

# **NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION MONTH**



**C.A.R.E.S October Newsletter**  
**Philadelphia District Attorney's Office**  
**Victim Support Services Division**



*Najja R. Orr, President  
& CEO of Philadelphia  
Corporation of*



*Tamikia Morris, Director  
of Older Adult Protective*



*Shani Gilmore, Executive  
Administrator of Long-  
Term Care*

## **Philadelphia Corporation For Aging**

### **Preventing & Protecting Older Adults from Elder Abuse**

Preventing and addressing elder abuse takes a community of formal and informal support to educate, empower and provide justice for all. The supports that combat elder abuse, including those that keep individuals connected to their communities and others, are often the same as those that prevent social isolation – a risk factor for abuse, [exploitation](#), and neglect. To combat elder abuse, it is everyone’s responsibility to take preventive measures and to report any suspected cases.

Elder abuse takes many forms, including financial exploitation, self-[neglect](#), and physical abuse. Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) investigates and handles close to 5,000 cases of elder abuse that occur anywhere in Philadelphia each year, including care facilities and within the community.

“We want to make sure that an individual has all that is being promised to them while living in a facility or family setting and assist in making them as safe as possible as older adult advocates,” said Tamikia Morris, director of older adult protective services (OAPS) at PCA, a department which works to detect, [report](#), and prevent abuse among older adults in Philadelphia.

### **What is Elder Abuse?**

Elder abuse is the infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain, or mental anguish; the willful deprivation by a caretaker of goods or services which are necessary to maintain physical or mental health; and/or sexual harassment, rape, or abuse. Elder abuse can also take the form of self-neglect when an older adult's ability to care for themselves is diminished due to physical or cognitive challenges. Elder abuse can occur anywhere in the community, an institutional setting or an individual’s residence.

“Cases of elder abuse can have a destructive impact not only on the individual being directly affected but on the victims’ family and community as well,” said Shani Gilmore, Executive Administrator of Long-Term Care at PCA. “These cases present complex problems that no one can deal with by themselves and require those who care for the older adult to be on the lookout for warning signs.”

### **Recognizing the Warning Signs**

Signs of abuse, exploitation and neglect can manifest in an individual’s physical appearance, behavior, or finances:

- ⇒ Isolation from friends and family, signs of trauma, and withdrawal from usual activities
- ⇒ Fraudulent signatures, unpaid bills, and unusual spending
- ⇒ Poor hygiene, stained clothing, unmet medical needs, unexplained injuries, unexplained weight loss, and unsanitary living conditions



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*Enriching lives, preserving dignity.™*

## **Continued**

### **Working for Change**

This past month, PCA joined a new collaboration of Philadelphia government agencies and nonprofits formed to prevent elder abuse and financial exploitation of older adults.

Through a \$375,000 grant over three years from the Department of Justice, the Philadelphia District Attorney's office will assemble the Elder Abuse Multidisciplinary Team: a network of agencies each with its own specialty when it comes to assisting older people. The group includes the Penn Memory Center, the SeniorLAW Center, the Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of Elderly People, and PCA.

“This new investigative unit is incredibly important because PCA has seen an increase in elder abuse, including financial exploitation cases, over the course of the past few years. Any initiatives from the state to support Area Agencies on Aging's efforts to protect older adults in the communities we serve from harm is one that PCA wholeheartedly supports, and I look forward to collaborating with the District Attorney's Office in the weeks ahead to combat elder abuse as we have done for the past 50 years,” said Najja R. Orr, President & CEO of PCA.

### **Taking Action**

Some of the most important actions individuals can take are staying connected with older adults and their caretakers to discuss challenges and provide support. These conversations can also include discussing a care plan if the older adult becomes incapacitated or experiences an emergency.

Reports of suspected elder abuse or neglect can be made 24/7 to Older Adult Protective Services at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging by calling 215-765-9040.

# URBAN SURVIVAL

## Identify areas to avoid:

Avoid neighborhoods where there is a lot of crime, areas that are not well lit, or environments which can potentially be volatile. Also, avoid areas where there are large groups of individuals loitering. Avoid confrontational situations.

## Stay Ready, then you won't have to Get Ready.

Train yourself: Take self-defense classes. If you are a legal gun owner, retrieve training from a professional firearms instructor. Carry defensive equipment (tactical pen, mace, etc.).

## Go Time: Have a winner's mindset. "In this fight, I will prevail!"

Active Shooter: Run-Hide-Fight!

Go Bag: Essential emergency items in a backpack (food/water, cash, etc.). Keep an old cell phone with you as a back-up, and make sure that it's fully charged. Federal law mandates that every cell phone must be able call 911 no matter if it has a service provider or not.

Personal Protection Observation: Awareness and common sense are your first line of defense. Paying attention to your surroundings. Watch people's hands, a person with ill intent will need to use their hands to harm you. Be conscious of people around you and their proximity.

- **Act:** Seek cover and concealment: place yourself behind something that will hide you and keep you out of harm's way.
- **Baseline Behavior:** An accepted normal behavior in a given environment. Be aware of anomalies, which are simply oddities or peculiarities. Be aware of your surroundings.
- **Threat Indicators**-Body Language: a *person constantly looking around, appearing to be nervous, clinching of their fist, Invading your personal space.*
- **Spidey Senses:** Funny feelings, your instincts, gut feelings, signals that are telling you to be aware and careful!
- **Fight Denial:** Do not ignore your innate feelings. Sometimes we will find ourselves in disbelief of a dangerous incident that is occurring directly around us, so we will talk ourselves out of what our SPIDEY SENSES are telling us.
- **Gray Man:** Avoid wearing jewelry or items to bring attention to you. Blend with the environment.
- **Target Harden Yourself:** Project an aura of awareness, avoid engaging on your phone, or using earbuds while walking. Be aware of your surroundings: Keep your head on a swivel, by looking left, right front, back, up, down (720 Degree surveillance). You can significantly lessen the potential of being a victim, when viewed as being in a readiness state.

Crime can materialize in many ways. The U.S has been subjected to an unprecedented increase in violent crimes. The below information will provide you with some basic, practical applications to assist in navigating through life safely. **Be Your Own Help when Help is not coming.**

## Preparation+Planning = Protection

Prior to attending an event, take time to visit the location, at least 1 or 2 days in advance to Assess, Identify and Document (AID) the following:

- Entry and exit points
- Path to /from destination
- Safe space in case of an emergency
- Emergency evacuation routes
- On-site security (security guards, lighting, security cameras)
- Retrieve the information of the person(s) in charge of the facility
- Nearest police district and hospital
- Restrooms
- Arrival & Departure Times
- Parking Area
- Seating Arrangements
- General Inquiries

ALWAYS, inform a friend or family member of your whereabouts.

See Something, Say Something, Do Something  
Call 911, Be A Good Witness!



LaMonte Adams  
Lieutenant  
Philadelphia Police Department  
Homeland Security Bureau  
Dignitary Protection Unit

Disclaimer: The information shared does not represent the views of the Philadelphia Police Department.



# PHILADELPHIA POLICE



## CARJACKING

### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

#### HOTSPOTS:

- Getting in & out of vehicle
- Residential driveways
- Parking lots & garages
- Gas stations
- ATMs
- Streets with poor lighting

**Tip: Exercise heightened awareness in carjacking "hotspots"**

#### SCENARIOS:

##### BUMP & RUN

**Bump:** The criminal with at least 1 passenger bumps your vehicle

**Run:** Once you get out to assess the damage, your vehicle is stolen

**Tip:** Stay inside with the windows closed and the door locked. If you feel a threat put your flashers on, signal the driver to follow you, and drive to the nearest police station

##### Food Deliveries

The criminal calls for a food delivery to an address. When the food arrives, the criminal steals the delivery driver's vehicle

#### SAFETY TIPS:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Make it a habit to start your car and drive away immediately
- Look around for suspicious persons in vehicles or loitering in the area before entering/exiting your vehicle
- Park in well-lit areas
- Keep your windows rolled up & doors locked
- Trust your instincts. If you feel something is wrong leave the area
- Keep your cell phone in your pocket to dial 911 easily
- Don't stop for stranded motorists along the road. Note their location and call 911

#### IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF A CARJACKING:

- If you are confronted by a carjacker give up your car & leave the scene
- Avoid verbal and physical confrontations
- Make a mental note of suspect and their vehicle's description
- If there is a child in the vehicle, let the carjacker know "my child is in the car"

**Your vehicle can be replaced.  
You are irreplaceable!**

# Community Involvement






**Please join the C.A.R.E.S. Team in Welcoming  
our new Peer Crisis Responder, Joseph Smiley**


**CARES staff provides peer support to individuals and families  
in the immediate aftermath of a homicide.**



**Supporting families, friends and communities impacted by  
homicide! CARES HOTLINE: 215-275-7937**



**Contact us: Philadelphia District Attorney's Office 3 South  
Penn Square Philadelphia, PA 19107 Phone: 215-686-8019  
EMAIL: [philacares@phila.gov](mailto:philacares@phila.gov).**



**C.A.R.E.S. Peer Crisis Responders Team**



**Melany P. Nelson, Director**

**Shakina DeShazon, Administrative Manager**

**Yvonne Nelson, Lead Responder**

**Deshawnda Williams, Responder**

**Andrea Rivera, Spanish Speaking Responder**

**Jacquie DeShazor, Responder**



**Mark Pittman, Responder**

**Andre Nelson Jr., Responder**



**Joseph Smiley, Responder**