

OLDER WOMEN'S RIGHTS MATTER: AN OVERVIEW OF THE OLDER WOMEN'S LEGAL EDUCATION PROJECT

**WEST COAST LEAF &
THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR ELDER LAW**



“Women often stay in a situation that is very unhealthy and scary for years because they don’t know how to end it. And where do you go when you leave?”

**-OLDER WOMEN’S DIALOGUE
PROJECT PARTICIPANT**

TODAY WE WILL DISCUSS:

- 1. Substantive equality**, older women, and the law
- 2. What we've learned** from talking directly with older women
- 3. The Older Women's Legal Education Project**
 - *Roads to Safety* legal handbook
 - Wallet cards
 - Service provider workshop/webinar

THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR ELDER LAW

**Dedicated to
improving the
lives of older
adults**

- Research, writing and analysis for law reform
- Collaboration and consultation with community groups
- Developing materials to help people understand legal rights and responsibilities



WEST COAST LEAF

- Promotes women's equality through law
- Believes differences must be respected and supported by the law, and by social and institutional practices



Litigation

Law
Reform

Public
Legal
Education

NEW! RISE WOMEN'S LEGAL CENTRE

- Help with family law issues for women with low incomes
- Possible types of help: legal advice, help writing documents, representation in Provincial Court, library and computer space

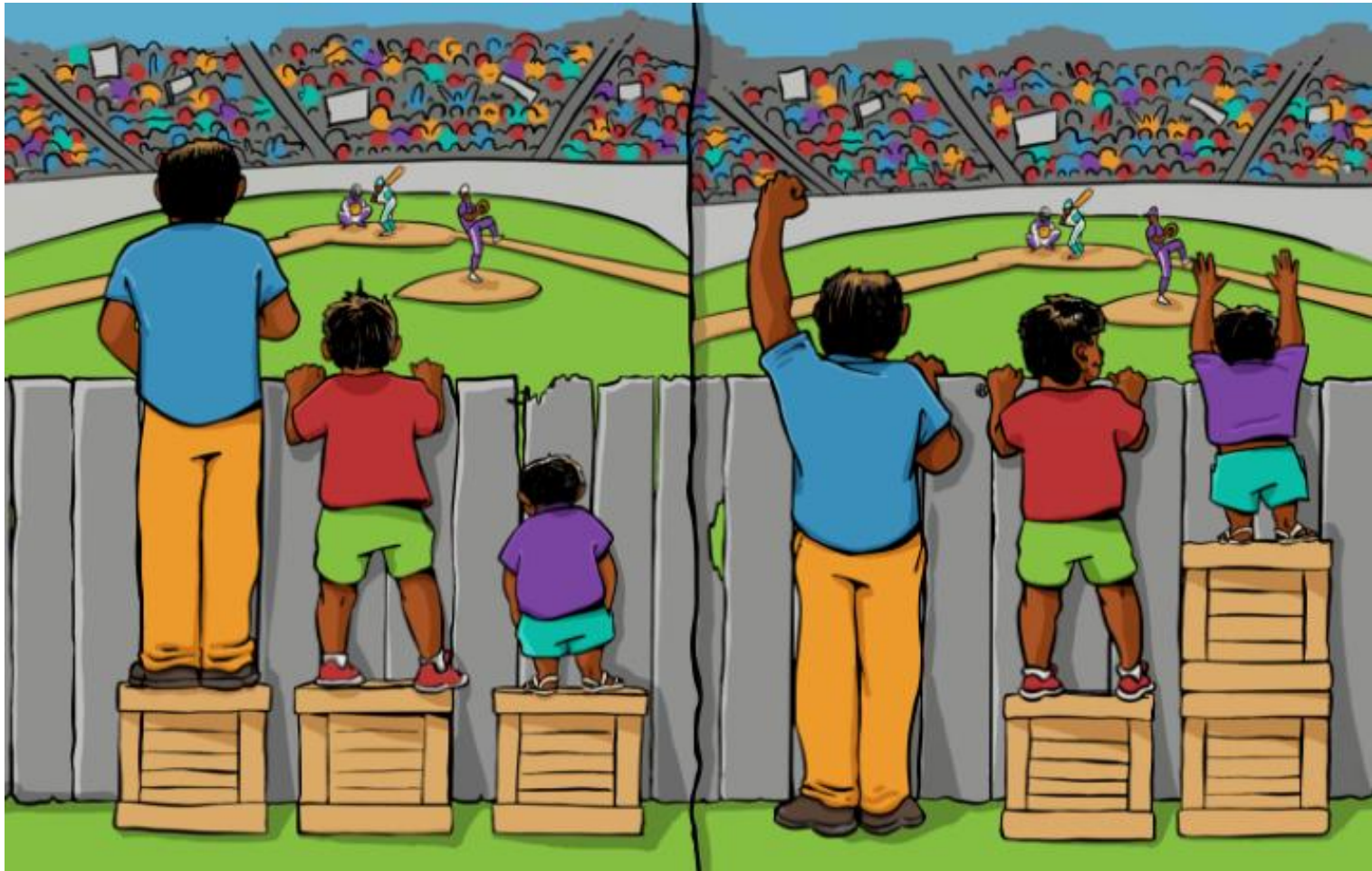


In Vancouver
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womenslegalcentre.ca

Part 1:

Substantive equality, older women, and the law



Formal Equality

Substantive Equality

INTERSECTIONALITY AND 'ELDER ABUSE'



"My life experiences are as both a Mohawk and a woman. I cannot say when I can name an act as discrimination, that it happened to me because I am a Mohawk or because I am a woman. I cannot take the women out of the Mohawk or the Mohawk out of the women...I exist as a single person. My experience is 'discrimination within discrimination.'"

-Patricia Monture-Angus, 1958-2010
Mohawk lawyer, activist, educator and author

“It’s not just that older woman are treated poorly, but if you’re older, a woman and not white you’re treated worse. There are different levels and kinds of discrimination that stack up one on another. When you’re like me and poor, not-white, older and a woman—well then you’re in trouble.”

**-OLDER WOMEN’S DIALOGUE PROJECT
PARTICIPANT**

INTERSECTIONALITY AND 'ELDER ABUSE'

- If I leave my sponsor, will I be deported? What will happen to my grandkids? I'm the one who keeps them safe and cares for them.
- I don't want to report my husband's violence. I don't trust the police to treat an Aboriginal woman with respect. Too many of our men are behind bars.
- My kids always assumed I wasn't good with money. Now that I have partial facial paralysis because of my stroke, they want me to give them full control. They think I'm not intelligent because my speech is slower and less clear than before.

Part 2:

What we have learned
from talking to older
women



THE OLDER WOMEN'S DIALOGUE PROJECT

THE OLDER WOMEN'S DIALOGUE PROJECT EXPLORES:

1. What are the pressing law and social policy issues impacting older women?
2. What can we do to address these barriers to quality of life for older women?

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE



SOUTH GRANVILLE SENIORS CENTRE



I take two pills a day, instead
of the three that I'm required to take

RICHMOND WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE



ABORIGINAL MOTHER CENTRE



SOME THEMES FROM OWDP CONSULTATIONS

POVERTY AND INCOME INSECURITY

Some contributing factors:

- Immigration
- Disabilities
- Limited or no pension access
- Impacts of residential school and foster care
- Caregiving responsibilities
- Discrimination

“The stigma associated with fleeing abuse is huge. Your credit rating is terrible, you have no clean clothes and people look at you differently when you have to tell them why you left. The stigma follows you when you go to rent your next place—loss of friends, credibility, loss of everything.”

**-OLDER WOMEN'S DIALOGUE PROJECT
PARTICIPANT**

SOME THEMES FROM OWDP CONSULTATIONS

LACK OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Some challenges:

- Language barriers
- Lack of accessibility of information
- Service providers not communicating with older women directly because of ageism
- Lack of access to legal information

SOME THEMES FROM OWDP CONSULTATIONS

VIOLENCE AND BARRIERS TO SAFETY

Some issues:

- Increased physical vulnerability to violence
- Lack of access to transition housing
- Systemic violence perpetrated against Indigenous women by institutions and individuals
- Social isolation: both a safety risk and a strategy for self-protection

“The older women in their 70s and 80s are a different generation, and they got married for life. There would be a lot of shame in leaving. And they may never have worked: they have no money to leave.”

**-OLDER WOMEN'S DIALOGUE
PROJECT PARTICIPANT**

Part 3:

The Older Women's Legal Education Project

WHY THE OLDER WOMEN'S LEGAL EDUCATION PROJECT?

1. Findings from the OWDP
2. Separation of seniors' services and violence against women sectors

COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

Roads to Safety: Legal handbook & wallet cards



Service provider training: workshop and webinar

GET THE RESOURCES & LEARN MORE!



www.westcoastleaf.org/roads

WALLET CARD VERSIONS AVAILABLE

General English version

Version in English listing specialized services for Indigenous women

Arabic

Chinese (Simplified)

Chinese (Traditional)

Filipino (Tagalog)

French

Hindi

Persian (Farsi)

Punjabi

Spanish

Urdu

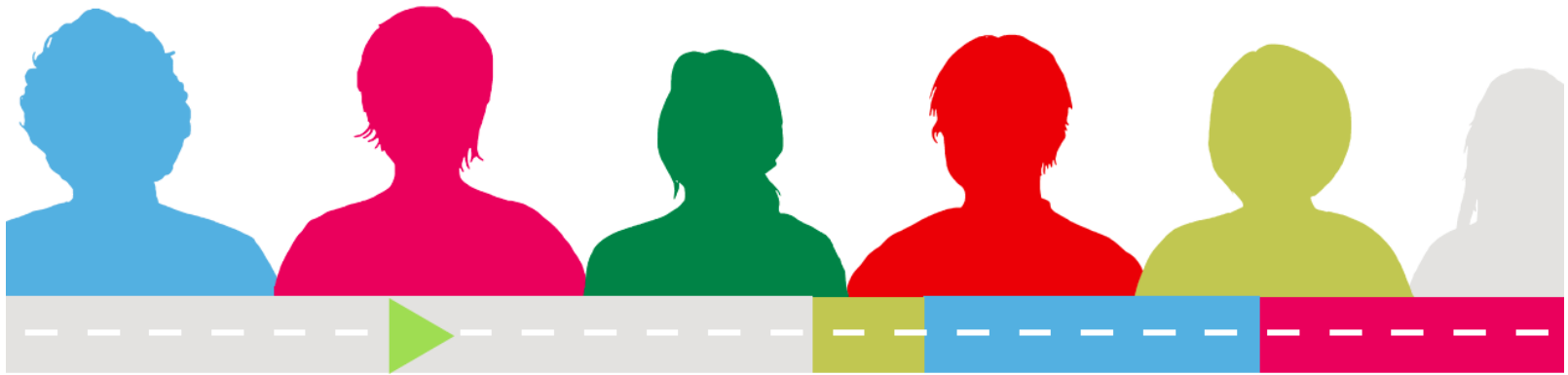
Vietnamese



www.westcoastleaf.org/roads

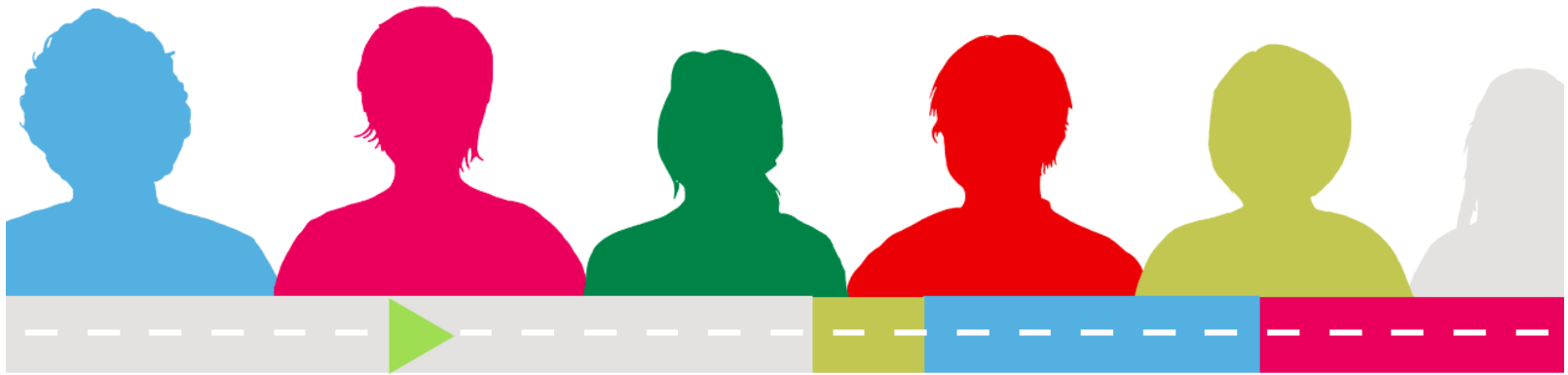
OLDER WOMEN'S RIGHTS MATTER

WORKSHOP & WEBINAR TOPICS



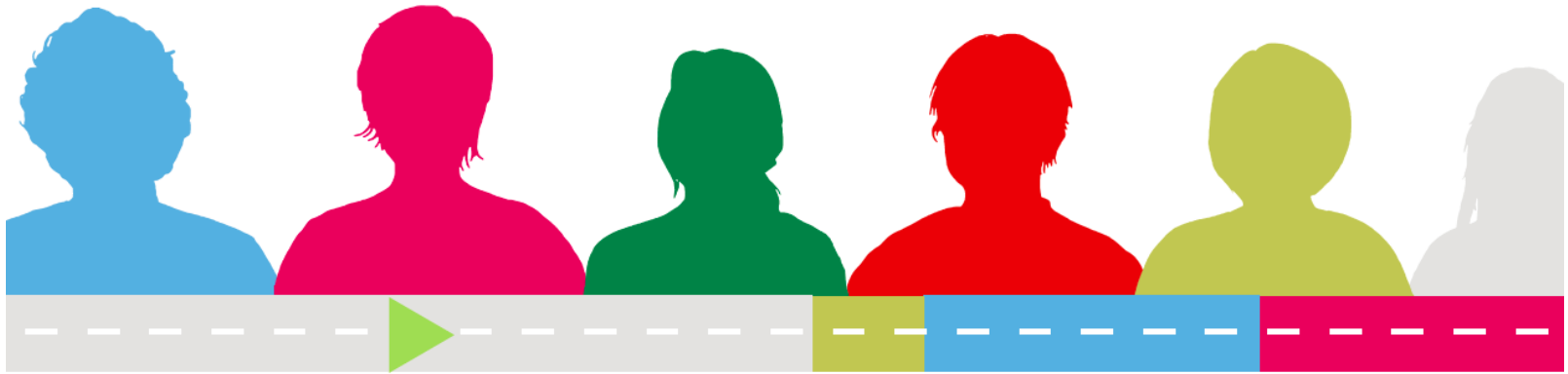
- Decision-making rights
- Powers of attorney and representation agreements
- Roles of the Health Authorities and Public Guardian and Trustee
- Protection orders and peace bonds
- Pension basics, including pension division

ROADS TO SAFETY – WHAT'S IN THE HANDBOOK?



- Emergency information & safety planning
- Decision-making rights
- Immigration and sponsorship
- Getting legal help
- Public financial supports (income & disability assistance, public pensions, housing supports)

ROADS TO SAFETY – WHAT'S IN THE HANDBOOK?



- Protection orders and peace bonds
- Keeping grandchildren safe
- Financial abuse
- Property division after separation
- Resources for support

ROADS TO SAFETY – LEARNING FROM OLDER WOMEN

IF YOU ARE IN DANGER

- If you think you are in danger, call **9-1-1** for emergency help.
- If you need help in a language other than English, say what language you speak when you call **9-1-1** to get an interpreter.
- If you are deaf or hard-of-hearing and use a TTY (teletypewriter), dial **9-1-1** through your TTY.



If someone has hurt you and you need support or information, call **VictimLink** at 1-800-563-0808. This service is available 24 hours a day and in many languages.

Every woman deserves safety and respect.

إذا كانت حياتك معرضة للخطر، إتصلي هاتفياً على الرقم 9-1-1 وأذكرى إسم اللغة التي تتحدثين بها.
إذا قام شخص بإيذاءك وتحتاجين إلى الدعم أو المعلومات، إتصلي بخط هاتف الضحية (VICTIMLINK) على الرقم 1-800-563-0808. هذه الخدمة متوفرة على مدار 24 ساعة وبلغات عديدة.
كل امرأة تستحق السلامة والإحترام.

如果您正处于危险之中，请致电 9-1-1，告诉对方您讲什么语言。

如果有人伤害了您，您需要支持或信息，请致电 VICTIMLINK (受害者热线) 1-800-563-0808。这项服务以许多语言提供服务，一天 24 小时昼夜不休。

每个妇女都应该享有安全和尊重。

如果遇到危險，請致電 9-1-1，並講出您說什麼語言。

如果有人傷害您而您需要支援或資訊，請致電 受害者熱線 (VICTIMLINK)：1-800-563-0808。這項服務每天 24 小時都可使用，並且以多種語言提供。

每個婦女都應獲得確保安全和受到尊重。

KUNG IKAW AY NASA PANGANIB, tumawag sa 9-1-1 at sabihin kung anong wika ang sinasalita mo.

Kapag ikaw ay sinaktan ng isang tao at kailangan mo ng tulong o impormasyon, tawagan ang VICTIMLINK sa 1-800-563-0808. Magagamit ang serbisyon ng ito sa iba't ibang wika, 24 oras bawat araw.

Ang bawat babae ay may karapatang maging ligtas at ginagalang.

SI VOUS ÊTES EN DANGER, composez le 9-1-1 et dites quelle langue vous parlez.

Si quelqu'un vous fait mal et que vous avez besoin de soutien ou de renseignements, appelez VICTIMLINK au 1-800-563-0808. Ce service est disponible 24 heures sur 24 et dans de nombreuses langues.

Toutes les femmes méritent d'être en sécurité et respectées.

अगर आप संकट में हैं, तो 9-1-1 को फोन करें और बताएं कि आप कौन सी भाषा बोलती हैं।

यदि कोई आपको चोट पहुंचाए और आप को सहायता या जानकारी की आवश्यकता हो तो VICTIMLINK को 1-800-563-0808 पर फोन करें। यह सेवा दिन के चौबीसों घंटे व अनेक भाषाओं में उपलब्ध है।

सुरक्षा व आदर प्रत्येक महिला का अधिकार है।

اگر در خطر هستید، با 9-1-1 تماس بگیرید و بگویید که به چه زبانی صحبت می‌کنید.
اگر کسی به شما آسیبی برساند و به کمک یا اطلاعات نیاز داشته باشید، با VICTIMLINK به شماره 1-800-563-0808 تماس بگیرید. این خدمت در 24 ساعت شبانه‌روز و به چندین زبان موجود است.

هر زنی شایسته‌ی برخورداری از ایمنی و احترام است.

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਖਤਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ 9-1-1 ਨੂੰ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਦੱਸੋ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਹੋ।

ਜੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਜਾਂ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਵਿਕਟਿਮਲਿੰਕ ਨੂੰ 1-800-563-0808 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ। ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾ ਦਿਨ ਦੇ 24 ਘੰਟੇ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਬਾਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੈ।

ਹਰ ਔਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਆਦਰ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਹੈ।

SI ESTÁS EN PELIGRO, llama al 9-1-1 y diles qué idioma hablas (di "Spanish").

Si alguien te ha lastimado y necesitas apoyo o información, llama a VICTIMLINK al 1-800-563-0808. Este servicio está disponible 24 horas al día y en muchos idiomas.

Todas las mujeres merecen seguridad y respeto.

اگر آپ خطرے میں ہیں تو، 9-1-1 پر فون کئے اور آپ جو زبان بولتے ہیں وہ کہئے۔
اگر آپ کو کسی نے چوٹ پہنچائی ہے اور آپ کو مدد یا معلومات کی ضرورت ہے تو، VICTIMLINK کو 1-800-563-0808 پر فون کئے۔ یہ خدمت دن کے چوبیس گھنٹے اور بہت سی زبانوں میں مہیا ہے۔
ہر خاتون کو حفاظ اور عزت کی مستحق ہے۔

NẾU QUÝ VỊ ĐANG BỊ NGUY HIỂM, hãy gọi số 9-1-1 và cho biết quý vị nói tiếng gì.

Nếu có người đã thương quý vị và quý vị cần được trợ giúp hoặc cần biết tin tức, hãy gọi cho VICTIMLINK (ĐƯỜNG DÂY TRỢ GIÚP NẠN NHÂN) tại số 1-800-563-0808. Dịch vụ này hoạt động 24 giờ mỗi ngày và bằng nhiều ngôn ngữ.

Mỗi người phụ nữ đều xứng đáng được an toàn và tôn trọng.

ROADS TO SAFETY – LEARNING FROM OLDER WOMEN

HOMES ON RESERVE

What happens if you leave your marriage or common-law relationship and your family home is on reserve land that falls under the *Indian Act* (a law that deals with local First Nations governments, reserves, and Indian status)?

Some Bands have created their own laws to deal with family homes. You can contact your Band office to find out whether your Band has adopted its own laws about this.

If not, a law called the *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act* will apply as long as the spouses or common-law partners are living on reserve and at least one of them is a member of a First Nation or a Status Indian.

The *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act* covers protections and rights for people and families living on reserve, for example:

- The right to live in the family home
- Your rights after your spouse or common-law partner dies
- How the value of a home on reserve can be divided after the breakup of a marriage or common-law relationship.

Some Bands have created their own laws to deal with family homes. You can contact your Band office to find out whether your Band has adopted its own laws about this.

ROADS TO SAFETY – **LEARNING FROM OLDER WOMEN**

SECTION 2

You are Not Alone: About this Handbook



**If someone is
hurting you, it is
not your fault and
you are not alone.**

Every woman deserves to be safe and treated with respect. This handbook was created to help you understand your rights and options if someone in your life is hurting you.

Unfortunately, sometimes older women are not safe and people in their lives mistreat them. Abuse can come in many forms such as:

- Physically hurting you — for example, pushing you, hitting you, or treating you roughly
- Doing anything sexual to you that you don't agree to
- Threatening to hurt you or someone you care about
- Stealing from you
- Pressuring you to sign legal documents

AREA OF SPECIAL FOCUS: DECISION-MAKING RIGHTS

- All adults presumed capable
- Dementia diagnosis does not mean no legal capacity, though discrimination means women's decisions not always respected
- Capacity depends on the type of decision
- Often, abuse of older women involves taking away their right to make decisions
- Right to consent OR not consent to sex

“It’s like all of a sudden you’re invisible at 60.”

“They equate incapacity with aging.”

““Just because we are older women does not mean we have no more intelligence. We have things to say.”

**-OLDER WOMEN’S DIALOGUE
PROJECT PARTICIPANTS**

Thank you for joining us!

Keep in touch!

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