

MEDIA RELEASE

ELDER ABUSE SCAM RESURFACES, IMPACTING LOWER MAINLAND SENIORS

Anyone who can identify the perpetrators urged to ANONYMOUSLY call Crime Stoppers

VANCOUVER, B.C. (June 7, 2022): As Senior's Week in B.C. begins (June 5-11), local police are dealing with a telephone scam that has impacted several local seniors recently

The scam isn't new, but a local resurgence has been noticed, says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers.

"We're being told by police that they're investigating about 20 known cases and want to prevent any more seniors becoming victims," Annis says. "Typically, someone calls a senior citizen claiming that a grandchild or family member is being held in custody and that a large amount of cash is needed help get that person released. The story is made up of course and very suspicious, but well-meaning grandparents still withdraw large amounts of cash from the bank and arrange to deliver it, never to be seen again. We're urging anyone with information on who's behind the crime to call Crime Stoppers anonymously."

Elder abuse can take many forms - from physical, emotional or psychological abuse, to bullying and financial abuse. *(See attached backgrounder for examples of often-ignored forms of elder abuse.)*

"Abuse of elderly people is one of the most underreported crimes in our society. It might go unreported due to embarrassment, fear of retaliation, or an unwillingness to get a family member in trouble," says Annis.

Preventing Elder Abuse

Groups wishing to help seniors and their families prevent this kind abuse can book Crime Stoppers' *"See Something, Say Something"* elder abuse awareness presentation.

For each session, a retired law enforcement officer is accompanied by a volunteer to go anywhere seniors can gather in the Lower Mainland, to give a talk and answer questions at no cost. They encourage seniors and caregivers to call in tips anonymously to Crime Stoppers or to other law enforcement authorities. Seniors are also encouraged to watch out for one another and provide information to Crime Stoppers anonymously, so it can be forwarded to police.

Anyone wishing to contact Crime Stoppers and book an elder abuse prevention presentation will find information at Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers' website solvecrime.ca.

(more)

About Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is a non-profit society and registered charity that offers rewards for anonymous tip information about criminal activity and provides it to investigators in the communities of Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Anonymous tips may be provided through Crime Stoppers' downloadable "P3" app for Apple and Android phones, calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477, 1-855-448-8477 (new number), online at solvecrime.ca or by following the link on the Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers [Facebook](#) page. Find MVCS on Twitter: [@solvecrime](#) and Instagram: [@metrovancouvercrimestoppers](#).

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers accepts tips in 115 different languages and will pay a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a criminal, recovery of stolen property, seizure of illegal drugs or guns or denial of a fraudulent insurance claim. Tipsters stay anonymous by using code numbers to check back later and collect their rewards.

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BACKGROUND

COMMON FORMS OF ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse is a crime, and can take many forms - from physical, emotional or psychological abuse, to bullying and financial abuse.

All are forms of violence against some of our most vulnerable citizens.

It's a cowardly act, and it goes unreported much too often. Some of our most elderly citizens become victims of their own family members and feel they have nowhere to turn.

Physical abuse

- Acts of violence and other ways to coerce elderly victims
- Depriving them of life essentials
- Using medication to incapacitate them
- Locking seniors out of their homes
- Not providing or allowing adequate hygiene

Emotional or psychological abuse

- Withholding basic rights and privileges
- Restricting freedom to socialize with others
- Denying a safe secure environment
- Removing decision-making powers
- Bullying - insults, threats, intimidation, yelling, ignoring and isolation.

Financial abuse

- Withholding funds
- Selling property without the owner's consent
- Forcing elders to alter a will, or abuse power of attorney
- Scams/fraud aimed at vulnerable seniors