

Resources for Elderly Assistance and Community Help: Partnership Education and Training



Project REACH...
Resources for Elderly Assistance and Community Help



Emerald
TRAINING CONSULTANTS

InterFaith
works



Funding Provided By: NYS Office of Mental Health; Joanne M. Mahoney, Onondaga County Executive

Roots of Project REACH

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- Resources for **Elderly Assistance** and **Community Help**
- Foundation: New York State Office of Mental Health Geriatric Mental Health Grant
- Multicultural based
- Holistic approach: Emotional, Physical, Environmental



Goals of the Project

- Increase awareness and knowledge of mental health and the elderly
- Identify behavior and indicators for at-risk elderly
- Identify and assist at-risk elderly whose independence and safety may be in jeopardy

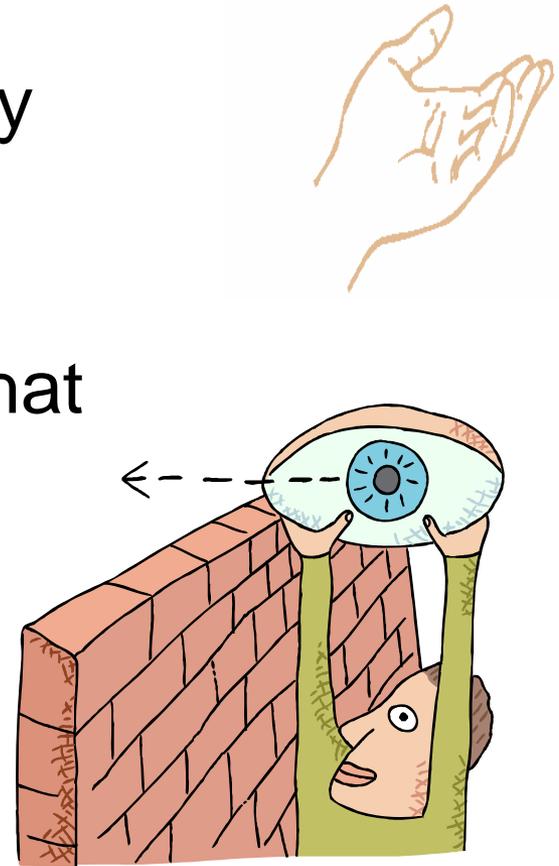
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Why Do We Need You?

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- You see individuals in your daily work who may be at-risk
- The project needs “eyes and ears” in places and situations that might otherwise be missed



Age Related Changes

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- Potential physical /biological changes may occur as we age
 - Sensory Perception
 - Motor Abilities
 - Cardiovascular System
 - Neurological



What to Look For: Mental Health

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- **Confused, disoriented, delirious**

ex. Thinking it is 50 years ago and talking to you as if you were part of that time, clothes don't match weather conditions

- **Behavior not reality-based**

ex. Eye and body movement, and conversation indicates talking to someone who is not present

- **Very down, very high mood**

ex. Sad, crying, slow moving or moving and talking extremely fast, excessively jovial and friendly.

- **Very anxious**

ex. Pacing, hand wringing

- **Memory impairment**

ex. Repeatedly asking the same question, not paying bills

- **Self harm (next slide)**



Suicide/Risk of Self-Harm

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■ Clues to look/listen for:

- “No one will miss me.”
- “Next time you come, I’ll be gone.”
- “I won’t be a burden anymore.”
- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness
- Recent loss (family, pet)
- Getting affairs in order
- Giving away possessions



What to Look For: Physical Health

- Bruises
- Open wounds or sores
- Limping/favoring body part
- Complaining of pain
- Empty medication bottles, and/or verbal indication they have run out of medication
- Looks too thin, malnourished

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What to Look For: Environmental

■ Inside

- Squalor, dirty conditions
- Food left out, dirty dishes piled up
- Evidence of rodents/pests
- Pet urine/feces in house, multiple pets
- Empty pill bottles, liquor bottles
- Too hot or too cold
- Plumbing, water not functional

■ Outside

- Broken windows, doors, screens
- Mail not collected

■ Both

- Foul odors
- Garbage piled up
- Emaciated pets/pets with no water or food

Basics of Communication

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- Cultural differences
- Respect
- Mirror/Match
- Ask questions/Listen for answers
- Apologize
- Be aware of your voice and tone (can they hear you?)
- Be aware of lighting, print on paperwork (can they see it?)
- Watch for non-verbal clues
- Did they understand your message?



Confidentiality



- Referring partner will remain anonymous throughout the process unless otherwise desired
- **“Promises”**: Let them know you are concerned about their well-being and safety: therefore, if you think they are not safe you will call someone who may be able to help them
- Keep private things private-Who needs to know? i.e. 9-1-1, caregiver, family, Project REACH
- Do not share personal information, for example, with a curious neighbor who is not a caretaker or relative

Who Do I Call?

■ 9-1-1

- Unconscious or minimally conscious
- Chest pain, shortness of breath
- New difficulty seeing, walking, speaking
- Fallen and can't get up
-don't move them
- Moderate or severe bleeding

■ Project REACH: 435-2362

- Whenever 9-1-1 has been called
- Behavioral concerns
- Environmental concerns
- Physical concerns
- Financial concerns

What Will Project REACH Do?

- Be available to discuss situations and answer questions for you
- Follow up on client referrals
- Offer assessment and referrals as needed
- If you request, give you feedback

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