

# Connect to Protect

Adults, who are physically ill, elderly and frail, developmentally delayed or chemically dependent, may at times need the assistance of others to handle the challenges of everyday life. So too, people who depend on others for care and assistance have a higher risk of vulnerability for abuse, neglect or financial exploitation.

## Vulnerable Adults Need Your Help

To help them find safety and security, the community needs to know about this problem and what to do about it.

Any one of us may need protective services at some point in life. As you help others, remember that you are strengthening a system that you too may need.

**Call:**

**218-998-8166**



These stories are **NOT** fiction. These **HAVE** happened. These are adults who have been neglected, abused or financially exploited.

### It's when.....

You notice your elderly friend Gladys no longer has money for personal things. Her daughter has taken control of her checkbook, and Gladys doesn't know what happens to her Social Security check.

You come to visit your dad, and you notice that there's no food in the house, he's unkempt and you're worried that he's not taking his medication.

Your neighbor is handicapped and being cared for by a friend. She tells you she can no longer get to her doctor because her friend will not take her. When she tells you this, she trembles and tells you last time she wanted to see her Dr.; this "friend" hit her.

*If you are a mandated reporter under the law, you **MUST** report suspected harm.*

## What Should You Do?

You need to report these types of cases so that these people may get the protection and safety they need.

Vulnerable adults have an impaired ability to provide for their own needs and protect themselves from harm or neglect. The law can protect and assist them.

Many vulnerable adults are reluctant to report, and when asked about it directly, they may even deny that harm or neglect has occurred. That's why it's so important for family members, friends, physicians, social workers and others to be aware of abuse, neglect and exploitation and report if they suspect something is going on.



## Promote Safety... Connect to Protect

### *What are the warning signs of abuse?*

- The person may say that she/he is being harmed or is afraid of someone.
- Bruises, black eyes, broken bones, burns and/or cuts.
- Injuries which are unexplained or inconsistent with explanation given.

### *What are the warning signs of neglect?*

- Dehydration, weight loss & malnutrition.
- Depression, confusion or other changes in mental functioning.
- Repeated falls.

### *What are the warning signs of financial exploitation?*

- The person does not have access to his/her own money.
- Asked to sign documents but does not know why.
- Personal property like cash, checks, credit cards are missing.
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## Connect to Protect

In Otter Tail County, call:

**218-998-8166**

Known as the *Common Entry Point*, this location receives all reports of known or suspected maltreatment and works with appropriate authorities to provide assistance.

**If there is immediate danger call 911.**

Talk about your concerns with Adult Protection Services of the County Social Service Agency. In Otter Tail County, call **218-998-8166**.

For other Minnesota counties, call Senior LinkAge Line at 1-800-333-2433 for information.

### **Remember.....**

This is a service...

- you can use.
- that can help.
- that can find a resource.
- that's confidential.
- that's part of the community.

