



# Street Smarts for Prevention of Elder Abuse with Seniors

**ELDER ABUSE!**  
Hiding in Plain Sight

# To Rob or Not to Rob



Because Elder abuse hides in plain sight... there are some things you should be aware of as a senior or elderly adult, especially if you're alone or use public transportation to help prevent you from becoming a victim of a would be attacker.

So let's begin the smarts and think about it.



The following is a list of the scenarios you may want to prioritize.

1. Number of persons in group
2. Daytime/Nighttime
3. Escape Route
4. Man/Woman
5. Camera/Video
6. Police Patrols
7. Amount of Money
8. Number of bystanders
9. Anonymity
10. Alertness of Victim
11. Resistance
12. Young/Old



# Answers are to Follow



No	Priority -
1	Escape Route
2	Alertness of Victim
3	Amount of Money
4	Resistance
5	Anonymity
6	Police Patrol
7	Daytime/Night time
8	Man/Woman
9	Young /Old
10	Number of People in the Group
11	Number of bystanders
12	Cameras



# Escape Route

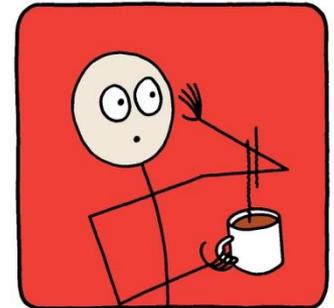
- The first priority of the criminal is to look for a rapid and less visible means of escape.
- EGRESS –
- Slip away
- Disappear
- Evade





# Alertness of Victim

- Are you distracted and NOT paying attention?
- WATCHFUL
- Warning signal
- Lookout
- Aware



# Amount of Money



Like honey attracts flies so does your appearance

- Open purse
- Jewelry
- Eye glasses
- Vehicles/contents
- Designer clothing/jewelry
- Conversations





# Resistance

- The power or capacity to resist.....
  - Keep from yielding to
  - Withstand
  - oppose
- How Approachable are you?
  - Keep an arms distance between yourself and strangers
  - And at least 3 to 6 feet because of COVID



# Anonymity

- Not easily distinguished...
- Lack of individual features
  - Cloak
  - Disguise
  - Hidden
- Wearing a Mask





# Police Patrols

- Frequency
  - Regular patrolling of an area
- Presence - Type?
  - Foot patrol
  - Motor vehicle
  - Motorcycle
  - Horse patrol
- What's the number to your Police Precinct?



# Man/Woman

- Criminals look for women who are alone, and in areas that are poorly lit. This gives them the chance to stay hidden and gain the element of surprise during an attack.
- To avoid this possibility, women should park in public places with good lighting, walk with others whenever possible and not linger in dark areas.

• Source: [Crime Prevention tips.org](http://CrimePreventiontips.org)

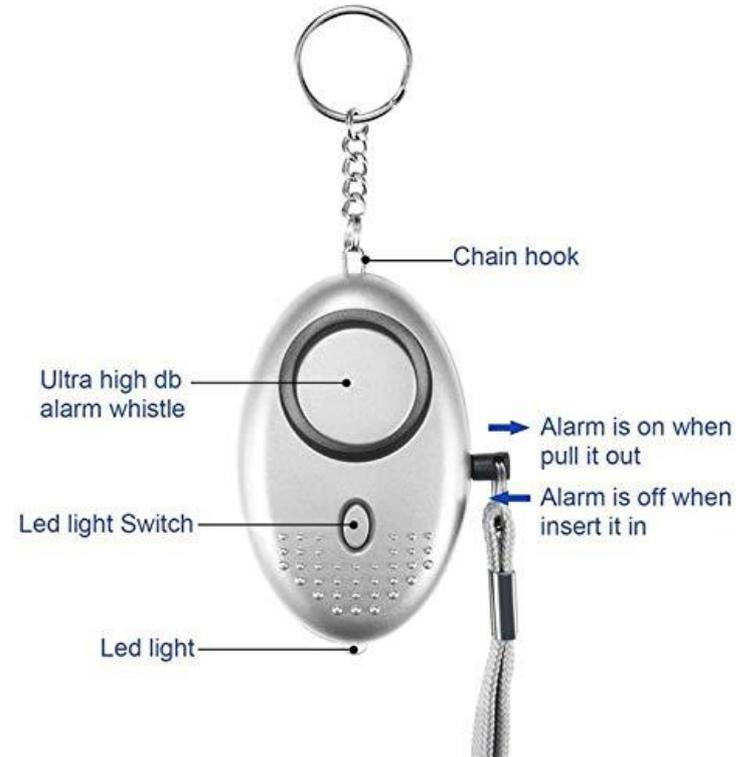
# Daytime/Nighttime



- Always be ready for anything when you are in public:
  - Bus stop
  - Parking lots and Terminals (airport)
  - Shopping centers
  - Restaurants
  - Movie Theatres

# MAKE A LOUD NOISE

- And if you are assaulted, put up a strong fight that will make your attacker wish he/she hadn't targeted you for a crime.
- SCREAM.....OR PULL YOUR HAND HELD ALARM





# Young/Old

Fight back in any way you can. Use your purse, hands, feet and anything else as a weapon.



# Number of People in Group

Safety in numbers is the hypothesis that, by being part of a large physical group or mass, an individual is less likely to be the victim of a mishap, accident, attack, or other bad event.

- Is there Safety in numbers?



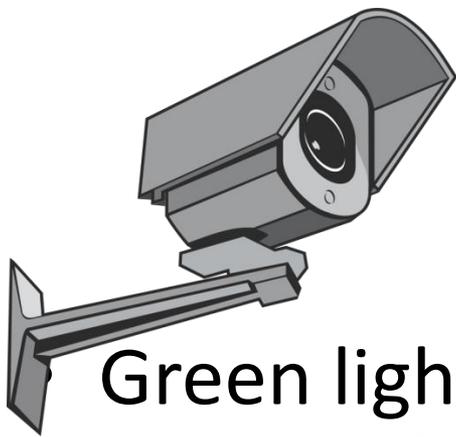
There is safety in numbers, and a criminal won't want to be seen by multiple people who may be able to describe them to the police. If there are people close by, yell for help, or shout for someone to dial 911.



# Number of Bystanders

- Crowds can make people callous - We sometimes become different people in the presence of others.
- Our power as active bystanders – is we can act to prevent suffering and create a better world.
- When no one's doing anything – how should you respond in an emergency
- As a bystander?





# Camera versus Video

Green light security are cameras used in real time; with connections to the police departments to assist in combatting crime.

- Project Green Light Detroit Partners to strengthen the local ties between participating stations, DPD Precinct Captains, DPD Neighborhood Police Officers, and surrounding community leaders and organizations.





# Bag Lady Tips

Protecting yourself from having your purse snatched, these few simple tips should help considerably.

- **Keep the bag close to your body.**
- **Do not hang the bag on the same shoulder as the purse.**
- **Do not wrap it around your wrist.** Your wrist is still weak enough that it may be tempting to a snatcher, If your purse is snatched while around your wrist, you might be injured. Some victims have been thrown down as well as have gotten concussions as well as broken bones.
- **Try not to carry around things beyond what you can manage to lose.** Even with the best precautions, if you encounter a thief who is willing to injure you – you should always be prepared to let the bag go if necessary. For example, leave unused charge cards at home.
- **Never leave your purse on a store counter or in a grocery shopping cart unattended.** Even for a moment.
- **Shop With a Friend.** A general rule for safety in any other context when going out applies here as well. You're always safer when in the company of someone else, man or women.
- **If you must be out at night alone, stay in well-lighted areas.** Walk close to street lights, staying well away from dark corners, alleys and building entrances.

# Purses Pockets and Fanny Packs



- Keep your money and Personal ID close to you

- Pockets versus Purses



# Walker and Storage



Walkers are good for exercise and may be used for some storage.

Make sure you access what you really need to put in your storage container before you leave home and put yourself at risk.





# Losing Your Vision



## Talking to other people and finding out what's in your local area

- It may help to talk about your feelings with friends, family or others around you who are willing to listen. It may also help to talk to people who have had similar experiences and understand what you're going through. Your local sight loss charity can put you in touch with other people in your area, and offer support for partners, family members and friends.

# Assisting a Visually Impaired Person

## Guiding

Walk side by side. Allow the person with impaired vision to set the pace and to hold your elbow (hand to elbow).

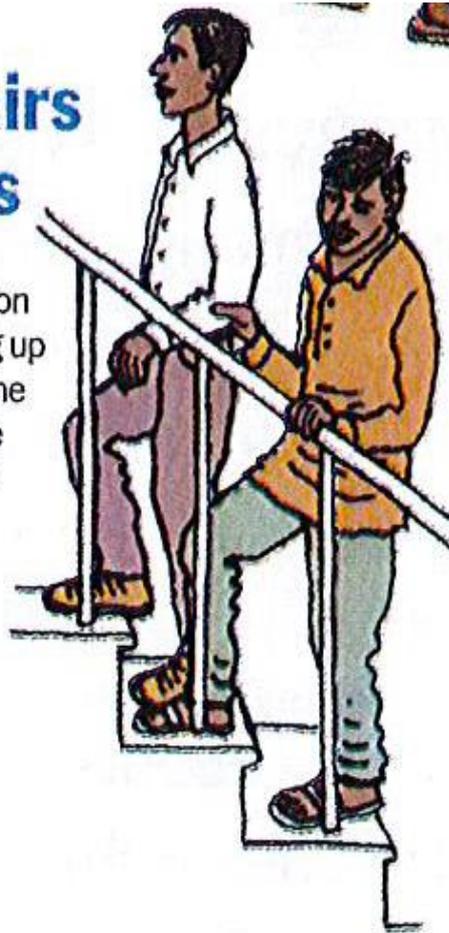


- Walk side by side
- Allow the person with impaired vision to set the walking pace and to hold onto your elbow
- Hand to elbow or
- To place their hand on your shoulder as you narrate the direction/s.

# Steps, Stairs and Slopes

## Steps, stairs and slopes

Tell the blind or visually impaired person whether you are going up or down, and allow time for him/her to hold the handrail. Go one step ahead and take a slightly longer stride on the last step to allow your partner space.



- Approach stairs so the person's free hand is near the handrail and tell them where it is.
- Say 'stairs up' or 'stairs down'.
- Always say when the top or bottom of the stairs has been reached.

# DOORWAYS

## Doorways

Tell the person whether the door opens towards or away from you. Go through the door with your partner on the side of the hinge. Open the door with your guiding hand. Allow your partner to feel the handle, follow you through the door, and close the door behind both of you.

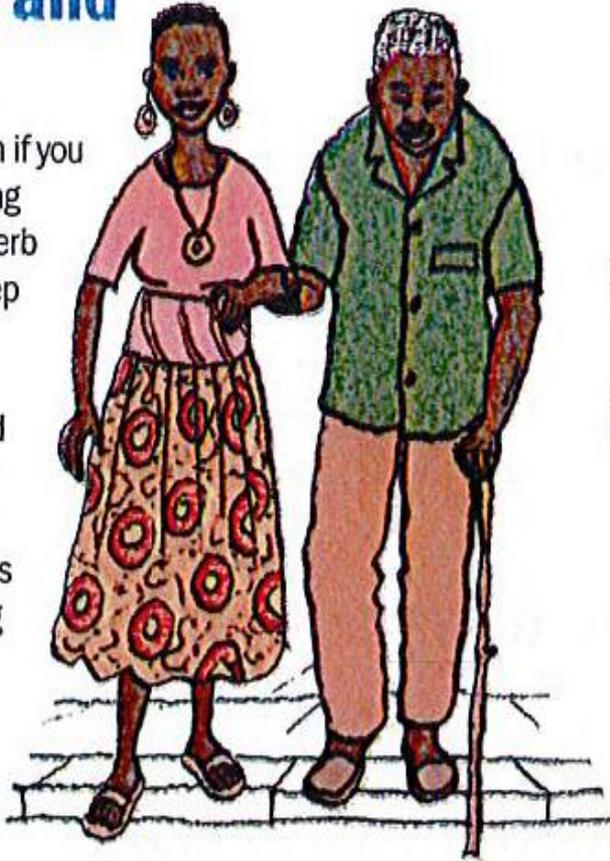


- Approach the door with the person you are guiding on the hinge side.
- Open the door and the visually impaired person can use their free hand to take the door handle from you.
- If the person you are guiding is not on the hinge side, ask them to change sides.
- They will side-step behind you, taking your other elbow with their other hand.
- Bend your elbow and point it out behind your back to make it easier for them to find it.

# ROADS AND CURBS

## Roads and kerbs

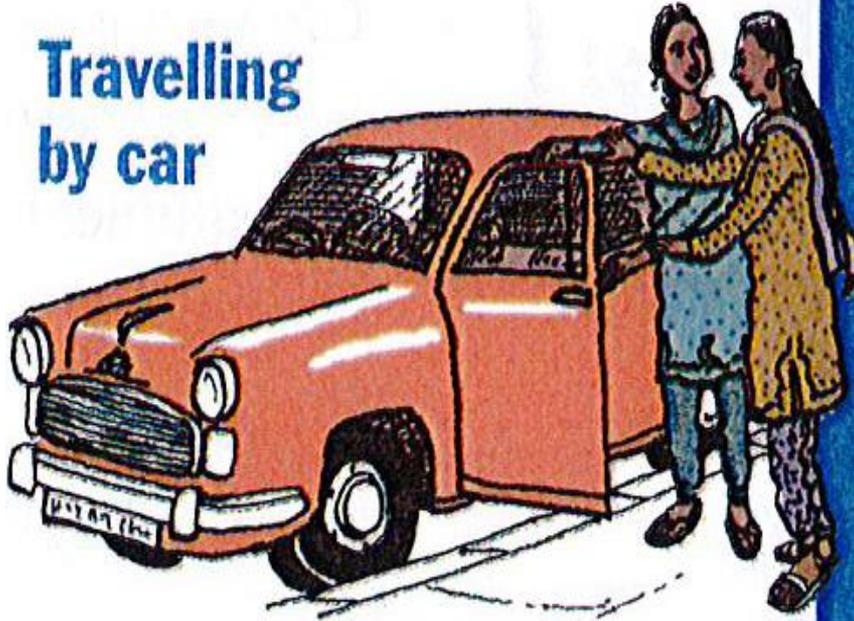
Tell the person if you are approaching 'kerb up' or 'kerb down' (the step onto or off a pavement or sidewalk), and pause slightly before taking the step. Cross the road using the shortest distance and go straight across.



- When you reach a curb or step, approach it straight-on, stop, and say 'step down' or 'step up'.
- Warn them if the step is higher or lower than usual.

# TRAVELING BY CAR

## Travelling by car



Tell the person if he/she is getting into the back or the front seat of the car, and whether it is facing left or right. Place your guiding hand on the door handle and allow him/her to slide his/her grip hand down your arm to the door handle.

With the other hand he/she will be able to note the car roof and lower his/her head appropriately. At the end of the journey, get out first and help your partner out.

- Say which way the car is facing and place the visually impaired person's hand on the door handle.
- The person should then be able to manage by themselves.

# AGING PUTS US ALL AT RISK

## WHO IS AT RISK?

Elder abuse can occur anywhere – in the home, in nursing homes, or other institutions. It affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures, and races. Based on available information, women and “older” elders are more likely to be victimized. Dementia is a significant risk factor. Mental health and substance abuse issues – of both abusers and victims – are risk factors. Isolation can also contribute to risk.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT ABUSE?

Report your concerns. Most cases of elder abuse go undetected. Don't assume that someone has already reported a suspicious situation. The agency receiving the report will ask what you observed, who was involved, and who they can contact to learn more. You do not need to prove that abuse is occurring; it is up to the professionals to investigate the suspicions.

**REPORTING** is confidential and you may remain anonymous. Making a report in instances of neglect or abuse is the right thing to do...and its easy don't be afraid. Elders have a right to be safe! To report suspected abuse in the community Adult Protective Services (APS) is here to help.

**IN CASES OF IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 911**

## VULNERABLE

A condition in which an adult is unable to protect himself or herself from abuse, neglect, or exploitation because of a mental or physical impairment or advanced age

## EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained or uncharacteristic changes in behavior, such as withdrawal from normal activities, unexplained changes in alertness, etc.
- Isolate elder (doesn't let anyone into the home or speak to the elder)
- Verbally aggressive or demeaning, controlling, overly concerned about spending money, or uncaring

## FINANCIAL ABUSE/EXPLOITATION

- Lack of amenities victim could afford
- Vulnerable elder/adult “voluntarily” giving uncharacteristically excessive financial reimbursement/gifts for needed care and companionship
- Has control of elder's money but is failing to provide for elder's needs
- Vulnerable elder/adult has signed property transfers (Power of Attorney, new will, etc.) but is unable to comprehend the transaction or what it means

**NO EXCUSE**  
FOR Elder Abuse

**1-855-444-3911**

NLSM-Elder Law & Advocacy Center

## NEGLECT / SELF NEGLECT

- Lack of basic hygiene, adequate food, or clean and appropriate clothing
- Lack of medical aids (glasses, walker, teeth, hearing aid, and medications)
- Person with dementia left unsupervised
- Person confined to bed is left without care
- Home cluttered, filthy, in disrepair, or having fire and safety hazards
- Home without adequate facilities (stove, refrigerator, heat, cooling, working plumbing, and electricity)
- Untreated pressure “bed” sores (pressure ulcers)

## PHYSICAL/SEXUAL ABUSE

- Inadequately explained fractures, bruises, welts, cuts, sores or burns
- Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases

## ABANDONMENT

- Lack of social connectedness
- Desertion by family, community or agency
- Left unattended in a public facility or waiting room

DAAA REGION 1A  
THE DETROIT SENIOR SOLUTION  
1333 Brewery Park Blvd. Ste. 200  
Detroit, MI 48207  
313.446.4444



*If you or others experience abuse or neglect in a long term care facility (e.g. nursing home, assisted living facility), The Michigan Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is here to help.*

**Call 1-866-485-9393 Toll Free**



**DOES SOMEONE YOU KNOW**  
*- a senior or adult with a disability -  
display any warning signs of mistreatment?*

**Adult Protective Services**  
**1-855-444-3911**

For State reporting numbers visit the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services Agency MDHHS website.

**The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) directed by the U.S. Administration on Aging, helps communities, agencies and organizations ensure that elders and adults with disabilities can live with dignity, and without abuse, neglect, and exploitation. NCEA is the place to turn for education, research, and promising practices in stopping abuse.**

# ELDER ABUSE

→ Hiding in Plain Sight

## WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

In general, elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a care giver or "trusted" individual that lead to, or may lead to, harm of a vulnerable elder. In many states, younger adults with disabilities may qualify for the same services and protections. Emotional or psychological abuse; financial abuse and exploitation; neglect; physical abuse; sexual abuse; and abandonment are all considered forms of elder abuse.

In many states, self-neglect is also considered mistreatment.

*Thank  
You*

For your attendance and attention to  
this very important information.

## References

- Crimeprevention.org
  - Crime prevention Tips
  - GDABI – Sue Stevens
  - <https://www.fightingblindness.ie/living-with-sight-loss/assisting>