

## THE VICTIM AND THE ABUSER



### VICTIMS...

Victims of elder abuse may refuse to admit that they are being mistreated. There are many reasons for this:

- Shame
- Worry that legal action might be taken against their abuser
- They may not recognise that they are being mistreated and/or may not be able to report the abuse

Common characteristics of victims of elder abuse include:

- Vulnerable
- Socially isolated
- Physically / mentally impaired
- Highly dependent on their caregiver

### ABUSERS...

Abusers may defend their actions or deny that they have harmed the aged victim. They may include caregivers, relatives, adult children or the spouse of the victim.

Abusers may:

- Be experiencing caregiver stress
- Be lonely and cut off from society
- Be poor at communicating with elderly persons
- Be financially dependent on the elderly victim

It takes courage to walk away when you are being abused, or to step in when you witness an elderly being abused. Elder abuse is a crime, and cannot be tolerated.

**DO SEEK HELP EARLY**

## HELP LINES

**ComCare Call**  
1800 222 0000

### FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST CENTRES

#### PAVE

Promoting Alternatives to Violence  
6555 0390

<http://www.pave.org.sg>

#### TRANS SAFE Centre

6449 9088

<http://www.transfamilyservices.org.sg/safe.html>

#### Care Corner Project StART

6476 1482

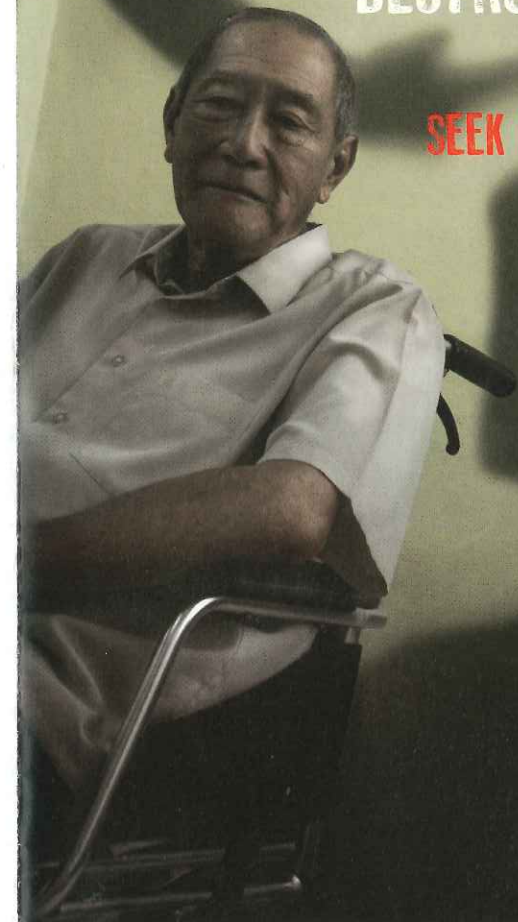
<http://www.carecorner.org.sg/start.html>

You can also find more information at:  
<http://www.stopfamilyviolence.sg>



# FAMILY VIOLENCE DESTROYS LIVES

**SEEK HELP EARLY**



## Stop Elder Abuse

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, call ComCare Call at 1800 222 0000

Visit [www.stopfamilyviolence.sg](http://www.stopfamilyviolence.sg)



# STOP ELDER ABUSE

Family violence is any violent, threatening or controlling behaviour that occurs within the family causing a person to live in fear.

## WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Elder abuse can be described as any action or lack of action, by a person or a caregiver in a position of trust, which puts the health or well-being of an elderly person at risk.

## THERE ARE VARIOUS FORMS OF ELDER ABUSE

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

These are acts which cause physical pain and injury to the elderly person, such as beating, pushing and having the elderly inappropriately restrained and locked up.

### EMOTIONAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

These are acts which would cause emotional pain and distress to the elderly person. These would include threats and humiliating comments made against the elderly person. It may include acts that cause the elderly person fear of being harmed, being ignored, harassment and/or being isolated from other friends and family. The elderly may have their personal property, including prized possessions or pets, destroyed.

### NEGLECT

This refers to situations when the elderly person is not provided his/her basic needs such as food, access to housing, clothing, physical and medical care and financial support. This can happen both intentionally or unintentionally.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

This happens when the elderly person is forced to take part in an unwanted sexual activity. This may include acts committed against an elderly person who is not able to provide consent to the sexual act.

### ABANDONMENT

This is when the family member, purposely places the elderly person in a situation where the elderly person would have to manage his/her own needs beyond that of his/her ability. It includes situations where an elderly person may be left in a care facility, without financial maintenance.

### FINANCIAL ABUSE

This refers to the abuser taking advantage of the elderly person's funds or resources, for personal gain. The abuser may exercise undue influence to bring about changes in the making/ execution of wills, denying the elderly person access to personal funds, or convincing the elderly to be involved in financial scams.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

### PHYSICAL

**Signs could include, but are not limited to:**

- History of unexplained and multiple injuries at various stages of healing
- Delay in reporting and treating injury/illness
- Unexplained burns or fractures
- Unexplained hair loss

### SEXUAL

**Signs could include, but are not limited to:**

- Torn or stained underclothing
- Pain or itching in the genitals
- Bruises in the private areas
- Feelings of shame and guilt

### EMOTIONAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL

**Signs could include, but are not limited to:**

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Neurotic traits (e.g. sleep disorders)
- Social withdrawal or isolation
- Suicidal behaviour / tendency

### NEGLECT AND/OR ABANDONMENT

**Signs could include, but are not limited to:**

- Poor nutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Soiled / unsuitable clothing
- Medical needs / physical problems ignored

### FINANCIAL

**Signs could include, but are not limited to:**

- An elderly person not being allowed access to his/her property
- Unexplained withdrawal of money from the elderly person's account
- An unusual interest by family members in the elderly person's assets
- A caregiver who refuses to spend money on the care of the elderly person

