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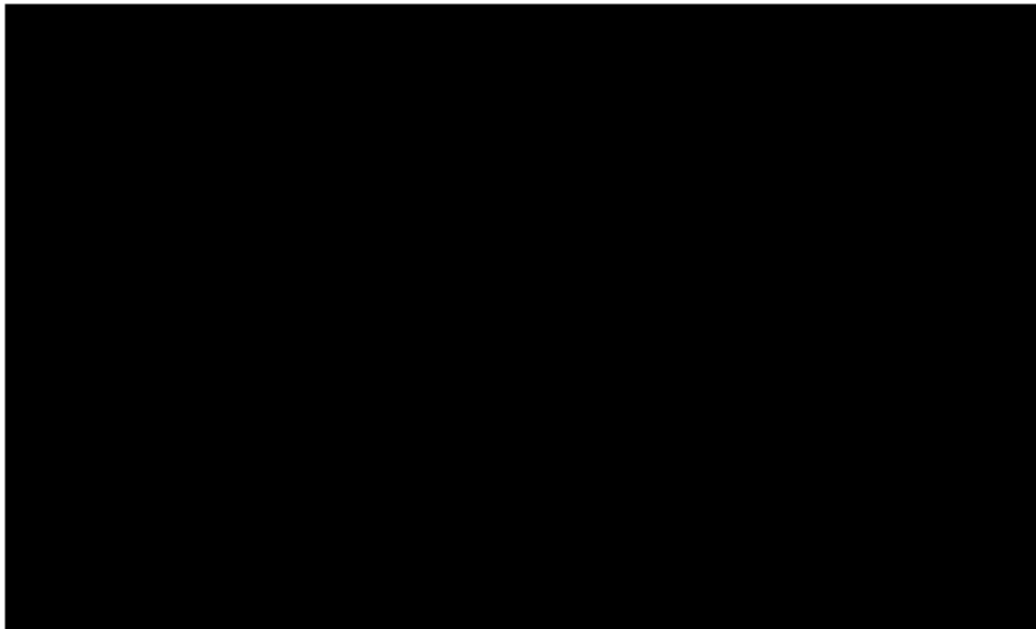
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WEST ROXBURY

## Video: Seniors flash mob West Roxbury store to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Posted by Matt Rocheleau June 15, 2012 06:48 PM

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(Ethos)

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The flash mob – a term coined nearly a decade ago – is old news.

But one organized Friday morning at a West Roxbury supermarket used age to bring a youthful punch back to the act of suddenly gathering in public to perform a brief, choreographed routine.

More than 25 seniors from Ethos' AgeWell West Roxbury program, along with members of the nonprofit's protective services staff, participated in a flash mob, singing and dancing to The Beatles "When I'm Sixty-Four" at the Roche Bros. grocery store Friday morning.

The surprising turn out was the first of its kind locally, according to the organization. It was arranged, through weeks of rehearsal, to raise awareness about elder abuse in the Boston area and across the country. June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

On average, there are 54 reports of suspected elder abuse each day in Massachusetts, according to figures reported in 2011 by Mass Home Care, an elder services advocacy group. The figure represents a 31 percent increase from the number of elder abuse cases reported in the state in 2008.

In Boston alone, more than 7,000 cases of suspected elder abuse were reported between 2008 and 2012, according to Ethos, an organization that directly aids and advocates for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Friday's flash mob was sponsored by Ethos, Faulkner Hospital and Roche Bros.

To learn more about elder abuse, see the below information provided by Ethos, or visit [www.ethocare.org](http://www.ethocare.org).

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### What is Elder Abuse?

The National Center of Elder abuse defines elder abuse as intentional or neglectful acts by a caregiver or a "trusted individual" that harm, or may harm, a vulnerable elder.

Elder abuse comes in many forms including physical, emotional or sexual

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Elder abuse comes in many forms including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, abandonment or self-neglect.

How do you report a case of suspected elder abuse?

The Boston Elder Protective Services Program at Ethos assists people 60 years and older who are at risk and are suffering from either from self-neglect, neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or financial exploitation.

People in the community are encouraged to contact the Boston Elder Protective Services Program at Ethos if they are concerned that an elder is at serious risk. Certain professionals are mandated by law to report suspected cases of elder abuse, neglect and self-neglect, including physicians, social workers, psychologists, nurses, police, firefighters. All reports remain confidential.

If you, or someone you know, suspect an elder might be a victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation, contact the Boston Elder Protective Services Program at Ethos 617-522-6700 (Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), the Elder Abuse Hotline 800-922-2275 (available after normal business hours and on weekends) or the Police by calling 911.

The Professionally trained caseworkers at Ethos investigate reports of neglect or abuse, and then create a service plan to remedy the situation quickly. While the elder is the primary client, Ethos caseworkers also confer with caregivers and healthcare professionals to assess needs. In keeping with an adult's right to self-determination, Protective Services fully respects elders' choice to accept or refuse Services intervention, provided they have the capacity to make their own decisions.

The Elder Protective Services team works to remedy specific problems in the least restrictive manner possible. The intention is not to be punitive, but rather to assist elders and their caretakers in resolving situations with the least amount of disruption to the elder's life.

If the elder is in imminent danger, Boston Elder Protective Services caseworkers will respond immediately to insure the elder's safety. In cases of serious abuse, neglect or financial exploitation, the Elder Protective Services team will refer the matter to the Suffolk County District Attorney.

*E-mail Matt Rocheleau at [mjrochele@gmail.com](mailto:mjrochele@gmail.com).*

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