

# Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of January 5 to January 11, 2019

Articles Compiled by Debra J. Stemmler

Editing and Commentary by Nora J. Baladerian, Ph.D.,

Posting by Thomas F. Coleman

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: 1,6, 8, 11, 23, 29, 30, 46, 48

Physical Abuse: 2, 4, 9, 12, 14, 16, 17, 24, 25, 32

Emotional/Verbal Abuse: 10

Financial Abuse: 10, 13, 19, 21, 22, 26

Murder: 3, 5, 7, 18

Neglected: 10, 15, 27, 31

Kept Enclosed: 23

Restraint: 28

Related to special education: 3, 9, 24, 28

Guardianship: 22

**WINNER of most egregious award:** 1: Woman in vegetative state for 10 years gives birth at skilled nursing facility, surprising staff; 18: All patients died due to neglect at SNF.

**WINNER of “good job” award:** 41: Grant to fund mental health services to sexual assault victims in underserved populations.

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

Family: 19, 31

Carer: 6, 7, 12, 15, 21, 25, 27, 31, 44

Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF): 1, 2, 10, 11, 12

Co-resident (living program): 11

Group Home: 6, 29

Stranger: 2

Special education: 3, 9

Law Enforcement: 5, 17, 32

Bank Employee: 13

Acquaintance: 23

Men: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 23, 29, 30, 32, 46, 48,

Women: 6, 9, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 31

**Good News:** 22: Woman sentenced in financial abuse case to 16 to 40 years in jail; 38: Store offers “quiet hours” for shoppers with autism; 49: new film depicts sexual assault.

**Bad News:** 18: All patients die at SNF due to neglect; 20: state program for special education students served none; 35: Maine found to fail in mental health services for children.

**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>

**DISCLAIMER:** We use direct quotes from the articles which may include language that is not consistent with current guidelines for respectful or preferred descriptors or references.

### **ABUSE & NEGLECT**

1. “A Woman in a Vegetative State Suddenly Gave Birth. Her Alleged Assault is a #MeToo Wake-Up Call” - Patients at nursing homes and long-term care facilities are particularly at risk of being victims of abuse or sexual violence. – Vox – January 7, 2019 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/gSNinh>
2. “Man Attacks Wheelchair Bound Person at Sonora Nursing Home” - The suspect, 35-year-old Cesar Hernandez, allegedly began assaulting a double amputee disabled adult shortly after entering the Avalon Health Care Center on Greenly Road Thursday afternoon. – My Mother Lode – January 5, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/VSgytp>
3. State Revokes Certification of Special-Needs School Where Boy was Restrained and Later Died - Local school districts are removing students from a private El Dorado Hills school that provides services for special-needs students after the state rescinded the facility’s certification Wednesday. – The Sacramento Bee – January 10, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/EUxXPY>

4. "Report: Man Arrested for Abusing Elderly Disabled Man" - An adult male with special needs, a teenager and two dogs are removed from a home, a report states, when signs of abuse are uncovered in the home. According to an arrest report, deputies responded to an undisclosed location last month and found a teenager and an elderly man with special needs inside an apartment. – 3 Wear TV – January 9, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/Tnl5px>
  
5. "Family Seeks Answers After Mentally Ill Man Dies in Cobb Custody" - Reginald Wilson, 54, suffered from schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, his family say. He was found unresponsive at the Cobb jail and later declared dead. – Atlanta Journal Constitution – January 7, 2019 – (Georgia)- <https://is.gd/vMnhGJ>
  
6. "Police: Boise woman arrested for sexually abusing developmentally-delayed man" - Brittany Wilson was a worker in the east Meridian group home at the time. Reports say she had worked there about three months. "We believe they had sex on at least three occasions," Basterrechea said. "We were contacted by her employer who had some concerns because of text messages they found (on the victim's phone)." – KIVI TV – January 7, 2019 – (Idaho) - <https://is.gd/gE37HI>
  
7. "Southern Indiana Man Sentenced for Killing Disabled Man in Mobile Home Fire" - A southern Indiana man will spend 60 years in prison for killing a man in a mobile home fire. In November, a jury found Joshua Risinger guilty, but mentally ill. – WDRB- January 9 , 2019 – (Indiana )- <https://is.gd/h232k7>

8. “Des Moines Man Charged with Sexually Abusing Intellectually Disabled 16-Year-Old” - According to online court records, 22-year-old Kai Hanner abused the teen at a Des Moines home on January 5th. – WHO TV – January 7, 2019 – (Iowa) - <https://is.gd/LICCYv>
  
9. “Video Shows Teacher Dragging Autistic Student Down Hallways, Around Corners” - “It is my belief that all schools should be required to have cameras in place in order to protect students and teachers,” Nelson wrote. “Also, all schools should have more training for teachers to handle children with disabilities and to learn proper protocol to retrain and redirect if needed.” – KPLC TV – January 7, 2019 – (Kentucky)- <https://is.gd/OUkd4u>
  
10. “Concern About Care Lingers After Violations Found at Williamstown Nursing Home” - According to federal Department of Health and Human Services inspection reports, violations noted at Sweet Brook Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Williamstown, among other things: the resuscitation of a patient without consent, leaving residents in soiled diapers and unsanitary restraints for extended periods, and verbal and financial abuse of residents wishing to leave the facility. – The Berkshire Eagle – January 10, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/9de1iU>
  
11. Falmouth Man Charged with Assault at Nursing Home” - An East Falmouth man pleaded not guilty Tuesday in Barnstable District Court to a charge that he assaulted a resident of a Sandwich nursing home by touching her breast, while he was also a resident at the home, according to court documents. Ruby Antone Jr., 72, was summonsed to court and arraigned on a charge of indecent assault and battery on a person over 14 after he failed show up for a Dec. 11 magistrate’s hearing, according to the documents. - Cape Cod Times – January 9, 2019- (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/kAyrpl>

12. Employee allegedly assaults patient at Cambridge nursing facility - A 26-year-old Roslindale woman working at a Dana Street care facility allegedly slapped a patient more than eight times after he refused to get out of bed on Christmas day, according to Cambridge police. -Wicked Local – January 9, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/1AzHs6>
  
13. “Watertown Woman Arraigned in Connection with Alleged Financial Theft” - Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan has announced that Pamela Karalis, 44, of Watertown, was arraigned yesterday in Middlesex Superior Court and charged with four counts of embezzlement by a bank employee, larceny from a person over the age of 60, four counts of obtaining a signature by false pretenses, money laundering and tax evasion in connection with an alleged bank fraud of an elderly woman. – Belmont Wicked Local – January 8, 2019, (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/HQGnJr>
  
14. “Three Teens Accused of Beating Wyandotte Special Needs Student” - Wyandotte police confirm they are investigating a Jan. 2 incident where three teens allegedly beat a 14-year-old special needs student. [WDIV Click on Detroit](#) posted a video of the incident, showing three teenagers punching the boy, then stomping his head. – News Herald – Jan 10, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/RL7vxA>
  
15. Sterling Heights woman pleads guilty to abandoning man - Noha Hamze, a 57-year-old DHHS-paid caregiver, pleaded guilty to 4th Degree Vulnerable Adult Abuse for leaving Roger Garza, a 78-year-old man requiring constant attention, and going back to Sterling Heights with no plans to return for the man. At the time on Sept. 17, Garza was described as, “confused, unkempt and injured.” – The Morning Sun – January 7, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/Mbh4EV>

16. "Man Charged with Child Abuse, Alleged to Have Battered Disabled 14-Year-Old" - A 20-year-old Kenosha man allegedly battered a cognitively disabled 14-year-old Pleasant Prairie boy, biting him and possibly hitting him with a golf club. According to the criminal complaint against James Williams, the boy's older brother called Pleasant Prairie Police Monday, reporting that, the night before, two of his friends had come to his home while he was out and battered his younger brother. – Kenosha News – January 8, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/Jn6YS8>
  
17. "Officer Filmed Beating Mentally Ill Naked Woman Charged with Assault and Misconduct" - The officer caught on camera beating a naked mentally ill woman has been charged with assault and misconduct. Cpl. Dwayne Jones was seen in a cell phone video last August punching the woman in the head. Family of the woman said that because of the state she was in, officers should have known she wasn't in the right state of mind. – Fox 2 – January 9, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/vo4ql2>
  
18. "Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care: Serious Issues, Change is Imperative at Bethel Care Center" - The Minnesota Department of Health said the patients were all on ventilators and all passed away because of neglect. – KSTP 5 – January 6, 2019 (Minneapolis) - <https://is.gd/jlk6sg>
  
19. "Florissant Woman Sentenced in Financial Exploitation of Disabled Person" - After a four-year legal saga, a woman has been sentenced to probation for using a person with special needs to get a loan and cellphone services. – St. Louis Post – Dispatch – January 4, 2019 – (Missouri) - <https://is.gd/Fh8gUP>
  
20. "State Program Created for Special Needs Students Has Failed to Help a Single One" - The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education said

in an email that after four years, the effort had failed. Not a single child applied for the scholarship nor were any funds donated to pay for them. –  
Missourian – January 5, 2019 - (Missouri) - <https://is.gd/5NgMgB>

21. “Caregiver Pleads not Guilty to Thefts from Vulnerable Adult” - A 28-year-old caregiver has pleaded not guilty to stealing more than \$14,000 from the northeast Nebraska man she's been helping. Cedar County District Court records say Kayla Hansen, of Coleridge, is charged with abuse of a vulnerable adult and two related crimes. She entered written pleas Wednesday. – 1011 Now – January 10, 2019- (Nebraska) - <https://is.gd/HYYcQu>
  
22. “Ex-appointed Guardian Gets Prison in Nevada Elder Abuse Case” - A 53-year-old former court-appointed financial guardian who admitted stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars from people assigned to her care in Las Vegas was sentenced Friday to 16 to 40 years in Nevada state prison in what prosecutors called the state's largest-ever elder exploitation case. – The News Tribune – January 4, 2019 – (Nevada) - <https://is.gd/GGMEAp>
  
23. “New York Man Charged with Kidnapping, Assaulting Wheelchair-Bound Woman in Ellsworth” - A New York man was charged Tuesday after allegedly holding a 64-year-old wheelchair-bound woman in an Ellsworth hotel and sexually assaulting her, police said Wednesday. Michael Jon Palmatier, 62, of Sidney, New York, was charged Tuesday with Class A kidnapping, Class A gross sexual assault, Class B aggravated assault, Class D assault, terrorizing, obstructing the reporting of a crime and violation of a protective order. – Bangor Daily – January 9, 2019 – (New York)- <https://is.gd/II2HIQ>

24. "Elementary School Teacher Assaulted Handicapped Child; Cumberland County Officials Say" - April Michelle Caudill, 37, of Fayetteville was charged Monday with assault of a handicapped person. An arrest warrant says that on Oct. 23, 2018, a handicapped student was assaulted when Caudill hit "her head twice using an open hand." – CBS 17 – January 8, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/1r3Vo7>
  
25. "Police: Caretaker Assaulted Disabled Woman" - Kristie Marie Goins had been released from jail three days before she allegedly slapped the 66-year-old woman with an open hand, threatened to hit her with a hammer, pinned her against a chair and punched her. – Gaston Gazette – January 8, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/Qsjk0C>
  
26. "Two Women Accused of Financially Exploiting Ohio County Man" - The Ohio County Sheriff's Office said an 84-year-old man was the victim of financial exploitation days after Christmas. Deputies said their investigation led to the arrest of 31-year-old Molly Johnson and 43-year-old Janice Leek. – Tristate – January 7, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/lzK8Br>
  
27. "Investigation: Care Home Resident Smelled of Rotting Flesh" - The person was eventually moved to a new home and immediately hospitalized for surgery to remove dead and decaying tissue, according to state records. – The Charlotte Observer – January 10, 2019 – (Oregon) - <https://is.gd/EbWbdI>
  
28. "Family of Special Needs Student Sues Pittsburgh Public Schools Over Unlawful Restraint, Lack of Support"- The mother of a special-needs student has filed a federal lawsuit against the Pittsburgh Public Schools district alleging that it failed to provide her son with the appropriate

support plan, and that school police placed him in handcuffs when he had an outburst in his first-grade class. – Pittsburgh Post- Gazette -January 8, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/40GBog>

29. “Man Accused of Raping Woman in Group Home, Affidavit Says” - Austin police have arrested a man suspected of keeping a woman in a group home against her will and raping her, according to an arrest affidavit filed on Monday. – Statesman – January 7, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/GT2FTS>

30. “Former Maintenance Man Indicted, Charged with Sexual Assault of Disabled Woman” - A second indictment has been brought against 45-year-old Robert Lopez-Parker, who was arrested and charged with sexual assault of a disabled woman on May 2, 2018. KCBD originally brought this story in May of last year, following his first indictment: - KCBD – January 9, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/xIBFI5>

31. “Utah Women Charged with Abuse After Maggots Found Inside Neglected Mother’s Open Wounds” - The victim is confined to a bed and wheelchair and requires assistance daily. Police state she is in the care of her two adult daughters, 38-year-old Paula Leona Rhodes and 37-year-old Terry Gardner. Charging documents indicate Rhodes admitted she had not bathed or cleaned her mother in a few weeks and that Gardner told police she was aware of the maggots in her mother's wounds. – Fox 13 Utah- January 10, 2019 – (Utah) - <https://is.gd/wKNh0B>

\*This one wins my vote for most awful!

32. “Bond Set for Ex-HRRJ Correctional Officer Accused of Strangling Mentally Ill Inmate” - Dale Prodo Barnes was indicted by a grand jury on Jan. 3 and charged with malicious wounding and strangulation. The charges stemmed

from an incident that happened on Jan. 9, 2018, in which a mentally ill inmate named Skyler Peacock accused Barnes of attacking him as he was trying to get his pills.- WAVY 10 – January 8, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/jWWzuw>

## LAWS & LEGISLATION

33. “Vulnerable Adults Get Greater Protection Now” - The [Vulnerable Adults Act \(VAA\), passed in Parliament last May](#), provides an additional avenue for social workers to turn to when other attempts at engaging the family of the adult - typically an elderly person - have failed. – The Straits Times – January 7, 2019 – (Singapore) - <https://is.gd/Dn731c>

## STUDIES & STATISTICS

34. “Are Illinois’ Veterans Receiving Better Care?” - The first required biannual report for the Illinois State Veterans Homes has now been published for the reporting period of July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018 and highlights the number of complaints made by residents including those listed in a “Resident Grievance Log” and required follow-up by staff, information on any epidemic reported at a veterans home, the number of cases and information on the cases, and action taken by the homes to eradicate the spread of communicable disease. – Levin Perconti Blog – January 7, 2019 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/5kmkuA>

35. “Report Finds That Maine Fails To Provide Adequate Children's Behavioral Health Services” - The state of Maine fails to provide adequate access and quality in its Children's Behavioral Health Services, according to [a new report](#) commissioned by Public Consulting Group. – Maine Public – January 9, 2019 – (Maine) - <https://is.gd/iQkhTm>

36. “CRISPR Studies Hint at Cell Pathways Involved in Autism” - A variety of genetic risk factors for autism disrupt some of the same processes in cells, two new studies suggest<sup>1,2</sup>. Both studies used the DNA-editing tool CRISPR to mutate genes with ties to autism. In one of the studies, researchers grew neurons from human stem cells lacking any of 10 genes implicated in autism. Half of these neurons show diminished electrical activity at their connections with other cells, or [synapses](#). – Spectrum – January 7, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/sAyvR6>

37. “Pennsylvania Criticized for How it Handles Elder Abuse Cases” - A six-page summary of the report says investigative practices aren’t standardized across counties and it criticizes training requirements for caseworkers who are fielding a fast-growing number of complaints. – Trib Live – January 9, 2019 – (Pennsylvania)- <https://is.gd/mPZfnP>

## IMPROVED SUPPORTS

38. “Keighley Store introduces 'Quiet Hour' to Help Autistic Shoppers” - Music is switched off and non-emergency tannoy announcements stopped between 9am and 10am every Saturday. The initiative – which has been implemented at the store at Alston Retail Park, in Keighley – was developed in conjunction with the National Autistic Society. – Keighley News – January 6, 2019 – (England) - <https://is.gd/m6n5WX>

39. “New Books Developed for Visually Challenged Children” - This 35-year-old artist’s creative ideas in teaching the blind how to illustrate books show that if visually challenged children’s sense of touch and manual skills are improved, they will get a better understanding the world around them and, as a result, will have a greater self-confidence in order to make their

presence felt in this unknown world. – Iran Front Page – January 6, 2019 – (Iran) - <https://is.gd/01RUTh>

40. “Kansas Embraces Unconditional Housing Program for Mentally Ill” – The idea is to provide those who need treatment with unconditional housing and the support services they need, even if they are substance abusers who are likely to violate traditional program requirements for curfew and sobriety. – The Topeka Capital Journal – January 7, 2019 – (Kansas) - <https://is.gd/huXSPs>

41. Women's Center Receives Three-Year Victims of Crime Act Sexual Assault Victims Services Grant - The Women’s Center, Inc. has received a three year Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Sexual Assault Victims Services grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services that began on January 1, 2019. The grant will enhance the agency’s sexual assault program in Alger and Marquette County and will allow the agency to focus on assisting victims in underserved populations such as the elderly, disabled, mentally ill, LGBTQ, homeless and “at risk youth.” – TV 6 Upper Michigan’s Source – January 8, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/BTGjFn>

42. “Parents with Limited English Can Get Lost Without Translations of Special Ed Plans. NYC is Trying to Fix That” - Now, education department officials have quietly launched a pilot program to centralize the translation process instead of asking schools to sort out the logistics on their own. Beginning in September, schools in District 9 in the Bronx, District 24 in Queens, and District 75 (a citywide district for students with more complex disabilities) can ask the education department’s translation department to handle the request. -Chalk Beat – January 9, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/SO0hKg>

43. "Video Appears to Show Taco Bell Employee Refusing to Serve Man Who is Deaf" - According to a statement from Taco Bell, the worker, who was not identified, "no longer works for their organization" and all other employees at the Kettering location would be retrained on their policies. – Fox 13- January 4, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/MnombS>
44. "Disability Dialog to Help Make Toledo More of a Disability-Friendly City" - "We must never forget that the real benchmark for how we measure a disability-friendly community is how we care for one another," said The Ability Center Executive Director, Tim Harrington. – NBC 24 – January 7, 2019 - <https://is.gd/iDI7kn>

#### INTERNATIONAL

45. "Australia's 2018 Human Rights Performance Slammed" - The Australian government's human rights approach to refugees, Indigenous people and those with disability has been slammed by an annual review, which warns that Australia is at risk of breaching its international human rights obligations. – Probono – January 9, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/CXHNfF>
46. "Carer, 62, is Charged with Raping a Severely Disabled Woman, 38, at her Home" - A carer has been charged with sexually assaulting a severely disabled woman in her own home. The 62-year-old man allegedly assaulted the woman, 38, in October last year while going round to her house in Port Macquarie to care for her. – Daily Mail – January 8, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/VgWfkW>
47. "Chennai: 64-Year-Old Woman Attacked by Mentally Ill Son, Dies" - A 64-year-old woman died on Thursday night of head injuries sustained a week

back when her mentally retarded son pushed her against a wall following a verbal dispute. -Deccan Chronicle – January 5, 2019 – (India) -

<https://is.gd/OecCGJ>

48. “Mentally Retarded Girl Impregnated for the Third Time in Rufunsa - In the first rape incident in 2014 , Lucia Kapandula who is also physically challenged had her first pregnancy when she was 19 years and the matter was reported to the police but no investigations were done. Kapandula now has a third child who is seven months old which has made concerned members of the community to now call on relevant authorities to conduct a DNA test on prime suspects who they say are some of her own family members. – Lusaka Times – January 6, 2019 – (Zambia) -

<https://is.gd/ZkASch>

#### MISCELLANEOUS

49. “Touch Me Not Film Explores Sexual Needs of People with Disabilities” - “When I was 20, I thought I knew how things worked: desire, intimacy, beauty,” director Adina Pintilie, 38, tells The Post. But “reality is much more complex.” Her film “Touch Me Not,” screening at MoMA Friday through Jan. 17, is an unflinching look at human sexuality, replete with nudity and a possibly unprecedented inclusion of disabled cast members, one of whom, Christian Bayerlein, is partially paralyzed. – New York Post – January 9, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/r9yjcB>