



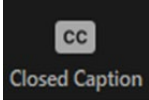
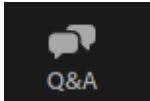
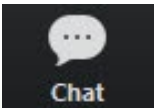
*Transportation Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Lunch and Learn Webinar Series:*

Language Matters

December 7, 2022



Instructions for Zoom Webinar Participation

- All participants are muted.
- The session is being recorded. All materials including the recording will be put on the [NADTC](#) website.
- Closed captioning is available. You can turn captioning/subtitles on or off by clicking on the cc button. 
- Please put your questions in the Q & A button. 
- Chat is open and can be used for general comments, or technical assistance. 

NADTC's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative

- National DEI Survey
- Focus Groups
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Lunch & Learn Webinar Series



National Aging & Disability Transportation Center

- Federally recognized technical assistance center
- Funded through the Federal Transit Administration with guidance from the Administration for Community Living
- Partnership between Easterseals and USAging



National Aging & Disability Transportation Center

Our Mission:

To promote the availability of accessible transportation options that serve the needs of Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Caregivers, and Communities.

National Aging & Disability Transportation Center

What We Provide:

- Technical Assistance & Training
- Publications & Resources
- Partnership Coordination
- Community Grants and Coalitions



Language Matters

Hosted by the Maine Council on Aging

Jess Maurer, Executive Director, Maine Council on Aging
December 7, 2022

Questions For Today

- What are the many ways that *Language Matters* in creating inclusive services for older people across diverse communities?
- How we can all be more intentional and inclusive in the way we talk with and about each other.
- What are the effective tools and actions we can take within our organizations and systems to be more welcoming and create a sense of belonging?
- How does language help you become more age-positive?

Why we know what we know

FrameWorks Institute led a multi-year research project to learn what Americans think about aging and older people. This helped us “map” our cultural models and cognitive shortcuts, and gave us good insight into how to help frame conversations to shifts people toward more productive thinking.



What Americans Think

Public perceptions about older people are incomplete and unrealistic - older people are either living a life of leisure or are frail and dependent.

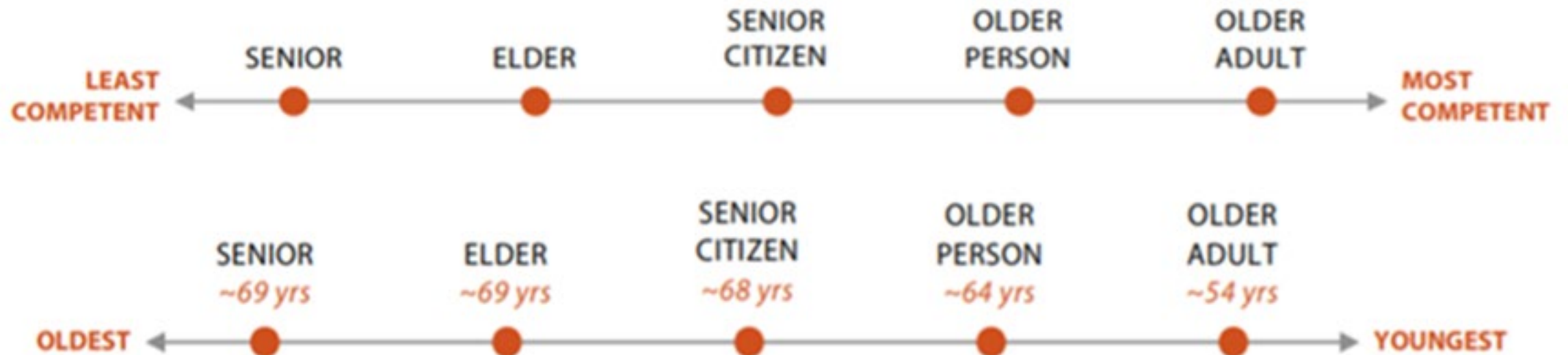
Aging “problems” are considered individual, not systemic – people should have worked harder, family should be stepping up, etc.

Ageism is not considered a “real” problem, as compared to racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.

Terms like tsunami and crisis polarize and immobilize. This fuels “us versus them” and nihilistic “nothing I can do” thinking.

Words Trigger Unproductive Ideas

How do Americans view words describing older people?

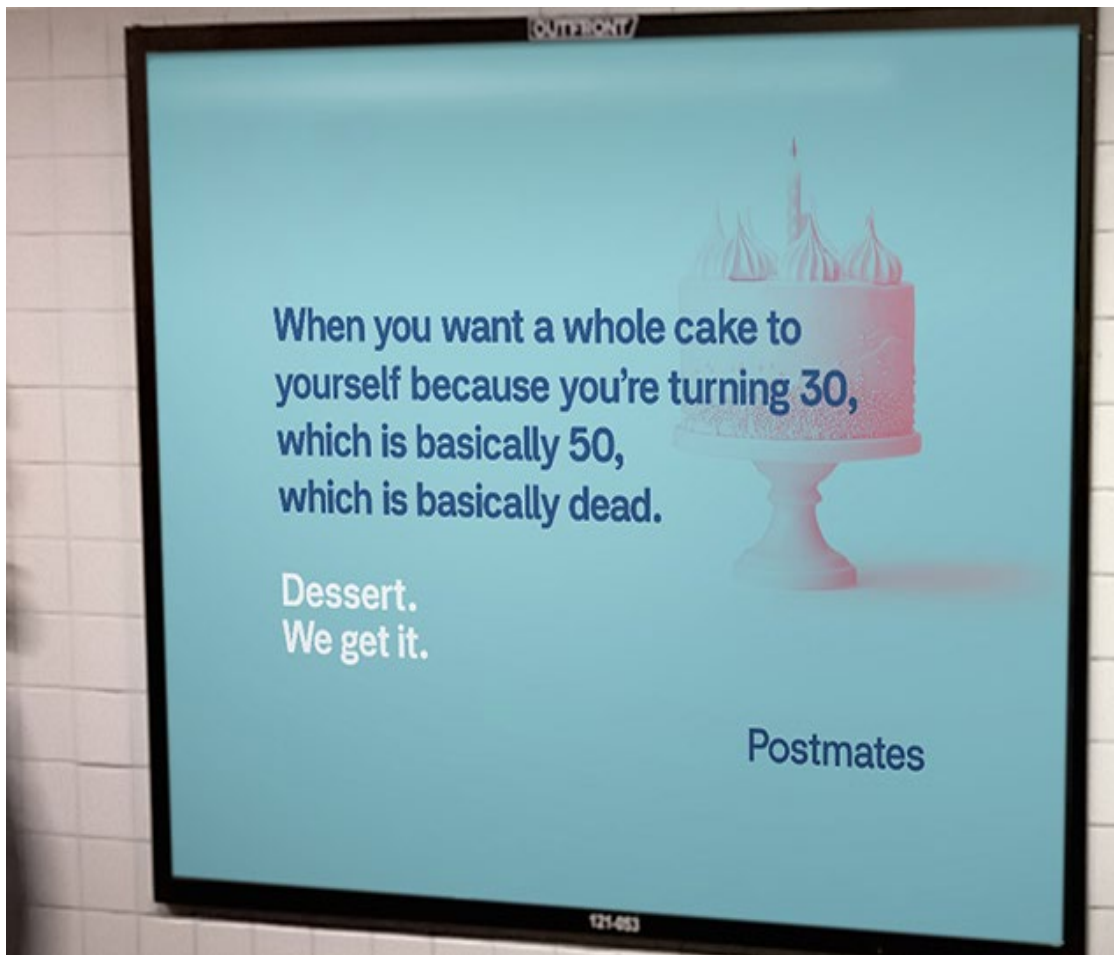


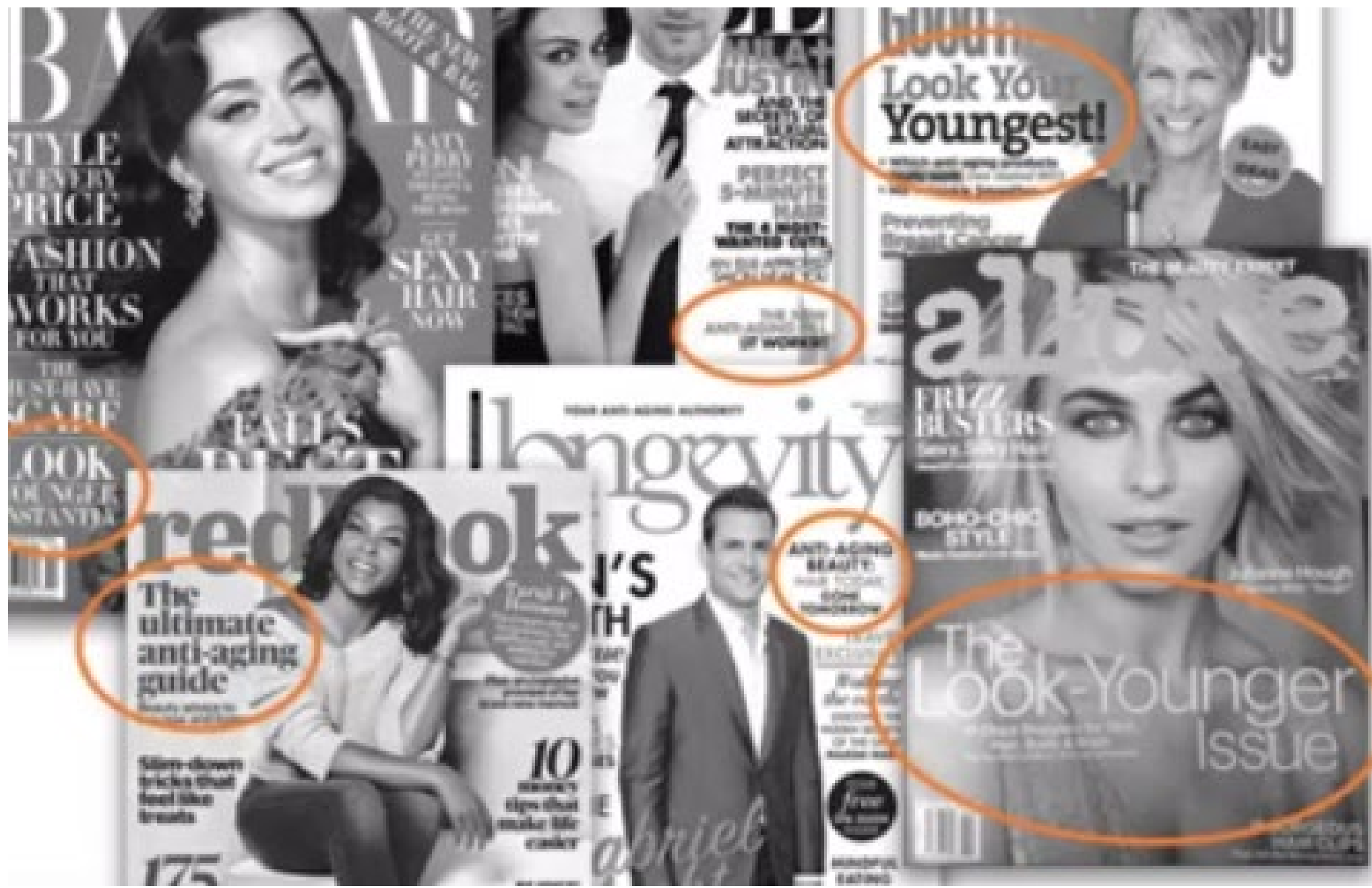
What Helps Reduce Ageist/Biased Thinking?

- **Inclusivity** – we’re all aging. Shift to “us” instead of “them” / “we” instead of “they”.
- **Live your age** – we constantly distance ourselves from others who are older – lead by example by embracing your own aging processes.
- **Use of neutral words** to describe older people – avoid “senior citizen” “senior” - never use “the elderly” - a pejorative word inferring vulnerability.
- **Avoid painting all older people with the same brush** – not all thriving/not all failing – check out the images you use on your websites

Cultural Messaging

"...50, which is basically dead."





Look Your Youngest!

LOOK OF UNCLE STANLEY

The ultimate anti-aging guide

ANTI-AGING BEAUTY

The Look-Younger Issue

How does ageism work?

Step One: We're culturally shaped to value youth and to avoid appearing old - it's a pervasive narrative we seldom intellectualize.

Step Two: We bring our own internalized attitudes about older people and our own aging to work with us.

Step Three: We reinforce cultural stereotypes with one another in the workplace – we give ageist cards, have “senior moments,” offer veiled compliments - “you never seem to age”

Step Four: These attitudes seep into our actions - skewing our perception and help to build an unconscious culture of exclusion.

Impact of Ageism

Ageism has significant impact on the health and well-being of older people, including:

- In the workplace, leads to personal economic challenges in later life, but also allows Maine's workforce challenges to grow
- In the community, puts constraints on community roles and contributions
- In healthcare, results in poor health outcomes
- In the media and popular culture, marginalizes the immense contributions of older people and further diminishes the value of older lives
- ***In policy arenas, leads to less support for needed systemic changes***
- Long term impact of overt ageism during COVID is to be determined.

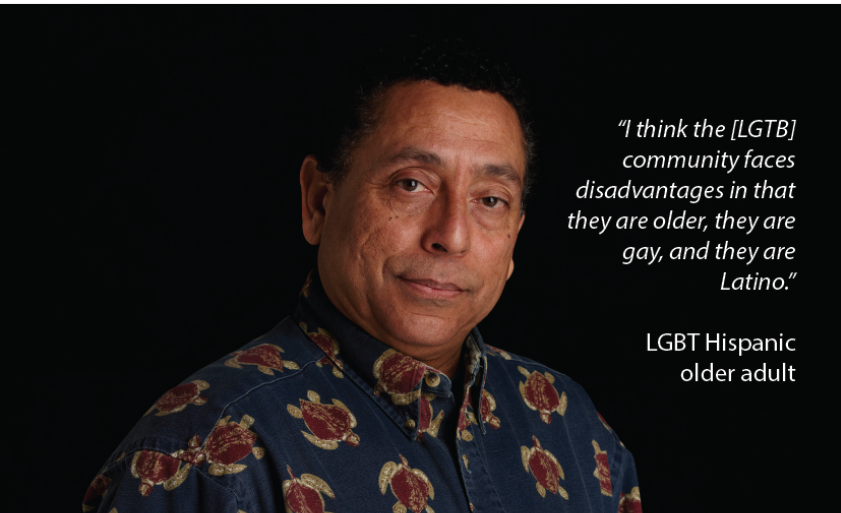
Older People are Diverse!

How to be an Ally to Transgender Older Adults



Zoom Webinar
Date: Friday, November 19, 2021
Time: 12 noon - 1:15 PM EST / 11 am - 12:05 pm CT / 10 am - 11:15 MST / 9 am - 10:15 PT
Pre-Registration Required
<https://bit.ly/JoiningTransAlly>

The National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA) presents



"I think the [LGBT] community faces disadvantages in that they are older, they are gay, and they are Latino."

LGBT Hispanic older adult

In Their Own Words, the first report to document the unique experiences and challenges faced by LGBT Hispanic older adults



Available for download at www.nhcoa.org

HEALTH EQUITY AND LGBT ELDERS OF COLOR

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Serving Diverse Elders

Strategies for Meaningful Inclusion in Service Planning and Delivery

PRODUCED BY THE NATIONAL CONSORTIUM ON AGING RESOURCES FOR SENIORS' EQUITY MEMBERS

Asociación Nacional Pro-Personas Mayores (ANPMMA)

National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)

National Italian Council on Aging (NICOA)

The National Caucus and Center on Black Aging (NCCBA)

The National Resource Center on LGBT Aging (NLGA)



National Indigenous Women's Resource Center



Justice for Indigenous elders!

Protect our elders' physical, mental, emotional & financial

World Elder Abuse Awareness Saturday, June 15th, 2019

NATIONAL CAUCUS & CENTER ON BLACK AGING CELEBRATES OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Coffee and doughnuts served



Distance on... come

MAY 16TH 10 AM
CE ESCAROSA
1800 PENSACOLA, FL 32504
MCDONALD'S ON 9TH



HEALTH MONEY & POLICY WORK & PURPOSE

Aging with Disabilities in America

Ageism and other systems of discrimination

Disparities from other systems of discrimination (race, gender, rurality, class, sexual orientation, ability, etc) all get worse as people age.

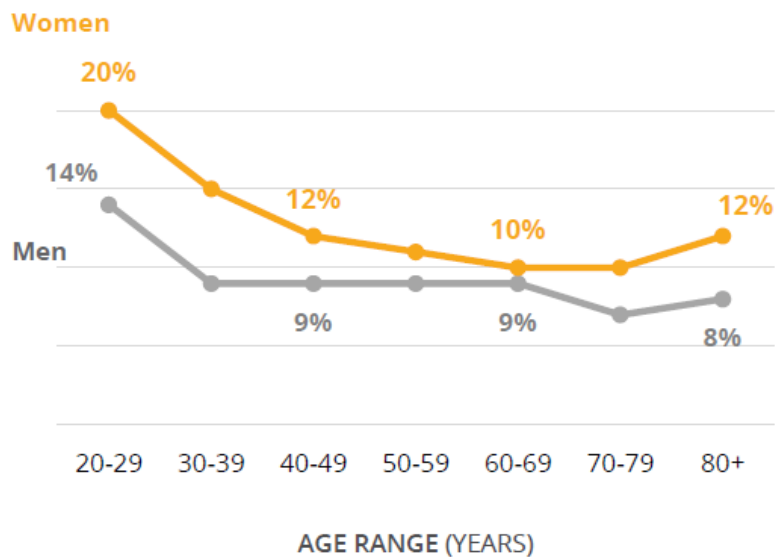
Other systems of discrimination are ALSO operating at all four levels and ALSO affect messages, resources and rules.



Impact of Sexism & Racism in Later Life

► **Figure 1:** In the United States, **women are more likely to live in poverty** compared to men, across all adult age groups.

Percent of U.S. population living in poverty, 2019

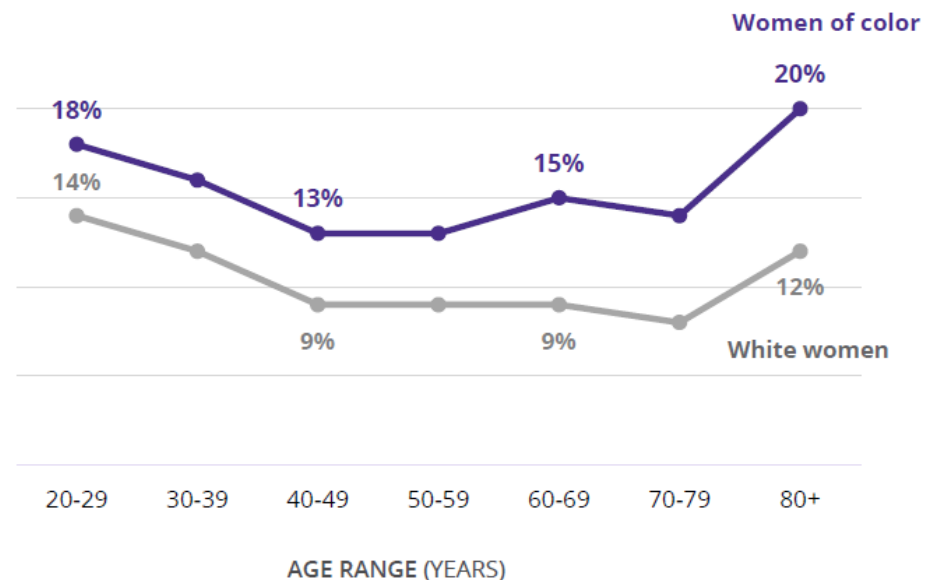


The Census is based on include their healthcare. many assistive programs, and percentage. The FPL is a threshold rate of cost of food

Source: U.S. Survey Annual

► **Figure 2:** Women of color experience higher rates of poverty compared to white women, across all age groups.

Percent of U.S. female population living in poverty, 2019



Note: "Women of color" includes respondents identifying as Black or African American, Asian, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White Hispanic, and multiple race combinations identified in the Current Population Survey (CPS); "White women" includes respondents identifying as "White Only" in the CPS.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2021 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic (March) Supplement

<https://mainecouncilonaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Economic-Security-Older-Women-in-Maine-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Why Language Matters...
Reveals what we believe about aging.

“Age Beliefs are Mental Maps of how we expect older people to behave based on age.”

Becca Levy



Chat Storm

When we think of an older person what are the words or phrases that come to mind?

What we Believe (even subconsciously) can Impact *How we speak to older people*

- Devaluing someone's ability (too old to understand new technology)
- Discrediting someone's capacity (implicitly by talking to caregiver)
- Patronizing speech – “Elderspeak” (sweetie, honey, young lady)
- Ignoring their points of view in decision-making
- Using an overly accommodating tone and simple vocabulary
- Overcompensating for an older person's presumed needs (being too quick to offer help)

Intention Matters: It makes the Invisible...Visible

It happens regardless of:

SOCIO-
ECONOMIC
STATUS

ABILITY

ETHNICITY

RACE

COMMUNITY

GENDER

SEXUAL
ORIENTATION

EVERY1 KNOWS SOME1
Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2021



We welcome:

All **rac**es
All **rel**igions
All **cou**ntries of origin
All **sexu**al orientations
All **g**enders
All **eth**nicities
All **ab**ilities

We stand with you.

diversity.ucsf.edu/WelcomeAll

UCSF

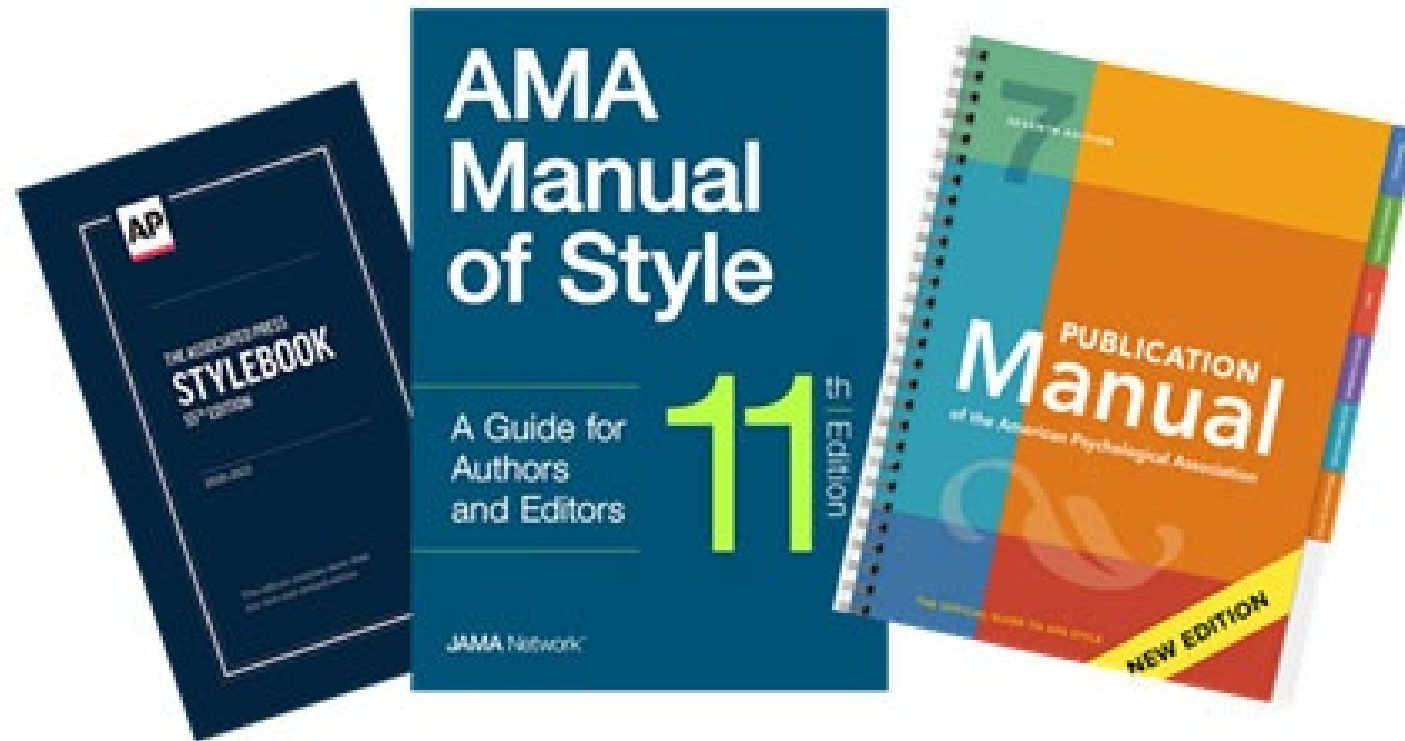
University of California
San Francisco

Language Matters: *You can miss the target if you use the wrong language.*



- Maine ~~Senior~~ **Age Positive Games**
- *The Mission of the Maine Senior Games is to provide athletic events and wellness opportunities to improve the health and fitness of **people 45 and over.***

National Recommendations



AMA Manual of Style

“Discrimination based on age (young or old) is ageism.

Because terms like seniors, elderly, the aged, aging dependents, old-old, young-old, and similar "other-ing" terms connote a stereotype, avoid using them.

Terms such as older persons, older people, older adults, older patients, older individuals, persons 65 years and older...”

2020 AP Style Book Changes

- Use older adult, older person/people versus senior, senior citizen, elderly when appropriate.
- Aim for specificity when possible.
- Provide context when possible.
- If an official or organization uses words like “seniors” or “the elderly” ask for specifics to understand the age range being described.
- Do not use “the elderly” as reference to a group.
- As with all people, describe the person as the person wants to be described.*

*Our note: some older people of color and indigenous people use the term elder to describe themselves or older people in their community. Thus, there is an equity issue to be considered here.

Why Language Matters...*Creates Belonging*

Belonging is a human need, just like the need for food and shelter.

Getting to belonging is the ultimate goal of diversity and inclusion.

Consider what it feels like to be unwelcome.

Why Language Matters: *Helps Build Age+*

Older people who ***embrace positive stereotypes/views*** about aging are:

- ***Live 7.5 years longer*** than those with less positive perceptions of aging
- 44% more likely to recover after suffering a new disability
- Experience less depression and anxiety
- Have less cardiovascular disease, produce less cortisol – a stress hormone – over time, and autopsy findings showed less frequent dementia

Why Language Matters in Transit

People may take public transit their whole life, and others may start once they can no longer drive. Losing your ability to drive is a loss of independence that can lead to significant isolation and health problems associated with it. For far too many people in rural America, there may only be one option for a ride – if that option feels unsafe, the person is left with no ride at all.

We want that ride to be as welcoming and as safe as possible. Using language that offends the rider or worse scares them – for instance refusal to use a stated preferred pronoun is a signal of hostility that may immediately make that person feel unsafe. A racist, sexist, or homophobic remark has the same impact.

One 90+ year old man, when asked about whether he'd experienced “elderspeak” said, **“Yes...you get called everything but a person...you no longer have your pronouns.”**

What you can do to be more inclusive?

Become more aware of your language.

- Avoid “elderspeak” – “sweetie” “honey” “cutie”
- Don’t ever call an older person “young lady/man”
- Avoid ageist humor, comments, and jokes.
- Don’t make assumptions about ability – be patient with all your customers!
- Always talk to the customer, not their helper.
- Don’t tell ageist jokes and call them out when you hear them!



Tips for Your Organization That Address Language

- Check your mission, vision, and goals, and internal and public-facing communications follow best practices for age-inclusive language. Intentionally state your intention to include the lived experience of older people, BIPOC, LGBTQ, and people with disabilities in your work.
- Share this recorded webinar and the [AMA Manual of Style recommendations](#) with your communications staff and asked them to incorporate these recommendations.
- If your organization is doing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work, make sure age is being included.
- Check out your public facing images – are you including people of all types and abilities and are you portraying older people and people with disabilities as vulnerable or capable (for instance, always shown with a helper or getting assistance)?
- Make sure your procedures, practices, and spaces user-friendly/person-centered for older people – ask older people if they are!

A Story About Bob



Some Ideas

Be *human* forward. Treat everyone you meet just as a person. Ask yourself, does this person's race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status or age really have anything to do with providing a ride?

If you have to use a descriptor, use:

Older person

Person with a disability

Don't use pronouns unless you're sure: Pronouns affirm gender identities and create safe spaces, while misgendering results in marginalization.

But, what should I call you? How about by my name? Don't know it, just ask!

Final Word About Words

When they get in the bus or in the car for a ride:

Be language neutral – there’s no reason to acknowledge someone’s perceived gender with “sir” or “mam” – you might get it wrong and they might have the worst day because you do. Same with elderspeak – “young lady” or “honey.” You might think it’s funny, but it might ruin their day.

Good morning, how are you?

If you’re one-on-one and having conversation – don’t make assumptions about where they’re going and why. Let them tell you. They might be going to the doctor to help a younger friend get through a procedure. Instead, of focusing on the ride, ask about the purpose in their lives or what brings them joy.

Final Word About Words

- Words matter. And what's appropriate and inclusive evolves and changes over time. *Terms are evolving.* It's essential to listen, watch, learn, engage, and reengage.
- Identity is as personal to us as our name, so just as you would call everyone by the name they share with you, you should also employ the identifiers they ask you to use as well. If you're unsure which identifier to use, follow the other person's lead. When in doubt, using their name will never fail you.
- These practices really come down to “people first” language—language that person first broadens versus language that narrows.

National Aging & Disability Transportation Center

Where to Find Us:

- Website
- Monthly eNews
- Social Media
 - Linked in
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Youtube

Join our Mailing List!





Call toll-free: 866.983.3222

Email: contact@nadtc.org

Web: <http://www.nadtc.org>

Find us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube & LinkedIn

