

APS Supervisor Core: How to Talk About Elder Abuse

INSTRUCTOR LED TRAINING (VIRTUAL BOOSTER ACTIVITY)

PARTICIPANT MANUAL



The Academy for Professional Excellence is a project of the San Diego State University School of Social Work

Funding Sources



This training was developed by the Academy for Professional Excellence, with funding from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.

Curriculum Developers, 2021

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Introduction

We are pleased to welcome you to **APS Supervisor Core: How to Talk About Elder Abuse** Participant Manual, developed by Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations (APSWI), a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence under a grant from the California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division.

The Academy for Professional Excellence, a project of San Diego State University School of Social Work, was established in 1996 with the goal of revolutionizing the way people work to ensure the world is a healthier place. Our services integrate culturally responsive and recovery-oriented practices into our daily work to promote healing and healthy relationships. Providing around 70,000 learning experiences to health and human service professionals annually, the Academy provides a variety of workforce development solutions in Southern California and beyond. With five programs, three divisions and over 100 staff, the Academy's mission is to provide exceptional learning and development experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations and communities.

APSWI is a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence. APSWI is designed to provide competency-based, multidisciplinary training to Adult Protective Services professionals and their partners. APSWI's overarching goal is the professionalization of Adult Protective Services professionals to ensure that abused and vulnerable older adults and adults with disabilities receive high quality, effective interventions and services.

APSWI partners with state and national organizations and experts in the older adult and adults with disabilities professions to empower APS professionals and those they serve to live safely, peacefully and in a world that is free from abuse and neglect.

APSWI's partners include:

- National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) Education Committee
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Adult Programs Division
- County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), Protective Services Operations Committee (PSOC)
- California's Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC)

Partner Organizations

Dawn Gibbons-McWayne, Program Manager, APSWI

Academy for Professional Excellence

<https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/apswi/>

Krista Brown, Former APSWI Leaders Institute Program Coordinator, APSWI

Academy for Professional Excellence

<https://theacademy.sdsu.edu/programs/>

Jennifer Spoeri, Executive Director, National Adult Protective Services (NAPSA)

<https://napsa-now.org>

Paul Needham, Chair, NAPSA Education Committee

<https://napsa-now.org>

Kim Rutledge, Adult Protective Services Liaison, Adult Protective Services Division

California Dept. of Public Social Services

<https://cdss.ca.gov/Adult-Protective-Service>

Francisco Wong and Chris Alire, Co-Chairs, Protective Services Operations Committee of the County Welfare Director's Association

<https://cwda.org/about-cwda>

Acknowledgements

This training is the result of a collaborative effort between Adult Protective Services administrators, supervisors, staff development officers and workers across the state and the nation; professional educators; and the Academy for Professional Excellence staff members. APSWI would like to thank the following individuals and agencies:

Agencies

California Department of Social Services, Adult Programs Division

Arizona Department of Economic Security, DAAS-Adult Protective Services

National Adult Protective Services Association

National Center on Elder Abuse

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National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) Education & Development Committee

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Executive Summary

How to Talk About Elder Abuse

APS is essential to preventing and addressing abuse, neglect and exploitation of older and dependent adults. The presence and messaging of APS plays a large role in how the public perceives, talks about, and reacts to elder abuse. APS supervisors play an important role with the community, their staff, and community partners/stakeholders.

In this interactive, multi-module training, learn what factors currently influence the way the public thinks about elder abuse and practice a new communication strategy developed by the National Center on Elder Abuse, in conjunction with the Frameworks Institute. Resources, toolkits and other helpful information will be shared to help participants continue the reframing process.

Virtual Training:

- The following virtual instructional strategies are used throughout the course: short lectures (lecturettes), interactive activities/exercises including breakout groups, chat box discussions, large group discussions, self-reflection, poll options, and individual practice. PowerPoint slides and role playing/demonstrations are used to stimulate discussion and skill development.
- Participants will need access to a computer with video conferencing capability and be able to connect to the virtual platform being used to deliver this training. A headset or earbuds with microphone and a video camera are highly encouraged. Participant Manual is a fillable PDF if using Adobe Acrobat. Participants are encouraged to either print a hard copy or ensure access to Adobe Acrobat to allow for highlighting, typing in comments and filling out worksheets.

Course Requirements:

- Completion of How to Talk About Elder Abuse 60-minute eLearning module.
- Completion of the entire module (eLearning plus booster activity) is required to receive course completion credit.

Continued

Target Audience: This workshop is intended for new supervisors or experienced staff who may require a refresher.

Outcome Objectives for Participants:

By the end of this training participants will be able to:

- Describe the goals and objectives of the Reframing Elder Abuse Project.
- Understand current perceptions of elder abuse.
- Practice a new communication strategy on elder abuse.
- Identify resources to support you and your staff in your work.

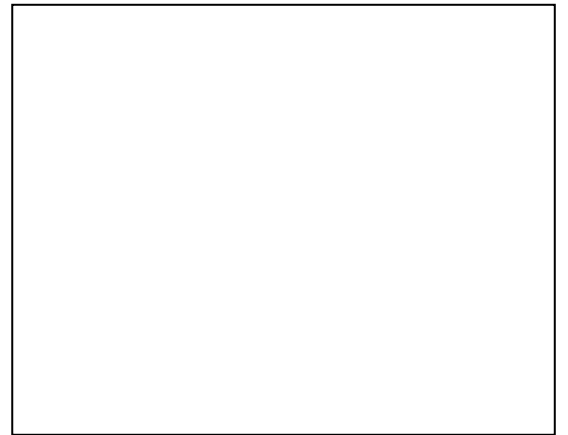
Course Outline



CONTENT	MATERIALS	TIME
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS		10 minutes
Welcome and Introductions	Slides 1 – 2	
Technology Overview	Slide 3	
Why Supervisors Should Reframe/Comfort with Reframing	Slide 4-5	
ACTIVITY FOR APS SUPERVISORS		30 minutes
Consider These Scenarios	Slide 6	
Prompt	Slide 7/Letter of Support	
Breakout Groups	Slide 8	
REFRAMING QUESTIONS DEBRIEF		15 minutes
Reframing Questions	Slides 9-12	
HOW TO APPLY REFRAMING WITH STAFF DOCUMENTATION		20 minutes
Sample Case Documentation Activity	Slides 13-15	
QUESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS		10 minutes
Questions	Slide 16	
Practical Tips	Slides 17	
Resources	Slide 18-20/Resource Handout	
WRAP UP	Slides 21	5 minutes
TOTAL TIME (INCLUDING BREAKS)		90 minutes



How To Talk About Elder Abuse: Booster Activity

We create experiences that transform the heart, mind, and practice.





About the Academy & APSWI







The Academy is a project of San Diego State's School of Social Work. Serving over 20,000 health and human services professionals annually, the Academy's mission is to provide exceptional workforce development and learning experiences for the transformation of individuals, organizations and communities.

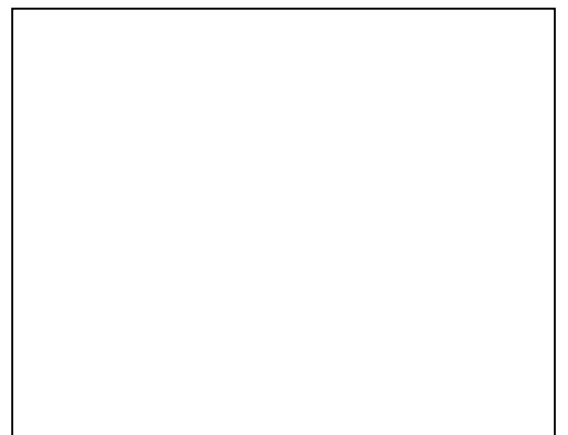
APSWI, or Adult Protective Services Workforce Innovations, is a training program of the Academy that provides innovative workforce development to APS professionals and their partners.



San Diego State University

ACADEMY PROGRAMS



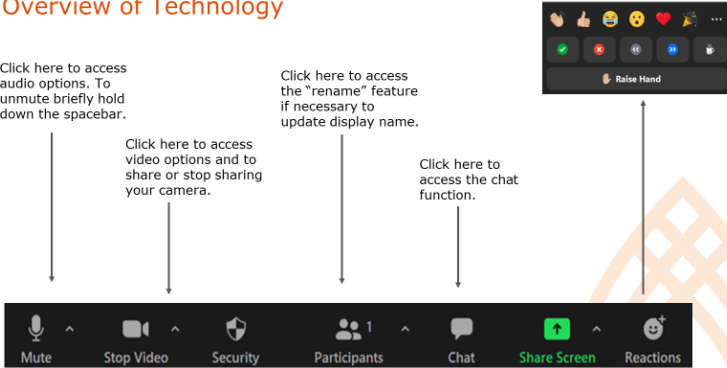
Overview of Technology

Click here to access audio options. To unmute briefly hold down the spacebar.

Click here to access video options and to share or stop sharing your camera.

Click here to access the "rename" feature if necessary to update display name.

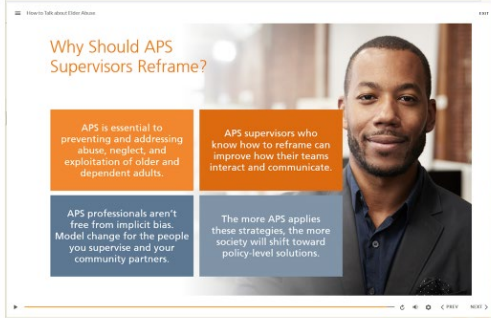
Click here to access the chat function.



The image shows a Zoom meeting control bar with icons for Mute, Stop Video, Security, Participants (1), Chat, Share Screen, and Reactions. A secondary bar above it shows icons for Raise Hand, Mute, Video Off, Stop Video, Security, Chat, and Reactions. Arrows point from the text instructions to the corresponding icons in the control bars.



Why Should APS Supervisors Reframe?




The slide contains the following text:

- APS is essential to preventing and addressing abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older and dependent adults.
- APS supervisors who know how to reframe can improve how their teams interact and communicate.
- APS professionals aren't free from implicit bias. Model change for the people you supervise and your community partners.
- The more APS applies these strategies, the more society will shift toward policy-level solutions.




Comfort with Reframing?



Consider These Scenarios

- Writing a proposal to obtain funding for additional APS staff.
- Presenting testimony to your board of supervisors or other lawmakers, urging support for funding for additional APS staff.
- Speaking to law enforcement about APS services and the value of funding for additional APS staff.



Handout: Prompt (Letter)

Re: Letter in Support of request to add eight Social Worker and two Social Work Supervisor positions to Adult Protective Services in the FY22 Budget

Dear Supervisor Schoen, Supervisor Ruiz, and Supervisor Lopez,

I am writing to express my strong support for the requested positions to be added to the Adult Protective Services (APS) program, a key partner in law enforcement's efforts to protect the community's most vulnerable seniors.

Elder and dependent adult abuse is a major problem that affects many vulnerable adults in our communities, many of whom do not have sufficient support systems to age safely. According to researchers, at least 10 percent of seniors are victimized each year. According to U.S. Census Bureau, Population Projections, the number of Americans ages 65 and older is projected to nearly double from 52 million in 2018 to 95 million by 2060, which represents a rise from 16 to 23 percent of the total population (Population Reference Bureau, 2020). Additionally, due to advancements in medicine, public policy, advocacy, the life expectancy for persons with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) has increased significantly. It is projected that by 2030 the number of adults with I/DD aged 60 and older is projected to grow to 1.2 million (Kerins, 2019).

As a result, the number of elderly victims entering the criminal justice system can be expected to increase even more in the coming years, including victims of physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and financial exploitation/fraud. Given this aging explosion, APS requires additional funding to provide extended services/case management to these increasingly vulnerable individuals.

APS and the Office of the District Attorney have successfully collaborated since 1999 with a number of programs including financial specialist teams, domestic violence prevention teams, and death review teams. However, the increasing need and demand for services from APS to protect elders in the community has resulted in the withdrawal from several law enforcement collaborations.

APS provides significant services in the area of intervention and prevention. Since elder and dependent adult abuse cases are vastly underreported, without a strong APS program even more crimes against elders and dependent adults might escape detection and fewer victims would be protected. There are countless cases that law enforcement does not see because of successful APS intervention which prevents abuse from reaching criminal levels. A strong APS program is a critical component of law enforcement's overall coordinated response to victims of elder and dependent adult abuse.

Continued

The Office of the District Attorney depends on a strong APS agency to help us do our job. Therefore, I strongly urge you to fully fund and add the requested eight Social Worker and two Social Work Supervisor positions to the APS program in the FY22 budget.

Sincerely,

Ned C. Eaye, MSW
APS Supervisor II
Blue County HHS


Prompt

Re: Letter in Support of request to add eight Social Worker and two Social Work Supervisor positions to Adult Protective Services in the FY22 Budget

Dear Supervisor Schoen, Supervisor Ruiz, and Supervisor Lopez,

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Empty space for participant response to the prompt.

Breakout Groups

Using the reframing elder abuse strategies, consider the following questions regarding how you would modify any part of the following text for your needs:

- Which cultural models from the swamp of elder abuse do you identify in the text? How can you replace these unproductive cultural models with the value of justice?
- Which social supports are incorporated into the text? How can you utilize the building metaphor to strengthen the role of systematic factors and solutions?
- What are the most important pieces of data to include to make sure your audience knows your program is important?
- How can you conclude with an explanation that links the request for additional APS Social Work positions to systematic solutions?



Empty space for participant response to the breakout group questions.

Breakout Activity for APS Supervisors¹

Consider the following text based on your actual or imagined experiences in one of the following roles as an APS supervisor:

- Writing a proposal to obtain funding for additional APS staff.
- Presenting testimony to your board of supervisors or other lawmakers, urging support for funding for additional APS staff.
- Speaking to law enforcement about APS services and the value of funding for additional APS staff.

Using the reframing elder abuse strategies, consider the following questions regarding how you would modify any part of the following text for your needs.

- Which cultural models from the swamp of elder abuse do you identify in the text? How can you replace these unproductive cultural models with the value of justice?

- Which social supports are incorporated into the text? How can you utilize the building metaphor to strengthen the role of systematic factors and solutions?

- What are the most important pieces of data to include to make sure your audience knows your program is important?

Continued

- How can you conclude with an explanation that links the request for additional APS Social Work positions to systematic solutions?

As a reminder, the Talking Elder Abuse Quick Start Guide is a great resource to use when reframing communications.

Full URL here: https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/elder_abuse_bp_quick_start_guide.pdf

1 Activity modified from 2018 Reframing Communication About Elder Abuse: Mezzo/Marco-Level Framing Exercise for Social Workers. Prepared by Chris Herman, NASW.

Handout: Swamp Elder Abuse Tool

What could the survivors and families your team works with think about elder abuse? What implicit biases might APS supervisors and caseworkers have and how does this impact your team and ability to implement meaningful interventions?

The FrameWorks Institute conducted research to figure out how the public currently understands elder abuse. The NCEA presents their findings using the metaphor of a swamp. In a swamp, you can find mud and unsteady footing, and even dangers like alligators. At the same time, swamps are ecosystems with beneficial creatures and plants. We can think about public perception the same way: there are unproductive, and even dangerous approaches to talking about elder abuse that exist alongside productive, beneficial sentiments. Once you're familiar with the swamp, you'll be able to anticipate what you might want to avoid, and what will be useful, when communicating with the public, and your staff, about aging and elder abuse.

Let's look at the cultural models from the unproductive side of the swamp: the mud, sticks, and alligators of public perception. Here are some cultural models, or cognitive shortcuts that people use to think about elder abuse, that are barriers to productive communication.

For example, the cultural model of elder and abuse. The relationship of perpetrator and victim which casts older adults as less than whole people, powerless, passive, and vulnerable.

Dependency = Vulnerability

The cultural belief that aging is a process of deterioration and dependency triggers patterns of paternalistic thinking that denies agency to older people. This model leads people to the conclusion that abuse is inevitable, because older people are inherently vulnerable.

Spotlight on Individuals

The American public generally believes that elder abuse is primarily the consequence of individual characteristics of the people directly involved, whether the victim or perpetrator. They focus on the attributes of the perpetrator (greed, laziness, moral failing) and victim (poor health, weakness, or being "difficult"), and fail to see the bigger picture.

Everyone's Responsible (so Nobody is)

Are you familiar with the Bystander Effect? The idea that, when a crisis or

emergency happens in a crowd, people generally assume that *someone* will help, so they don't need to. This effect is true for systemic social problems like elder abuse as well. Because the public does not understand systemic contributions or solutions to elder abuse, they have little knowledge regarding their role in helping to reduce and address elder abuse. They assume that others will help, that it's not their responsibility.

Modern Life is the Problem

It's common for people to make sense of the prevalence of elder abuse by reasoning that societal changes have placed constant strain on people who care for older adults. Mounting stress, paired with the devaluation of older people and the belief that nursing homes are unfortunate but necessary, join together to explain the perceived inevitability of abuse. While this model encourages the public to consider societal factors, it also reinforces a sense of fatalism about elder abuse by linking it to deep and seemingly unchangeable trends.

Limited Solutions

The public shares a deep fatalism about the possibility of preventing elder abuse and, when pressed to think about solutions, people tend to focus on surveillance and remediation after the fact. This limited understanding comes from the strong public perception of older people as vulnerable, passive wards in need of protection.

Education and awareness campaigns that emphasize solutions at the individual level can unintentionally limit the range of solutions people envision. To help the public think more expansively, bring systemic solutions into your messages about elder abuse.

Supports in the Swamp

When you think critically about the public beliefs about elder abuse, some of the challenging cultural models we just discussed actually have productive understandings within them. Let's take a look at some of the **lily pads in our swamp**: understandings and ideas you can use to counter the idea that "nothing can be done" about elder abuse.

Elder + Abuse

Embedded within this cultural model is the understanding that elder abuse, in any form, is unacceptable.

Modern Life is the Problem

People understand that, in our current system, caregivers have been pushed to their limits. Support for caregivers, and more awareness and education about elder abuse, are absolutely necessary.

Solutions

Even if the current awareness and education focus on after-the-fact solutions like surveillance and prosecution, you can move the conversation toward proactive, preventative solutions like increasing social support and research on policies.

Group Review: Question #1

Which cultural models do you identify in the text? How can you replace these unproductive cultural models with the value of justice?



Group Review: Question #2

Which social supports are incorporated into the text? How can you utilize the building metaphor to strengthen the role of systematic factors and solutions?



Group Review: Question #3

What are the most important pieces of data to include to make sure your audience knows your program is important?



Group Review: Question #4

How can you conclude with an explanation that links the request for additional APS Social Work positions to systematic solutions?



Consider These Scenarios

- Documenting an assessment
- Case presentations
- Case collaboration with community resources (caregiver agencies, long-term care facilities, law enforcement, etc.)



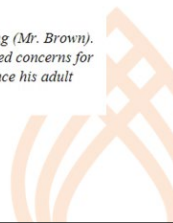
Prompt

Sample Case Documentation

Client
George Brown

DOB
6/15/1941

Intake
Complaint received from a neighbor regarding their elderly neighbor's wellbeing (Mr. Brown). Neighbor disclosed hearing yelling from the home nearly every day and expressed concerns for "that poor old man". Neighbor stated they never see their neighbor anymore since his adult nephew, Jim Brown, moved in.



Handout: Sample Case Documentation

Client: George Brown

DOB: 6/15/1941

Intake: Complaint received from a neighbor regarding their elderly neighbor's wellbeing (Mr. Brown). Neighbor disclosed hearing yelling from the home nearly every day and expressed concerns for "that poor old man". Neighbor stated they never see their neighbor anymore since his adult nephew, Jim Brown, moved in.

Case Notes: APS worker met with client and nephew at the client's home. Nephew appeared agitated and would not leave the room so that the client could be interviewed alone. Client was oriented to person and place, he is not oriented to time or the situation which can be very typical for the aged. Client's clothes were wrinkled and had numerous stains. The client's home appeared unkempt, the floors were dirty, cluttered with newspapers and garbage. There was an odor of urine present. The nephew shared the electricity was out. This interview was primarily conducted with nephew who talked over the client when he tried to answer. Client was present however did not actively participate in this conversation.

Nephew stated he is only living relative. Nephew reported he is the sole support for the client and does everything - including meal preparation, grooming, and transportation. Nephew shared he is financially dependent on client as he cannot work due to client's care needs. Client has limited income, \$2,500 m/o. social security. Due to income level client does not qualify for IHSS. It appears that the client did not plan well for his retirement or care needs and the nephew is disorganized.

Nephew expressed frustration with the client's "wandering" which makes it particularly hard to bathe or feed the client regularly. Nephew admitted to outbursts of yelling however denies hitting the client.

This APS professional's impression is the client and nephew are struggling to meet client's daily needs. The victim seems to be very vulnerable and perhaps disengaged in daily needs. This may be a result of possible dementia, neuro exam recommended to measure inevitable deterioration in the short term. This family has limited access to community resources due to income, however there is financial strain to meet daily expenses. Nephew's inability to secure employment is a possible contributor to intensifying circumstances. Nephew stated he was unaware of programs/resources to help and stated he was eager to learn more. Victim may benefit from additional case management services due to vulnerable high need status.

Sample Case Documentation Activity

- Which cultural models from the swamp of elder abuse do you identify in the text? How can you replace these unproductive cultural models with the value of justice?
- Which social supports are incorporated into the text? How can you utilize the building metaphor to strengthen the role of systematic factors and solutions?
- Generally, how can you change "swampy" language and avoid common pitfalls within the text as a whole?
- Lastly, why is it important to avoid the swamp and reframe in elder abuse while taking case intakes and notes?



A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for participants to write their answers to the sample case documentation activity questions.

Questions



A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for participants to write their questions.

Practical Tips

- Use “we”, “us”, “all”, “everyone”
- Avoid activating images or “vulnerable”
- Use person-first language
- Highlight multiple solutions
- Use NCEA resources



Practice Resources



Talking Elder Abuse Toolkit



Video Lecture Series




Reframing Tips Monthly eNews




Reframed Resources




Contact the NCEA




(855) 500- 3537




ncea@med.usc.edu



linkedin.com/company/ncea
Facebook:
@NationalCenteronElderAbuse
Twitter:
@NCEAatUSC




ncea.acl.gov




Thank You!

We envision a world where
the quality of life for individuals, organizations, and communities
is transformed into a healthier place.



APSWI
Adult Protective Services
Workforce Innovations



Talking Elder Abuse: A FrameWorks Communications Toolkit

The Big Picture

Quick Start Guide to Talking Elder Abuse

MM Click icon to see MessageMemo

Framing is the process of making choices about what to emphasize and what to leave unsaid. Here’s a quick tour of themes to avoid and alternatives to advance.

Instead of:	Try:
Appealing to sympathy	Appealing to <i>Justice</i> : This is about treating older people fairly
Talking about vulnerable populations and dependent victims	Talking about the importance of social connections to empower older people and reduce risk factors
Using crisis-laden or emotional rhetoric to condemn elder abuse	Demonstrating the collective—social and economic—costs of elder abuse
Relying on the public’s limited conception of abuse as a two-person relationship	Intentionally expanding the definition of abuse to include self-neglect, sexual abuse, and systemic causes
Focusing only on individual perpetrators and victims	Explaining the underlying social conditions that can increase risk factors
The terms “perpetrators” and “victims”	Try less swampy language like “people who commit elder abuse” and “survivors”
Using data and expert jargon to explain the causes and consequences of elder abuse	Using the <i>Social Structure</i> metaphor: Society is like a building. Let’s improve it with support beams that can keep everyone safe.
Providing solutions that emphasize individual responsibility	Providing solutions that emphasize collective responsibility and systemic/policy changes
Descriptions of the problem	Telling a complete story: Why it matters, how it works, and what can be done to address the problem

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Resources



Talking Elder Abuse Toolkit

frameworksinstitute.org/toolkit/talking-elder-abuse/



Reframing the Conversation on Elder Abuse
Video Lecture Series

Use the link on the NCEA Resources website:

<https://ncea.acl.gov/reframing-elder-abuse#gsc.tab=0>



Reframing Tips Monthly eNewsletter

forms.aweber.com/form/51/820629751.htm



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home/



STEAP Initiative

<https://ncea.acl.gov/supportsandtoolsforelderabuseprevention#gsc.tab=0>



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OUR WHY: **REVOLUTIONIZE
THE WAY PEOPLE
WORK TO ENSURE
THE WORLD IS A
HEALTHIER PLACE.**



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