

# Neighbors

## Vulnerable seniors encountering abuse, neglect, exploitation

The legal protection of seniors in America stems from a desire to defend those who are most vulnerable. By recognizing risk factors and warning signs for abuse, neglect and exploitation, loved ones more readily can prevent potential dangers.

In Kentucky, the terms “abuse,” “neglect” and “exploitation” are defined in KRS 209.020.

Generally, abuse includes infliction though an act that results in physical pain or injury, whereas neglect is the deprivation of resources or services, either by the individual’s own inability or through the irresponsibility of a caregiver.

Exploitation, on the other hand, is the act of taking advantage of another person through deception or intimidation. Whereas abuse and neglect usually result in a physical harm, exploitation usually results in a deprivation of assets.

The key to protecting seniors from abuse, neglect and exploitation is to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of victimization.

It is also important to understand that while focus is often on younger individuals such as family members, neighbors or caregivers, seniors also can be the culprit. Sometimes that victimization is due to a senior’s cognitive decline, while other times the offender acts badly while fully aware of his or her actions.

Unfortunately, there are numerous factors that can result in significant risk for abuse and neglect. Poverty, particularly for those with limited (or distant) family relationships may lead to reliance upon unscrupulous people or businesses. Those who are dependent upon others for mobility, care and social interactions, especially if they also have diminished capacity, become isolated, creating an easy target for abuse and neglect.

Unsafe relationships can occur at any age and diminished capacity often factors into both the perpetrator and the victim.

Warning signs of abuse or neglect can be as straightforward as recurring or unexplained injuries, weight

loss or fear of the caregiver or partner. However, less obvious signs are also often indicators of serious underlying

problems: hoarding, limited contact with “outside” individuals (even self-imposed isolation) and serious consequences from poor decision-making (such as moving untrustworthy

individuals into the home or suddenly making large non-sensical purchases).

Exploitation, on the other hand, can be more difficult to notice as there are rarely physical signs like with abuse or neglect. In many cases, the exploitation may not even be recognized as exploitative by either the perpetrator or the victim.

Loved ones residing with a senior can be a good way to keep the senior at home. However, individuals residing with the senior while living on the senior’s income without providing services in exchange is exploitation. Similarly, using the senior to obtain prescription drugs or stealing the senior’s identity to make purchases or obtain loans are acts of exploitation.

The best way to prevent abuse, neglect or exploitation of a loved one is to stay connected to the senior as well as other members of the senior’s family or friends. Power of attorney documents can ensure that appropriate loved ones have the ability to check bank accounts for concerning transactions and to keep an eye on digitized medical records that may not be otherwise mentioned.

Kentucky is a mandatory reporting state, which means that every person has a duty to report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation. If an issue is suspected, call Adult Protective Services through their toll-free reporting hotline at 877-597-2331.

Seniors, through increasing vulnerability, are at great risk for abuse, neglect, and exploitation. However, by recognizing the risk factors and warning signs, and by staying diligent, loved ones can ensure that seniors are protected.



CYNTHIA GRIFFIN



Col. Lynn Ashton, left, presents a grant award letter to Ann Borders, president of Project LEARN Board of Directors.

## Project L.E.A.R.N. receives grant

Project L.E.A.R.N. Inc. received a grant from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels in the amount of \$5,000 to purchase new chairs and tables for the all-purpose room.

Project L.E.A.R.N. Inc. serves adults

with intellectual disabilities by providing a day program at the facility at 225 College St. in Elizabethtown.

HOKC awarded \$2.5 million in grants supporting 333 nonprofits, impacting more than 4 million Kentuckians. Grants

are made possible through donations from Kentucky colonels from throughout the commonwealth and around the world who choose to exercise the honor of being named a Kentucky Colonel in a meaningful way.

## Garden Club members take field trip to Lancaster



Garden Club of Elizabethtown members Judy Quire, Glenda Price, Marsha Frey, Charlotte Campbell, Joan Radford, Phyllis Dickerson, Sherry Bruckner, Debbie Skaggs, Joyce Effinger and Rita Leake, gather during a trip to Lancaster.



Joanna Kirby, past president of the Garden Club of Kentucky, flower farm owner and avid gardener, selects flowers from her yard to create flower arrangements with club members.

## Neal receives scholarship from E'town Lions



Reaghan Neal receives a \$1,500 scholarship check from Elizabethtown Lions Club President Lion Willie Oden and is pictured with her mother, Kimberly Neal.



Reaghan Neal was recognized by the Elizabethtown Lions Club as one of three recipients of the Elizabethtown Lions Club scholarship at the meeting on June 17. Neal is a 2025 graduate of Central Hardin High School and EC3 and graduated with two associate degrees. Neal will attend Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she was accepted into the honors’ college and will study communication and pre-med.

## Area students named to McKendree Dean's List

Jaydan Burnett of Payneville and Jakob Fredrickson of Elizabethtown were named to the McKendree University Dean’s

List for the spring 2025 semester.

To be named to the dean’s list, a student must earn a GPA of 3.60 or higher.

### TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is **Saturday, Aug. 2** the 214th day of 2025. There are 151 days left in the year.

**On this day in 1790**, the first United States Census began under the supervision of Thomas Jefferson. A total of 3,929,214 people were counted in the census, nearly 700,000 of whom were enslaved.

**In 1873**, inventor Andrew S. Hallidie successfully tested a cable car he had designed for the city of San Francisco.

**In 1876**, frontiersman “Wild Bill” Hickok was shot and killed while playing poker at a saloon in Deadwood, Dakota Territory, by Jack McCall, who was later hanged.

**In 1921**, a jury in Chicago acquitted seven former members of the Chicago White Sox baseball team and two others of conspiring to defraud the public in the notorious “Black Sox” scandal, though they would later be banned from Major League Baseball for life by

Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis.

**In 1923**, the 29th president of the United States, Warren G. Harding, died in San Francisco. Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president.

**In 1934**, German President Paul von Hindenburg died, paving the way for Adolf Hitler’s complete takeover.

**In 1945**, President Harry S. Truman, Soviet leader Josef Stalin and Britain’s new prime minister, Clement Attlee, concluded the Potsdam conference.

**In 1974**, former White House counsel John W. Dean III was sentenced to one to four years in prison for obstruction of justice in the Watergate cover-up. Dean ended up serving four months.

**In 1985**, 137 people were killed when Delta Air Lines Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed while attempting to land at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

**In 1990**, Iraq invaded Kuwait, seizing control of the oil-rich emirate. The

Iraqis were later driven out by the U.S. in Operation Desert Storm.

**Today’s Birthdays:** Author Isabel Allende is 83. Actor Butch Patrick (TV: “The Munsters”) is 72. Rock music producer/drummer Butch Vig is 70. Actor Mary-Louise Parker is 61. Filmmaker Kevin Smith is 55. Actor Sam Worthington is 49. Actor Edward Furlong is 48. Actor Lily Gladstone is 39. Singer Charli XCX is 33. Olympic swimming gold medalist Simone Manuel is 29.