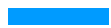


## **One Senior Place: More than one million seniors are victims of elder abuse**



Brenda Lyle | Special to FLORIDA TODAY

***Support local journalism.** A digital subscription is incredibly affordable and makes you the most informed person around. [Click here and subscribe today.](#)*

Q: Am I a mandatory reporter?

A: While it is not a date widely recognized outside of the elder care world, June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

The day was officially recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 2011. Elder abuse comes in many forms; some are overt — while others are more subtle.

Too frequently, the abuser is a trusted friend or family member.

Florida statutes identify “vulnerable adults” and utilizes an abuse reporting system that protects the confidentiality of the reporter.

***Previous One Senior Place columns:***

**Be alert:** Silver Alerts have very specific criteria to be met before activation

**Know the signs:** 'Longest Day' June 21 brings awareness to those with Alzheimer's disease

**Be careful:** Falls at home are leading cause of injury, death for people over age 65

Elder abuse can be financial, emotional, physical and sexual.

It also includes people who are neglected and those who neglect themselves (self-neglect).

The National Center for Elder Abuse reports that “between one and two million Americans over 65 years old have been injured, exploited or mistreated by someone they depended on for care or protection.”

In our state, Chapter 825 of the Florida Statutes defines “vulnerable adults” as those who lack capacity to consent due to mental illness, development

disability, organic brain disorder, physical illness or disability, drug use, intoxication, short-term memory loss or other conditions.

While we would hope that EVERY person in Florida would be a mandatory reporter, the Chapter 415 specifies certain individuals by profession, including those in health care, law enforcement, banking, certain state and municipal employees and others.

I have had several unfortunate consultations that resulted in reports to Adult Protective Services for suspected abuse or exploitation.

In some cases, the victim did not even understand that what they were experiencing is considered neglect, abuse or exploitation.

As WorldElderAbuseAwareness.com notes: “The consequences of elder abuse are grave: older adults who are abused are twice as likely to be hospitalized, four times as likely to go into nursing homes and three times as likely to die. Abuse can happen in any setting, in the older adult’s own home or a senior living community.”

To report abuse, you can call the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873, or go to <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>. Reports are taken by the Florida Department of Children and Families and screened for statutory criteria. Reports must include information about the vulnerable adult and the suspected abuser. Professionally mandated reporters must include their name and agency, but all information about any reporter is kept confidential.

At One Senior Place, we are care managers, nurses and social workers. We are morally and professionally bound as mandatory reporters. While the statutes may not designate you as a mandatory reporter, elder abuse demands the attention of us ALL. If you witness or suspect abuse, please take action. It could save a life.

*One Senior Place is a marketplace for resources and provider of information, advice, care and on-site services for seniors and their families. Questions for this column are answered by professionals in nursing, social work, care management and in-home care. Send questions to [AskOSP@OneSeniorPlace.com](mailto:AskOSP@OneSeniorPlace.com), call 321-751-6771 or visit One Senior Place, The Experts in Aging.*

*Brenda Lyle is a Certified Care Manager and Certified Dementia Practitioner with One Senior Place, Greater Orlando.*



[Help](#) · [Terms of Service](#) · [Your California Privacy Rights/Privacy Policy](#) · [Privacy Policy](#) · [Site Map](#) · [Accessibility](#) · [Our Ethical Principles](#) · [Manage Cookies](#)



© Copyright Gannett 2022