

# Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of December 1 to December 7, 018

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Articles are listed in alphabetical order by state within each category, so you can easily scan through the articles for those within your state or other states in which you have an interest. *International* articles are near the end. The categories are: *Abuse and Neglect*, *Guardianship*, *Laws & Legislation*, *Studies & Statistics*, *Improved Supports*, *International*, and sometimes, *Miscellaneous*.

Check the categories below for a guide to types of abuse. The categories are indicated by type, and the number of the article.

## **Type:**

### **Abuse and Neglect:**

Sexual Assault: 5, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 36, 48

Physical Abuse: 1, 9, 12, 22, 23, 42, 43

Emotional/Verbal Abuse: 12, 19

Financial abuse: 3, 4

Murder: 1, 2 (due to neglect), 6, 8

Neglected: 11, 13, 19, 42

Related to special education: 8, 9, 13, 22

**WINNER of most egregious award:** 6 (man kills both autistic sons to collect insurance money), 39 (Woman with autism “marched out of store” but had done nothing wrong), 51 (effort to normalize child sexual abuse.)

**WINNER of “good job” award:** 16: Call to not mix individuals with disabilities with adjudicated sex offenders in residential programs by NY Assemblyman.

**WHO DUN IT** (listed by article number):

Family: 6

Carer: 1,2,5, 11, 18, 10

Hospital: 11, 23, 36, 42

Group Home: 1, 5

Counselor: 15

Stranger: 14

Special education employee: 8, 9, 13, 48

**Good News:** 17: Student wins \$28M rape suit; 27: Congress considering “Safe Schools Act” to reduce/eliminate seclusion and restraint; 29: Lawsuit alleges abuse of mentally ill patients in hospital.

**Bad News:** 30: National survey on autism reports 1 in 40 is current incidence, but 30% receive no treatment; 34: People with disabilities excluded from humanitarian disaster response efforts.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Visit our website at [www.disabilityandabuse.org](http://www.disabilityandabuse.org) While on the homepage, we invite you to “like” us at the bottom of the page, making it easier to keep up with our activities! Prior weekly newsfeeds are archived at: <http://disabilityandabuse.org/newsfeed/contents.htm>

## **ABUSE & NEGLECT**

1. “Behind Closed Doors: A Group Home Investigation” - Recently, there have been three different cases where caretakers in these homes have been accused of some unthinkable crimes. – Fox 10 News – Alabama – November 29, 2018 - <https://is.gd/MikNLT>
2. “Lawrence Deputy Dismissed for Failing to Contact DHR Before Girl's Death” - A Lawrence County sheriff's deputy was fired Thursday for failing to notify the Department of Human Resources after he responded to a call involving a 12-year-old girl found wandering unclothed in a neighbor’s yard on Thanksgiving morning, the sheriff said. About 14 hours later, the girl, Jayla Capri Sutton, of Lawrence County Road 136, who was visually impaired and mentally disabled, was fatally struck by a vehicle on Alabama 157 near Hatton. – Decatur Daily – November 30, 2018 – (Alabama) - <https://is.gd/yJDQfl>
3. “Woman Arrested In Financial Exploitation Case” - An Athens woman has been arrested for her part in stealing from an elderly man while he was in the hospital, an official said Friday. Amber Deann Roberson, 31, of Brownsferry Street, was booked into the Limestone County Jail at 10:15 p.m. Thursday. She is charged with one count of first-degree financial exploitation of the elderly. – The News Courier – November 30, 2018 – (Alabama) - <https://is.gd/FOvIjh>
4. “Preliminary Hearing Set for Dothan Man Charged with Financially Exploiting Elderly Woman” - Kevin Saffold is charged with three counts of first-degree financial exploitation of the elderly, one count of second-degree theft of property, and one count of second-degree possession of forged instruments. – Dothan Eagle – November 30, 2018 – (Alabama) - <https://is.gd/O4itj7>

5. “Owner of Assisted Living Facility Gets Jail Time, Probation for Sexually Assaulting Residents” - The owner of an assisted living facility received 75 days in jail and 12 years of probation for sexually assaulting two residents. Angel Floro, 71, pleaded guilty Monday (Dec. 3) in Benton County Circuit Court to two counts of second-degree sexual assault. – 5 News Online – December 4, 2018 – (Arkansas) - <https://is.gd/xGM7hD>
  
6. “Man Accused of Killing Autistic Sons to Collect Insurance Payout” - Federal prosecutors said Tuesday that Ali Elmezayen purchased several accidental death insurance policies on his family members two years before he drove his Honda off the end of a California pier, drowning sons Abdelkarim, 8, and Elhassan, 13, in the Port of Los Angeles. – Daily Beast – November 15, 2018 – (California) - <https://is.gd/rTYkCm>
  
7. “Grandmother Fights for Life After Being Struck in Wheelchair by Hit and Run Driver” - The 65-year-old Bozeman woman was struck by a hit and run driver as she attempted to cross Lone Tree Way in Antioch in her wheelchair, just before three o'clock early Sunday morning. – Fox KTVU – December 3, 2018 – (California) - <https://is.gd/b2pljY>
  
8. “Autistic Teen Restrained at School, Dies 2 Days Later” - A 13-year-old boy at a private alternative school in California who was restrained during an incident and became unresponsive died two days later at a hospital, officials said. CNN – December 17, 2018 – (California) - <https://is.gd/I9aQlC>
  
9. “Mom Calls for Independent Investigation After Burn Found On Autistic Son at School” - A DeKalb County mother is vowing not to give up after her 3-year-old son with autism came home from school with a second-degree burn on his back and the school found no wrongdoing. Aakil James came home from Pine Ridge Elementary with the burn on his back after attending

a class for children with special needs in October. – 11 Alive – December 3, 2018 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/VUBj5l>

10. “Man Sentenced for Sexually Abusing Mentally Disabled Girl” - A 39-year-old Lawrence man who molested a girl with mental disabilities was sentenced to just over 10 years in prison. – KSNT – November 29, 2018 – (Kansas) - <https://is.gd/IKGTTs>

11. “Veterans’ Nursing Home Care Remains Dismal” - U.S. lawmakers have sent a demand letter to the head of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, regarding more information be revealed following the horrific exposure of negligent care occurring at an already poorly rated Veterans Affairs (VA) facility in Brockton, Massachusetts. – Levin & Perconti – December 3, 2018 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/AfnyUM>

12. “Falmouth Man Pleads Not Guilty to Rape”- Marc Miranda, 34, was charged with two counts of rape, one count of assault and battery on a person with an intellectual disability, and one count of intimidating a witness, juror, police or court official in connection with an Aug. 11 incident, documents say. – Cape Cod Times – December 6, 2018 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/2tW53E>

13. “ 'I Was Hysterical': Mom Says School Lost Her Son With Special Needs” - But one Ferguson mother told the I-Team her kid's school lost her special needs son, and then laughed in her face when she came to find him.- KSDK – November 30, 2018 – (Missouri) - <https://is.gd/FAbHFN>

14. “Tome Found Guilty of Raping A 13-Year Old Developmentally-Disabled Girl” - Richard Lee Tome has been found guilty of raping a 13-year old developmentally-disabled girl. Tome initially went on trial in April, but a

mistrial was declared because the girl was unable to testify. – 3 KRTV-  
December 4, 2018 – (Montana) - <https://is.gd/aJhbAd>

15. “Treatment Center Counselor Charged with Sexually Assaulting Girl in His Care” - A Trenton man sexually assaulted a teenage girl in his care and sexually harassed another while working as a residential counselor at a treatment center in Robbinsville last year, authorities alleged Friday. – NJ.Com – December 7, 2018 – (New Jersey) - <https://is.gd/H3T6ZW>
  
16. “Assemblyman: Sex Offenders Shouldn't Be in Group Homes with People Who Are Disabled” - "OPWDD only provides services for people with a diagnosed developmental disability as defined by state law, and is obligated under the law to provide needed services to those who qualify, regardless of a person's clinical or forensic history." – News 13 – November 30, 2018 – New York - <https://is.gd/OY2d0Y>
  
17. “Mount Vernon Special-Needs Student Wins \$28M Rape Lawsuit” - Lawyers for the woman, who is now 21 years old, said a jury ruled in their favor against the Mount Vernon school district on Friday, almost seven years after the victim was allowed to go home on a public bus instead of a school bus, a mistake her lawyers say led to a sexual assault, bullying and a brutal school beating. – Lohud – December 4, 2018 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/e37gKY>
  
18. “Sewickley Twp. Man Charged with Sexually Assaulting Mentally Disabled Woman” - The victim moved into 74-year-old Wayne Smith’s home on Aug. 31 after he offered her a place to stay. On Sept. 8, the woman told police that Smith had sexually assaulted her multiple times. – KDKA 2 – November 30, 2018 – Pennsylvania - <https://is.gd/CuhIzq>

19. "Clover Woman Accused of Taking Woman's Meds, Food in Elder Abuse Case, Police Say" - A Clover woman was arrested after she verbally abused an elderly housemate and kept food and medications from the victim, police said. Sandra Whitner Lovelace, 58, is charged with three counts of abuse of a vulnerable adult, said Capt. Logan McGarity of the Clover Police Department. – The Herald – December 3, 2018 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/SjkX1E>
  
20. "Lawyers Argue DSS Abuse Investigation Details Should Be Removed from Public Record" - The attorneys also claim in the document, which was filed in federal court in Charleston on Friday, that details related to those allegations are confidential and should be redacted from the public record. – The Post and Courier – December 3, 2018 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/xjqNw0>
  
21. "Charges Dropped Against Disability Worker Who Said She Was Falsely Accused" - But in November 2017, she said she accidentally stepped on the hand of a patient at the facility while approaching to calm him down. A video camera, she said, caught what happened. – Greenville News – December 7, 2018 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/GlznCu>
  
22. "Unexplained Bruises On a Special Needs Student Raises Questions from Parents" - 3-year old Joseph Cardona appears to be okay, as he played basketball with his older brother Vincent, and his father, Orlando. A closer look reveals the scrapes on his face, that sent his parents to the school searching for answers. – Fox 29 – November 30, 2018 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/YnqOWB>
  
23. "APNewsBreak: Assaults Increase at Washington Mental Hospital" - Workers blame the hospital administration for an increase in assaults, saying they are failing to provide enough staff and are moving dangerous

patients into less-secure wards and leaving them there after they attack others. – The Kansas City Star – December 3, 2018 – (Washington) - <https://is.gd/6bldsW>

## **GUARDIANSHIP**

24. “Letter: Guardianship problems” - U.S. News & World Report states that Arizona is one of the top 3 states for rampant guardianship fraud. U.S. Senate Committee on Aging met Wednesday with a scathing report on professional guardianship fraud. It's estimated over \$300 billion dollars of net worth is controlled by guardians, including trust assets that are routinely controlled by conscripting trustees into guardianship/conservatorship. – Tucson.Com – November 30, 2018 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/pqOUtg>

25. “I’m Petitioning ... For The Return of My Life”- When Phyllis Funke hit bottom, the court appointed a guardian to prop her up. The remedy is like prison, she said. But “at least in prison you have rights.” – The New York Times – December 7, 2018 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/oG9ql8>

## **LAWS & LEGISLATION**

26. “Pro-life, Disability Groups Petition SCOTUS to Uphold Indiana Abortion Law”- Supporters say the law helps prevent discriminatory eugenics practices, especially against children with Down syndrome. – National Catholic Register – November 30, 2018 – (Indiana) - <https://is.gd/6gghOa>

27. “Seclusion in Schools Could End Thanks To Congress” - The House and the Senate have introduced the 'Keeping All Students Safe Act,' which prohibits schools from putting children in seclusion rooms and limits how and when they can use restraints. - Valley News Live – November 30, 2018 – (North Dakota) - <https://is.gd/bUyAPY>



## STUDIES & STATISTICS

28. “Autistic Individuals Are Less Vulnerable to Cyber Phishing Attacks Than Others” - An interdisciplinary research study led by the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Department of Computer Science noted that the detailed-oriented nature of individuals with autism spectrum disorder may make them better equipped to combat phishing attacks. – Medical Press – December 7, 2018 – (Alabama) - <https://is.gd/TrNrWs>
29. “Court Monitor ‘Absolutely Convinced’ Mentally Ill Inmates Abused, Inadequately Treated in Illinois” - The Illinois Department of Corrections continues to flounder in its efforts to care for inmates with mental illness, according to a new report authored by Dr. Pablo Stewart, a psychiatrist and court-appointed monitor on a 2016 settlement agreement on a class-action lawsuit. – iwillradio.tv.online – December 5, 2018 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/qQZ7P1>
30. “National Surveys Estimate U.S. Autism Prevalence At 1 In 40” - About 1 in 40 children in the United States has autism, according to a survey conducted in 2016. Roughly 30 percent of those children were not being treated for the condition at the time. – Spectrum – December 3, 2018 - (National) - <https://is.gd/1TABfN>
31. “UN Launches First Report On Disability Rights” - The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on Monday launched the first UN Flagship report on Disability and Development. The report focuses on “Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by, for and with persons with disabilities.” The SDGs are a collection of 17 global goals set by the UN in 2015, which include ending global poverty and hunger, implementing sustainable environmental practices and more. – Jurist – December 4, 2018 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/5YXlzy>  
\*Published out of Pittsburgh but International Story

32. "PA Has Dropped the Ball On Funding Special Education- A recent report published by the Education Law Center finds that local school districts across Pennsylvania are shouldering the weight of rising costs associated with special education. – Public Opinion Online – December 2, 2018 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/MmkBRO>
33. "South Carolina Dead Last in Ranking of States for Elder Abuse Protections" - South Carolina is dead last in a national ranking of states in protecting its vulnerable elderly citizens from abuse, a new report shows. – Greenville News – December 4, 2018 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/7A5eYh>
34. "Aid Agencies Ignoring Plight of Disabled People" - The report says: "People with disabilities are often invisible in, and excluded from, the humanitarian response and unable to access adequate assistance and protection due to physical, communication and attitudinal barriers." – The Telegraph December 3, 2018 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/4Exq9X>

## **IMPROVED SUPPORTS**

35. "A Guide for Navigating the Special Education Preschool System" - Navigating New York's special education preschool system can be a challenging task, especially after reports of some providers allegedly misusing state funds, according to recent audits by the state comptroller's office. – SILIVE- December 2, 2018 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/Zl1rDJ>

## **INTERNATIONAL**

36. "Nursing Home Carer Accused of Sex Attack On Elderly Resident with Dementia" - Michael William Schuppe, 59, was on Sunday granted bail after he was charged on Saturday over the alleged incident in October. The court heard Mr Schuppe — who also cared for his own mother as a high-needs

patient — will fight the allegation. — news.com.au — December 3, 2018 — (Australia) - <https://is.gd/SXKXWH>

37. “MP Yurdiga, Wife, Urge Support for People with Episodic Disabilities” - Conservative MP David Yurdiga says people suffering from episodic disabilities face inequality in Canada and are treated differently under Canadian law and he wants to change that. Yurdiga says he wants to see legislative and policy changes that would ensure those living with Multiple Sclerosis, epilepsy, arthritis, and other episodic disabilities be protected by policy to ensure they can stay in the workforce and have better access to programs they need. — 680 News — November 29, 2018 — (Canada) - <https://is.gd/hC6I3s>

38. “Thousands of People with Disabilities in Croatia Trapped in Institutions” - A decade has passed since Croatia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, an international treaty that prohibits the detention of people simply on the grounds of their disability and upholds the right of all people with disabilities to live independently in the community, with choices equal to those of others. — Human Rights Watch — December 3, 2018 — (Croatia) - <https://is.gd/Zau1k0>

39. “Woman Who Has Autism Left in Tears as Debenhams Staff 'March Her Out of Shop' - But She'd Done Nothing Wrong” - A vulnerable woman who has autism was left in floods of tears when she was marched out a shop in Hull city centre - even though she'd done nothing wrong. — Hull Live — December 1, 2018 — (England) - <https://is.gd/BF00Uc>

40. “State Mulls Ration Cards for Differently-Abled” - All these decades, as the mentally retarded and physically challenged persons, staying at various orphan and other welfare homes, are not having ration cards due to lack of

proper address and others. – The Hans India – December 2, 2018 – (India) - <https://is.gd/SzAkDm>

41. “Women With Disabilities Are More Vulnerable” - More than 100 differently-abled women and girls have raised allegations of sexual harassment in [West Bengal](#) alone since 2012, a city-based NGO working for the rights of the disabled said. – The Hindu – December 3, 2018 – (India) - <https://is.gd/3P9BVK>

42. “Indonesian Care Homes Slated For Abusing Mentally Disabled” - In a report, released on Dec.3 to mark the [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#), the commission said staff at such facilities regularly mistreated mentally disabled people, which included beating them. The report was based on a study of such facilities across Java. "They considered them not useful and dangerous and didn't want to even bathe them," said Choirul Anam, a Komnas HAM commissioner. – UCA News -December 4, 2018 – (Indonesia) - <https://is.gd/OeIG3M>

43. “National Crime Agency 'Assisting' PSNI With Muckamore Abbey Abuse Investigation” - An expert report was commissioned in September 2017, following reports of inappropriate behaviour and alleged physical abuse of patients by staff in two wards. – Belfast Telegraph – December 4, 2018 – (Ireland) - <https://is.gd/BKk8h4>

44. “Men who rape and impregnate disabled girls should be castrated – MP” - “It is unfortunate that disabled women still face such barbaric acts from men who should be at the forefront in defending them,” she added. - Standard Digital – December 3, 2018 – (Kenya) - <https://is.gd/K74aZS>

45. ~~\*Of interest The MP is a disabled woman~~

46. “Mentally Retarded’ Boy Stabs Father to Death” - Police officials said that a 15-year-old Bilal killed his father identified as 54-year-old Jalil at their home located at Jahangirabad area within the limits of Rizvia police station. He was taken to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. – The Nation – December 1, 2018 – (Pakistan) - <https://is.gd/asEQN1>
47. “#DontLookAway: WATCH Disabled Abused Mom's Journey of Self-Discovery, Empowerment - Cape Town - “Even though he was abusive, I needed him and I didn't want him to leave.” That’s according to Rose\*, a 33-year-old resident of the Saartjie Baartman Centre for Woen and Children in Manenberg.- IOL – December 3, 2018 – (South Africa) - <https://is.gd/RnABJ5>
48. “Outcry Over ‘Inaction’ At Sex Abuse of Disabled Durban School Kids” - This was the second time in two years that such allegations were made against staff at the school, and education stakeholders had asked how long the abuse of the disabled pupils would continue before action was taken against those implicated. – IOL – December 7, 2018 – (South Africa) - <https://is.gd/ITvPnE>
49. “‘Patchy’ Refuge Access for Disabled Women in Wales” - About 30% of the 157 of refuge spaces in Wales are accessible to those with a disability, according to responses to a Freedom of Information request. Welsh Women's Aid said disabled women were more likely to be in an abusive relationship than non-disabled women. – BBC News – November 30, 2018 – (Wales) - <https://is.gd/AsPZfR>

## MISCELLANEOUS

50. “What You Should Do with Your Pets, The Elderly, And The Handicapped During a Natural Disaster” - Above all, experts stress that preparation is crucial. And, even if it’s not hurricane, tornado, or wildfire season where you live now, thinking about what you’d need in case the worst happens can make a huge difference. – Yahoo Life Style – December 1, 2018 – (National) - <https://is.gd/CBIIOh>

51. “This New Netflix Show 'Normalizes Child Sexual Abuse And The Sex Trafficking Of Minors,' Says Watchdog Group” - The show is based on a real-life sexual trafficking scandal when a mother was arrested for sex trafficking, [according to Variety](#). – Deseret News – November 30, 2018 – (National) - <https://is.gd/OhoKBR>