



Aging Etiquette



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WYOMING CENTER ON AGING



Learners will better understand:

Objective 1

Diversity of People who are Aging

Objective 2

Ageism in Institutional Settings & Implications

Objective 3

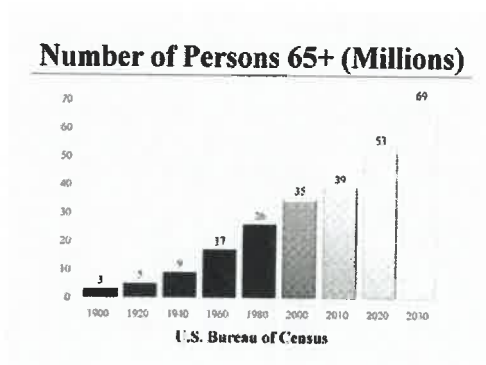
Aging Etiquette & Reasonable Accommodations



This PowerPoint provides helpful information, awareness and skills development for working with people who are aging.

1. We will address who the older population is, definitions, common misconceptions, myths and stereotypes concerning people who are aging.
2. We will provide you with background information on ageism within a variety of different disciplines and contexts. Looking at elder abuse and infantilization.
3. You will learn about laws, etiquette and programs to protect the aging population and how to create a respectful environment inclusive of persons who are aging.

Aging Profile



Objective 1

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/u-s-faces-explosion-of-senior-citizens-will-baby-boomers-strain-economy> (2019) est 9 minutes

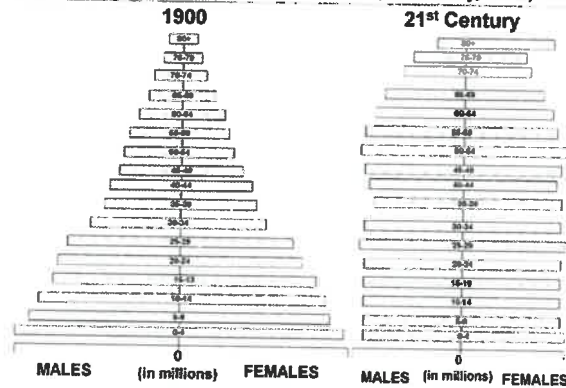
Copy and paste the link above into the address bar and view before presentation for more information or show to your class

- The first of the estimated **79 million** baby boomers will turn 65 in 2011 at a rate of **10,000 a day!!**
- **One in five** people will be aged 65 or older by 2030.
- Life expectancy and aging minorities are increasing
- The number of people enrolled in Medicare will grow from 47 million in 2010 to **80 million** by 2030
- Older women outnumber older men
- America can expect a significant shift in the balance of non-workers versus workers
- A sharp increase in the number of people requiring special services and public support & a limited amount of professionals in the field will pose many challenges.

- The U.S. is older than it has ever been

Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging (AOA)
PBS Newshour

AGE PYRAMID IN USA (Olshansky, 1997)



Objective 1

Person's who are 65+ are at increased risk of experiencing discrimination, abuse and decreased quality of life

Some "studies show the rates of elder abuse rise as the age of the victim rises" (2004, Women of Color Network)

Increases in the aging population and significant shortages of geriatric professionals will pose many challenges in the future

Basic awareness and training can help to reduce elder abuse, negative stereotypes and improve quality of life and health outcomes for persons who are aging



Implications of Changing Demographics

Greater numbers of older adults will be at increased risk

Significant shortages of geriatric professionals to meet demand

Need for training of health professionals and increase awareness of negative stereotypes

An informed and aware healthcare work force can reduce risk and improve health outcomes for older adults

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Audience Participation



What words pop into your head when you think of an older person?

What can you gather about the person pictured here? Is she depressed, sick, wealthy, nice or mean? Does she work and/or does she have any limitations?

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Ask the audience to verbalize some words associated to persons who are aging and record their responses on a large writing surface.

Answers might include irritable, grumpy, weak, mournful, debilitated, cognitively impaired, dependent, senile or incompetent among many others

You can ask them to get into groups and come up with as many positive vs. negative words and see which category in the end has the most words. If they can only come up with negative ones ask them why that might be.



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Misperceptions

Olive Riley (108 years old)

October 20, 1899 – July 12, 2008
New South Wales, Australia

- One of the oldest bloggers with over 70 entries and numerous YouTube videos.
- Lived through the entire 20th century
- Raised three children
- Loved to sing, dance and share her thoughts and experiences right up until her death
- Blogging helped her keep her mind fresh and allowed her to meet people all over the world
- She held a variety of jobs including working as an egg sorter and lived her life to the fullest

BBC News, 2008



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oaNE1Q-YU>

****She starred in a documentary film called "All About Olive"**

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Watch the video at the following website to gain better insight on who Olive Riley really was at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7505029.stm>

Visit this website to view the news article about her and her life:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7505029.stm>



Stereotypes and Perceptions

Stereotype – “a set of inaccurate, simplistic generalizations about a group that allows others to categorize them and treat them accordingly” (dictionary.com)

Stereotypes are often flawed assumptions created by unreliable sources such as the media or uninformed friends and family members. Each person has a unique set of qualities and background.

Ageism- “systemic stereotyping of and discrimination against older people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplished this with skin color and gender” (Butler, 1989, p. 139).

Objective 2



Implications of stereotyping: Generalizing is dangerous, discriminatory and unfair. It can lead to mistreatment and abuse of basic human rights and decrease quality of life.



Ageism Perpetuated in Popular Culture

Cartoons, film, music, TV, books, media, and print



What stereotypes are being perpetuated in the above example?

Can you think of any other examples?

In what ways can these stereotypes be influencing behaviors?

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Right click on the Progressive picture and select open hyperlink or copy and past the following web address in the address bar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooHLE03upOg>

There are many examples in the media and society of ageism. What stereotypes are being perpetuated in the above examples?

Ageism is being learned at a very young age and can be witnessed in a variety of children's movies!

Many cartoons depict older people as evil or incompetent.

This teaches children negative images of elderly people and contributes to ageism. As Butler argues "ageism allows younger generations to see older people as different from themselves; thus, they subtly cease to identify with their elders as human beings."

(Sorgman & Sorensen, 2001)



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Ageism Perpetuated in Popular Culture

Demeaning Language & Labeling



"THIS OLD GEEZER HAS AN AGE DISCRIMINATION SUIT, YOUR HONOR."

Image from CartoonStock.com reference # ear0159

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What are some other terms you are familiar with?

A physician assistant who worked in an emergency room gave some examples of phrases routinely used for older patients in the ER these included "disaster waiting to happen." "nightmare on a stretcher." "Dotty old guy in bed three", "gramps down the hall" "sweet old lady". She says "understand, these expressions are rarely voiced with overt hostility. Some are spoken gently or intended to be humorous. ... but these discriminatory labels, no matter how they're ultimately intended or directed, all tend to demean or devalue. They're all emblematic of ageism" (Curry, 2008).

Many people argue that negative attributes about aging and older people is a labeling problem. Negative labeling based on age such as frail, ill, dependent etc. make us believe the elderly are a social problem to be addressed rather than a natural stage of life. So how do we address the problem of labeling?

Examples of demeaning language:

Geezer Cute old maid Funny Dirty old man Saggy Bottom Fogey Ornerly Old goat Over the hill Blue hair Crazy Gramps Old timer

Coot

Cuckoo Old fart Old Crackerjack



Ageism Perpetuated in Popular Culture

Selfish "Boys on the Go" or "Greedy Greasers"

Politics and media have been influential in shaping how Americans feel about the aging population



"Elderly, Affluent—and Selfish" New York Times



"The Tyranny of America's Old" Fortune Magazine

"America's new elite—healthy, wealthy, powerful and staging history's biggest retirement party" Time Magazine

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Americans who are aging are often blamed for a lot of America's fiscal and social problems

Old age benefits are often seen as some of the biggest detriments to America, and as a result it can lead to resentment of people who are aging

Americans who are aging are often seen as a burdensome responsibility through the media and in turn contributing to an unsympathetic society

Time magazine portrayed the aging population as "America's new elite—healthy, wealthy, powerful and staging history's biggest retirement party"

How could these messages effect someone you love who is aging?

Who or what is really to blame? What does the research say and what about healthcare providers?

There have been many stories and messages intended to spark fear in people's eyes and much of the blame is directed at the aging population. Due to legislators and prominent politicians, many people fear that there will be no more resources left for

younger populations and that older people are going to run the country into the ground and will result in the ending of other worthy social causes. These fears can lead some people to anger and the effects can be seen in how they in turn treat the aging population.



Myths: True or False

- 35% of doctors believe that high blood pressure is part of “normal” aging even though evidence shows otherwise.
- Depression is a symptom of getting old.
- People in their 80s or beyond are most likely to have severe mental deterioration and are “senile.”
- All older people have serious hearing deterioration and have difficulty perceiving speech and loud sounds.
- Because of age-related declines in memory and learning, most older people should not be given complicated and challenging jobs.
- Most older adults live in nursing homes.

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Dementias do afflict a significant proportion of the elderly and may increase with age, but even if you live to be 80 or older, the chances of your developing dementia are considerably less than 50 percent.

Dementias can happen at any age. Common causes of dementia may include head injuries, vitamin deficiencies, and toxic causes (excessive alcohol and drug use) (Schulz & Salthouse, 1999).

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As people gain experience in a job they are likely to increase their level of performance regardless of age or any memory limitations they might be experiencing. (Schulz & Salthouse, 1999).

About 87 percent of adults over 65 are able to cope fine with the demands of everyday living.
(Schulz & Salthouse, 1999).

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, slightly over 5% of the 65 and over populations occupy nursing homes, congregate care, assisted living, and board-and-care home, and about 4.2% are in nursing homes at any given time. The rate of nursing home use increases with age from 1.4% for the young to 24.5% for the oldest of the older adults. Almost 50% of those 95 and older live in nursing homes. (Breytspraak, Kendall, & Halpert, 2008)



Infantilization

Infantilization- *“patronizing treatment toward people who are older by caregivers (often well intentioned), who relate to them as an insensitive parent might treat a child” (Kitwood, 1997).*



Persons who are older deserve the same rich opportunities & quality of life available to other members of society to include security, comfort, meaningful activities, relationships, enjoyment, dignity, autonomy, privacy, individuality, spiritual well-being, and functional competence (Salari, 2005).

****Infantilization is the result of negative aging stereotypes*

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Negative stereotypes of people who are aging can lead to elder mistreatment and abuse.



Infantilization as Abuse

Many scholars agree that infantilization is **abuse** and that many basic **human rights** are violated due to lack of understanding and stereotyping.

*** "**psychological mistreatment** is the most frequent type of elder abuse, and is defined as the infliction of mental anguish, in the form of threats, isolation, derogatory names, **child-oriented treatment**, humiliation, or intimidation" (Salari, 2005).***

Objective 2



Numerous studies have collected evidence of older adult abuse by institutions and care givers in the form of infantilization.



Results of Infantilization

*Numerous studies have shown that **ageism** and **infantilization** causes:*

- Decreased quality of life
- Decreased functionality
- Negative self-evaluation



Objective 2

Three Categories of Infantilization

- Speech Infantilization
- Activity Infantilization
- Environmental Infantilization



Objective 1



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Speech Infantilization

- **Baby talk-**
 - "lets take our pills"
 - " good girl/boy"
- **Nicknames**
 - Sweetie, honey, cutie
- **Reprimands**
 - Humiliation by caregiver
 - Caregiver irritability and impatience
- **Non-verbal communications**
 - Eye rolling, head shaking
 - Finger pointing or shaking
 - Ignoring or delayed response



Objective 2

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Ask the audience if they can think of any other examples of speech infantilization.

Activity Infantilization

- Centrally mandated activities
- Childish games



- Songs, coloring, & birthday parties
- Toys: play-doh, blocks, stuffed animals
- Meaningless interactions
- Regulated mealtimes, bedtimes, breaks and social time
- Limiting personal care times

Objective 2

Ask the audience if they have ever witnessed activity infantilization?

Environmental Infantilization

- **Lack of privacy**- shared bedrooms and bathrooms
- **Child oriented décor**
- **Confinement**
- **Lack of diversity in setting**
- **Age inappropriate decorations**
 - 3-foot Easter Bunny
 - 12-foot caterpillar made of paper plates
 - Large childlike wallboards, stickers, garland and client made projects
- **Intolerance of intimacy** – sexuality and building relationships are important but are often prohibited behaviors



Objective 2



Implications

Dependency- the belief that people who are old are weak and in need of help encourages unnecessary helping behavior and learned helplessness also known as self-fulfilling prophecies.

Resentment- excessive helping behaviors are insulting and can lead to resentment and /or risk avoidance.

Fight or flight- Demeaning behaviors, activities and environments can lead to increased aggression and/or withdrawal.

Detrimental health effects- can cause decreased self-esteem, depression, stress, loneliness, and declines in health.

Adapted from Gatz and Willis (1988) "The Role of Family in the Care of Aging Parents: A Review of the Literature" and "Helping Hand: How Helping Aging Parents Can Be Harmful" by Gatz and Willis (1988)

Objective 2





Aging Etiquette

What is Aging Etiquette??



Understanding and implementing respectful communication and interaction with people who are older or aging

Objective 3



According to the Encarta Dictionary, Etiquette is defined as: “the rules and conventions governing correct or polite behavior in society in general or in a particular social or professional group or situation.”



Aging Etiquette and Best Practice

Person First Language

Recognize the person not their age, health status or anything else

Examples of Person First Language:

Say	Instead of
She's an older adult or person who is aging	Elderly or old adult
People with disabilities	The handicapped or disabled
He has an emotional disability	He's emotionally disturbed or mentally ill
He has a physical disability	He's a quadriplegic/crippled
She/he need or uses	She has a problem with.....
Accessible parking	Handicapped parking

Objective 3





Aging Etiquette and Best Practice

Don't Assume Age Dictates Abilities

Empower and Encourage Independence- help to improve autonomy and self-esteem

Investigate your own attitudes and beliefs-if you believe persons who are older are weak, then your helping behaviors may exceed the person's actual needs.

Respect- don't be intrusive and consider their sense of worth and their life experiences. They should not be treated as inmates or toddlers at a day care center.



Objective 3

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Aging Etiquette and Best Practice

Don't Assume Age Dictates Abilities

- Develop age-appropriate services and settings
- Always assume competence
- Ask first! They may not want help.
- Speak clearly, don't shout
- Treat them as you would an adult not a child
- Treat them the same as you would anyone else



Objective 3





Aging Etiquette and Best Practice

Specific Examples

Instead of	Do
Dancing to hokey pokey or singing "Bear went over the Mountain"	Client chosen activities appropriate like Social Security or retirement
A 3-foot Easter Bunny or child themed crafts hanging on the wall	Current news, vintage posters, people or events of their past, ask clients what they want hung on walls
Sweetie, honey, cutie	Call them by their name and refer to them as general or doctor if that is their wish
Mandatory activities or meals	Offer flexible and voluntary activities such as meal times. If they don't want to eat they shouldn't be forced, they are adults and have free will.
Confined inside & centrally mandated activities	Special outings visiting community professionals (lawyers, entertainers, health personnel) or photography.

Objective 3

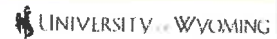




Summary

1. **America is older than it has ever been.**
2. **Stereotypes and ageism have many negative implications.**
3. **Increased awareness and the use of best practice techniques can improve quality of life and health outcomes in persons who are aging.**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPFCn3itBFE>



1. **America is older than it has ever been. The changing demographics will pose many challenges in the future.**
2. **Stereotypes and ageism have many negative implications.**
3. **Increased awareness and the use of best practice techniques can improve quality of life and health outcomes in persons who are aging**



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Wyoming Center on Aging

University of Wyoming

1000 E. University Avenue, Laramie, WY 82071

Phone: (307) 766-2829

www.uwyo.edu/wycoa

wycoa@uwyo.edu

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