

# NEWS RELEASE

**Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Date: June 12, 2024**

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## **Summit County recognizes elder abuse awareness, Alzheimer’s and brain awareness**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council recently passed a resolution declaring the month of June as Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month and a resolution declaring June 15 as Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The resolutions ask that residents of Summit County participate in events and programs that uplift both residents living with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease and older residents that may face or have faced neglect, exploitation, or abuse.

According to the [National Institute on Aging](#), dementia is the loss of cognitive functions such as thinking, remembering, and reasoning to such an extent that it interferes with a person’s daily life, while Alzheimer’s disease is a progressive brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills and is the most common cause of dementia. Nearly 7 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s and this number is expected to rise to 13 million Americans by 2050. Women, Hispanic, and Black Americans are at a significantly higher risk for developing Alzheimer’s and related diseases.

In 2023, Summit County was designated a Dementia-Friendly Community and has embarked on a mission to better serve residents with dementia and to meet the needs of an increasing number of people living with dementia. The Akron-Summit County Public Library has led the way with their Dementia Inclusive Library initiative, which has included staff training from the Ohio Council for Cognitive Health and Memory Kits for people with dementia. Dementia Friends training is also available to local institutions, businesses, and groups who want to learn how to better advocate for and support their neighbors and loved ones with dementia. Residents can visit the library’s [Dementia Inclusive Library](#) webpage to learn more.

“We all know someone living with Alzheimer’s or dementia. If you haven’t cared for someone with Alzheimer’s or dementia, you know someone who has. We must continue to commit to preventing, treating, and curing Alzheimer’s and related dementias,” said County Executive Shapiro.

Elder Abuse Awareness Day takes place on June 15 and aims to raise awareness around elder abuse, defined as neglect, exploitation, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse of adults 60 or

older. This annual observance began with the World Health Organization in 2006 and led to the adoption of House Bill 215 in the Ohio General Assembly in 2012, making Elder Abuse Awareness Day an annual occurrence in the state. Locally, [Adult Protective Services](#) is responsible for remedying or arranging for the remedying of conditions of abuse in Summit County. Raising awareness about both elder abuse and Adult Protective Services is highly important as the Ohio Department of Aging estimates that 1 in 10 adults aged 60 and older in the United States is a victim of elder abuse. There are currently over 3 million Ohioans aged 60 and over, and that number is expected to increase by 2040 so that older adults will consist of a quarter of Ohio's population.

“Our older adults deserve to live safely, without fear of exploitation or abuse,” said Executive Shapiro. “By raising awareness, we hope to close the gap between instances of abuse and reports of abuse to get older residents the help they need. If you, your friend, or your family member is experiencing a situation like this, please, call the Adult Protective Services’ 24/7, anonymous hotline, 330-643-7217.”

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