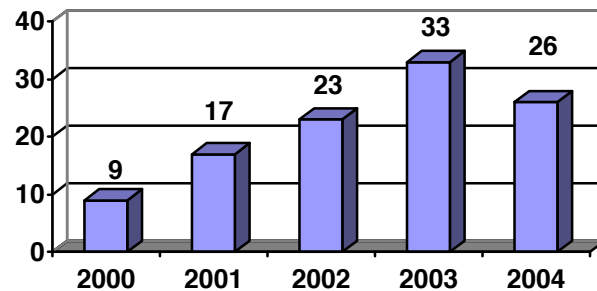


## Wood County is Pro-Active with Elder Abuse Concerns

Reported Elder Abuse Cases  
Wood County



### Key Facts

- There were 3,853 elder abuse cases in Wisconsin in 2003:
  - Physical abuse - 10%
  - Emotional abuse – 8%
  - Neglect – 13%
  - Self-neglect – 49%
  - Material abuse – 20% (Financial Exploitation)
- The largest group (49%) of elder abuse victims were 80 years or older.
- Relationship to their abuser:
  - Spouse – 14%
  - Children – 45%
  - Other relative – 15%
  - Friend/neighbor – 12%
  - Other (may include service provider) – 14%
- Exercising their rights as competent adults under Wisconsin law, 19% refused services offered.

### Why is this Information Important?

In Wood County, elder abuse investigation and counseling is handled through the Social Services Department. If a victim is indeed suffering from domestic violence, it is referred to the Family Center in Wisconsin Rapids or the Personal Development Center in Marshfield.

Elder abuse cases in Wood County have been steadily increasing over the past four years with 9 reported in 2000, 17 in 2001, 23 in 2002 and 33 in 2003. The number of abuse cases has grown steadily since 2000 representing a 375% increase over a four-year period. This increase may be due in part to a new county-wide interdisciplinary team that formed in 2000 to prevent elder and domestic abuse, to educate the community, and to provide a strong support system to help victims of abuse in later life.

### Referral Services

Wood County currently provides a toll free, 24-hour referral service available for families and victims of elder abuse. In Wisconsin Rapids, the number is 421-8696, and in Marshfield, the number is 397-6253.

In case of domestic violence affecting seniors, 24-hour help is also available by calling the Family Center in Wisconsin Rapids at 421-1511.

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Health & Family Services, Division of Disability & Elder Services*