

# COMBATING ELDER ABUSE STARTS WITH US



Everyone deserves to age with dignity and respect. Still, far too many older adults are denied that fundamental right.

According to the National Council on Aging, one in ten adults over 60 in the United States experiences elder abuse; however, only one in 24 cases is reported. That silence speaks volumes. It reflects how aging is too often overlooked, underestimated, and dismissed.

June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. It is a time to speak the truth: elder abuse is real, it causes lasting harm, and we all have a role to play in ending it.

Elder abuse is more than just neglect or fraud or violence. It is the most heinous form of ageism. It is what happens when society treats older people as if they do not matter. It stems from harmful stereotypes, from indifference, and from the idea that growing older means losing value.

At NYC Aging, we confront this every day. Our Elder Justice Unit supports older adults who have been harmed, connecting them to safety, services, and justice. But prevention takes more than a response. It takes a cultural shift in how we see aging and how we treat older people. One way we're doing that is by expanding the Tenancy and Eviction Support Services (TESS) program to older adults

referred by Bronx housing court judges, to ensure that even the most vulnerable can remain in their homes.

This year for Elder Abuse Awareness Month, we're calling on the community to challenge ageist attitudes and promote respect to conquer ageism. Because when we lead with respect, we build stronger communities.

Communities where abuse has no place. Where older people are protected, honored, and heard.

Earlier this month, NYC Aging hosted a World Elder Abuse Awareness Day reception at Gracie Mansion to celebrate the courage of older adults who seek support and honor the professionals who help them rebuild their lives.

Let's carry that same spirit forward. Speak up. Interrupt the stereotypes. Believe survivors. Push back when someone devalues aging or excuses harmful behavior.

Elder abuse cannot fester in communities that protect and honor their older members. It cannot grow where respect, visibility, and justice are the norm.

If you or someone you know needs help, call Aging Connect at 212-244-6469.

Elder abuse is real. It causes harm. And we are here for survivors.



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