



Board of Commissioners

PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioners Proclaim World Elder Abuse Day in Lake County

PAINESVILLE, Ohio, June 6, 2024– June 15, 2024, is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. It is a time for communities across the U.S. and all over the world to highlight this important social issue affecting some of the most vulnerable in our society. At today's Commissioners' meeting, the Board proclaimed June 15, 2024, as World Elder Abuse Day in Lake County. The Board of Lake County Commissioners support and recognize the importance of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

To promote awareness of elder abuse in Lake County, the 3rd Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Walk will be held on June 13, 2024, at 11:45 AM beginning at Job and Family Services and concluding at the County Administration Center with a short presentation. All are welcome to attend, and participants are encouraged to wear purple, the color designated for elder abuse awareness.



From the left: Tyler VanDrei, Commissioner John T. Plecnik, Suzanne Casar, Commissioner Richard J. Regovich and John R. Hamercheck.

“World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is an opportunity for Lake County to shed light on the often-overlooked issue of elder abuse and neglect, and to work towards a future where all older adults are valued and respected,” said John T. Plecnik, President of the Board of Lake County Commissioners.

It is estimated that 5 million, or 1 in 10, older adults in the United States experience abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Even more alarming is that research suggests that as few as 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse ever come to the attention of authorities. Older adults may lack support and are more likely to experience social isolation and loneliness, which increases their risk for maltreatment.

“The fact that so many cases of elder abuse go unreported is a sobering reminder of the importance of addressing these issues and providing a safe and supportive environment for all older adults,” said Commissioner Richard J. Regovich. “We must work together to raise awareness, provide resources, and combat social isolation and loneliness.”

During 2023, the Lake County Department of Job and Family Services responded to over 500 reports concerning abuse, neglect or exploitation of seniors. Although these calls varied in nature, the one common theme was the mistreatment of a vulnerable member of our community. “The social workers in our adult protective services division meet with older adults in our community to assess them for safety, advocate on their behalf and connect them to necessary resources. If anyone suspects that an elderly individual in Lake County is being abused, neglected or exploited they should contact our agency to report their concerns. The Lake County Department of Job and Family Services strives to protect and advocate for those vulnerable seniors in our community. We will continue to shed light on this important issue,” said Job and Family Services Director Suzanne Casar.

"Elder abuse is a persistent issue that requires collective action. We cannot simply wait for it to resolve itself; instead, we must take proactive steps to intervene. If you suspect someone you know is being mistreated - whether it's physically, emotionally, or financially - it's essential to speak up and report your concerns," said Commissioner John R. Hamercheck.

For more information, or to report concerns of abuse, neglect or exploitation, contact the Lake County Department of Job and Family Services, Adult Protective Services Division at (440) 350-4000, press 1.

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