



Caravan

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE REFRAMING AGING INITIATIVE

Welcome to the latest edition of *Caravan*. This bi-monthly newsletter shares information, ideas, and inspiration to help our fellow travelers on our journey to improve the public's understanding of what aging means and the contributions older people bring to society.



News + Articles

Lead Story: National Center to Reframe Aging Launches!

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the new National Center to Reframe Aging, now the central hub for the movement to reframe aging. This new Center aims to help people tell a more complete story about aging, the benefits of growing older, and the opportunities of an aging society.

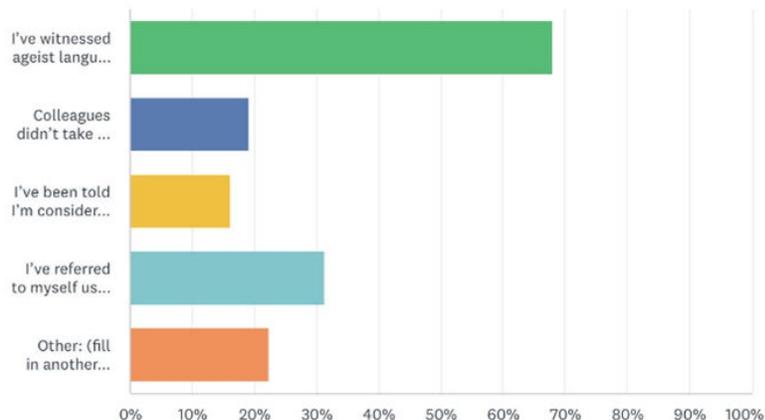
Since the inception of the Reframing Aging Initiative, we've been thinking deeply about the need to address ageism and ways to think and talk about aging. We've created a National Center to Reframe Aging with these goals: to deepen the evidence base about how to reframe aging, to build a vibrant community of competent and passionate communicators, and to lead a culture change movement to improve the public's understanding of aging and the many contributions older people make in Society. The new Center will provide tiered organizational membership opportunities and services, including:

- Training & technical assistance to increase your ability to rally support for aging policies & services,

- Tactics for raising awareness on aging issues while dispelling deep-rooted biases,
- Mechanisms for addressing negative attitudes on aging and confronting entrenched ageism, and
- Access to a library of tools and resources.

To learn more about advancing your organization’s involvement, visit our website www.reframingaging.org; contact us at reframingaging@geron.org.

Caravan Readers Respond: Ageism in the Workplace Is Common



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I've witnessed ageist language or behavior in the workplace	68.07% 113
▼ Colleagues didn't take me seriously because of my age (young or old)	19.28% 32
▼ I've been told I'm considered "overqualified" for a job	16.27% 27
▼ I've referred to myself using age stereotypes, such as calling myself "tech-challenged"	31.33% 52
▼ Other: (fill in another experience with ageism in the workplace)	Responses 22.29% 37
Total Respondents: 166	

There’s a lot of room for improvement when it comes ageism in the workplace. More than 160 readers responded to our most recent poll on this topic, many sharing stark examples that affected them personally. The vast majority (68%) said you’ve witnessed ageist language or behavior in the workplace. Nearly a third (31%) said “I’ve referred to myself using age stereotypes.” Nearly a fifth (19%) said colleagues didn’t take them seriously because of their age. Sixteen percent said they were told they were overqualified.

A few narratives focused on ageism in later life:

- *I am an “elderly” teacher and have been told my skills aren’t up to date. I’m only 57 and I have been working with technology and education and have a master’s in IT. Younger teachers get much more attention and respect*
- *Job opportunities in my large workplace are targeted at people with developing project coordination experience (3-5 years) rather than someone older with more extensive experience. I have 25+ years experience. The salary cap and short contract terms make changing jobs at this stage of my career unrealistic.*

- *When I turned 65 I was requested to relinquish seniority and when I refused I was subjected to a discipline warning which eventuated in my walking out and taking legal action.*

Of course, ageism exists across the life course, and other comments reflected that:

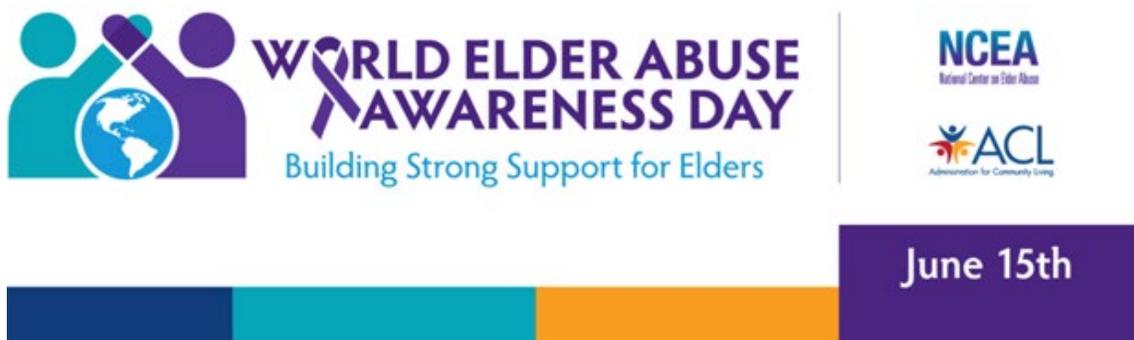
- *I've heard comments such as, "millennials don't want to work" and "millennials don't have any loyalty"*
- *I've been called a baby in the workplace specifically because they asked my age.*

Reframing Tip

Recently, one of our Twitter followers asked why we don't recommend the term "Senior Citizen." We try to avoid words that invoke stereotypes, and a 2021 study shows that age-based labels like "senior citizen" increased negative stereotypes by 7 times compared to role-based framing like "grandparent." To capture an age-based demographic, try using words like "older people" or "older adults." The authors of the study (see [article in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society](#)) suggest using titles that reflect life roles, like grandparent, community member, teacher, or volunteer, rather than age demographi.

What We're Reading

We were heartened to read the [White House Proclamation on WEAAD 2022](#), which starts with "It is more vital than ever that we ensure our older adults can age with the dignity, security, and appreciation that every person deserves." The [National Center on Elder Abuse](#) provided wonderful tools and guidance to help us honor #WEAAD, and our own Trish D'Antonio wore purple and participated in the second annual virtual awareness walk, [Walk for WEAAD](#), to show her support!



This story wins just for the title: "[Don't joke about old age \(it's bad for your health\)](#)," but the topic is serious. It references an article in the JAMA, the Journal of the American medical Association: "[Experiences of Everyday Ageism and the Health of Older US Adults](#)," which found that people who were exposed to "everyday ageism" were more likely to have health conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic pain, and depression.

Now, these people know how to live: "['Grandfluencers' Are Sharing a New Vision of Old Age](#)." This New York Times article talks about groups of people in later life who are creating

communities of their own and sharing their lifestyle on social media. A group called Old Gays, which started posting videos on TikTok in December 2020, now has 7.1 million followers on TikTok and a few hundred thousand on Instagram. The Retirement House, a Hollywood set rented by the hour, presents a whimsical version of aging and commands and audience of 3.6 million on TikTok and 184,000 on Instagram.

Please follow us on Twitter to learn more about [@ReframingAging](#).



The [Reframing Aging Initiative](#) is led by [The Gerontological Society of America \(GSA\)](#) on behalf of the [Leaders of Aging Organizations](#) and is currently funded by [Archstone Foundation](#), [The John A. Hartford Foundation](#), [RRE Foundation for Aging](#), and [The SCAN Foundation](#), with additional support from [Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation](#), [New Hampshire Endowment for Health](#), [NextFifty Initiative](#), [Rose Community Foundation](#), [San Antonio Area Foundation](#), and [Tufts Health Plan Foundation](#).

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