



CONTACT:
 Ashley Chambers
ChambersA@elderaffairs.org;
 850-414-2142

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida Department of Elder Affairs and Florida Department of Children and Families Jointly Recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

~ Elder Affairs to Host Awareness Events Across Florida ~

TALLAHASSEE – In recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) and to help build safer communities for more than 5.3 million older Floridians, the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) will host statewide events for Floridians to learn about elder abuse and how to report suspected or known abuse to authorities.

June 15 is a worldwide awareness effort designated by the United Nations to focus attention on the growing problem of elder abuse. Across the globe on WEADD, people will wear purple to honor elders, and there will be events hosted on five different continents throughout June. In Florida, Governor Rick Scott has issued a [proclamation](#) recognizing Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

“Each of us has a role to play in protecting our seniors, who should be treasured and respected,” said Elder Affairs Secretary Jeffrey Bragg. “Far too many of Florida elders are victimized by abuse. Being aware of the signs of abuse is critical, and it is up to each of us to put an end to this shameful practice.”

Unfortunately, elder abuse continues to be a problem in Florida, which has the largest population percentage of elders in the nation. In the last fiscal year, the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) received 41,160 reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of Florida elders. More than 9,100 of them, or 22 percent, were reports of financial exploitation – the third largest category of reported abuse. For every case of abuse reported, it is estimated that 24 are not because the victim is too afraid or embarrassed to report it.

“Protecting vulnerable adults from further abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect is a top priority for the department,” said DCF Secretary Mike Carroll. “We all have a responsibility to help keep vulnerable adults safe and report any concerns about the abuse of a vulnerable adult to the hotline. This month is a great opportunity to remember those who have cared for us and how valuable they are to our families and our communities.”

The DOEA Elder Abuse Prevention Program works to educate all Floridians, including seniors, caregivers, family members, and professionals who come in contact with seniors, about the prevention of abuse and how to report it.

To view a list of awareness events in your area, please click [here](#).

If you are a victim or suspect elder abuse, please contact the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). If you would like more information about the Department’s Elder Abuse Prevention Program, contact DOEA at 850-414-2000.