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# Midland DAILY NEWS

February 13, 2014



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## Our view: Know what elder abuse is

Story

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By the Midland Daily News  
Posted: Monday, February 10, 2014 1:00 pm

With the population of people age 85 and older scheduled to skyrocket in the next 35 years, it is in everyone's interest, especially Baby Boomers, to become aware of elder abuse: What is it? How to detect it? How to avoid it?

First the facts:

In 2010, there were 5.8 million people age 85 and older, according to U.S. Census figures. That number is projected to be 19 million people by the year 2050.

"As more older adults become very old we see the numbers of (elder abuse) cases increase," said Dr. Peter Lichtenberg, director of the Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State University, in a story published Sunday in the Daily News.

And, perhaps more alarming, is that 90 percent of abusers are family members, according to The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA).

In a simplified definition, elder abuse is the failure to provide basic needs or protections from harm, with psychological and financial abuse being the two most common forms, according to the NCEA.

Older seniors often are hesitant to reveal what's going on because they rely on their abusers for their health and well-being, said Midland County Senior Services Director Alan Brown in the Daily News article, which contained a list of warning signs for elder abuse.

Red flag warnings are changes in the person's personality, behavior or physical condition and should be the trigger to start asking questions about what is going on.

There are resources ready to help people who suspect elder abuse or families that need help with issues of aging people.

- Midland County Senior Services at (989) 633-3700
- Midland County Department of Human Services at (989) 835-7040
- Michigan Adult Protection Services at (855) 444-3911
- 9-1-1

We urge our readers to become aware of what elder abuse is and to educate themselves in order to protect one of our most vulnerable populations.

For more information on elder abuse, visit the NCEA website at [ncea.aoa.gov](http://ncea.aoa.gov)

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