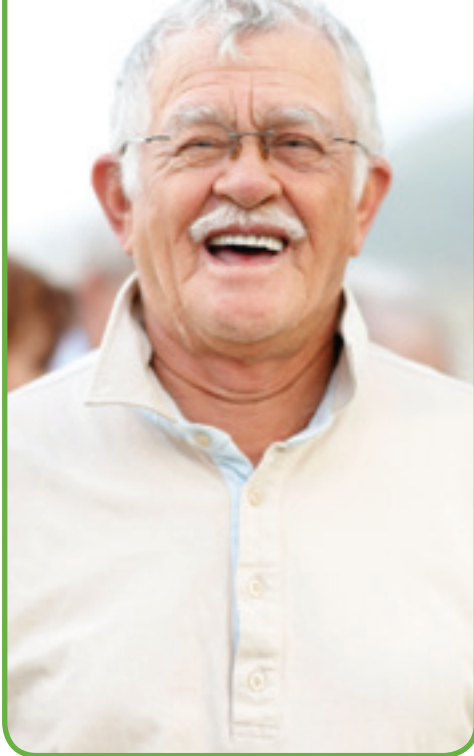
Everyone, no matter what age, young or old, can play a part in challenging ageism and preventing elder abuse.



Ageism is the stereotyping and discrimination against people because of their age. It can affect anyone at any time in their life, impacting on younger as well as older people. The focus of this booklet is on ageism in relation to older people and how it can act as a cause of elder abuse, and what you, as a younger person or someone who works with younger people, can do.

In this context, ageism refers to deep-rooted negative beliefs about older people and the ageing process, resulting in age discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping. It can be the root cause of elder abuse and the reason why some people do nothing to stop it.

Elder abuse causes harm or distress to an older person and/or it violates their human rights. It can be a single or repeated act, or lack of action and happens in relationships where there is an expectation of trust.



Ageism discrimination distress
stereotyping prejudice
violates **negative**

THE FACTS

1

The majority of people live well and safe as they get older, however up to 10,000 older people in Ireland each year experience abuse.

2

The main type of abuse is psychological for example bullying, intimidation, humiliation and/or coercion.

3

Other forms of abuse include physical abuse, material or financial abuse, sexual abuse, discrimination and institutional abuse (this is abuse that happens within or by institutions e.g. financial institutions, nursing homes etc).

4

Elder abuse can be intentional, when someone sets out to be abusive. Sometimes it can also be unintentional where the person does not realise that the consequence of their actions can be deeply distressing to the older person.

5

Elder abuse most often occurs where the older person lives - in their home or in a care setting.





THE FACTS

6

In about 80% of cases the person who abuses is a family member.

7

The number of people who report elder abuse to the HSE or to the Gardai is much smaller than the number who experience abuse. In many cases the older person doesn't tell anybody.

8

There are many reasons why someone may not report abuse - out of fear and/or uncertainty of the outcome. However, support and help is available (see support section of this leaflet).

9

Staying connected to family and friends can reduce the risk of experiencing abuse.

10

Being involved in intergenerational and other community based activities can be a preventative measure against abuse.



CASE STUDIES

An older man is invited to an event for his grandniece and goes with his extended family. He is not greeted when he arrives and no-one speaks to him when he's there. He leaves without being thanked for coming, no one notices his exclusion.



Mr Johnston is frustrated that his wife has become forgetful and has started to rely on him to remember things like her medication and appointments.

She struggles to care for herself as she has serious arthritis in her joints. One day her husband shouts at her and walks out slamming the door, leaving her to fend for herself for the day.



CASE STUDIES



Mr O'Brien can no longer go to town so relies on a daughter to purchase hearing aid batteries. His daughter has not had time to do so for over three weeks, so Mr O'Brien is going without the aid and cannot hear his phone, the doorbell or the television.



An older couple make plans for the day. Mags wants to go to the day centre to meet her friends, her husband Thomas tells her she can't go because he doesn't want her to have fun with her friends while he sits home alone.



WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A YOUNGER PERSON?

Recognising the value and experience of people of different ages is hugely important in breaking down the barriers of ageism and stereotyping. A positive attitude towards ageing and older people is often the first step in the prevention of elder abuse.

In our communities we can try to reconnect with other generations, and find and value more of what we share in common, rather than focusing on what is different. Ageing is common to all of us - regardless of our culture, country, gender, or ethnicity - **we are all ageing from the day we are born!**



There's a lot you can do to tackle ageism and help prevent elder abuse:

- If you are worried about someone who may be experiencing elder abuse, talk to someone you trust, a family member, teacher or youth leader or contact the relevant organisations listed below.
- You can talk to your teacher / youth worker / peers about learning more about ageing and doing a project in your community / school which includes older people and helps build positive

connections with other generations.

- Intergenerational projects can be fun for all ages. Think about ways to bring people together – music, dance, cookery, photography, IT, art, gardening...the possibilities are endless!
- Visit www.ageaction.ie/generations-together for more information on how to set up an intergenerational project in your community.
- You can raise awareness of ageism and elder abuse – share this leaflet with your friends and family and other people in your community and spread the word about doing something to challenge ageism and prevent elder abuse!



WHERE TO GO FOR SUPPORT

AGE ACTION

Call: 01 4756989

Monday to Friday

9am - 1pm and 2pm - 5pm

Website: www.ageaction.ie

Email: library@ageaction.ie

HSE - DEDICATED SOCIAL WORK SERVICE FOR THE PROTECTION OF OLDER PEOPLE

Call: 1850 24 1850

Monday to Saturday 8am to 8pm

Website:

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/olderpeople/elderabuse/>

Email: info@hse.ie

You will be provided with the details of HSE staff in your local area who can help you. More information on elder abuse is also available from the HSE website

CHILDLINE

Call: 1800 666 666

Website: www.childline.ie

Text 'Talk' to 50101

SAMARITANS

Call: 1850 60 90 90

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

Website: www.samaritans.org

Email: jo@samaritans.org

HEADSTRONG

Call: 01 472 7010

Website: www.headstrong.ie

Email: info@headstrong.ie

ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Call: 1800 341 341

Monday to Friday 10am - 4pm

Website: www.alzheimer.ie

Email: helpline@alzheimer.ie

CARING FOR CARERS IRELAND

Call: 065 6866515

Website: www.caringforcarers.ie

Email: support@caringforcarers.org

MONEY ADVICE AND BUDGETING SERVICE (MABS)

Helpline: 1890 283438

Monday to Friday 9am - 8pm

Website: www.mabs.ie

Email: helpline@mabs.ie

AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

For emergencies call 999 or 112

Contact your local Garda Station

WOMEN'S AID

Call: 1800 341 900

(10am to 10pm, 7 days a week)

Website: www.womensaid.ie

Email: info@womensaid.ie

SAFE IRELAND (NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE BODY FOR WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES)

Website: www.safeireland.ie

AMEN

(MEN WHO ARE EXPERIENCING ABUSE IN A RELATIONSHIP CAN CALL)

Call: 046 902 3718

(9am to 5pm, Monday - Friday)

Website: www.amen.ie

Email: info@amen.ie

DUBLIN RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Call: 1800 77 8888

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Website: www.drcc.ie

Email: counselling@rcc.ie

RAPE CRISIS NETWORK IRELAND (NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE BODY FOR RAPE CRISIS CENTRES)

Website: www.rcni.ie

Disclaimer note: The contents of this booklet are intended to enhance awareness of elder abuse and are provided as an information guide only. We have made every effort to ensure the material in this publication is accurate, however no responsibility is accepted by, nor liability assumed by or on behalf of the participating organisations.

