



Trends in Fraud Schemes Targeting Older Adults

April 17, 2024
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Today

- AARP Fraud Watch Network
- AARP FWN Helpline
- Top reports to the helpline
- Communication/payment trends
- Resources

What's your scam?

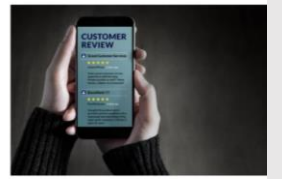
AARP Fraud Watch Network



Why Criminals Want Your Driver's License



Romance Scammers Woo Victims Into Crypto Schemes



How to Spot Fake Reviews Before You Buy

- Empower consumers to spot and avoid scams and fraud
 - Publications/alerts/podcast
 - State initiatives (volunteers)
 - Presentations/webinars/tele-town halls
 - Strategic partnerships
 - Research (gift cards, chronic, holiday, etc.)
- Provide support for scam targets and victims
 - Helpline/victim support groups
- Advocate for legislative and regulatory fixes
 - Federal advocacy/growing state advocacy

AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline

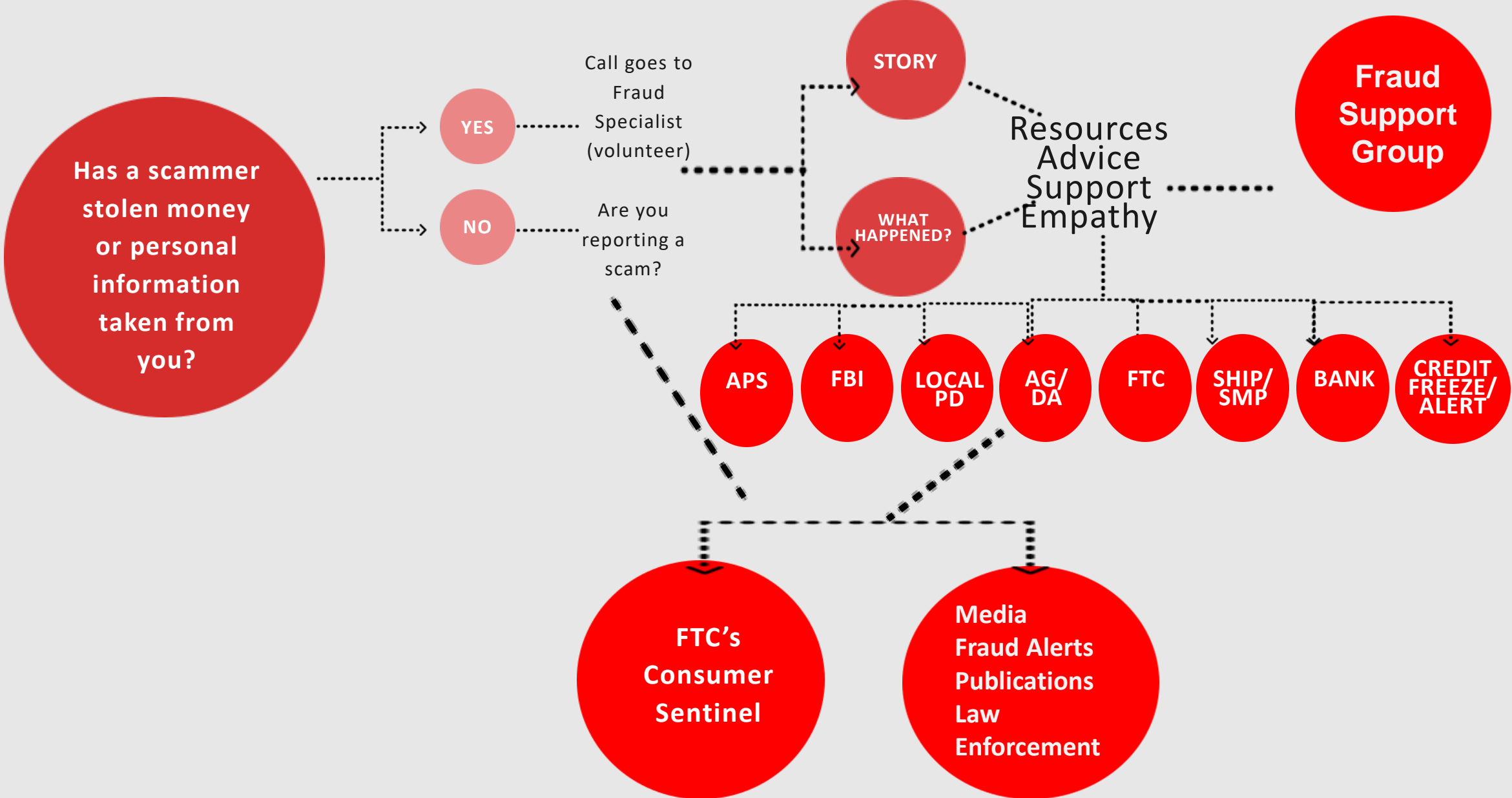


- Why call AARP???
- Take over 100,000 reports annually, 300-500 calls daily
- Reports sent to FTC Consumer Sentinel
- Victims receive additional support from trained volunteers (150+ in 30+ states)
- Average victim call just over 22 minutes
- FREE!
- Anyone!
- Helps inform AARP education/outreach/priorities
- Empathetic ear and a “wise friend”

Empowering Victims Through Language We Use

Instead of that	Say this	Why it matters
I can't believe you were duped	This is not your fault	The individual is not responsible for the actions of the scammer.
How could you fall for that?	Scammers are manipulators. You are a victim of a crime.	“falling for” shows action on the victim’s part. The action was on the perpetrator thus the scammer holds the responsibility.
You didn't provide any personal or financial information to him, did you?	Did you provide any personal or financial information?	Non-judgmental stance.

The Evolution of a Helpline Call



Victim Reports from 2024 (8,400+, 4/17)

1. Identity Theft
2. Impostor Business (Amazon)
3. Tech Support/Computer Virus
4. Fraudulent Sales
5. Online Dating/Romance
6. Impostor Government (SSA, IRS, Medicare)
7. Sweepstakes/Prize/Lottery
8. Unauthorized Money Withdrawal
9. Investment Fraud and Schemes
10. Phishing

Trends: Payment Methods

- Increase interest in payment with cryptocurrency
 - More accessible
 - Not widely understood
 - Lots “buzz” around it
- Peer-to-Peer (Venmo, Zelle, Cash App)
 - Fast and accessible
 - More comfortable for people
- Gift Cards
- Accessing Bank Accounts Directly



Trends: Communication Methods



- Text Messages
 - Increased usage and accessibility
 - Posing as businesses (phones company, banks, etc.)
- Social Media
 - Widely used by scammers
 - Avoid contact from strangers
- Better Phishing Emails
- Apps with Social Components
 - Words with Friends, Gambling Apps, Games, etc.

Summary: Ways to Avoid Scams

- Protect your personal and financial information
- Manage your phone calls
- Do your research
- Avoid contact with any unknown entities (it's OK to be skeptical or rude)
- Don't rush to act (THINK!) and talk to others
- Consider unusual payment options a "red flag"
- Does it sound too good to be true?
- Actively seek information about trending scams/fraud
- Share your story
- Report!



Resources

- AARP Fraud Watch Network
www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork
- AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline
877.908.3360
- FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center
www.ic3.gov
- FTC Identity Theft
www.identitytheft.gov