

## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Attention Statement**

Imagine yourself in fifty or sixty years from now. You've become more dependent on those around you and you're not as active or mobile as you used to be. In order to hopefully provide for you better, you're family has decided to entrust your care to, in all reality, total strangers, by placing you in a Assisted Living Facility or have a caretaker help you in your home. While this may work out great for some, there are those cases where the lives of these elderly are in real danger.

### **B. Subject Statement**

While the number of cases of elderly abuse may not extremely great, the fact is that no matter how many there are, there are too many going on in our world.

### **C. Point Preview**

There are elderly people out there who are being disrespected, humiliated, mistreated, injured and even killed by people who don't see them as living, breathing human beings but as rag dolls or worthless objects that are meant to be neglected, taken advantage of, or mentally, physically or sexually abused.

### **D. Significance of Subject**

Today we will discuss some of the cases involving elderly abuse, the possible reasons for why it's happening and how to prevent from continuing.

## **II. Main Point I**

### **A. Subject Statement**

Abuse of an elderly person can begin with yelling at them or threatening them or intentionally failing to change their bedpan or undergarments. It can also be a case where they are exploited financially. As abuse develops further, it is then that elderly people's lives begin to really be put at risk, and possibly even lead to death, when the commonly known form of physical abuse, comes into play.

## **B. Documentation**

According to an article in Newsweek magazine, written November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007, when a woman by the name of Kim Collins hired a home health-care aide to look after her elderly parents, Pat and Dorothy Torano, in January 2006, she thought she was doing the right thing. But by the end of that summer, Collins was stunned when the San Diego Sheriff's Department informed her that Gina Trevino, the caregiver hired to take care of her parents, had opened 30 credit card accounts in the Toranos' name and purchased three vehicles worth \$50,000 with the Toranos' credit card. Trevino had also convinced the elderly couple to provide her with power of attorney and then managed to have them sign over ownership of their house, valued at \$650,000.

## **C. Illustration**

Trevino was taking advantage of two vulnerable and trusting elderly people because they were convinced by someone who seemed trustworthy because why would they assume that someone would be so cruel as to steal from them right under their noses, or even at all.

## **D. Signpost Statement One**

While this is a less known form of abuse that is taking place, the fact is, is that there are still plenty of cases out there involving the physical side of abuse.

## **E. Documentation**

According to an article in Los Angeles Times, written October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, a man by the name of Cesar Ulloa was arrested and charged with four counts of elder abuse and one count of torture. It was reported by the son of one resident, a 78 year old woman, that she was roused out of bed by having Ulloa jump on her chest and when she tried to defend herself, "he picked her up W.W.F.-style and slammed her onto the bed."

## **F. Illustration**

These people were being treated as non-human things with no emotion or feelings, and the reality is that many of them are in a state that leaves them confused and frightened and due to intimidation and fear of further abuse, they either aren't able to or just don't say anything to avoid the possible consequences.

## **G. Signpost Statement Two**

Ulloa was also arrested October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 after a nearly yearlong investigation into the death of 80-year-old resident Elmore Kittower. An autopsy report revealed that Kittower died of a blood clot in his lung. But the document also cited "blunt force trauma" as a contributing factor in his death. The report noted that Kittower's body was covered in bruises and had partly healed rib fractures that appeared to have happened within a month of his death. This is not the only case out there where death is the result.

#### **H. Documentation**

According to [karisable.com/elderabuse](http://karisable.com/elderabuse), last accessed on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Nadine Howden, 68, a bedridden, diabetic woman died of gangrene in her filth-filled home and was possibly a victim of homicide by abuse. She was found dead in her bed by a police officer. She was lying in her own feces, and her foot was infested with maggots even prior to her death. Detectives are looking at charging Howden's 36-year-old son, who was her caretaker.

#### **I. Illustration**

This is a case where the most commonly occurring type of abuse- neglect, has led to an old woman's life being ended.

#### **J. Summary Statement**

Whether it is neglect, being taken advantage of financially, or being physically abused, all of these forms of hurting these innocent people have got to end.

#### **K. Transition Statement**

There must be some reason for why these people think it is okay.

### **III. Main Point II**

#### **A. Subject Statement**

It isn't to say that there is an excuse for why people could do these horrible things, but there are causes for everything.

#### **B. Documentation**

According to a North County Times' article, written March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005, it had been more than a year since 12 former caregivers were arrested on criminal charges that they neglected a patient at SunBridg Care & Rehabilitation for Escondido-East, the nursing home where they worked. In recent years, the nursing homes have been held responsible for patient neglect, not the workers.

#### **C. Illustration**

This very fact that individuals had typically not been charged with neglect of patients could be enough incentive for these people to feel they could get away with it, and before this case, they more than likely had.

#### **D. Signpost Statement One**

Another reason these people may feel they can treat these people so badly is due to a lack of training from the beginning.

**E. Documentation**

According to an interview with Tyson Cook, the administrator at Crestview Manor Convalescent Home, in Escondido, which took place on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Cook states that unless people are trained correctly from the beginning and are being educated from right and wrong, then chances of improvement or prevention are unlikely. Background checks also help in truly finding out a person's accountability and know that they understand what is expected of them.

**F. Illustration**

Although it would seem that it would be common sense to know how to properly treat a fellow human being, there is truth in that with a lack of knowledge, there would be chances of not knowing how to properly take care of an elderly person and deal with their conditions. But there is no excuse for stripping the elderly of their rights as people by not treating them with respect and care.

**G. Signpost Statement Two**

It is sad enough when a person cannot trust someone they do not know, but it is even sadder when these elderly people cannot even trust one of their own family members (like the woman who died of gangrene in her home and her son was her caretaker)

**H. Documentation**

According to an article on elder-abuse-cyberray.blogspot.com, written on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008, when Robin Westmiller's 80-year-old father suffered a stroke in 2002, causing his health to deteriorate, it attracted the attention of a distant cousin in another state. Over her mother's protests, her father traveled to the cousin's home in March 2004, and within three weeks, the cousin had taken control of his life, refusing to let him talk to his family and convincing him to file for divorce and revoke his wife's power of attorney.

**I. Illustration**

This just shows how these elderly people are easily manipulated. This is due to trusting people who claim to care about them and then turn on them to take everything they have.

**J. Summary Statement**

Every person wants to trust others and know that when a person gives their word, that they mean it.

**K. Transition Statement**

Although we cannot change everyone, we need to figure out a way to make the system and people being hired for such important work more honest.

## **IV. Main Point III**

### **A. Subject Statement**

There are many ways to start helping get this problem solved, whether it is personally, locally or nationally.

### **B. Documentation**

According to an article written for helpguide.org, on February 13, 2008, some symptoms to look out for if there is suspicion of elder abuse include: Frequent arguments or tension between the caregiver and the elderly person or changes in personality or behavior in the elder. Ways to prevent abuse are to listen to seniors and their caregivers, intervene when you suspect elder abuse, and educate others about how to recognize and report elder abuse.

### **C. Illustration**

In order to report suspected elder abuse, contact the Adult Protective Services of California toll free at 1-888-436-3600, or you can contact the National Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116.

### **D. Signpost Statement One**

You can continue your help by then informing your community.

### **E. Documentation**

According to an article in the New York Times, written on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004 the author writes a letter to the editor in response to an article they put out about a case of elder abuse. He is mentioning the fact that the Elder Justice Act failed to be passed not too long after this article came out. He is trying to stress the point that this is an important issue and that it isn't a question of should we act but how soon.

### **F. Illustration**

The man, who wrote this letter, Robert Blancato, is taking a chance to express to his community what needs to be done regarding this issue. Other ways your community can be reached is through involvement in support groups like San Diego's FAST, the National Association to Stop Guardian Abuse, Advocates for National Guardianship Ethics and Reform and the National Center for Elder Abuse.

### **G. Signpost Statement Two**

By utilizing the power of numbers, trying to create awareness in your community can improve with this involvement. However, the greatest way this can be changed is through getting government support to stop the problem.

### **H. Documentation**

According to an article in AARP magazine, dated December 2007, a plan is proposed for guardianship monitoring, which encompasses all actions the judicial system takes after a guardian or conservator has been appointed for an adult.

**I. Illustration**

Basically, keeping a much closer eye on workers at the government level, which is meant to ensure less cases of things going unnoticed and taken care of.

**J. Summary Statement**

All of these are just some of the solutions that can be applied to solving the saddening problem we have with elder abuse.

**V. Conclusion**

**A. Summary**

Elderly abuse is not something that can continue to go unnoticed. They need our help.

**B. Post Point Review**

This issue is inhumane and horrible, and just plain wrong. Something must be done for these people.

**C. Significance**

Today, we have seen cases exemplifying the issue, reasons for why they may be happening and what we can do to help.

**D. Wrap Around**

Imagine yourself fifty, sixty years from now in a situation with no sign of escape and desperation to have your rights as a human being. If someone could help you, wouldn't you want them to?

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