



Domestic Violence and Older Victims

Older abused women live in all of our communities.

The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) estimated that 818,000 elderly Americans were the victims of domestic abuse in 1994 (NCEA, 1995). While most reported elder abuse cases involve an adult child as the abuser, two random sample studies (one in Boston and the other in Canada) found that the **majority of abusers were spouses/partners** ("Serving Older Battered/Abused Women: It's Our Responsibility," a publication of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence).

Many older victims of domestic violence do not seek help because they...

- ✿ were raised to believe that family business was a private matter and not to be discussed with anyone.
- ✿ are dependent on their abuser for care and may fear ending up in a nursing home.
- ✿ may have a lifetime of shared financial assets, but have no access to them.
- ✿ may see their 30, 40, or 50 year marriage as the major accomplishment in their life.

Adapted from "Serving Older Battered/Abused Women: It's Our Responsibility" a publication of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Abuse may include, but is not limited to...

- ✿ Hitting, beating, pushing, shaking, slapping, pinching, biting, kicking, burning
- ✿ Unwanted touching; all types of sexual assault or battery such as rape, sodomy, coerced nudity and sexually explicit photographing
- ✿ Verbal assaults, insults, threats, intimidation, humiliation, isolation from friends/family
- ✿ Neglect and abandonment when the abuser is the primary caregiver

Adapted from the National Center on Elder Abuse website (www.elderabusecenter.org).

24 Hour Domestic Violence Hotlines in Delaware

New Castle County
302.762.6110

Kent/Sussex Counties
302.422.8058

Abriendo Puertas
(Bi-lingual - Spanish)
302.745.9874

Other Resources:

Delaware Center for Justice
(50+ years of age)
302.658.7174 ext 12

Delaware Coalition Against
Domestic Violence 800.701.0456

Elder Abuse Hotline (Division of
Services for Aging & Adults with
Physical Disabilities)
800.223.9074