

What is Ageism

- ◆ *Ageism is a negative stereotype or myth about growing old expressed in our language and our behavior.*



- ◆ *Ageism is an assumption that chronological age is the only thing that defines who we are.*



- ◆ *Ageism is discrimination and prejudice on the basis of age in the workplace and our society in general.*



- ◆ *Ageism is the practice of treating older people as helpless, unproductive and powerless.*

Recognize Ageism

In the media:

- ◆ Overrepresentation of older adults in commercials for products such as laxatives, antacids, and denture adhesive
- ◆ Emphasis on youth and physical beauty to sell products
- ◆ Lack of representation of older adults in commercials for clothing, cars, dining and entertainment

In our communication with older adults:

- ◆ Talking in simple sentences
- ◆ Talking in “baby talk”
- ◆ Talking slowly to all older persons
- ◆ Speaking loudly to all older persons

In our language:

- ◆ Using words such as “geezer”, “elderly”
- ◆ Using phrases such as “over the hill”, “those elderly...”, “old as dirt”

In our beliefs:

- ◆ Older adults are “stuck in their ways” and will not change
- ◆ Older adults do not want to learn new things
- ◆ Older adults do not have fun
- ◆ Equating aging with being unhealthy and dying and equating youth with health and beauty
- ◆ The assumption that someone with a physical impairment also has a mental impairment.

Fight Ageism

- ◆ Educate yourself and others about the aging process.
- ◆ Get the facts on aging to combat stereotypes and myths about aging.
- ◆ Teach children the concept of the life cycle with positive images of old age.
- ◆ Accept aging as a natural part of life.
“Do not resent growing old. Many are denied the privilege.” - Unknown
- ◆ Challenge yourself to recognize ageism in the things you say and do, then change your language and your actions.
- ◆ Take notice of the advertisements you see and question why older adults are not represented.
- ◆ Recognize ageist jokes and avoid using them.
“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” - Plato

Opportunities

The Nash County Aging Department provides sensitivity training for businesses, organizations, schools, government offices, and any other entity wishing to become more informed on this topic.

Contact 459-1691 for more information on sensitivity training.



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How Do You Want To Be Treated?

“Change has to come from within.”

-Yvonne C. Moore

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*Provided by the
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