



FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION
OF TORONTO

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A United Way Member Agency

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Elder Abuse is on the Rise as Mayor Lastman declares

June 2002 Elder Abuse Awareness Month

June 11, 2002 – Mayor Mel Lastman has proclaimed June 2002 Elder Abuse Month in an effort to raise awareness of this critical issue.

“Elder abuse is a serious problem and we applaud the Mayor’s effort to help raise awareness of this issue,” says Lisa Manuel, PhD. The Family Service Association’s Manager of Seniors and Caregivers Support Services has more than 15 years experience working with seniors and caregivers. She specialises in serving seniors and caregivers that are at risk of falling between the cracks in the system.

The Family Service Association of Toronto has found that 35 percent of all clients served last year through its Senior and Caregivers Support Services involved abuse. This is up from 25 percent in 2001. In response, the Senior and Caregivers Support Services launched the Elder Abuse Consultation Team (EACT) to assist medical and social work professionals with complex cases of elder abuse.

Launched in January 2002, EACT brings together a team of experts that includes social workers, a geriatrician, registered nurse, a mental health and addictions specialist, Crown Attorney, financial advisor, clergy members and two senior women who are

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survivors of abuse.

“We have included two survivors of elder abuse because its is important to show seniors that they are not alone. It really helps overcome feelings of shame and isolation,” says Brenda Anderson, a counsellor with Senior and Caregivers Support Services.

EACT is capable of handling two cases per month and since January has dealt with eight cases and made 80 recommendations. They also provide interim consultations between meetings and help agencies to deal with cases as they arise.

Family Service Association’s Senior and Caregivers Support Services has also launched an Elder Abuse Group called Taking Control of Your Life. Seniors who have suffered abuse meet on a regular basis and are encouraged to form a support network they can continue even after the official group sessions have ended.

For more information about Family Service Association of Toronto’s Elder Abuse initiatives or to arrange an interview with the agency’s experts on seniors issue, please contact Karen Luttrell, Communications Manager at (416) 595-9230 Ext. 225.

Family Service Association of Toronto is a leading nonprofit social service provider and a United Way member agency. For more than 80 years, the association has been helping families and individuals in the greater Toronto area through counseling and community development programs. More information about Family Service Association of Toronto is available at www.fsatoronto.com.