

OASIS · AT A GLANCE

Preventing abuse, neglect, and exploitation in services

The worker you liked last month is missing an hour of your daughter's shift. Her jewelry is gone. She flinches when he touches her wrist. This is the post about what to do next without losing your mind or her placement.

BY JIM PALASTY · 13 MIN READ · ADULT PROTECTION

4x

VIOLENT-CRIME RATE

Adults with disabilities are victimized at four times the rate of adults without. The rate for IDD adults is higher still.

How it works

THREE STEPS

STEP 1

Notice



STEP 2

Document



STEP 3

Report

Reporting pathway by scenario

Physical abuse	911 if imminent. APS and Recipient Rights.
Sexual abuse	911. APS. Recipient Rights. Rape crisis center.
Neglect in care	APS. Recipient Rights. Provider agency.
Financial exploitation	APS. Local police. Freeze accounts.
Missing property	Agency incident report. APS if pattern emerges.
Verbal or emotional	Provider agency. Recipient Rights.
Denied services	Case manager. Agency. State Ombudsman.
Retaliation for reporting	State Ombudsman. Disability rights attorney.

A STORY WE KNOW



Rosa is 34 and lives in a licensed group home. Her mother Cecilia noticed she stopped talking about her Saturday worker, then flinched when he arrived. Cecilia photographed the bruise on her ribs and wrote down the times she noticed the flinch and the exact words Rosa used when she pointed to her body. Two weeks of quiet, boring paper. Then the report. Then the investigation. Then a different worker on Saturdays. Rosa smiles again.

BORING PAPER IS A WEAPON

What matters, at a glance

Warning signs

New fear of a specific person, unexplained injuries, sudden withdrawal, sleep or appetite change, financial changes.

Autonomy

Your adult daughter has the right to date, spend her money, refuse services. Not every unfamiliar person is a threat. Discernment matters.

Financial exploitation

The most common form of abuse against disabled adults. Check bank accounts monthly. Freeze credit. Watch for gift-card requests.

Who reports what

APS handles adults in the community. Recipient Rights handles licensed programs. CPS is not the right door for adults. Do not conflate them.

APS timeline

Most states investigate serious reports within 72 hours. Anonymous reports are allowed and taken seriously. Retaliation is illegal.

Provider trust

Good providers welcome family scrutiny. Providers who do not are the ones you scrutinize more.

BRING THESE · CHECK AS YOU GO

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Dated photos of any injury (ruler beside) | ☐ Written incident log with times |
| ☐ Copies of shift schedules | ☐ Bank statements for the last 90 days |
| ☐ List of people with access to her home and money | ☐ Names of any witnesses |
| ☐ Video of behavior change (with consent) | ☐ Written notification to case manager and agency |

YOUR MOVE

When something feels wrong, here is how you protect her without losing the placement

- 1 Ensure immediate safety. If the source is one person, make sure that person is not on the next shift.
- 2 Document before you confront. Photos with dates. Words she used. Times and places she pointed to.
- 3 Call Adult Protective Services first for community-based concerns. Get a case number in writing.
- 4 Call Recipient Rights for licensed-provider concerns. File in parallel with APS.
- 5 Call police for crimes. Do not skip APS in favor of police for non-emergencies.
- 6 Follow up in writing with everyone within seven days. Keep every reply.

The report is the beginning. The follow-up over six months is the case.

RESOURCES NAMED IN THIS POST

napsa-now.org/help-in-your-area · <https://napsa-now.org/help-in-your-area/>

Informational only. Not legal or medical advice. Verify current program rules before acting.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jim Palasty

Jim Palasty is the founder of OASIS for Autism and a single father of an adult autistic daughter in Michigan.