



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY MARKS ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH WITH CAMPAIGN *Silence Isn't Golden When It Comes to Harm and Theft Directed at the Elderly*

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) handled more than 8,000 cases of abuse against elders and dependent adults last year, through its [Adult Protective Services](#) unit (APS). This year, APS is on a pace to exceed that by 600 cases.

“As our population ages, the number of elderly and disabled persons who could become victims of neglect, physical and financial abuse will increase,” said County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman, Pam Slater-Price. “To fight back, we need residents to be more aware of this problem, and know there is something they can do about it.”

The County’s “Silence Isn’t Golden” campaign emphasizes that people must not assume someone else will report abuse. It is up to everyone to protect seniors and others from potential danger and distress. It is up to everyone to report any suspicion that an older or disabled adult is being harmed in some way. The campaign, which features the images and voices of elderly adults, will run in movie theaters, on television and on radio.

Despite the large number of cases handled in this county, many more older and dependent adults suffer abuse that goes unreported to APS or law enforcement. National statistics show that only 1 in 14 elder abuse situations is reported.

“Elder abuse is not just sad, it is a crime,” said Pam Smith, Director of [Aging and Independence Services](#), which runs APS. “We’re here to make sure people know that they have a role to play in preventing these tragedies, and the ‘Silence Isn’t Golden’ campaign is one of the tools we are using to get this information to people throughout our county.”

Elder abuse can be reported 24 hours a day/7 days a week at (800) 510-2020. The identity of callers can be kept confidential.

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