

# The Ligne Aide Abus Aînés is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year!

**Have you witnessed a situation of elder abuse?** Elder abuse is a complex reality that can be present anywhere, but often stays silent, mostly unrecognized and unreported.

Some clues can point to an abusive situation (e.g., bruising, unexplained injuries, sudden weight loss, withdrawal, depression, unusual bank transactions, disappearance of valuable objects, etc.).

However, not all indicators are necessarily related to abuse. The situation must always be assessed.



Whether you are an elderly person in an abusive situation, a loved one, a staff member or a witness who is worried about a potentially abusive situation, by calling the Ligne Aide Abus Aînés, you can count on a professional team to listen, provide support and information, and direct you toward the appropriate resources for your situation.

## **Scenario**

You met Suzanne at a leisure centre for seniors in your neighbourhood two years ago and have become friends with her. For a few weeks now, you have noticed that she has often been absent from activities that you both usually attend. The last time you saw her, she seemed worried and tired. You are worried for Suzanne, but you're hesitant to talk to her about it.

## **Advice on what to do if you think an elderly person is in an abusive situation:**

- Listen. Do not judge or quickly jump to conclusions.
- Encourage the person to assert themselves. People are more inclined to act when they prepare their plan themselves.
- Avoid taking control of the situation without the consent of the person you are trying to support. If they do not want help, respect their choice.
- Avoid showing frustration if the elder insists that everything is okay. People in an abusive situation sometimes look to protect the person abusing them because it is a person who they love unconditionally and from whom they do not want to be separated.
- Avoid confronting the person you suspect is the abuser. There could be retaliation against the elder.
- Ask if there is someone that the elder would like to talk to (a doctor, pastor, social worker, financial planner, nurse at the residence, etc.).
- Offer to research local services that are available in their area..

*Keep in mind that you do not have to solve the problem.  
You can simply ask the elderly person :*

**“Is everything okay? Do you want to talk about it? What can I do to help you?”**

**Do you think you are in an abusive situation or have witnessed one? Don't stay in isolation!  
Don't hesitate to call the Ligne Aide Abus Aînés to talk about what you're  
going through or have seen.**



The Ligne AAA is a provincial helpline specialized in elder abuse. Since October 1, 2010, it has offered free confidential, anonymous, bilingual and accessible services across Quebec, 7 days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., all year long. Since its opening, the Ligne AAA has taken more than 20,000 calls from the population. An average of 35% of the calls taken by Ligne AAA come from elders themselves, 35% from a family member and 10% from friends or neighbours.

**If you fear for the life, safety or well-being of a person, call 911 right away.**