



## Mental Health Association of South Central Kansas

555 N. Woodlawn, Ste 3105 - Wichita, KS 67208  
(316) 685-1821 - Fax (316) 685-0768  
[www.mhasck.org](http://www.mhasck.org)

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**Wichita, KS** – Studies indicate only 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse is reported. Sedgwick County currently has 65,000 people over the age of 65. That could translate to 4550 cases of elder abuse in Sedgwick County alone.

Mid-Kansas Senior Outreach, a program of the Mental Health Association of South Central Kansas, currently provides outreach and services to seniors who are at risk for abuse, neglect or exploitation. In 2015, we served over 400 individuals over the age of 65, which allowed them to remain safe and in their homes. This is a small percentage of the 4550.

We have just received a Victims of Crime Act grant that will allow us to expand and enhance our Mid-Kansas Senior Outreach program to all elder victims of crime. This program will support a volunteer coordinator for victim advocacy as well as a network of volunteer victim advocates. Victim services will include a 24/7 volunteer led hotline focused on the elder victim, a referral link for law enforcement, crisis counseling, assistance in filing compensation forms, accompaniment to court related activities and referral to community resources.

The impact of abuse, neglect, and exploitation also has a profound fiscal cost. The direct medical costs associated with violent injuries to older adults are estimated to add over \$5.3 billion to the nation's annual health expenditures<sup>31</sup>, and the annual financial loss by victims of elder financial exploitation were estimated to be \$2.9 billion in 2009, a 12% increase from 2008.<sup>32</sup>

**CONTACT:** Mary Beth Steiner, Senior Director of Health Home and Aging Services  
316-651-1211 [marybeth.steiner@mhasck.org](mailto:marybeth.steiner@mhasck.org)

