Adult Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

What you need to know
Let Me Introduce you to “Andy”

O Andy is an older gentleman who was incredibly successful in his chosen career.
O Andy made a lot of money.
O When he became older he let his grown step-son manage his finances.
O Slowly over time that step-son took total control of his finances and his life.
O Andy was no longer able to make a basic decision about his life. He was deprived of food, medicine and his ID was confiscated from him. Andy reports feeling a prisoner in his home.
Andy

- “Andy” is actually the late actor Mickey Rooney
- In March, 2011, Rooney testified to congress about his experiences to bring attention to the issue of adult abuse and let others know that it could happen to anyone
Your Golden Years?

Take a moment and envision them. What will you do? How will you spend your days?
The Golden Years?

- How many people envisioned themselves as being abused, neglected/neglectful to self or exploited?

- Unfortunately, the truth is it will happen to 1 in 10 of you. And of those 1 in 10 cases that come to the attention of the authorities, 1 in 14 cases will go unreported. (National Council on Aging).
Goals of Presentation

- Help you to identify Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation and who is a victim
- Educate you as to the state’s role
- Teach you ways in which you can help.
What is Abuse?

“Abuse is a form of mistreatment by one individual that cause harm to another person” (National Adult Protective Services Association [NAPSA])
Physical Abuse

- May include:
  - Slapping
  - Hitting
  - Beating
  - Causing physical pain, injury or suffering

- Physical Abuse Includes:
  - Confining an adult against their will
  - Locking someone in their room
  - Tying them to furniture
Signs and Symptoms

- Bruising/lacerations - possibly hidden by clothing
- Object-shaped bruising
- Bruises on neck, bottom of feet, genitals (bruises on extremities are often accidental).
- Bruising on a non-ambulatory person is questionable
- Inconsistency between story and injury
- Sudden change in victim and caregiver behavior
A word about bruising

Caution: beware some medications can thin blood and cause small bruises to spread or appear as multiple bruises.
Emotional Abuse

- Emotional Abuse: The infliction of anguish, pain or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts.

- Examples:
  - Insults
  - Yelling or threats of harm or isolation
  - Non-verbal actions like throwing objects, glaring
Signs and Symptoms

- Social isolation
- Fearful
- Defers in the presence of the abuser
- May question own capabilities
- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Suicidal thoughts and/or suicide attempts
Isolation/Abandonment

- Isolation:
  - Keeping people from friends and family and preventing contact via phone or mail.

- Abandonment:
  - Desertion by caregiver
Signs and Symptoms

- Abandonment:
  - Someone who is confused or who has dementia and has been left alone for days

- Someone who is left in a public place such as a hospital or a shopping mall.

- Someone who is unable to provide basic information about themselves and found wandering.
Isolation Symptoms

- Someone who is socially isolated and withdrawn
Financial Exploitation

This is the illegal or improper use of a person’s funds, property or assets which includes using another’s assets without consent, under false pretense or through coercion and/or manipulation.
Signs and Symptoms

- Inability to explain finances
- Disparity between assets & lifestyle
- Caregivers who are overly worried about the amount of money being spent on someone's care than the care itself
- Sudden changes in banking practices
Neglect

Neglect is the refusal or failure to fulfill a legal or contractual responsibility. This includes failing to provide life necessities such as food, water, clothing, shelter or a facility to provide or pay for care.
Signs and Symptoms

- Dehydration
- Malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Unhealthy and hazardous living environment
- Untreated health problems
Self-Neglect

- The behavior of an elderly/disabled person that threatens his/her own health or safety
Signs & Symptoms

- Not keeping medical appointment
- Refusing medical attention
- Inability to manage finances
- Poor hygiene
- Inadequate housing
- Animal infested living conditions

This excludes situations in which a mentally competent person makes a bad decisions or lifestyle choices
Who are we and what do we do?

○ Missouri Dept. of Health and Senior Services, Division of Senior & Disability Services

○ We investigate allegations of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation

○ We help adults to remain independent in their homes through the Medicaid funded in-home services program
Who are eligible adults?

- Any Missouri resident who is:
  - 60 years or older
  - 18-59 with a disability AND
  - Unable to protect their own interest or do not have the ability to perform (or obtain services) to meet their needs.
Purpose of Adult Protective Services

- To promote independence
- To Empower the client to attain or maintain optimal self-determination
- To provide quality alternatives to institutional care
- To maximize individual choice
How we get our reports

- Abuse and Neglect Hotline-Central Registry Unit (CRU) 1-800-392-0210
  - 7:00am-12:00am seven days a week including holidays

- Who can Report
  - Anyone!!!!!!!
  - Certain professions are mandated by law to report
  - HIPAA rule waived when state laws mandates suspected A/N/E be reported
How we get our reports

- By reporting in “Good Faith” the reporter is immune from criminal/civil liability

- Reporter Confidentiality is Protected Unless:
  - Reporter authorizes disclosure AND
  - Disclosure prevents further harm OR
  - Disclosure is Court ordered
The Investigation: It starts with a call

- Once a report is received that report will be assigned to a geographic area and to an Adult Protective and Community Worker (APCW) for continued investigation.

- That APCW will
  - Review the report and conduct a background check of the subjects of the report.
  - Develop an investigative plan which includes but is not limited to:
The Investigation: It starts with a call

- Assessing the need to involve law enforcement, mental health professionals (primarily CIT officers) and E.M.S.
- Determining who to interview and in what order
- Determining what records or documents will be needed to (dis)prove the allegations
- Determining each agency or entity which will need to be contacted to co-investigate or provide support
The Investigation

- The APCW will conduct a thorough investigation to determine the safety of the victim by:
  - Obtaining all information necessary to determine whether the alleged abuse or neglect occurred.
    - Evidence is obtained through interviews, records and documents.
  - The APCW will Evaluate and analyze the information obtained to determine if legal intervention or protective service are needed.
Determining if Abuse or Neglect has occurred

- Based on the information gathered during the investigative process, the APCW will determine if the alleged abuse, neglect or exploitation occurred.

- If a report is substantiated, then we are required by law to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency.
Other Factors to Consider

- The Right to Self-Determination: All Missourians have the right to make decisions regarding the course of their life and the state has a duty to respect the rights of others.
- Our agency has the statutory authority to protect eligible adults from risk of injury or harm.
- APCWs must balance these essential ethical principles when providing protective services.
Other Factors to Consider

0 So What does it mean?
0 It means that when an APCW determines that a person may need protective services, the person, who is competent can choose to receive or refuse services.
Protective Services

- Protective Services are offered when an eligible adult gives consent to receive services.
- Protective Services are a combination of public, private and individual services.
- The purpose of the intervention is to remedy abuse, neglect or exploitation or assist in meeting basic needs.
Protective Services

Examples

- Assistance locating emergency shelter, food, clothing or domestic violence shelters
- Crisis intervention
- Coordinating emergency medical intervention
- Referring to local food pantries
- Referring to Medicaid funded home and community based services program
- Involvement of law enforcement
HOW WE CAN & CANNOT INTERVENE

We Can:

○ Provide protective services interventions;
○ Authorize in-home services when criteria met

We Can:

○ Intervene when an adult is incapacitated and is in need of medical or mental health intervention
○ Intervene on behalf of incapacitated adult to identify a representative or explore legal interventions
HOW WE CAN & CANNOT INTERVENE

We cannot

- Transport under any circumstances
- Remove or evict an adult from their home

We cannot

- Place an adult in a mental health facility, nursing home or hospital
- Force a competent adult to change their behavior or lifestyle
DHSS Statistics

DSDS Adult Abuse Hotline Reports

- FY13: 25,845
- FY14: 27,092
- FY15: 27,595
- FY16: 28,630
Allegation Statistics

- Abandonment/eviction/homelessness: 35%
- Caregiver Neglect: 18%
- Emotional Abuse: 2%
- Falsification: 7%
- Financial Exploitation: 11%
- Misappropriation: 18%
- Physical Abuse: 6%
- Self Neglect: 1%
- Sexual Abuse: 2%
Community Partnership

- We need your help!
  - Know the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and CALL US if you suspect it is happening to an eligible adult

- How we rely upon you:
  - Direct services for our eligible adults
  - Transportation
  - Co-investigations
  - Copies of your records and reports regarding interactions with Reported Adults
DSDS Website & Helpful Numbers


- Toll Free Hotline to Report Abuse of Seniors and Adults with Disabilities: **1-800-392-0210**

- Referral for home and community based services: **1-866-835-3505**
Questions?

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Adult Protective and Community Supervisor
(816) 350-5472
Megan.Phillips @health.mo.gov
The Kansas City Elder Abuse Prevention Task Force

- Training
- Awareness
- Events
  - World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
    June 15th
    For more information and a toolkit:
- Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)
Questions?

Judy Gibbs
Kansas City Missouri Prosecutors Office
Judy.Gibbs@kcmo.org
Resources & Services

- Be aware!
- Ask questions.
- Refer the older adult AND their caregiver for services.
- Take part in training.

http://centeronelderabuse.org/education_overview.asp
https://www.ovcttac.gov/ElderAbuse/
https://www.ovcttac.gov/views/TrainingMaterials/dspOnline_VATOnline.cfm
Questions?

Michelle Brown
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Information & Referral Line
(816) 421-4980