BULLYING and Older Adults

Senior Protection Unit

David P. Shallcross
Director of Senior Protection Unit
BULLYING and Older Adults

Bullying Defined

- Unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

- The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time.
BULLYING and Older Adults

Why People Bully

- Physical pain
- Disease
- Loneliness
- Fear
- Vulnerability
BULLYING and Older Adults

Bullying Does not Stop at any age.

- While we grow older, we don't necessarily ‘grow up.'

- Cattiness and aggressive tendencies of our youth are not automatically erased as the years accumulate.
BULLYING and Older Adults

Types of Bullying
BULLYING and Older Adults

Physical bullying

- Harm to someone’s body or property.
BULLYING and Older Adults

Emotional Bullying

- Harm to someone’s self-esteem or feeling of safety.
BULLYING and Older Adults

Social bullying

- Harm to someone’s group acceptance.
- Exclusion from groups and activities.
Where does Adult Bullying Occur?

- Senior centers
- Adult day health centers
- Senior housing
BULLYING and Older Adults

Where does Adult Bullying Occur?

- Retirement apartments
- Nursing homes
- Private homes
BULLYING and Older Adults

Gender Differences: 

*Men*

- Direct confrontation
- Physical approach
- Verbally abusive
BULLYING and Older Adults

Gender Differences: Women

- Gossiping/Rumors
- Spitefulness
- Exclusion
BULLYING and Older Adults

Bullying Incidents

- Naming calling/teasing
- Gossiping
- Loud arguments
- Being bossed around
BULLYING and Older Adults

Bullying Incidents

- Financial Exploitation
- Constant complaining
- Pestering
- Aggression
BULlying and Older Adults

Bullying may include

- Enforcing seating and saving seats for their social cliques at mealtimes and events.
BULLYING and Older Adults

- Criticize
- Ridicule
- Lie about those who don’t meet their acceptance standards.
Take and sometimes destroy property to display their power and harass victims.
BULLYING and Older Adults

- Unexplained withdrawal of large sums of money.
- Abrupt changes in a will or other financial documents.
- Disappearance of funds or valuable possessions.
BULLYING and Older Adults

- Physically abusing victims by pushing, hitting, punching, or kicking them.
- They then validate their actions by saying it was an “accident”.

Attorney General Josh Shapiro

www.attorneygeneral.gov
Characteristics of People who Bully:

- Seek to control others by power and control.
- Making others feel threatened, fearful or hurt.
- Causing conflict between people.
BULLYING and Older Adults

- Warning Signs from People who are being Bullied:
  - Self isolation
  - Avoidance of areas or activities.
  - Vague complaints “They don’t like me” or “They won’t let me.”
  - Depressed mood
BULLYING and Older Adults

Reasons People Bully Others

- Depression.
- Medication side effects.
- Cognitive issues.
- Substance abuse.
- Sense of power.
- Learned behavior.
BULLYING and Older Adults

Actions You Can Take

- Work through feelings.
- Be honest and open.
- Share feelings and insights.
- Balance your own needs.
- Encourage others.
- Preventative approach.
What should I do?

- Try to be kind, gentle, and understanding to the bully.
- Turn the other cheek if possible.
- Sometimes, however, the only thing you can do in a bullying situation is walk away.
BULLYING and Older Adults

Bullying is not the fault of the victim!

Attorney General Josh Shapiro
BULLYING and Older Adults

Make a Report to...

- Administration
- Office of Aging
- Family Members
- Private Attorney
- Police
- Office of Attorney General
BULLYING and Older Adults

REPORT ASAP:
You are Not Alone!

I AM

BULLIED
BULLYING and Older Adults

Respect

Esteem

Veneration

Appreciation

Esteem

Regard

Fear

Admire

Courtes

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

PENNSYLVANIA

Attorney General Josh Shapiro

www.attorneygeneral.gov
BULLYING and Older Adults

We can find a friend in one another.
REPORT BULLYING
Senior Protection Unit
1-866-623-2137

Presented By
PA OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
www.attorneygeneral.gov