
Statewide Essay Contest Winner
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Elder abuse is the mistreatment, neglect, and exploitation of people who are of the older generation. It tends to happen because as people age, they tend to require assistance from others, and those people who are entrusted to carry out these duties sometimes cause harm to the vulnerable senior citizens of our community. They are often left with wounds that are both physical and emotional, most of which they may have a very hard time recuperating from. Elder abuse can occur physically, emotionally, and financially, and it is up to us as part of the community in which they live to ensure that we will see the warning signs and work to prevent these abuses since most elders are too distressed and fear that reporting the abuse will only worsen the situation. We must come to understand the types of abuse and be able to recognize the warning signs. Neglect is failing to pay proper attention to elders through failing to provide assistance in their daily activities and sometimes failing to properly assist them with their financials, whereas physical abuse is causing unnecessary and uncalled for pain or harm to an elderly person as well as sometimes providing improper medication to them. Emotional abuse can range from ignoring the individual to isolating them from activities and interaction with others to talking to them in a harsh and threatening manner, sexual elder abuse is having contact with an elder without consent, and financial abuse is make unauthorized decisions about an elderly person's financials and properties.

As I grow up and realize how much my grandparents influenced how I grew up, the support they continually showed me, and how they cared for me just as they had done for my parents, I realize that children and grandchildren alike both have the duty to repay the favor and care for their aging parents and grandparents. To mistreat them and abuse them is something that will not be tolerated in the community which we live in. They must be treated with undiminished respect and must be taken care of with the utmost care just as they provided for their children and grandchildren. No human being deserves to fall victim to elder abuse.

To prevent elder abuse we must be open and willing to listen to elders in speaking how they are feeling. We must be aware of the warning signs of all kinds of elder abuse, we must be willing to report them if abuses are apparent, and we must be willing to educate others of the types of abuses and how to identify them so this crisis that has struck our community can be attacked head on and resolved. Proper care and attention must be paid to these individuals who have contributed so much to our community in their younger years and who deserve to be treated with the utmost respect as they live their remaining years as they are entitled to, peacefully and unharmed.