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# Seniors Leading Change: *A Future Us Initiative*

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How to Build an Elder Abuse Prevention Network



**CANADIAN NETWORK** for  
the **PREVENTION** of **ELDER ABUSE**

**RÉSEAU CANADIEN** pour la **PRÉVENTION**  
du **MAUVAIS TRAITEMENT** des **AÎNÉS**



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Land Acknowledgment: CNPEA's office is located on the unceded and ancestral territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

This toolkit is part of CNPEA's *Future Us* national engagement strategy. Discover *Future Us* at [www.futureus.cnpea.ca](http://www.futureus.cnpea.ca)

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The logo for the Government of Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a serif font with a small Canadian flag icon above the letter "a".

# Consultations

This toolkit reflects consultations with existing Elder Abuse Prevention Networks, advocates and researchers who have contributed as advisors to the project. CNPEA wishes to thank everyone who participated, including members from:

- Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council (AEAAC)
- British Columbia Association of Community Response Networks (BC CRN)
- Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario (EAPO)
- Northwest Territory Seniors' Society (NWT Seniors' Society)
- Prevention Elder Abuse Manitoba (PEAM)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NLNPEA), SeniorsNL
- It's Not Right! Community of Practice members:
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  - Wanda Roberts, Program Head - Health Programs, Aurora College

The *Seniors Leading Change* toolkit also acknowledges and benefits from earlier work done by:

- The National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly: [CCR: Coordinated Community Response to Abuse of Seniors - NICE Online Resources \(nicenet.ca\)](#)
- Alberta Seniors and Housing, Strategic Planning Branch - [Addressing elder abuse: a toolkit for developing a coordinated community response - Open Government \(alberta.ca\)](#)

**A note on language:** Language used to describe experiences of elder abuse, and personal identities across communities, is complex and evolving. The language in this document will not apply to everyone and you may identify with or use different terms. Communities should discuss terminology as part of the process of coming to common understandings and approaches.

We are using the term “elder abuse” throughout the toolkit, recognizing that the World Health Organization and many countries use this term. The Government of Canada has recently adopted the use of “mistreatment of older adults”, which is also used in Québec. We recognize that “elder” is different from the term “Elder” as it is used in Indigenous and collectivist communities.

We refer to “older people”, “older adults”, and occasionally “seniors” interchangeably and without an age specification. The term “regional” is used interchangeably with Provincial/ Territorial.

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	5
Section 1: Reflection .....	8
1.1 Big Picture: We Are All Social Change Agents .....	8
1.2 Theory of Change: Walk the Talk of Prevention .....	8
1.3. Guiding Questions .....	11
Section 1 Infographic .....	12
Section 2: Action .....	13
2.1 Seniors Leading Change .....	13
2.2 Starting a Network .....	13
2.3 Purpose and Practice .....	17
2.4 Develop a Shared Understanding of Elder Abuse and Ageism .....	20
Section 2 Infographic .....	22
Section 3: Growth .....	23
Section 3 Infographic .....	24
Addendum .....	25
Resources .....	27

# Introduction

The Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (CNPEA) and partners launched *Future Us: A Roadmap to Elder Abuse Prevention* in March 2022. This national strategy sets out three goals to guide actions across the country:

- 1. Prioritize elder abuse** in every community.
- 2. Establish and support** elder abuse prevention networks at local, regional and national levels.
- 3. Teach everyone** to recognize warning signs of abuse and neglect, how to respond safely and effectively and where to refer in the community to find help.

With funding from ESDC's New Horizons for Seniors Program, CNPEA developed this toolkit to support Goal 2 to build a stronger network infrastructure across Canada.

## **The *Seniors Leading Change* toolkit**

This toolkit has been developed to support individuals and organizations who want to start an Elder Abuse Prevention Network (EAPN) and/or for existing EAPNs that want to expand their membership, activities and reach. Each section also ends with a summary infographic. A section on Advocacy and Strategies has been included to help support and coordinate a pan-Canadian movement in elder abuse prevention.

The toolkit is organized into 3 main sections:

- 1. Reflection: Orienting Ourselves to Prevention**
- 2. Action: Starting a Local or Regional Network**
- 3. Growth: Advocacy and Strategies**

## Why do we need Elder Abuse Prevention Networks?

Elder Abuse Prevention Networks (EAPNs) provide critical infrastructure to support prevention work and to build toward a pan-Canadian response of educated and engaged citizens. EAPNs are groups of people who organize to address the issues of elder abuse and ageism in their community. The networks include a mix of people of all ages and from a variety of sectors. They work together to address elder abuse and ageism in their community.

Think of EAPNs as essential elements in a circulatory system that can reach into all communities, operating at local, regional and national levels to facilitate a steady flow of information, ideas and innovation. At the local level, networks coordinate a community response that does not yet exist between formal and informal responders. Provincial / Territorial (P/T) networks play a vital role in connecting and mentoring local networks.

Six jurisdictions already have a P/T network, and in Québec, the government funds regional coordinators to support community coordination and engagement. There are more local networks in those regions. As the national network, CNPEA connects and supports the work of prevention across the country. From all three levels, we are working toward the common goal to end elder abuse.

### There is a Strong Relationship Between Elder Abuse and Ageism

“Ageism refers to “the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age.”

— World Health Organization, *Global Report on Ageism* (2020)

Ageism is a form of prejudice that dehumanizes older people and justifies abusive behaviours against them. Ageism leads to inadequate policies and services for older people and to overlooking consequences of discrimination, abuse, neglect and social isolation on older individuals, their families and communities. Elder abuse is not just an individual issue, it is the most harmful manifestation of ageism.

## Systemic Age Discrimination is a Barrier to Prevention

Ageism at a societal level ignores the safety and wellbeing of older people until there is a crisis. A primarily crisis-oriented response adds pressure to an already overburdened healthcare and social service system at a time when the population is aging.

Currently, EAPNs do the heavy lifting of trying to shift the community response toward prevention with little recognition or funding support.

CNPEA recognizes the dedication, passion and leadership of EAPN members however meaningful change cannot happen without ongoing investments in prevention. Almost all local EAPNs function as strictly volunteer initiatives despite cascading social impacts and high economic costs of elder abuse to the broader society. Relying on volunteerism to challenge entrenched social norms that enable elder abuse is a form of exploitation and a type of structural violence that causes harm. Volunteers cannot be relied on solely to tackle such deep-rooted issues.

Despite the lack of funding, EAPN members persist because they are committed to the possibility of a society that values and respects older people in communities that are safe for everyone. Networks provide essential services of public education and prevention. They are key actors of social change at community level.



**LEARN MORE**

*Canadian Coalition Against Ageism*



# Section 1: Reflection

## ORIENTING OURSELVES TO PREVENTION

### In this section:

- 1.1 Big Picture: We Are All Social Change Agents
- 1.2 A Theory of Change: Walk the Talk of Prevention
- 1.3 Guiding Questions



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### 1.1 Big Picture: We Are All Social Change Agents

The big picture of *Future Us* is to seed the country with small groups (networks) of committed people who wish to contribute to elder abuse prevention.

Too many people feel helpless and alone in the face of large and complex social issues. Professionals are experiencing high rates of burnout and moral distress. The idea that we can change the world through our everyday actions may seem naïve, but complexity theory tells us that when individual actions aggregate, collective impact can be achieved. By working together as a network with purpose, you can help to transform the way we address ageism and elder abuse.

### 1.2 Theory of Change: Walk the Talk of Prevention

To engage the broadest audience in the prevention of elder abuse, your network must have a clear commitment to social equity, diversity and inclusion, that includes addressing ageism.

Build a network membership that is diverse, where all members are equally valued and respected. In the most practical terms, EAPN members are challenged to walk the talk of prevention and non-violence and to engage in an ongoing learning process to attract and engage people of all ages, in many different kinds of communities, that may be ethno-cultural, religious, geographical or issues based.

## Social equity is a common goal that:

- Aims to achieve fairness and justice for all people and communities in social and environmental matters;
- Recognizes that systemic inequalities affect people's access to opportunities and outcomes, and works to eliminate them;
- Involves the participation and representation of all people and communities in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

### A New Framework

In 2021, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) published a final report titled *Reclaiming Power and Place* with recommendations that include a call for a new framework in human services that prioritizes relationships and the voices of Indigenous survivor-victims. Indigenous peoples are in every community. If you are starting a network, you can show respect and a commitment to change by creating space to engage and consult with Indigenous groups and leaders as a first step.

The MMIWG framework is proposed here as the overall framework to help guide the creation / evolution of EAPNs. That framework prioritizes relationships and the voices of Indigenous survivor-victims as a step toward Truth and Reconciliation. The implementation of the framework has broader implications for the human services system that can benefit everyone working in the field and for society as a whole.

By prioritizing the quality of our relationships, and by respecting the wisdom that comes with life experience, EAPNs can create a foundation for working toward a more just world that values and protects all forms of life and all people.



### LEARN MORE

"...relationships are key to both understanding the causes of violence and to making changes to end violence."

*Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*

## Implementing the Framework

There are different strands of social change theory and practice that can be woven together to operationalize the framework with a prevention orientation.

**Community development** is “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.” (United Nations)



### LEARN MORE

*Engaging People with Lived Experience and Community Participation as the Basis for Integrated Community Care.* TransForm Integrated Community Care

**Collective care** views the welfare and emotional health of members as a shared responsibility of the group. Wellbeing is not just an individual matter, but something that can be fostered and supported within the network.

**Cultural humility** is a lifelong process of self-reflection, self-critique, and commitment to understanding and respecting different points of view. It involves engaging with others humbly, authentically, and from a place of genuine curiosity and learning.

**Ethical Space** brings respect and trust for different kinds of knowledge. It is a way to address power imbalances in groups where only some kinds of information, knowledge and experience are valued.

**Trauma -and violence- informed principles** are the “how-to” increase equity as an individual and as organizations and communities. TVI cultivates cultural humility.



### WATCH

Dr. Colleen Varcoe talk about becoming TVI: *Trauma- and Violence-Informed Care - EQUIP Health Care | Research to Improve Health Equity*



### LEARN MORE

*Trauma -and Violence- Informed Approaches to Policy and Practice.* Public Health Agency of Canada

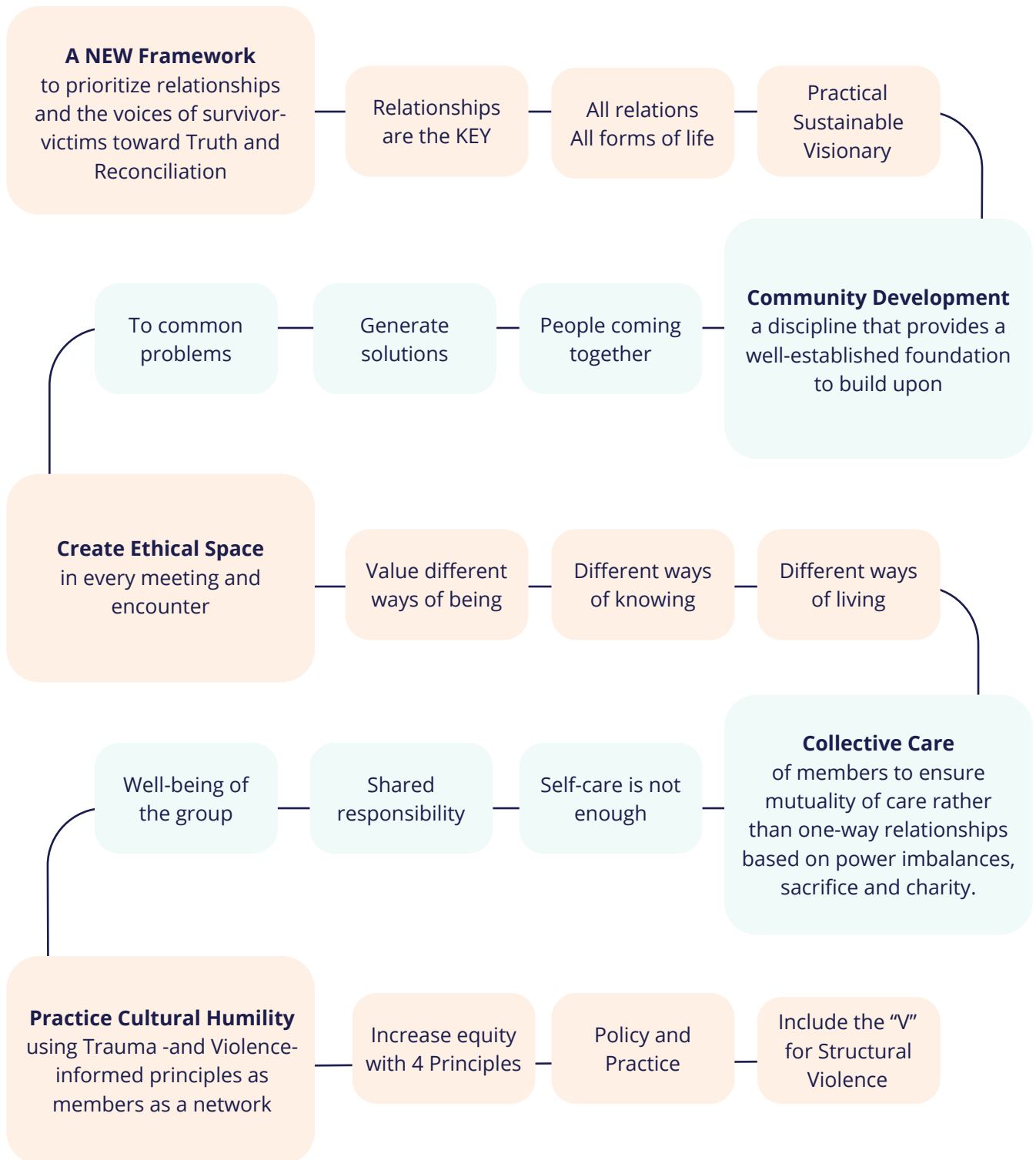
## 1.3 Guiding Questions

- ✓ Are older people included in the leadership?
- ✓ Are we welcoming? How do we welcome people to the network?
- ✓ Who are the Indigenous organizations/groups that we should meet and consult with as we begin to organize?
- ✓ Do our meetings create ethical space for members to share ideas and stories, offer support and dialogue that can hold divergent viewpoints?
- ✓ How do we demonstrate care for members?
- ✓ Can we commit to growing our membership to reflect the rich diversity of our community?

# Section 1 Infographic

## Orienting EAPNs to Prevention

Be the Change | Walk the Talk



## Section 2: Action

### STARTING AN ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION NETWORK

#### In this section:

- 2.1 Seniors Leading Change
- 2.2 Starting a Network
- 2.3 Purpose and Practice
- 2.4 Develop a Shared Understanding of Elder Abuse and Ageism



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### 2.1 Seniors Leading Change

The title of the toolkit acknowledges the pervasiveness of ageist attitudes that can result in “doing for” seniors in the name of “doing good”. Addressing our own internalized ageist beliefs requires reflection and a willingness to talk about it, to do and be better.

EAPNs can foster age-inclusion by recruiting and valuing older people as leaders, mentors and contributors from the very start, at the same time recognizing what younger members bring to the table. These intergenerational relationships help to nurture an abuse-free community by learning how to work collectively.

Older people volunteer for a mix of altruistic, social, health-related, and personal reasons. Their involvement enriches social change efforts and strengthens communities. A guiding principle for networks should be “nothing about us without us”. EAPNs are an excellent vehicle to reduce social isolation by engaging people of all ages in socially beneficial and purposeful activities.

### 2.2 Starting a Network

A network can start with a single statement and a question:

“I am concerned about elder abuse in my community. Who else shares my concern?”

If even just one person responds, you have a starting place. Look for others who see the need for a community response. Members may be professionals, homemakers, educators, advocates, and researchers, retired or working.

## Elder Abuse Is Not a Uniform Experience

Take time to look at the demographics of your community. The network will be stronger with a membership that includes people from diverse communities and groups that are often marginalized.

The experience of elder abuse isn't the same for everyone. Take care to recognize intersectional inequities and to address the different experiences of people in your community.

Start a conversation to discover common concerns and interests. Find out what others may be working on to address elder abuse and invite them to join forces.

Are there Indigenous organizations in your community? Develop connections, partnerships and network with Indigenous groups as a first step for a whole community response to elder abuse and ageism that acknowledges the need to act toward Truth and Reconciliation.



### LEARN MORE

[How to be an Indigenous Ally](#)

## Identify a Core Group

Almost all existing local EAPNs are volunteer groups, usually started by professionals who work with seniors and see an urgent need. Include older people in the planning and development of the network from the very start. If you are an older person initiating the network, look to your peers and to professionals who are well positioned to support the development process.

Organizations that are most impacted by elder abuse can provide a “home base” for the network development such as family counselling services, healthcare providers, victim services, police, retirement homes etc. There are advantages to having an organization act as a champion to get things going for your EAPN. They can provide some infrastructure such as a place to meet, a staff person to chair or take notes, access to a zoom platform, etc.

## Hosting and Hospitality

You might decide to host an event to invite a broader group of people to learn about and help grow the network. In planning the event, talk about how to create a truly welcoming space.

*Consider this:*

- ✓ Is your meeting space accessible for people with disabilities?
- ✓ Is the meeting space on a public transit route?
- ✓ Is there parking?
- ✓ Will there be food and refreshments?
- ✓ Have you done outreach with associations representing diverse older people?

A community event can be done inexpensively by using a free space in a library or community centre.

## **Who to Invite**

Think of individuals and organizations that are most likely to be concerned about elder abuse:

- Any group working with seniors on a regular basis (senior centres, meals on wheels, men's sheds, etc.)
- Those working in the field of gender-based violence and elder abuse (shelters, justice partners, victim services)
- Private and public sector organizations who serve older clients (banks, pharmacies, etc.)
- Financial advisors, lawyers, notaries
- Service providers who work with older people in sectors such as mental health, addictions, housing, counselling, and other social services
- Educators who may be providing public education on social issues
- Groups that focus on healthy aging (Age-Friendly Communities, Retired Persons Associations)
- Disability groups, 2SLGBTQ+ groups, newcomer associations
- Indigenous members / leaders in the community

## **Topics to discuss**

- Outline the purpose of the network and the goal of prevention
- Provide information about what is known about the scope and nature of elder abuse **See: [Seniors Leading Change Infographic](#)**
- Make it personal, share reasons for being involved – why it is important to you
- Illustrate how your network is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion
- Show how a network benefits the community
- Identify actions / activities to raise awareness about elder abuse in the community
- Identify referral agencies that can provide help
- Ask people to join!



## When starting a community conversation, be prepared to encounter a variety of responses

**Aware** of elder abuse, but doesn't always know what to do about it:

- ✓ Make the case that they can do something meaningful by learning about the issue and becoming a network member.

**Unaware** of elder abuse because it often takes place behind closed doors and is under-reported:

- ✓ Share information about elder abuse. A one-page handout is a great tool that can provide basic facts. If you have local stats, that is even better.

**Resistant/In Denial** that elder abuse is happening in the community because of the stigma and shame attached to the issue.

- ✓ Share that elder abuse happens in all communities and it is preventable. If the denial persists, don't try to convince them. Focus on working with people who share your concern.

### **Building Relationships is Slow Work**

The budding EAPN will prioritize the building of relationships and the voices and stories of older people and diverse community members. It takes time to grow the necessary trust that allows people to work together effectively. A network can start on actions right away, but the quality of the meetings, conversations and decision-making should be considered and reflected upon at every step as the network grows. Members in established networks have estimated that it takes 3-5 years to mature.

As a society, we are impatient with the process side of collective work and often want to go straight to action. One of the downsides of being so action-oriented is that many groups struggle with only having a few people who do all the work while other members check out, are unsure about, or don't have a clear role to play, or the ability to have influence.

Everyone has something important to contribute – and we need to be open to all contributions. Too often, people don't recognize their gifts or believe they are of value. This may be especially true for older members who have lost confidence under the negative impact of ageism that feels like being set aside or made invisible.

Set an expectation that everyone can make a contribution and that all contributions are valued. Name, acknowledge and celebrate the many kinds of gifts that members bring.

## 2.3 Purpose and Practice

The explicit purpose of the network is the prevention of elder abuse and ageism.

The practice is not just about the work that is done to educate and engage the community but also the internal work of attracting and retaining members and growing the network.

Decide together the concrete aspects of the network; how often you will meet, where the meetings will take place and how you will create agendas. It is not uncommon that some people will want to formalize the network right away with Terms of Reference, but it is also okay to work informally and to take time to allow the network to gel. Talk about how decisions will be made and how leadership can be shared among members as a strategy to avoid the pitfalls of having a single leader that the network depends upon to keep going.



### LEARN MORE

*[A Practical Guide for Consensus-Based Decision Making](#)*

## Creating Agendas

You will need to strike a balance between taking time to build relationships and getting to action. Split your agenda between process / discussion and action items.

### Agenda - Process

#### 1. Potential Discussions:

- ✓ prioritize relationships in the group – how will you do that?
- ✓ create ethical space at every meeting – who speaks, who is heard?
- ✓ collective care – how does the group care for its members?
- ✓ develop a practice of being trauma-and violence informed – what principles need attention?
- ✓ community development – how do you engage different groups in the community?

#### 2. Learn/Talk about:

- ✓ Ageism and how it shows up in your life, in your relationships and in your community. Start the discussion by reflecting on member experiences of aging, how they think, feel and act about getting older and the ways that age determines how one is treated.
- ✓ Elder abuse – see the section below: [Develop a Shared Understanding of Elder Abuse](#)

### Agenda - Action

**Internal Actions:** How does the network act as a group? You can develop simple, concrete practices on each of the topics discussed above.

For example, agree to give time for each person to speak without being interrupted. Find ways to share the time so that dominant voices learn to make space for others.

**External Actions:** What will the network do in the community?

EAPNs do not usually provide direct services but are more of a coordinating, collaborative entity. Activities may include:

- ✓ Meeting and partnering with the local government to inform them about the issues. Ask for their support in advancing a prevention agenda.
- ✓ Training and supporting facilitators to deliver public education about ageism and elder abuse.
- ✓ Embrace the *Future Us* goal to teach everyone in the community how to recognize, respond and refer.



## LEARN MORE

*It's Not Right! Neighbours, Friends & Families for Older Adults* is a pan-Canadian public education campaign funded in 2009 by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The materials are available in English and French and are free to EAPNs. Contact them to talk about training facilitators in your community.



T: 519-661-4040

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- ✓ Make a list of audiences to approach for public education and set annual goals. Start with your local government, offer to train all municipal staff and their agencies.
- ✓ Connect with other groups such as Age-Friendly Communities, Community Safety and Wellbeing Committees to educate and engage them in elder abuse prevention.
- ✓ Host public events to educate and engage citizens. Host a special activity around key dates such as June 15 (World Elder Abuse Awareness Day) or October 1 (Seniors' Day).
- ✓ Join your EAPN and the [Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#).
- ✓ Advocate for funding – [see Advocacy section below](#)

### Reflection and Ongoing Learning

At the end of each meeting, take time to reflect on the quality of the meeting together, before adjourning.

- What are members taking away?
- Is there something new that was learned?
- How did you create the space that allowed members to contribute and feel valued?

Honest answers and the ability of the group to hear constructive criticism and then respond respectfully and/or to problem-solve, is how you know that you are on the prevention path. Being able to hold and consider differing ideas will make the network stronger.



## LEARN MORE

The BC Association of Community Response Networks has twelve years of [evaluation reports](#) that can help identify success elements.

## 2.4 Develop a Shared Understanding of Elder Abuse

Understanding what elder abuse is, how it happens, and who it is happening to, is the introductory information that all of your network members will need. Don't assume that everyone understands the issue in the same way.

Consider the language you will use. For example, elder abuse has also been called elder mistreatment, senior abuse, abuse in later life, mistreatment of older adults. Developing a shared understanding of the issues, common definitions and language is an important part of early network development.

**Suggestion:** Compile a single page worth of information that highlights what the members want the public to know about elder abuse.

### Sample Questions to Guide Discussion:

- ✓ What is the most important information the network wants the local community to know?
- ✓ Is there research that can support the information?
- ✓ Are there definitions and tools that can be adapted or adopted to avoid recreating the wheel? For example, the World Health Organization defines elder abuse as: "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person."
- ✓ Are there any local statistics, stories or information available? Including local information helps people understand that elder abuse is happening where they are.

See: [Seniors Leading Change Infographic](#)

## **Draw from a variety of existing resources**

There are many websites that provide information, statistics and definitions about elder abuse.

Start with the [Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#).

There are provincial/territorial networks that also have a wealth of resources:

- Alberta: [Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council](#)
- British Columbia: [BC Association of Community Response Networks](#)
- Manitoba: [Prevent Elder Abuse Manitoba](#)
- Newfoundland and Labrador: [SeniorsNL](#)
- Northwest Territories: [NWT Seniors' Society](#)
- Ontario: [Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario](#)

## Section 2 Infographic

### Starting a Local or Regional Elder Abuse Prevention Network

Everyone contributes to shaping the “future us”

Nothing about us Without us

Who wants to start a network?



Start a community conversation



Host a public meeting

Host those who work with seniors

**The Purpose:**  
A network for the prevention of elder abuse and ageism

**The Practice:**

- ✓ outer work that is done to educate and engage the community
- ✓ the internal work of how the network attracts and keeps members, grows, and develops.



**Create Agendas**  
What we do in our network meetings



**Reflection & Ongoing Learning**



**Process**

Create practices to:

- ✓ Prioritize relationships
- ✓ Create ethical space
- ✓ Provide collective care
- ✓ Develop cultural humility
- ✓ Community development

**Find a Balance**

**Actions**

- ✓ Meet regularly
- ✓ Develop your “pitch”
- ✓ Meet with elected officials
- ✓ Develop trainers
- ✓ Advocate for funding
- ✓ Join CNPEA

Networks help create social change | Membership is a protective factor

# Section 3: Growth

## ADVOCACY AND STRATEGIES

### In this section:

- Planning for the future
- Advocate for Sustained Funding
- Join CNPEA and Provincial / Territorial Networks
- Engage Local, Regional & Federal Governments
- Align with Age-Friendly Communities and Similar Safety and Wellbeing Initiatives
- Align with Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Committees
- Seek out Private Sector Partners



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### Planning for the Future

Once your network is established, regular strategic planning should be part of your activities. Advocacy can be part of your strategy and joining with other networks to call for action on common goals is how we put our collective voices together to be heard.

### Advocate for Sustained Funding

At a societal level, not investing in prevention of elder abuse is a harmful expression of ageism. EAPNs need sustained funding. All levels of government can contribute to creating local-regional-national infrastructure of networks.

### Join CNPEA and Provincial / Territorial Networks

Remember that EAPNs are part of a larger and growing prevention movement in Canada. Become a member of the Canadian Network. Read *Future Us*, CNPEA's Roadmap to the Prevention of Elder Abuse to stimulate discussion at meetings and to contribute to the movement.

### Engage Local, Regional & Federal Governments

Build relationships with elected officials in your home community at all levels of government. Educate them on the issues of elder abuse and ageism. Show them the pan-Canadian vision. Ask for their support. Ask them to help advocate for network funding.



### **Align with Age-Friendly Communities and Similar Safety and Wellbeing Initiatives**

Ask the question: how can a community be considered age-friendly or achieve safety and wellbeing if ending elder abuse and ageism are not a focus for activity? EAPNs can advocate to be included in community planning processes and committees.

### **Align with Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Committees**

There are examples of GBV coordinating committees that have created or supported EAPNs in recognition of the overlap of issues. Find and build relationships with your local GBV coordinating committee to explore how you can partner and collaborate to ensure older people are included in violence prevention efforts.

### **Seek Out Private Sector Partners**

Banks are one example of affluent institutions that have corporate social responsibility. They also have concerns about financial abuse because it impacts their bottom line. Ask your local bank and other private sector companies to sponsor your EAPN.

## Section 3 Infographic

### Advocacy and Strategies to Grow

#### Seek out Private Sector Partners

Ask your local bank and other private sector companies to sponsor a local EAPN as part of Corporate Social Responsibility.

#### Advocate for Sustained Network Funding

Citizens involved with EAPNs are doing their part; we need governments to partner with us to invest in prevention. This is the case we need to make, and keep making, at all levels of government.

#### Align with Age-Friendly Initiatives

How can a community be considered “age-friendly” if elder abuse and ageism are not a focus for activity? Advocate to be included in community planning processes and committees.

#### Join CNPEA and Provincial and Territorial Networks

EAPNs are part of a larger and growing prevention movement in Canada. You are not alone. CNPEA partners with provincial and territorial networks to create ongoing learning and development opportunities. **BECOME A MEMBER!**

#### Align with Gender-Based Violence Committees

Find and build relationships with your local GBV committee to explore how you can partner and collaborate to ensure older people are included in prevention efforts.

#### Engage Local, Regional & Federal Governments

Build relationships with elected officials. Educate them on the issues of elder abuse and ageism. Show them the pan-Canadian vision. Ask for their support. Ask them to help advocate for network funding.



# Addendum

## Getting Started: An introduction to Elder Abuse Prevention Networks

Adapted from CCR: *Coordinated Community Response to Abuse of Seniors by the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly*

### What Is a Network?

A “network” is a diverse group of concerned community members who come together to create a Coordinated Community Response to abuse of older adults. Ideally, a local network strives to be a microcosm of the community we want to live in – one in which everyone is welcomed and valued. Elder Abuse Prevention Networks (EAPNs) may be known by other names.

### Guiding Principles

Articulate the guiding principles for the network. How we treat each other is as important as what we do together. Strive to create a welcoming environment, model non-violence, respect and mutuality.

- ✓ What principles will guide us?

### Administrative Structure

Decide as a group the name of the network and how often it will meet. At some point, you may want to develop a Terms of Reference to help the group decide on the roles, priorities and resources of the network.

### Working Together

Focus on building strong relationships. Develop written commitments (protocols) or agreements about how we will work together. They can cover topics such as information sharing, decision-making, roles and referral pathways.

- ✓ What agreements do we have or need? What are the pros and cons of having written protocols?

### Public Awareness & Education

EAPNs can organize public events and provide public education. Teach people of all ages to recognize warning signs of elder abuse, how to respond safely and effectively and where to refer to find help in your community.

- ✓ What do our members/ supporters think is needed for public education?

## **Professional Awareness & Education**

Discuss and recommend foundational elder abuse education and training that all professionals need to be able to recognize, respond & refer in situations of elder abuse.

- ✓ What do our members/ supporters think is needed for professional education?

## **Link to Related Initiatives**

Community coordination builds relationships between people, organizations and sectors doing similar work on related issues such as family violence, initiatives such as Age-Friendly communities and events such as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD).

- ✓ Are there benefits to partnering with another initiative or group?

## **Keep Track of the Community Response**

Your network can look at how things are working in the community, set goals and work toward continuous improvement. Being able to show progress over time helps build momentum with demonstrated success.

- ✓ How will we assess our network's impact?

## **Ongoing Outreach for Diverse Membership**

Networks are strengthened by having a wide variety of perspectives and life experiences that reflect the community.

- ✓ Who do we want to invite to our network to keep working toward it being as reflective of the diversity of our community as possible?

# Resources

A Practical Guide to Consensus-based Decision-Making; Jim Madden; Tamarack Institute, <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/a-practical-guide-for-consensus-based-decision-making>

Addressing Elder Abuse: a toolkit for developing a coordinated community response; Government of Alberta, <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/addressing-elder-abuse-a-toolkit>

Canadian Coalition Against Ageism, <https://www.ilccanada.org/ccaa>

CCR: Coordinated Community Response to Abuse of Seniors; National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE), <https://www.nicenet.ca/kb/ccr-coordinated-community-response-to-abuse-of-seniors>

Engaging people with lived experience and community participation as the basis for Integrated Community Care; Transform Integrated Community Care, [https://transform-integratedcommunitycare.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Transform\\_Handbook\\_EN-1.pdf](https://transform-integratedcommunitycare.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Transform_Handbook_EN-1.pdf)

Future Us: A Roadmap to Elder Abuse Prevention, <https://futureus.cnpea.ca/>

Global Report on Ageism; World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/combating-ageism/global-report-on-ageism>

[How to Be An Indigenous Ally](#), River East Transcona School Division

It's Not Right! Neighbours, Friends & Families for Older Adults, <http://itsnotright.ca/>

Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

Tamarack Institute, <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/>

Trauma -and Violence- Informed Care, Dr. Colleen Varcoe, Equip Health Care, <https://equiphealthcare.ca/resources/equity-essentials/trauma-and-violence/>

[Trauma -and Violence- Informed Approaches to Policy and Practice](#); Public Health Agency of Canada

# Join us!

Head to our *Future Us* website [futureus.cnpea.ca](https://futureus.cnpea.ca) and check your community on our map.

Share any Roadmap-inspired work you are undertaking at [futureus.cnpea@gmail.com](mailto:futureus.cnpea@gmail.com).



Learn more about CNPEA at [www.cnpea.ca](https://www.cnpea.ca)

[Become a member](#) to receive our updates

Get in touch with us about *Future Us* at [futureus.cnpea@gmail.com](mailto:futureus.cnpea@gmail.com)

