



**Survey on Abuse in Later Life:  
Individuals AGE 50 AND OLDER**

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey for **Vera House and the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition's Elder Abuse and Justice Committees**. Our community has received funding from the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women to create or enhance services for older victims of abuse.

In order to gather the kinds of information that will help us plan activities and services that better respond to the needs of victims of abuse in later life, we are asking older adults and service providers throughout our community to share their experiences.

**Your ideas are important to us.**

This survey is designed to gather information in three areas:

1. Your perspective about helpful services for older adults (**age 50 and over**) who may be experiencing some form of abuse
2. Your experience with issues of abuse in later life
3. Demographic information

**You do NOT need to provide your name.**

**All of your answers are anonymous and confidential.**

If you prefer to do this survey online, it can be accessed at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RBCRYWX>

### **What is Abuse in later life?**

Individuals who are age 50 and older may be hit, yelled at or sexually assaulted. They may be neglected, isolated or have had money or possessions stolen. Older victims are most generally harmed by someone they know; often someone they love or trust, such as a spouse, partner, adult child or other family member or a caregiver. You may know an older adult who has been or is being harmed. You may want to talk to someone after taking this survey.

### **If you need support immediately,**

call the Vera House 24-hour Crisis & Support Line at:  
**(315) 468-3260** (24 hours)

**OR TTY (315) 484-7263** (during business hours)

If you have questions about this survey or would like to know more about the work of Vera House or the Syracuse Area Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition's Elder Abuse and Justice Committees, contact:

**Jenny Hicks at Vera House Inc.**

phone: **(315) 425-0818** email: **[jhicks@verahouse.org](mailto:jhicks@verahouse.org)**

For further information and resources:

**<http://www.verahouse.org/about-us/elder-abuse-brochure>**

**Onondaga County Protective Services for Adults (315) 435-2815**

**Onondaga County Department of Aging (315) 435-2362**

**Section A: Services/Opportunities That Might Help Older Individuals**

**1. Please check the top five (5) services you think would be helpful for older individuals who are being hurt by a spouse, partner, adult child or family member or caregiver.**

- 24-hour crisis and support phone line to call for information and support
- Affordable legal help (such as help obtaining a divorce or changing a power of attorney or guardianship)
- Affordable long-term housing
- Assistance with balancing checkbooks, managing finances and creating personal budgets
- Case management (a professional to work with older victims to create a plan about what to do next)
- Counseling and/or mental health services for older victims
- Help for older victims taking care of the house or apartment
- Help with the arrest and/or prosecution of the abuser
- Money for rent or moving expenses, food, prescriptions if medication and medical supplies are not available due to interference from the abuser
- Orders of Protection (legal orders to keep an abuser away)
- Safe shelter (safe emergency housing for someone who is in danger)
- Someone to help if older victims need to go to court
- Support groups (a small group of older survivors of abuse who meet regularly to talk to each other and support each other)
- Transitional housing (temporary housing from 12-24 months for older victims who need a place to stay while they take next steps)
- Transportation to medical appointments, victim services and court
- Other, Please describe:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**2. Where do you think would be a good place to hold services for older victims? (Check all that apply.)**

- Onondaga County Department of Aging
- Church, synagogue or other faith community building
- Vera House Inc. (Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency in Onondaga County)
- Health care center
- Housing complex for older adults
- Library
- Senior center
- Other: Please suggest:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. What hours should services be available? (Check all that apply)**

- Mornings
- Afternoons
- Evenings
- Weekdays
- Weekends
- 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Other: Please suggest:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**4. What information could be helpful for older victims? (Check all that apply)**

- Caregiving (Two examples: tips on how to manage the stress of providing care to a person who is hurtful OR tips on how to provide care for a family member while living with an abuser)
- Childcare (how to provide care for own children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren living in the home where an older adult is being harmed)
- Criminal justice system (what happens after a spouse, partner or family member is arrested?)
- Employment and job training information
- Financial issues (such as how to balance a checkbook or create and live on a budget OR how to stop someone from stealing from me)
- Housing (emergency shelters, transitional or affordable permanent housing)
- Information about available services
- Information about controlling relationships and why they happen
- Information about what an individual can do to help themselves or others who might be in a harmful or controlling relationship
- Legal options (protective orders, wills, guardianships, divorce)
- Programs for abusers (e.g., Where are they located? Are they effective?)
- Programs for pets if older victims need to live in a location where pets are not allowed
- Safety planning (working with a professional to create a plan to live more safely or free from an abuser)
- Sexual assault
- Someone to talk to after the abuse has ended or the hurtful person has died
- Someone to talk to who can provide support and listen to their fears and concerns
- Referrals to other services/ agencies that can offer help in the community
- Spiritual/religious issues
- Substance abuse (drugs or alcohol)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. How should we let older adults know about available help? (Check all that apply)**

- Billboards
- Brochures about services
- Facebook or YouTube
- Faith-based newsletters or materials distributed at services
- Internet
- Newspaper ads
- Posters or flyers
- Presentations to community groups
- Publications for older adults such as free senior newspapers
- Radio ads
- Television ads
- Other ideas: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Where would you recommend posting posters or brochures? (Check all that apply)**

- Onondaga County Department of Aging
- Bathrooms of restaurants and other public places
- Beauty parlors or barber shops
- Churches, synagogues or faith communities
- Healthcare settings
- Housing for older adults
- Libraries
- Nursing homes, assisted living or other facilities
- Senior centers
- Other ideas \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What other suggestions do you have to help older individuals who are struggling with controlling and hurtful situations?**

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**Section B: Your Personal Experience**

**Some of these questions may be quite personal. Please feel free to skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. If you have been harmed by a spouse, partner, adult child or family member, or caregiver in any of the ways described in the left column, please check the box to indicate whether this happened before you turned 50 or after the age of 50. If you were harmed before and after 50, check both boxes. If this behavior has never happened to you, please leave the boxes blank.**

<b>Have you ever experienced:</b>	<b>Before age 50</b>	<b>Age 50 or after</b>
Have you ever had a spouse/partner, family member or caregiver take away your money, property or other assets without consent?		
Have you ever been denied food, water, sleep, medication or medical care?		
Have you ever been afraid of a spouse/partner, family member or caregiver?		
Has a spouse/partner, family member or caregiver ever hit, punched, pushed you or otherwise physically hurt you?		
Has a spouse/partner, family member or caregiver ever touched you in a way that made you uncomfortable or hurt you sexually in any way?		
Has a spouse/partner, family member or caregiver constantly put you down (saying things like “you are stupid” or “no one else will love you”) or made fun of you?		

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**1. Do you know anyone 50 or older who has had the experiences described in the previous questions?**

**Yes                      No**

**2. Have you ever asked for help with hurtful or controlling family members or caregivers? Please check all that apply.**

- Adult Protective Services
- Attorney
- Bank or financial advisor
- Church, synagogue or faith community
- Doctor, home-health provider
- Family member
- Friend or neighbor
- Onondaga County Department of Aging & Youth
- Police
- Vera House (Domestic & Sexual Violence Agency in Onondaga County)

**Were they helpful? Please explain.**

**If you did not ask for help, what reasons did you have?**

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**Section C: Demographics**

**To help us make sure that we get a good representation from this community, please check the answers that best describe you below. Keep in mind all responses will be kept confidential.**

**1. Age:**

- 50-59                       60-69  
 70-79                       80-89  
 90-99                       100+

**2. Race:**

- American Indian and Alaskan Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African American  
 Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin  
 Native Hawaiian  
 Multi-race  
 Other Pacific Islander  
 White  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Living situation:**

- Live alone independently  
 Live with my spouse or partner only  
 Live with another family member  
 Live at home with support from a non-family care provider  
 Live in an assisted living facility or nursing home  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Highest Level of Education:**

- Grades 0-8  
 Some High School  
 High School  
 Some College/Post High School Training  
 College Graduate  
 Post-Graduate Work  
 GED

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**5. Employment Status:**

- Employed Outside Home Full-time (over 30 hr/wk)
- Employed Outside Home Part-time
- Unemployed Seeking Work
- Unemployed Not Seeking Work
- Retired

**7. Annual Income:**

- Under \$14,999
- Between \$15,000 & \$29,999
- Between \$30,000 & 44,999
- Between \$45,000 & \$59,999
- Between \$60,000 & 74,999
- Above \$75,000

**8. Zip code:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please complete and return this survey by June 30, 2013.**

This survey was revised by the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) based on a survey created and implemented by the Merrimack County Coordinated Community Response team in Concord, New Hampshire.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Your responses will help us make decisions about the best ways to offer services and opportunities to older individuals in Onondaga County.**

If you choose to mail back your survey, please mail to:

**Vera House Inc.**

**6181 Thompson Road, Suite 100**

**Syracuse, New York 13206**

Or fax to (315) 425-8942 or scan and email to [jhicks@verahouse.org](mailto:jhicks@verahouse.org)

**If you have questions about this survey or would like to know more about the work of Vera House or the Syracuse Area Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition's Elder Abuse and Justice Committees, contact Jenny Hicks.**

**Phone: (315) 425-0818**

**E-Mail: [jhicks@verahouse.org](mailto:jhicks@verahouse.org)**



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