

Elder Abuse LibGuide



The purpose of this guide is to introduce academic library patrons to the issue of elder abuse. Sources will include academic publications as well as popular publications necessary for a broad overview of the topic.

Searching For Elder Abuse Research

Since the publication of the first related academic research in 1975, elder abuse has become a growing area of study among academics with new research being released constantly. Here are some good academic databases to help start a literature review.

[PubMed](#) is one of the most comprehensive medical databases available.

[Web of Science](#) is another good resource for science-related research.

[PsychInfo](#) is a database of psychology resources.

[Academic Search Complete](#) contains academic research from multiple disciplines.

[ProQuest Congressional](#) can help you find federal hearings and committee information related to elder abuse.

[ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global](#) will show early career research that has been done on elder abuse.

[Social Work Abstracts](#) introduces research on aging and social service needs.

[SAGE Research Methods Online](#) can help identify research methods used in social and health science academic research.

Defining Elder Abuse

“Elder abuse” can be defined in a variety of ways. This section will provide definitions of elder abuse as determined by national organizations that work in this area. It is important to note that academic researchers may define elder abuse in more specific terms in order to serve the need of their research, although all definitions will include the same basic elements.

The [National Center on Elder Abuse](#), a service of the federal Administration on Aging, does not provide a universal definition of elder abuse, but does promote the following definitions:

[Elder Justice Road Map](#) defines it as “Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, as well as neglect, abandonments, and financial exploitation of an older person by another person or entity, that occurs in any setting (e.g. home, community, or facility), either in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and/or when an older person is targeted based on age or disability.”

[National Academy of Sciences](#) defines it as "Intentional actions that cause harm or create a serious risk of harm (whether or not harm is intended) to a vulnerable elder by a caregiver or other person who stands in a trust relationship to the elder. This includes failure by a caregiver to satisfy the elder’s basic needs or to protect the elder from harm.”

[The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) defines it as an "intentional act or failure to act by a caregiver or another person in a relationship involving an expectation of trust that causes or creates a serious risk of harm to an older adult.”

[The National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life \(NCALL\)](#) also provides information on defining elder abuse and abuse in later life (which includes elder abuse).

[The American Bar Association](#) tracks state by state legal definitions of elder abuse and related terms. Terms vary by jurisdiction.

