

Resources for Elderly Assistance and Community Help: Partnership Education and Training



Project REACH...
Resources for Elderly Assistance and Community Help



Emerald
TRAINING CONSULTANTS

InterFaith
works



Funding Provided By: NYS Office of Mental Health; Joanne M. Mahoney, Onondaga County Executive

Roots of Project REACH

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- Resources for **Elderly Assistance and Community Help**
- Foundation: New York State Office of Mental Health Geriatric Mental Health Grant
- Multicultural based
- Holistic approach: Emotional, Physical, Environmental
- Project REACH Key Players



Goals of the Project

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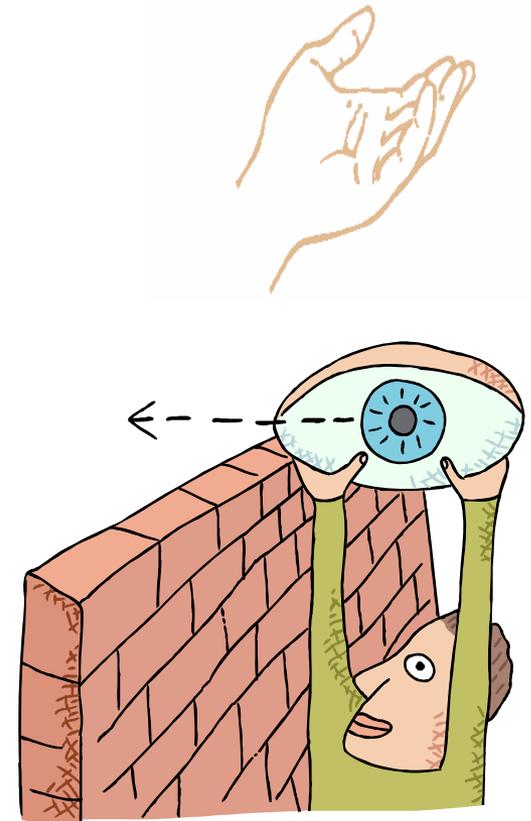
- Increase awareness and knowledge of mental health and the elderly
- Identify behavior and indicators for at-risk elderly
- Identify and assist at-risk elderly* whose independence and safety may be in jeopardy

**Use your judgment about age; if in doubt, make a referral and Project REACH will determine age eligibility*

Why Do We Need You?

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- You see individuals in your daily work who may be at-risk
- The project needs “eyes and ears” in places and situations that might otherwise be missed

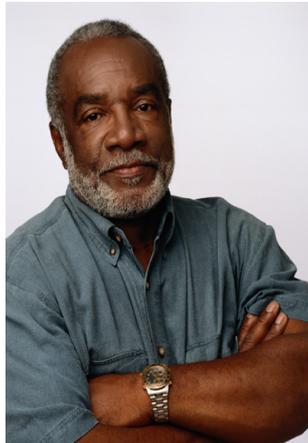


3 Factors That Influence Behavior

- Psychological
- Biological/Physical
- Environmental

Let's explore each in more detail...

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What to Look For: Mental Health

- **Confused, disoriented, delirious**
ex. Thinking it is 50 years ago and talking to you as if you were part of that time, clothes don't match weather conditions
- **Behavior not reality-based**
ex. Eye and body movement, and conversation indicates talking to someone who is not present
- **Very down, very high mood**
ex. Sad, crying, slow moving or moving and talking extremely fast, excessively jovial and friendly
- **Very anxious**
ex. Pacing, hand wringing
- **Memory impairment**
ex. Repeatedly asking the same question, not paying bills
- **Risk of suicide/self-harm (next slides)**

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Risk of Suicide/Self-Harm

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- Statistics
- Risk Factors
- Clues to Look for





Statistics

Upstate New York Suicide Rates by Age, Ethnicity

	65-74	75-84	85+
Males	44	43	16
Females	13	8	6
White Male	43	42	16
White Female	13	8	5
Black Male	1	1	0
Black Female	0	0	0
Hispanic Male	0	1	0
Hispanic Female	1	0	0
Other Male	0	0	0
Other Female	0	0	1

Source NYS Department of Health, 2005, Table 43

Risk Factors/Clues to Look For

- “No one will miss me.”
- “I don’t know why I’m having this service done. won’t be around much longer.”
- “I won’t be a burden anymore.”
- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness
- Recent loss (family, pet)
- Getting affairs in order
- Giving away possessions
 - What is **your** company’s policy on this?

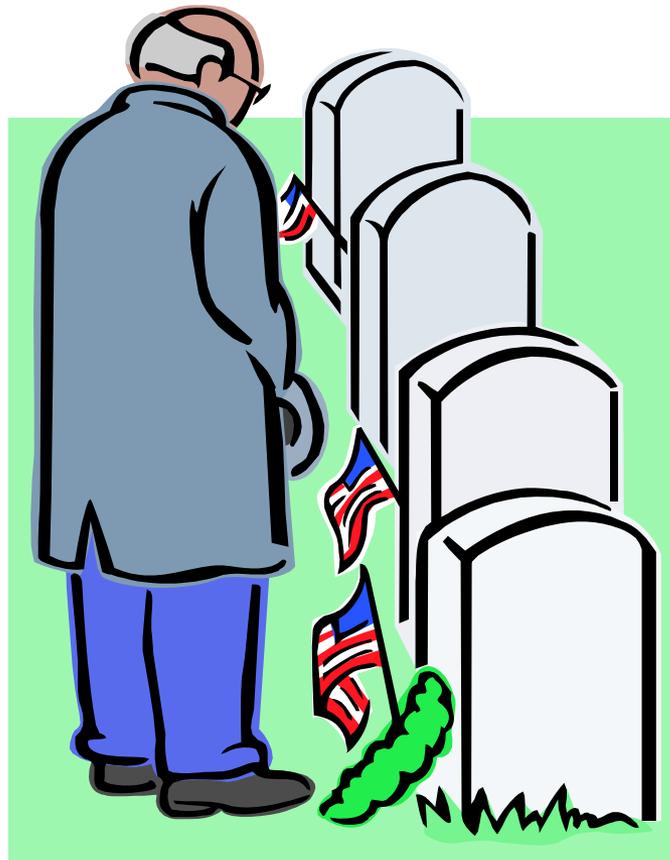
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Faces Behind the Story

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- Frank's Story
 - A Recent Loss
 - Loneliness
 - Depression



Faces Behind the Story

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■ Anne's Story

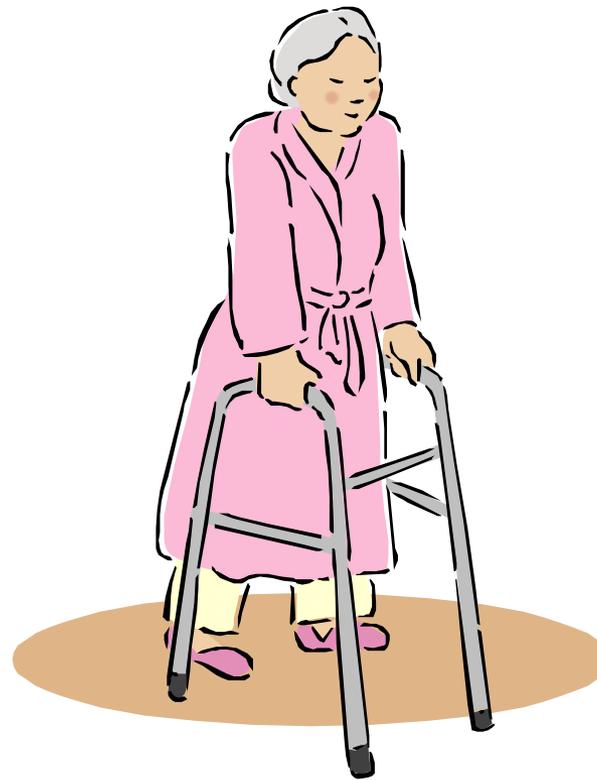
- Getting Affairs in Order
- Suicide



Faces Behind the Story

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- Ruth's Story
 - Pain
 - Terminal Illness



What to Look For: Physical Health

- Bruises
- Open wounds or sores
- Limping/favoring body part
- Complaining of pain
- Empty medication bottles and/or verbal indication they have run out of medication
- Looks too thin, malnourished



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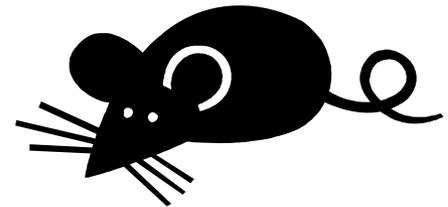


What to Look For: Environmental

■ Inside

- Squalor
- Food left out, dirty dishes piled up
- Evidence of rodents/pests
- Pet urine/feces in house, multiple pets
- Empty pill bottles, liquor bottles
- Too hot or too cold
- Plumbing, water not functional

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What to Look For: Environmental

Continued...

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■ Outside

- Broken windows, doors, screens
- Mail/papers not collected
- Area is not shoveled

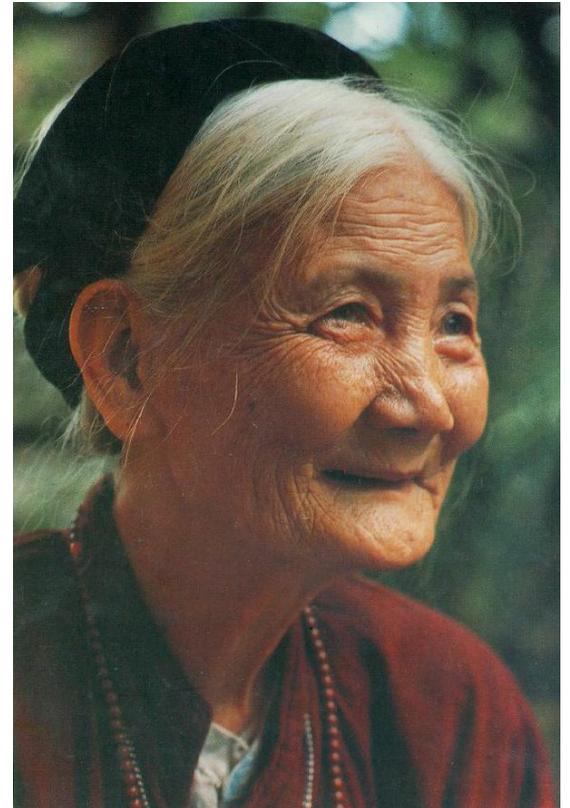
■ Both

- Foul odors
- Garbage piled up
- Emaciated pets/pets with no food or water



Diversity Awareness

- Statistics: City of Syracuse
- Onondaga County
- Refugee resettlement efforts



Basics of Communication

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- Respect
- Mirror/Match
- Reflective listening
- Verbal vs. Non-verbal communication
- Apologize

Communicating with the Elderly

- All of the previous plus:
 - Be aware of your voice and tone
(can they hear you?)
 - Be aware of lighting, print on paper
(can they see it?)
 - Check for understanding
(did they receive your message correctly?)

- Practice exercise: Communicating Cross Culturally/ Cross Generationally

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Age Related Changes: Review

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■ Potential changes that **may** occur as we age

- Neurological/Mental Status
- Increased risk for strokes,
heart attacks, falls, etc.,
- Senses decrease
- Living conditions and finances



Confidentiality

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- Referring partner will remain anonymous throughout the process unless otherwise desired
- If you think someone is not safe, call Project REACH
- Keep private things private-Who **needs** to know? i.e. 9-1-1, caregiver, family, Project REACH
- Do not share personal information, for example, with a curious neighbor who is not a caretaker or relative

Who Do I Call?



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■ 9-1-1

- Unconscious or minimally conscious
- Chest Pain, Shortness of breath
- Difficulty Seeing, Walking, Speaking
- Fallen and can't get up-don't move them
- Moderate or Severe Bleeding
- Know and follow your company's procedures

Who Do I Call?

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■ Project Reach 435-2362

- Whenever 9-1-1 has been called
- Behavioral concerns
- Physical concerns
- Environmental concerns
- Financial concerns



What Will *Project Reach* Do?

- Forms review
- Be available to discuss situations and answer questions for you
- Follow up on client referrals
- Offer assessment and referrals as needed
- If you request, give you feedback

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Remember...

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- You are NOT Expected to be Therapists or Social Workers
 - Trust Your Instincts
 - Your eyes and ears may save someone's life
 - You are **Very Important** to this Project
- ...We Thank You!

Rev: 7/15/08