

Ageism

There's a lot at stake: It's time to reduce ageism and change thinking



Ageism is discrimination based on age.

Ageism impacts how we think (stereotypes), how we feel (prejudice) and how we act (discrimination) towards others or oneself based on age ([WHO](#)).

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

Ageism affects our health, happiness and longevity. People with more positive self-perceptions of aging live 7.5 years longer than those with negative views of aging. Positive age beliefs protect against the development of dementia, and are a protective factor for the development of chronic disease.

Ageism harms the economy with an estimated \$850 billion in lost gains to GDP as a result of involuntary retirement and underemployment.

Ageism costs \$63 billion in health care costs every year.

HOW TO REDUCE AGEISM AND CHANGE THINKING

Education about aging and positive intergenerational engagement are powerful strategies to reduce ageism.

We can learn how to stimulate internal dialogue and reflection and change our unconscious and conscious thoughts to have more positive attitudes about aging and growing older.

FORMS OF AGEISM

Internalized ageism – When we feel fear, dread or have shame about our aging or disassociate with being older/old.



Cultural ageism – The everyday, invisible normalized negative messages about aging and being old embedded within the culture.



Relational ageism – When we are concerned about being judged or devalued based on age.



Benevolent ageism – Patronizing, paternalistic beliefs or behaviors that older people need to be protected or taken care of and can't make decisions by themselves.

