

JUNE IS ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH

There is an older adult in this city right now sitting with a secret that is eating them alive.

Maybe it is the nephew who has been "borrowing" money for years and never paid it back. Maybe it is the home attendant who speaks to them in a way that makes them feel small. Maybe it is a partner, someone they have loved for decades, who withholds lifesaving medication when they get upset. They do not tell anyone. Not because they do not want help. Because they love the person hurting them. Because they are afraid of what happens if they speak up. Because somewhere along the way, they started to believe they deserved it.

June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month, and June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, a moment the world pauses to raise awareness about a horrific form of abuse. Elder abuse is financial exploitation, physical harm, emotional cruelty, sexual violence, and neglect carried out by someone the older adult knows and trusts: a family member, a caregiver, a friend, a partner. It touches every community, every borough, every zip code. And it is vastly underreported, because shame and loyalty are powerful silencers.



June is also Pride Month. For LGBTQIA+ older adults, the stakes are often higher and the silence even deeper. A lifetime of navigating systems that were not built for them, sometimes hostile to them, can make asking for help feel impossible. Abuse within families and chosen families is real, and it deserves to be spoken about directly and without flinching. Every older adult, regardless of who they love or how they live, deserves to be safe.

This is core to NYC Aging's mission. Every older New Yorker deserves to be safe. We have Elder

Justice programs in every borough offering crisis intervention, safety planning, counseling, shelter referrals, and help navigating the legal system. And for older adults impacted by crimes committed by strangers, such as scams, theft, or physical assault, our Crime Prevention and Support Services (C-PASS) program provides safety planning, help filing complaints, and connections to legal and mental health resources.

None of that matters, though, if people do not know it exists. So this is us saying it plainly: if you or someone you know is being hurt, taken advantage of, or made to feel afraid, there is help, and you do not have to earn it. Call Aging Connect at 212-AGING-NYC (212-244-6469). We will connect you, or someone you believe needs help, to the support they need, in their borough, in their language, on their terms.



**NYC Department for the Aging
Commissioner
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