

# HOW TO TELL SOMEONE YOU ARE BEING ABUSED

## Starting the Conversation

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Abuse is a difficult and emotional topic to talk about. Often people are fearful, humiliated or ashamed when they find themselves in an abusive relationship. It takes courage for people experiencing abuse to reach out and start the conversation to find the support they need.

**Remember, no one deserves to be abused or mistreated. Consider telling:**

- Someone you trust
- Someone who will listen and support you

#### Who can you tell?

- Family member or relative
- Friend or neighbour
- Lawyer or accountant
- Staff at a community centre, seniors' centre or seniors' group
- Clergy/faith leader
- Doctor
- Victim service worker
- Police

Consider bringing a friend with you when you decide to speak with someone about the abuse.

#### How to Start the Conversation:

- Pick a time when you will have privacy and do not feel rushed.
- Choose a place where you are safe and won't be interrupted.
- Say, "I have a serious problem that has been happening for...." [mention the length of time].

**Describe what has been happening.**

**My son, daughter, spouse, friend, caregiver...has been abusive by:**

- Pushing me
- Slapping me
- Shoving me
- Threatening me
- Yelling at me
- Saying hurtful things to me
- Saying untrue and unkind things to me
- Ignoring me
- Making it difficult for me to get adequate food, shelter, medicines

**My son, daughter, friend, caregiver....has not been treating me well. He/she has:**

- Used my money for themselves
- Taken money from my bank account without my permission, or denied me access to my money
- Forced me to sign a Power of Attorney or Will
- Forced me to sign over my house
- Forced me to give him/her my PIN number and bank account information
- Prohibited me from visiting my friends/family or having them visit me
- Forbidden me from using the telephone to speak with friends or family and blocked all callers from speaking to me

**When this happens it makes me feel:**

- Sad
- Helpless
- Lonely
- Humiliated
- Embarrassed
- Depressed
- Angry
- Disrespected
- Frightened

**I want you to help me by:**

- Listening and supporting me
- Helping me get the information I need
- Helping me to safeguard my finances and money
- Taking me to a lawyer to make a Power of Attorney, Representation Agreement and/or

Will

- Helping me to move somewhere safe
- Working with me to safely understand and solve the problem
- Calling an agency to help
- Checking with me before you take action

Please don't share this with anyone else unless you have my permission.  
This was very hard for me to talk about. Thank you for listening.

*Remember, if you are a person experiencing abuse, it is important that you find help and that you feel supported.*

### **Who should you call for help?**

**If the situation is an emergency or if a person is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.**

Abuse may be a crime and fall under the Criminal Code. Call your local police station for information or to report abuse.

### **BC Centre for Elder Advocacy & Support — Seniors Abuse & Information Line (SAIL) 604 437-1940 | 1 866 437-1940 (toll free)**

Available Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Starting July 2013, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily (excluding holidays). SAIL is a safe place for older adults, and those who care about them, to talk to someone about situations where they feel they are being abused or mistreated, or to receive information about elder abuse prevention: [www.bcceas.ca](http://www.bcceas.ca)

**VictimLink BC** is a toll free, confidential and multilingual telephone service available across BC and the Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1 800 563-0808. It provides information and referral services to all victims of crime and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence. VictimLink BC is TTY accessible. Call TTY at 604 875-0885.

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