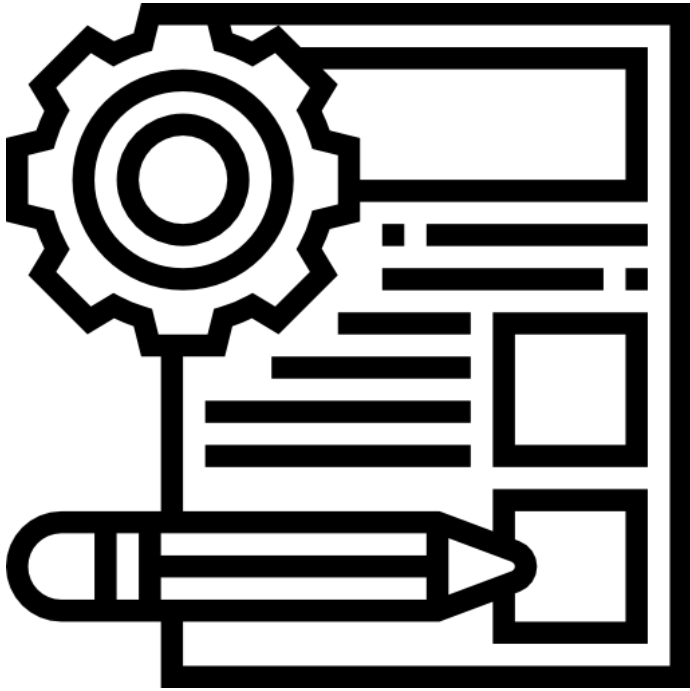




How Does Elder Abuse Impact Latinx Communities?

The National Center on Elder Abuse
Eden Ruiz-Lopez, MPA
Alycia Cisneros, MSW
Alexis Calleros, BA

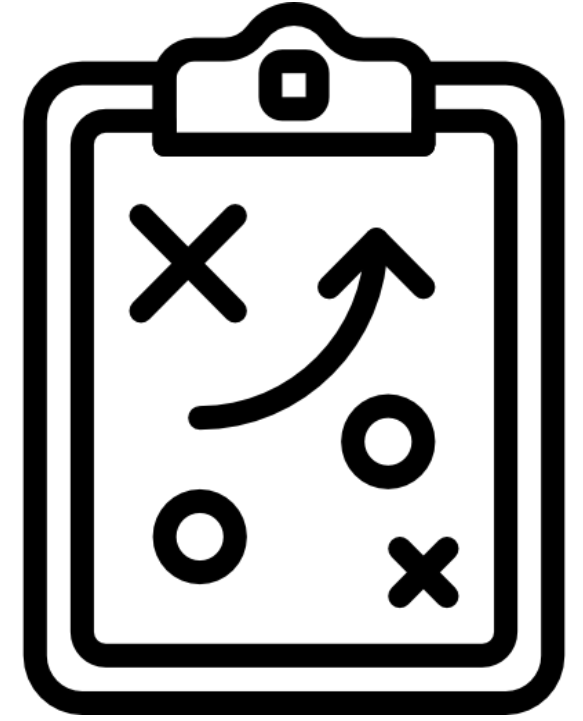
Today's Objectives



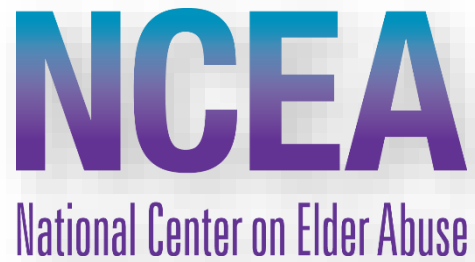
Define



Examine



Identify



The National Center on Elder Abuse strives to improve the national response to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We provide education, share the latest in research and national policy, and promote best practices in the field and in our communities.

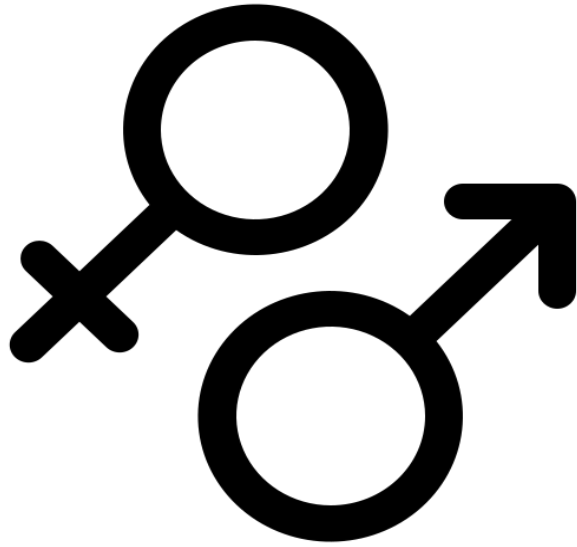
NCEA National Partnerships

Resource materials on special topic areas for many target audiences:

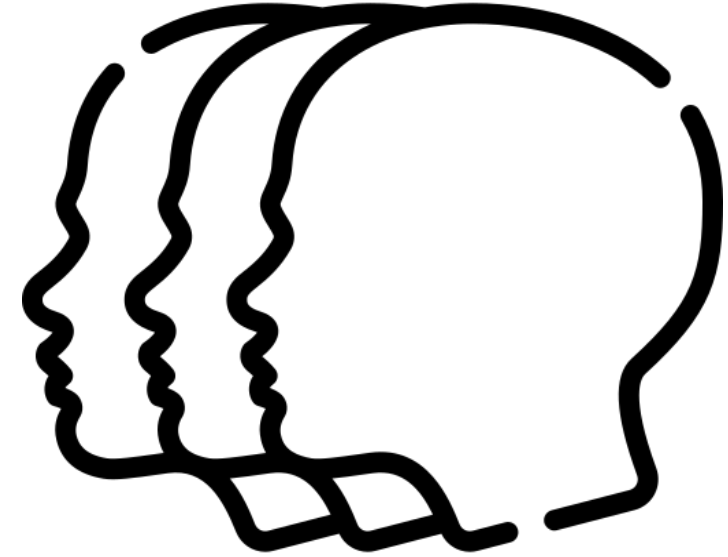
- Adult Protective Services
- Cultural Issues
- Law and Legislation
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
- Multidisciplinary Approaches
- Long-Term Care Abuse
- Persons with Disabilities
- Public Awareness
- Public Policy
- Research Briefs
- Risk Factors
- Statistics, Incidence, and Prevalence



Reminders: Proper Terminology

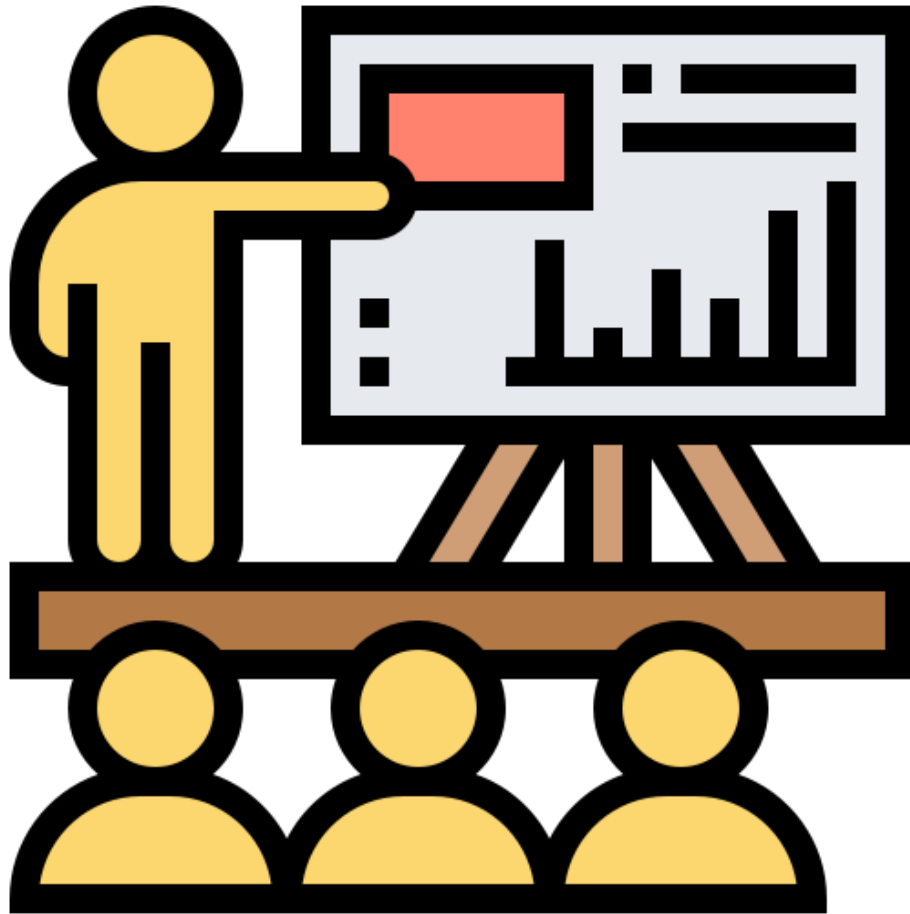


Pronouns show a distinction between gender identity and expression



Hispanic identity can be interpreted as an ethnic term

Reminders: Proper Terminology (Cont'd)



Latino refers to Latin American decent blending Native American, African and Spanish heritage.

The '**X**' in **Latinx** is a gender-neutral term.



What We Know

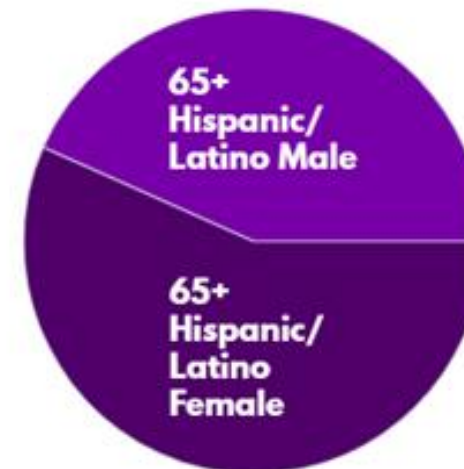
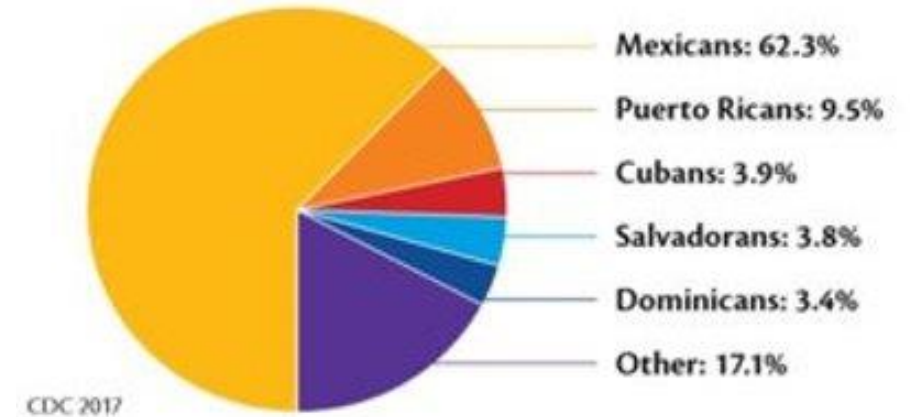
Statistics

- 95 million Americans will be aged 65 or older by the year 2060
- **1 in 10** Americans age 60+ experience a form of elder abuse every year



- 67% of older adults abused are **women**
- **1 in 24** cases are reported

LATINO POPULATION SUBGROUPS & STATISTICS



According to U.S. Census Bureau

- 16.5% of U.S. population is 65+
- Over 2.6 Million are Hispanic or Latino, Female Older Adults
- Over 2 Million are Hispanic or Latino, Male Older Adults

Poverty and Elder Abuse

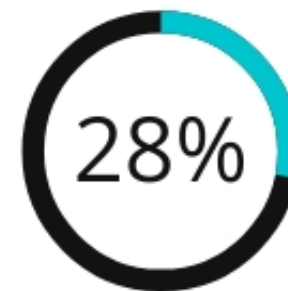
Poverty can be considered a risk factor for elder abuse, for it impacts overall well-being in numerous ways.

- Deprivation of quality care
- Insecure housing
- Independence capacity
- Financial issues
- Food insecurity



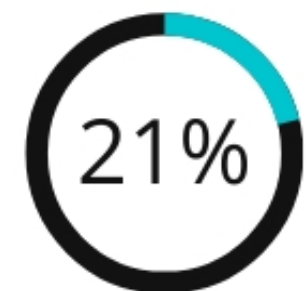
Colombian 65+
in Poverty

10% of Latinx Population in U.S.



Dominican 65+
in Poverty

8% of Latinx Population in U.S.



Puerto Rican 65+
in Poverty

9% of Latinx Population in U.S.

U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanic Population (2015-2019)

Cognitive Capacity and Elder Abuse

- **Capacity** – refers to a continuum of decision-making abilities
 - Impaired decision-making can lead to an increased risk for abuse and exploitation
- An estimated **6.2 million Americans aged 65 and older** are living with Alzheimer's dementia in 2021
- **One in nine people aged 65 and older (11.3%)** has Alzheimer's dementia

Prominent Scams

- Grandparent Scams
- Crypto Currency Scams
- IRS Scams
- FBI Scams
- Romance Scams
- Computer Scams
- Lottery Scams



Elder Abuse Scenario

- Tomás, age 70, retired five years ago and recently lost his wife to breast cancer. Hoping to restart his life after this difficult loss, he **joined a dating website**. One evening, Tomás received a message from someone who presented herself as a younger woman named Marisol. She appeared to be very attractive from her dating profile photos, in her forties and a divorcee living in South America. **After just a few weeks, their correspondence had escalated from polite small talk to more intimate conversations.** They began to talk daily. One day, Marisol missed an evening of chatting online with Tomás and he was upset. Marisol, then appeared online the following evening and told him that her daughter had tragically been killed in a car accident and that she was stressed about her finances. Consumed by grief, **Tomás willingly offered to send her \$45,000, which was sent by wire transfer.** After a few weeks had passed, she mentioned that she needed a new roof on her home and had to replace the car that was totaled in her daughter's accident. Tomás then wired \$65,000 more.....



History, Barriers, and Risk Factors

Significant Historical Events

1910
Mexican
Revolution



1917
Jones- Shafroth Act

1924
Border P
atrol



1965
The Older
Americans
Act

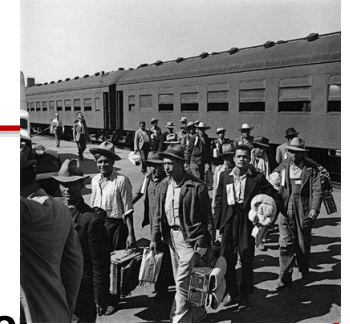
1964
Civil Rights
Act



1954
"Operation
Wetback"



1942
Mexican Farm Labor
Agreement



1980
Mariel Boatlift

1986
Immigration
Reform and
Control Act

1991
Declaration of Rights and
Responsibilities of Older
Persons

2016
DAPA



2020
DACA
Preserved

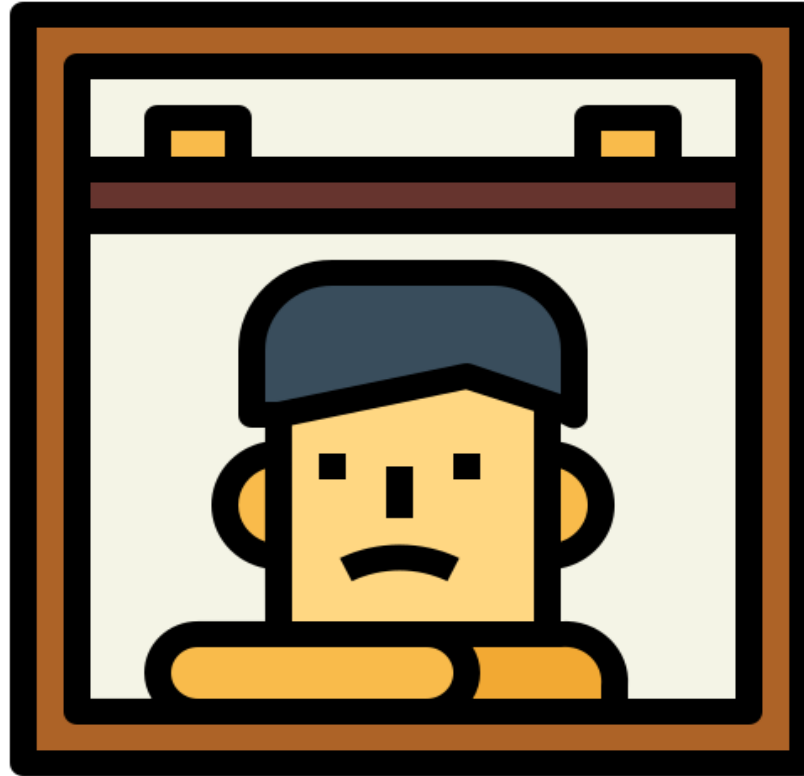
Consistent Barriers

This population has several **intersectional barriers** that can stem from their immigration status and levels of acculturation, which can **influence risk factors for abuse**:

- **Language**
- **Limited Financial Resources**
- **Dependency**
- **Healthcare & Social Service**
- **Fear of Prosecution**



How Barriers Encourage Isolation



Older adults who are socially isolated are more at risk of poor health behaviors, including being sedentary and not eating well.

Cultural Beliefs as Risk Factors of Abuse

Risk Factors

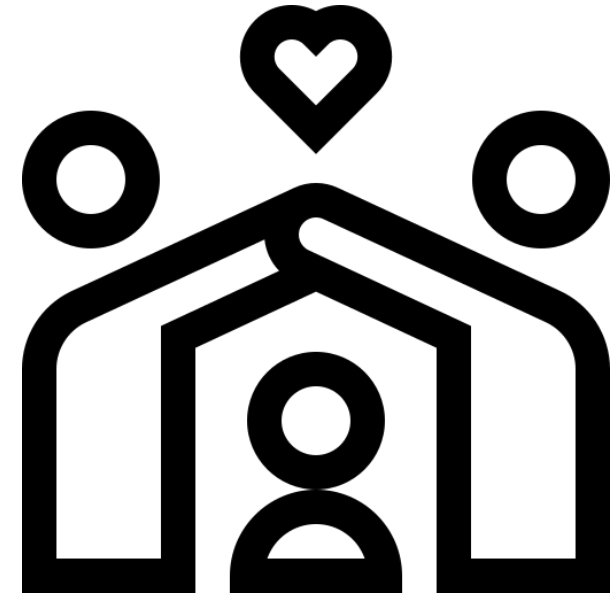
- Favoring a Family Caregiver and In-Home Care
- Help-Seeking Behavior
- History of Domestic Violence
- Machismo: *pride in being male; virility; masculinity*
- Acculturation



Cultural Beliefs as Protective Factors

Protective Factors

- Family
- Community
- Spirituality and resilience





Help-Seeking Behavior

What is your experience with services?

- The standard of care for this population is unmet due to a lack cultural competence within service agencies.
- Under usage of services including underreporting of Elder Abuse to agencies like APS



Help-Seeking Behavior

Concerns to Consider:

- Reporting
- Retaliation
- Respect
- Defense
- Prosecution
- Incarceration





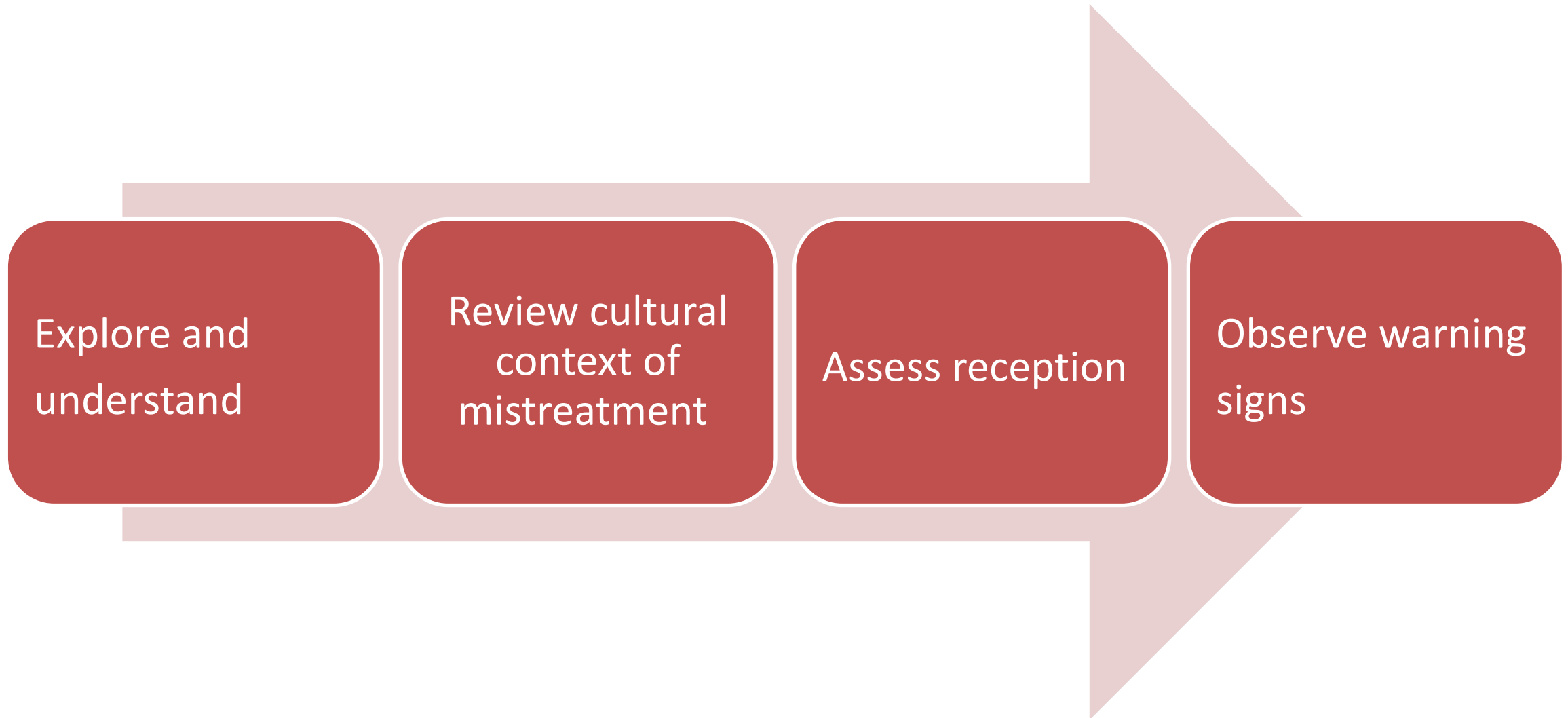
Culturally Competent Service and Future Research

Tips to Providing Culturally Competent Services to Latinx Families (NCEA Research)



Culture, along with factors such as language barriers, fear of authorities, and living arrangements impact how older adults perceive mistreatment, their knowledge of support services, and willingness to report mistreatment and engage in recovery resources.

Steps to consider when assessing mistreatment of Latinx older adults:

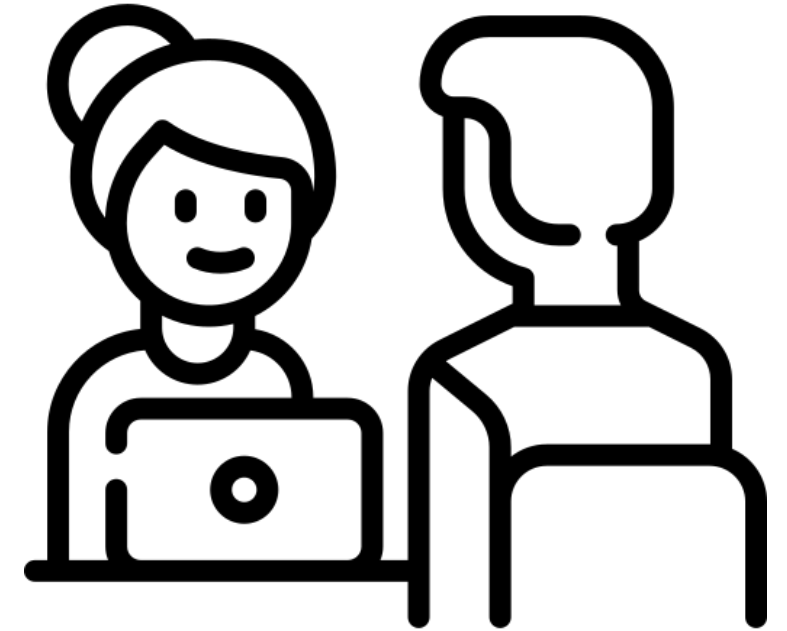


Updating Assessment and Intervention Techniques

Assessment Intervention

- ✓ Consider cultural
- ✓ Cultural differences competency
- ✓ Do not rely solely on self-
- ✓ Bilingual services report
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Criterion standards

Hincapie, D., Gilmore, M., Lenox, M., & Stripling, A. (2020).



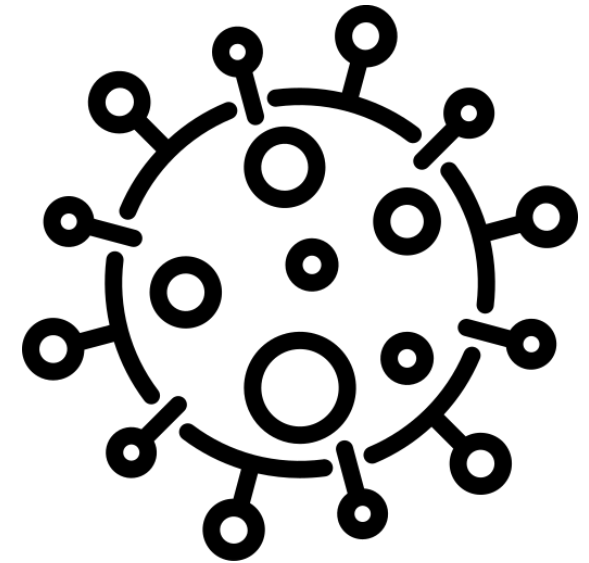
Adapting Interventions During the Pandemic

"Social Distancing" vs Physical Distancing

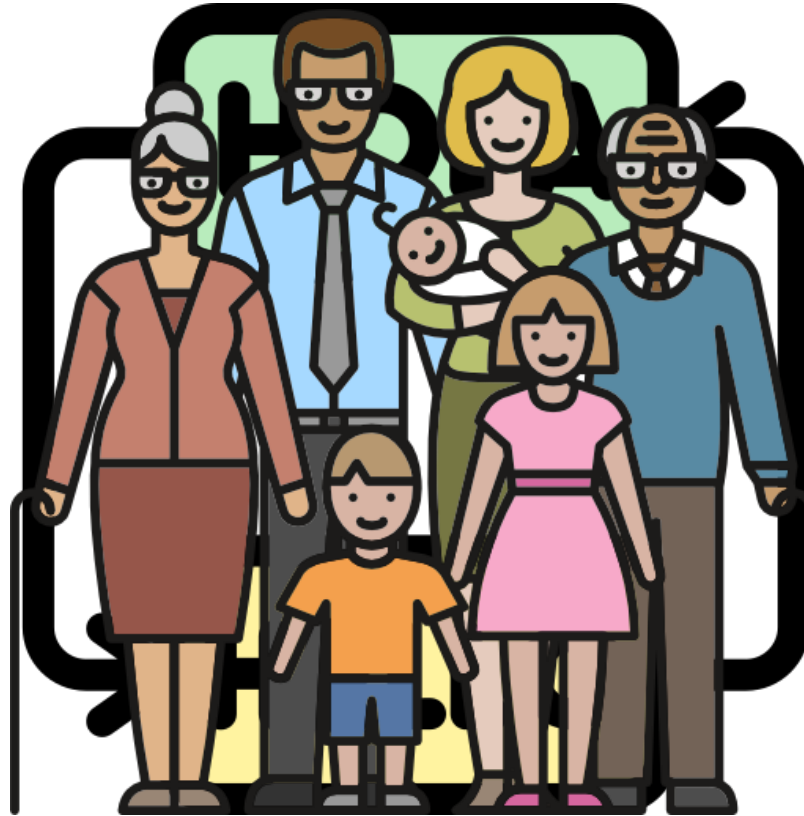
Lack of Face-To-Face Contact

Utilizing Protective Factors

Safety Issues



What should research initiatives focus on?



Research to Highlight Social Supports



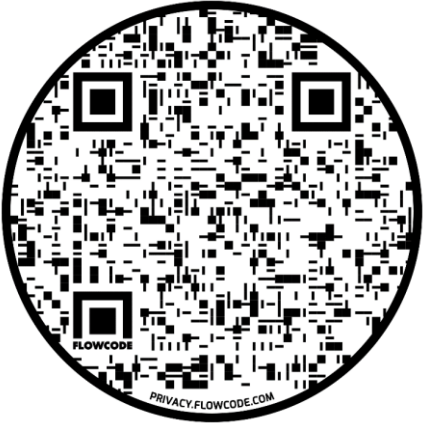
What can we do to update our assessments?





Relevant Resources

Resources



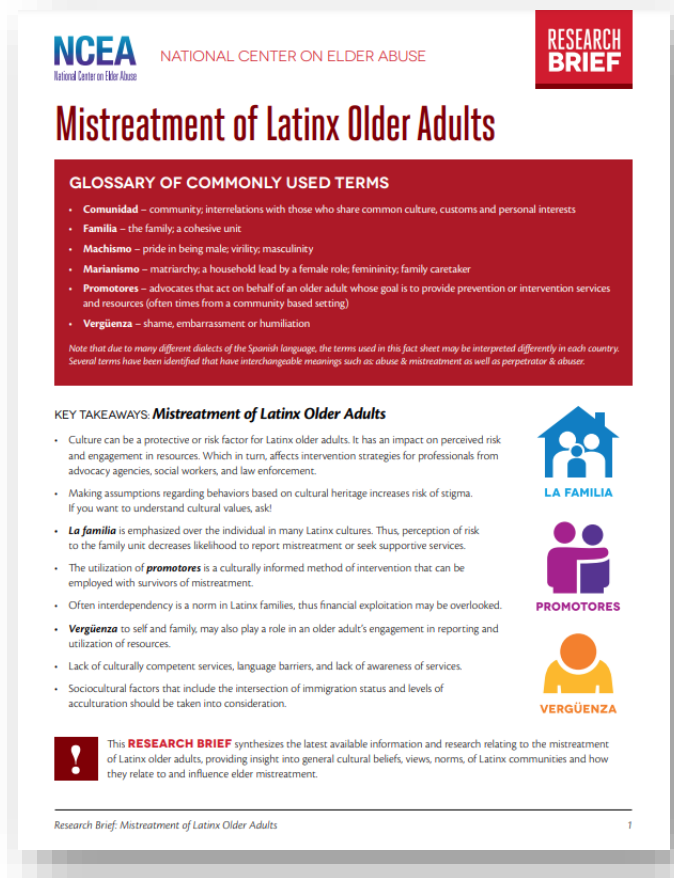
- [Talking Elder Abuse Toolkit](#)
- [Free Online Course](#) (WEAAD2021)
- [Reframing Aging Initiative](#)
- [Monthly Tips](#) eNewsletter

- [Public Service Announcements Video](#)
- [Red Flags of Abuse](#), [Facts About Elder Abuse](#), [12 Things](#)
- Support and Tools for Elder Abuse Prevention (STEAP) [Toolkit](#)

Resources

Research briefs

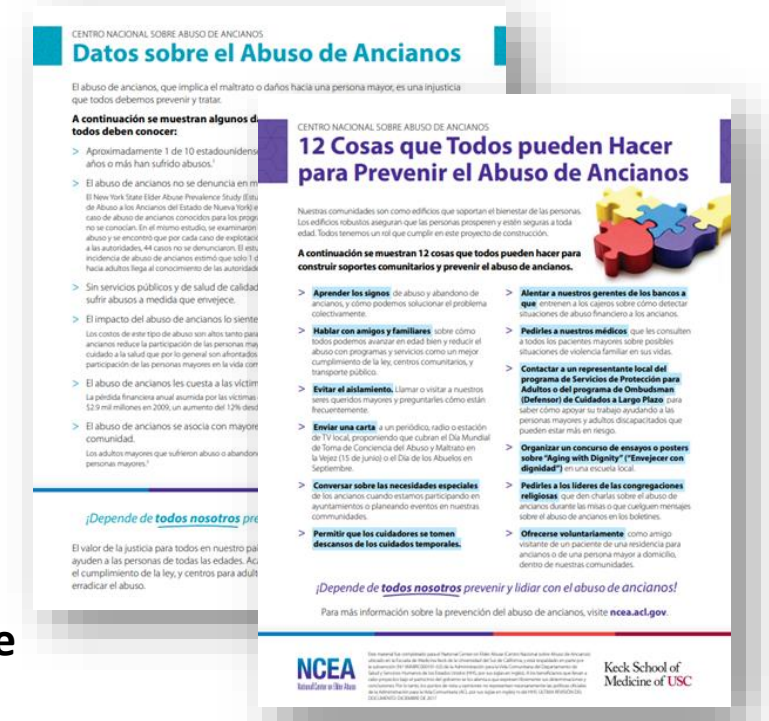
- Mistreatment of African American Elders
- Mistreatment of Asian Pacific Islander (API) Elders
- Mistreatment of Latinx Older Adults
- Mistreatment of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Elders



In-language fact sheets

Fact sheets discussing topics on *Mental Health, Caregivers, Financial Exploitation, Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Neglect, Long-term Care, Prevention* are available in multiple languages:

- English
- Spanish
- Chinese
- Korean
- Japanese
- Tagalog
- Farsi
- Vietnamese



American Indian and Alaska Native Resources

LEGAL ISSUES IN INDIAN COUNTRY

ELDER ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

- Elder abuse and neglect refer to any of the following types of mistreatment committed by someone with whom the Elder has a special relationship, such as a spouse, sibling, child, friend, or caregiver.
- Types of elder abuse:
 - o Physical
 - o Emotional or psychological
 - o Sexual
 - o Financial or material exploitation
 - o Neglect
 - o Self-neglect
 - o Abandonment
 - o Soul-wounding or spiritual abuse^{2,3}

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT ELDER ABUSE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE?

- Indigenous Elders are held in high regard, as guardians of history, culture, and traditions and are to be honored and respected.
- Becoming an Elder in many Indigenous communities is not a set age but a distinct status earned from wisdom, knowledge, and responsibility.
- Being an Elder is different than being elderly; elderly is associated with age and ability.
- Out of respect, we will use the term Elder.
- An Elder experiencing abuse may not report it because of shame, fear of retaliation, increased vulnerability, or fear of getting a loved one in trouble.

ELDER ABUSE IN INDIAN COUNTRY:

- The extent of Elder abuse in Indian Country is unknown due to underreporting.
- Elder abuse is common. National rates estimate that 1 in 10 Americans over the age of 60 have experienced abuse, neglect, and exploitation.⁴
- Some tribes have adopted an elder abuse code or ordinance to protect elders from abuse and neglect.
- Tribal Elder abuse programs are limited, and little incidence data exists.
- Elders may not view themselves as victims or want to perceive themselves as victims.
- Some elders may be unable to report due to diminished mental capacity, isolation, or physical limitations.
- Fear of retaliation in the form of physical harm, initialization, or abandonment for disclosing abuse.

IS ELDER ABUSE A CRIME?

- All states and tribes criminalize acts that violate particular laws (e.g., sexual assault, battery, theft, or fraud) related to Elder abuse instances.
- Many states and tribes have laws, codes, or resolutions that criminalize elder abuse.
- Every criminal offense is comprised of elements that must be proven by prosecutors beyond a reasonable doubt.
- These elements vary depending on the state or tribal laws and whether the charge is a misdemeanor offense or a felony offense.

RISK FACTORS FOR ELDER ABUSE INCLUDE:

- Living in poverty
- Suddenly depend on others for care
- Reside alone with primary caregivers
- Suffer from mental health problems
- Lack of social support or live in isolation
- Live in an area where services are limited or unavailable
- Receive substantial income from allotted lands or mineral rights



SOCIAL SERVICES for Elders in Indian Country

THE GENERAL POPULATION AND TRIBAL-SPECIFIC SOCIAL SERVICES ARE PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, FOR-PROFIT OR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

- The goal of social services is to prevent and alleviate elder abuse and neglect.
- Indigenous communities have developed tribally operated elder services and programs to meet their older or disabled adults' needs.
- In 1965, the United States Congress passed a federal bill, the Older American Act (OAA) to address the lack of community social services for older persons.
- The OAA provides federal funding for aging services, resulting in expanded services all over the country.¹

OAA TITLE VI

- In 1978 the OAA was amended to include Title VI, which established federal funding for elderly nutrition and supportive services for Native Americans (American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians).
- The program has expanded to include caregiver support services.

TITLE VI PROGRAMS PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE FOLLOWING SERVICES IN INDIAN COUNTRY:

- Nutritional Services:
 - o Congregate meals
 - o Home delivery meals
 - o Guest meals
 - o Voluntary contribution for meals
- Supportive Services:
 - o Transportation
 - o Outreach
 - o Health promotion and wellness
 - o Elder abuse education and prevention
- Caregiving Supportive Services:
 - o Information and assistance
 - o Counseling and training
 - o Support groups
 - o Respite services

TITLE VI PROGRAM AND ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

All social services outlined in the Title VI Program can be used to prevent elder abuse and neglect by:

- Encouraging participation by seniors in communal services
- Helping older and disabled adult access financial help
- Balancing family support with older and disabled adult's independence¹

Screening for Abuse and Neglect

- Screening for elder abuse and neglect is the first step in detection, management, and prevention.
- Best practice is to screen all older adults, especially those considered at risk.
- There are several established elder abuse and neglect screening tools that social service providers may use.
- The best screening tool adapted for Native Americans is the Native Elder Life Scale.
 - o It is used with the Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Screening Abuse Test.
- Some factors that make an older adult vulnerable to abuse and neglect include:
 - o Social isolation
 - o Frailty, functional disability, or cognitive impairment
 - o Pathology of the abuser
 - o Caregiver stress or anger
 - o Dependence of the older adults on the abuser
 - o Dependence of the abuser on the older adult
 - o History of violence in the family²



A Spotlight on Two Spirit Elders and Elder Justice Facts

Based on findings from the Two Spirit Elders Resource and Information Guide

Defining Two-Spirit

The term "Two-Spirit" was articulated at the Third Annual Intertribal Native American/First Nations Gay and Lesbian Conference in Winnipeg in 1990.¹ The term is an attempt to embrace the ways in which distinct American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities had and continue to practice sexual and gender expressions that exist outside of the European binary labels imposed on tribal communities through the process of colonization. For many tribes, Two-Spirit people are not thought of in terms of "man" or "woman" and embody a distinct, alternative identity marker reflected by their Indigenous language.² It is important to not assume that a person identifies as Two-Spirit, LGBTQ, or a particular gender identity, and to always reflect language used by the person.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Two-Spirit is a contemporary *distinctly cultural* term than many American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), First Nations, and other Indigenous people identify with to bring together their sexual orientation and gender identity with their spirituality, traditions, and culture.³
- ▶ Two-Spirit elders experience significant disparities across multiple areas when compared with the general U.S. population, and are at higher risk for adverse health outcomes than other AI/ANs.⁴
- ▶ Colonization introduced structural homophobia, transphobia, and sexism, disrupting AI/AN traditional gender norms and sexual expressions. Because of this, many Two-Spirit and queer-identified elders have increased health risks including HIV diagnoses, higher suicide rates, chronic stress, and susceptibility to abuse, to name a few.⁵
- ▶ Further research that is culturally responsive and includes Two-Spirit identifying people is needed to increase health outcomes and combat elder abuse.⁶

Historical trauma profoundly affects health outcomes for all AI/ANs, but even more so among Two-Spirit elders. Many Two-Spirit elders have survived state-sanctioned violence and federal policies such as the establishment of Christian residential schools, which sought to impose rigid gender norms and familial structures that they were not accustomed to. It is vital for practitioners to understand the lasting effects of colonization, which in turn, have encouraged a climate of patriarchal and homophobic sentiments among many AI/AN communities and tribal decision makers.



Practice Tips

Help people feel comfortable to articulate a problem and need:

- Offer contact options
- Utilize mobile apps
- Consider reading and language levels
- Proper salutations

Communicating with People with Limited English Proficiency



The National Center on Elder Abuse is committed to spreading elder abuse awareness and providing quality information and referrals to people around the nation. Over the years, we have become more widely known and have conversed with people who come from various ethnic backgrounds and speak language(s) outside of English. Therefore, we have expanded our communications practices in speaking with people who have limited English language proficiency.

We encourage the use of these best practice tips to aid your communication efforts:

- When anticipating a need to hire a new role on your team, screen for bilingual or multilingual candidates.
- Identify members among your team who speak other languages who you know can assist with outreach when connecting with people who speak different languages.
- Establish a list of translated basic phrases, such as "Do you speak English?".
- If someone is contacting you by phone and has reception issues (Are they trying to reach you from somewhere remote or out of the country?), try to obtain as much information as possible to contact the person back, in the hopes of establishing a clearer second communication attempt.
- For people requesting information with language barriers or who may be hard-of-hearing, slow down your speaking pace, pronounce words clearly, and repeat phrases when necessary.
- While communicating, have a list of apps, online translators, and quick access reference guides to use.
- Offer multiple contact options such as phone, email, or hand-written correspondence. When communicating by phone, many people with limited English proficiency have difficulty explaining what they need and often find it easier to elaborate in writing.





Elder Abuse Guide for Law Enforcement

User-Friendly Interface

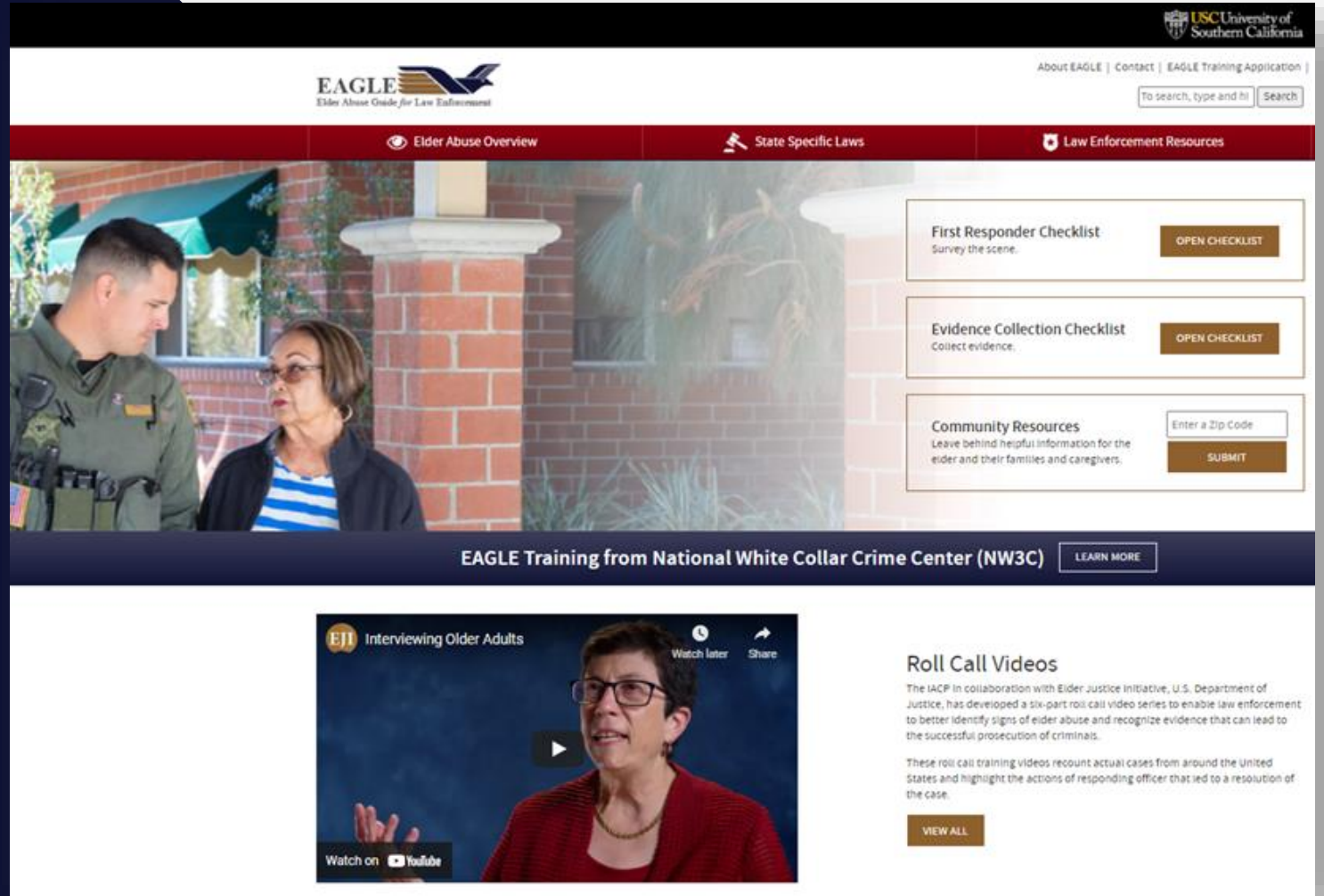
- Red Bar is accessible from anywhere on EAGLE

Resources for Law Enforcement

- Need immediate assistance with documenting a case of elder abuse? Resources are readily available on the homepage

Multiple Training Opportunities

- EAGLE's online training with NW3C is one of the first items users see
- More training options are available to explore



Eagle.USC.edu



Thank you!

1-855-500-3537 (ELDR)
ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov

NCEA, ACL Website
<https://ncea.acl.gov>

Training Resources on Elder Abuse (TREA): www.trea.usc.edu



[@NCEAatUSC](https://twitter.com/NCEAatUSC)



[@NationalCenteronElderAbuse](https://www.facebook.com/NationalCenteronElderAbuse)

* Citations available upon request