The Power to Prevent Elder Abuse Is in Your Hands
• On March 2, 2011, the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging heard the testimony of legendary entertainment celebrity Mickey Rooney about his experience as a victim of exploitation and emotional abuse. He is now an advocate for seniors across the nation and encourages them to speak out about their abuse and exploitation.

• Mickey Rooney’s last words to the public audience, “Don’t let it happen to you.”

Toedtman, AARP Bulletin, April 2011 Vol. 52, No. 3
DOEA vs. DCF

Administers

• Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Program
• Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Administers

• Abuse Hotline for adults and children
• Investigations
Long Term Care Ombudsman

- DOEA program
- Protect the rights of long-term care facility residents
- Education and investigations

1-888-831-0404
Florida Statutes

Chapter 415

Chapter 825
Overview of Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

- Complex and often hidden problem
- DCF investigates and corrects through reports taken by the abuse hotline
- All citizens in Florida are mandatory reporters
Vulnerable Adults

- Unable to protect themselves due to their disability/infirmitiy.
- Person age 18 or older whose ability to perform the normal activities of daily living, and/or to provide for their own care or protection, are impaired due to a mental, emotional, long-term physical, or developmental disability or dysfunction, or brain damage, or due to the infirmities of aging.

Florida State Statutes 415.102(27) (2011)
Capacity

• Means that a vulnerable adult has sufficient understanding to make and communicate responsible decisions regarding the vulnerable adult’s person or property, including whether or not to accept protective services offered by the department.

Florida State Statutes 415.102(4) (2011)
What Are Indicators of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation?
Abuse

- Any willful act or threatened act by a relative, caregiver, or household member which causes or is likely to cause significant impairment to a vulnerable adult’s physical, mental or emotional health.

- Includes acts and omissions

Florida State Statutes 415.102 (1) (2011)
Neglect

• Failure or omission on the part of the caregiver or vulnerable adult to provide the care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the physical and mental health of a vulnerable adult.

• Failure of a caregiver or vulnerable adult to make a reasonable effort to protect a vulnerable adult from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by others.

• Repeated conduct or a single incident of carelessness which produces or could reasonably be expected to result in serious physical or psychological injury, or a substantial risk of death.

Florida State Statutes 415.102 (16) (2011)
Exploitation

- A person who stands in a position of trust and confidence with a vulnerable adult; or knows or should know that the vulnerable lacks the capacity to consent; and knowingly, by deception or intimidation, obtaining or using, or attempting to obtain or use the adult’s funds, assets, or property with the intent to temporarily or permanently deprive the adult of the use, benefit, or possession of the funds, assets, or property for the benefit of someone other than the vulnerable adult.

Florida State Statutes 415.102 (7)(a) (2011)
Perpetrators / Abusers

• Over 90 percent of the time they are family members
• May be using/abusing alcohol or other substances
• May have a poor financial situation
• May be extremely stressed
• Often lack understanding about the needs of the person they are caring for
Reporting
Barriers to reporting

• Victims find it difficult to report for themselves due to guilt, pride, shame, or fear
• Recognizing signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation is sometimes not easy
• There is often a lack of knowledge of mandatory reporting requirements
Reporting

Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How?
• Making a good report requires...
  • Understanding of terms and reporting requirements
  • Clear communication
  • Detailed information
Reporting

- Telephone
  - **1-800-96-ABUSE** (1-800-962-2873)
- Online
  - [https://abuse-report-bc.dcf.state.fl.us/abusewebreport/home.aspx](https://abuse-report-bc.dcf.state.fl.us/abusewebreport/home.aspx)
    (You must have JavaScript and Popups enabled to complete a report.)
- Fax
  - **1-800-914-0004**
Hotline Commitment to Service

All calls are CONFIDENTIAL!
REMEMBER –
Everyone is a mandatory reporter of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
CONTACT NUMBERS

To learn more – 1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337)

To report abuse – 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)

INSERT AAA contact info