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# Changing Minds and Transforming Systems

## How Pennsylvania's State Unit on Aging Leveraged Its MPA to Reframe Aging

What strategic  
initiatives, such as an  
MPA, are underway in  
your state?

Which leaders have the  
ideas, influence, and  
leverage to transform  
systems at all levels?

How can you partner  
with the National Center  
to Reframe Aging to  
improve understanding  
about aging in  
your state?

Pennsylvania is engaging individuals from the Governor's Office to local Area Agencies on Aging to improve how Pennsylvanians think about, talk about, and value older people.

A commitment to "recognize the momentum, experience, longevity, economic contributions, and wisdom of older adults..." is codified in Aging Our Way, PA, its first-ever Multisector Plan for Aging (MPA), a transformative blueprint created by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) and 29 other agencies.

Pennsylvania's long-term work to improve perceptions and communication about aging is grounded in partnership with the National Center to Reframe Aging.

PDA is educating leaders at every level on the principles to reframe aging, from their staff to local leaders, via network presentations and the in-depth Core Elements to Reframe Aging course.

The MPA is fostering system transformations, as PDA and the National Center to Reframe Aging collaborate to reframe communications about Pennsylvania's 400+ Senior Community Centers (SCCs). They are developing effective framing strategies, tools, and new insights to emphasize SCCs as vital spaces for older people to stay active, connected, and valued.

The partnership is a model for other states to follow as we transform systems and build better communities for all.

## JOIN US IN TELLING A NEW STORY ABOUT AGING!

# What Can I Do?



Practice using the tips on the  
Quick Start Guide



Partner with the National Center,  
connect with us at  
[reframingaging@geron.org](mailto:reframingaging@geron.org)



Subscribe to *Caravan*,  
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Access tools and  
resources via  
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<https://learning.reframingaging.org/>



## Quick Start Guide

### Our Words Matter

Here Are Tips on How to Choose Them Well

Instead of these words and cues:	Try:
"Tidal wave," "tsunami," and similarly catastrophic terms for the growing population of older people	Talking affirmatively about changing demographics: "As Americans live longer and healthier lives..."
"Choice," "planning," "control," and other individual determinants of aging outcomes	Emphasizing how to improve social contexts: "Let's find creative solutions to ensure we can all thrive as we age."
"Seniors," "elderly," "aging dependents," and similar "other-ing" terms that stoke stereotypes	Using more neutral ("older people/Americans") and inclusive ("we" and "us") terms
"Struggle," "battle," "fight" and similar conflict oriented words to describe aging experiences	The Building Momentum metaphor: "Aging is a dynamic process that leads to new abilities and knowledge we can share with our communities."
Using the word "ageism" without explanation	Defining ageism: "Ageism is discrimination against older people due to negative and inaccurate stereotypes."
Making generic appeals to the need to "do something" about aging	Using concrete examples like intergenerational community centers to illustrate inventive solutions

Learn more at [www.reframingaging.org](http://www.reframingaging.org)