



## Seniors' Advocate Recognizes World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is a day to join together to raise the visibility of the fact that elder abuse is happening and acknowledge the impact of this abuse.

Elder abuse can be a one-time act or repeated again and again. It is a health and social issue and it is a violation of human rights. Abusers can be family, friends, acquaintances or strangers. One of the risk factors for elder abuse is ageism which is defined as negative beliefs about older adults. Ageism can put seniors at risk when society normalizes the harm and neglect of older adults by treating it less seriously.

Well, it's time to shift the paradigm! Ageism should not be tolerated and neither should elder abuse. But change can only come when society stops perpetrating negative stereotypes about aging and the aged, and we all begin to embrace the aging process as one part of the cycle of life. A person's age does not define their worth, but old age can make a person more vulnerable to mistreatment.

The Office of the Seniors' Advocate is challenging ageism during the month of June with two social media campaigns. The first, **Growing Bolder**, is encouraging seniors (or someone on their behalf) to submit a photo showing how they are defying ageist stereotypes as they age. Our second campaign, **Growing Bolder – Young Eyes on Bold Lives** is an art campaign inviting elementary school students to challenge ageism through art by submitting a drawing of what they love or appreciate about an older adult in their life. For more information on both campaigns, please visit <https://www.seniorsadvocatenl.ca> or call 709-729-6603/1-833-729-6603.

### Quote

"According to the World Health Organization (WHO), every year 1 in 6 people aged 60 and older experience some form of abuse. We know that ageist attitudes fuel elder abuse so the elimination of both is our collective, societal responsibility. In fact, besides having a moral responsibility to report suspected abuse, under NL's **Adult Protection Act** every one of us has a legal responsibility to notify authorities by calling 1-855-376-4957 or the local police. We all have a role to play."

Susan Walsh

Seniors' Advocate Newfoundland and Labrador

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