

BULLYING and Older Adults



Protecting *all* Pennsylvanians

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**BULLYING
HURTS!**

Attorney General Kathleen G. Kane

www.attorneygeneral.gov



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.**



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Why People Bully

- **Physical pain**
- **Disease**
- **Loneliness**
- **Fear**
- **Vulnerability**

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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.**

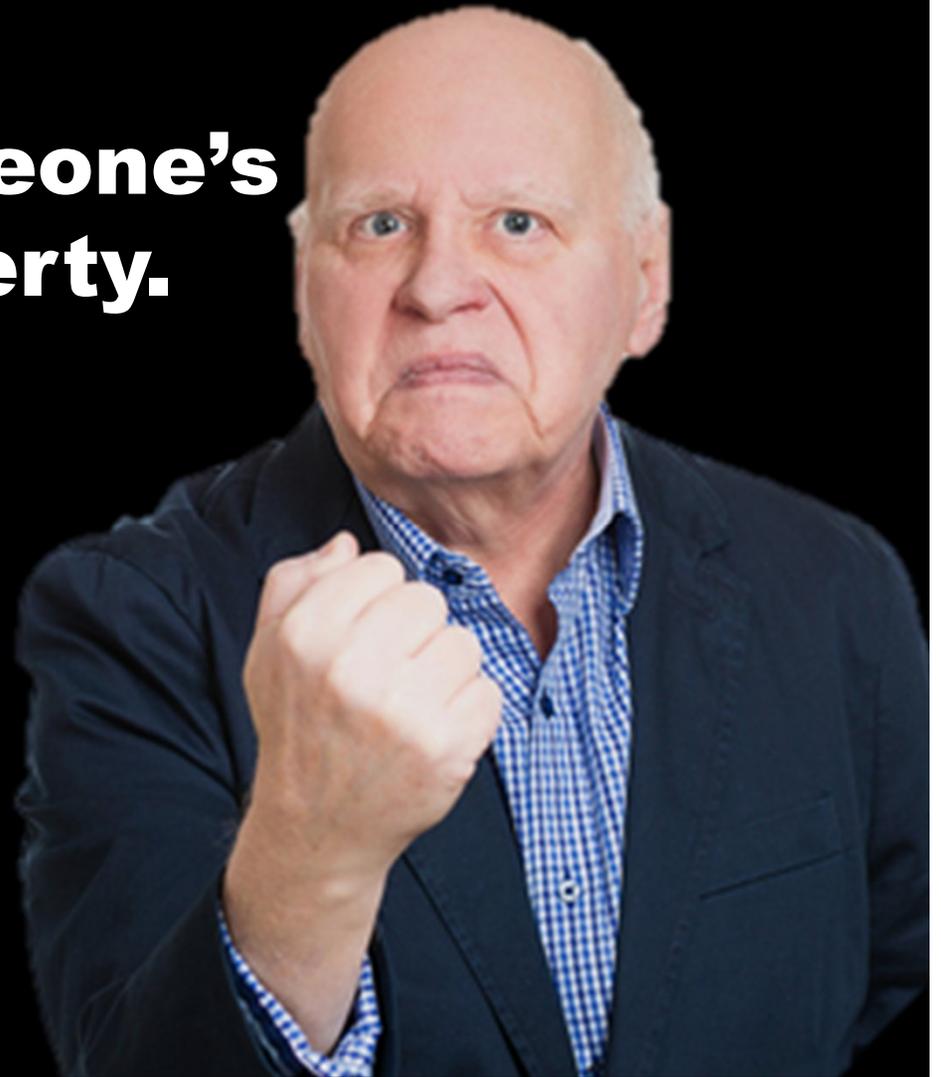
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Physical bullying

- **Harm to someone's body or property.**



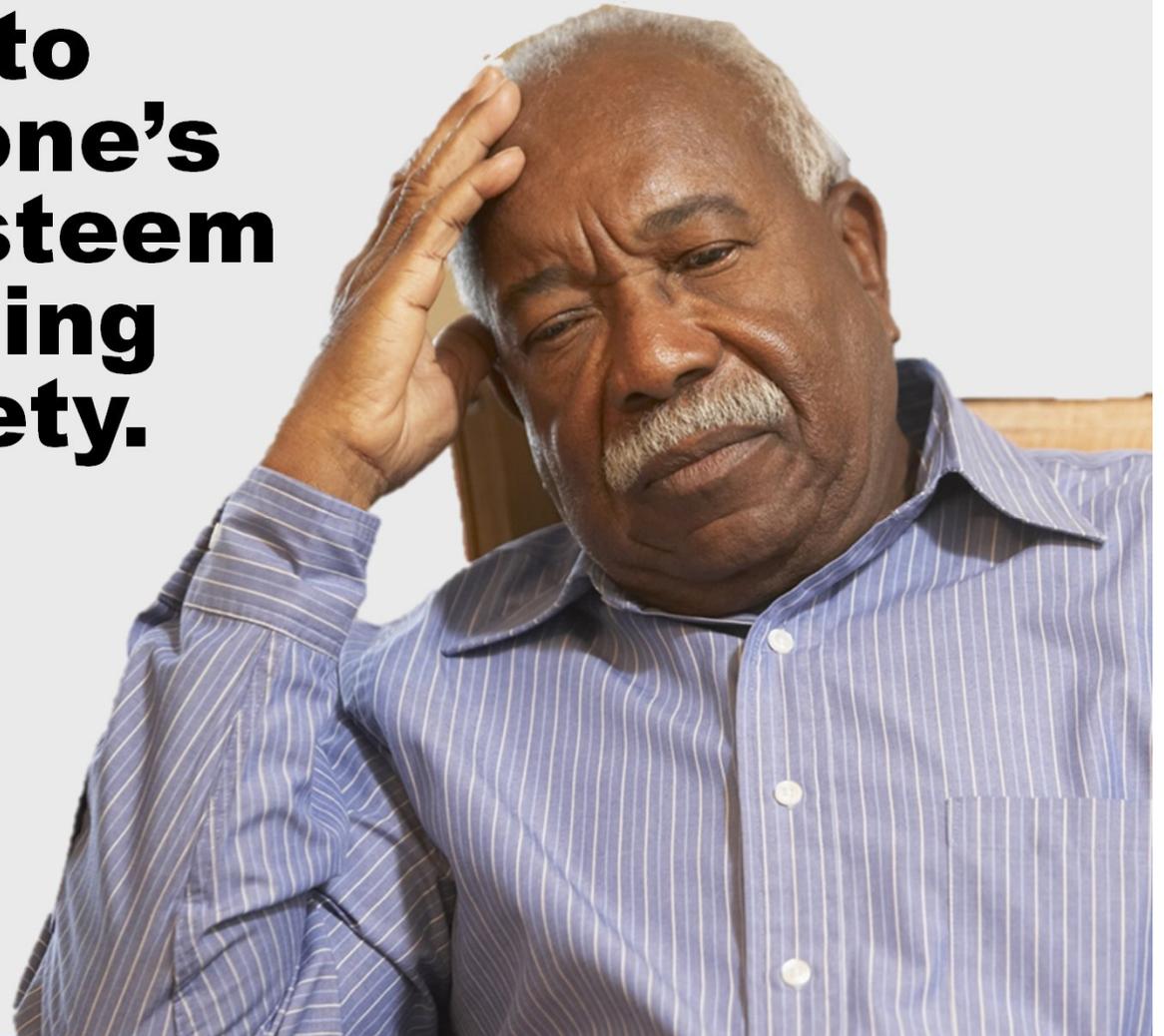
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Emotional Bullying

- **Harm to someone's self-esteem or feeling of safety.**



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Social bullying

- **Harm to someone's group acceptance.**
- **Exclusion from groups and activities.**

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Where does Adult Bullying Occur?

- **Senior centers**
- **Adult day health centers**
- **Senior housing**

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Where does Adult Bullying Occur?

- **Retirement apartments**
- **Nursing homes**
- **Private homes**



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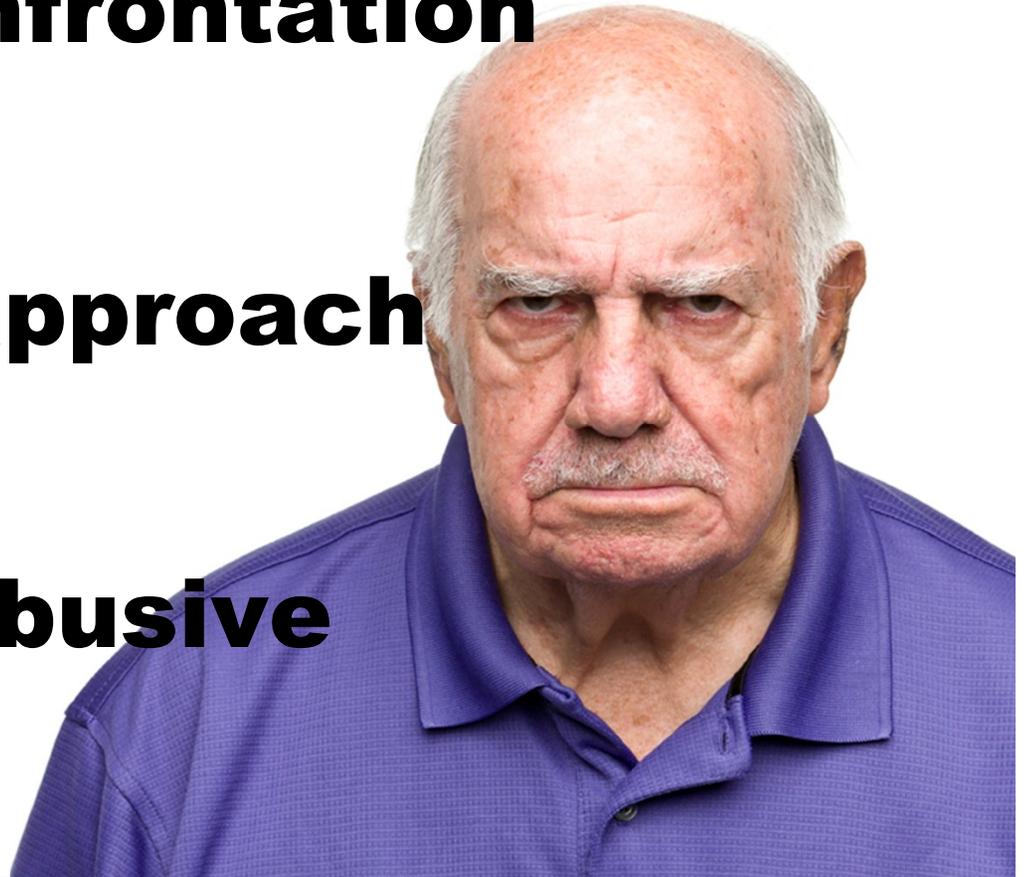


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Gender Differences:

Men

- **Direct confrontation**
- **Physical approach**
- **Verbally abusive**





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Gender Differences: *Women*

- **Gossiping/Rumors**
- **Spitefulness**
- **Exclusion**



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Bullying Incidents

- **Naming calling/teasing**
- **Gossiping**
- **Loud arguments**
- **Being bossed around**



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Bullying Incidents

- **Financial Exploitation**
- **Constant complaining**
- **Pestering**
- **Aggression**



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Bullying may include

- **Enforcing seating and saving seats for their social cliques at mealtimes and events.**



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- **Criticize**
- **Ridicule**
- **Lie about those who don't meet their acceptance standards.**



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- **Take and sometimes destroy property to display their power and harass victims.**



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

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



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Characteristics of People who Bully:

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



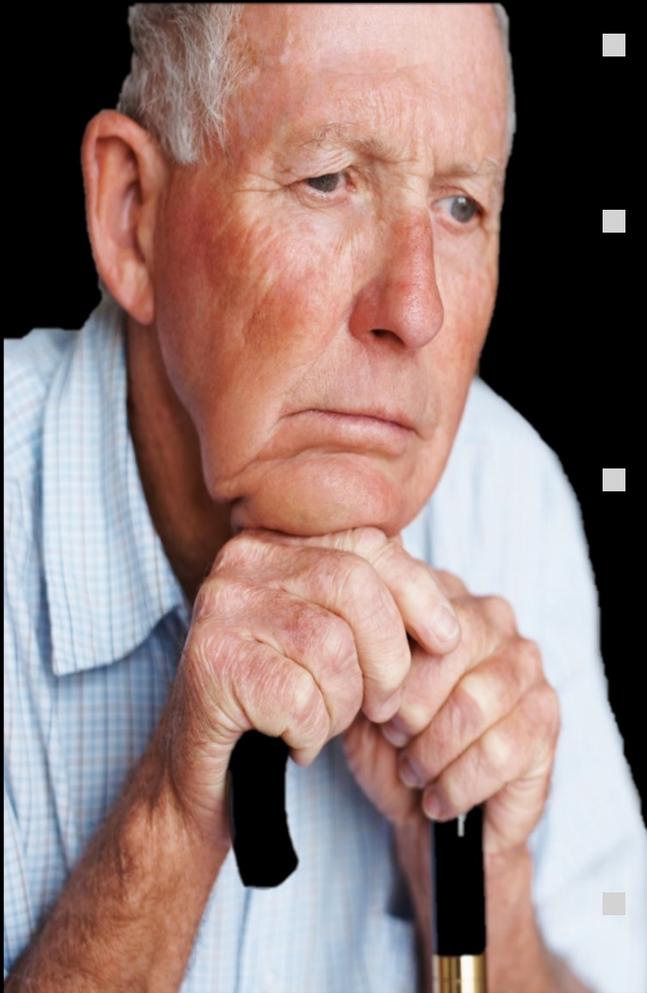
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■ **Warning Signs from People who are being Bullied:**

- **Self isolation**
- **Avoidance of areas or activities.**
- **Vague complaints
“They don’t like me”
or “They won’t let
me.”**
- **Depressed mood**



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Reasons People Bully Others

- **Depression.**
- **Medication side effects.**
- **Cognitive issues.**
- **Substance abuse.**
- **Sense of power.**
- **Learned behavior.**

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Actions You Can Take

- **Work through feelings.**
- **Be honest and open.**
- **Share feelings and insights.**
- **Balance your own needs.**
- **Encourage others.**
- **Preventative approach.**



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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.**

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- **Bullying is not the fault of the victim.**



**RESPECT YOURSELF ENOUGH TO
WALK AWAY FROM ANYTHING
THAT NO LONGER SERVES YOU,
GROWS YOU, OR MAKES YOU
HAPPY**

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Make a Report to...

- **Administration**
- **Office of Aging**
- **Family Members**
- **Private Attorney**
- **Police**
- **Office of Attorney General**



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REPORT ASAP:

You are Not Alone!

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We can find a friend in one another.



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REPORT BULLYING
Elder Abuse Unit
1-866-623-2137

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