"We are all aging, all the time, all together." That’s the message Marisa Sheldon and Christine Happel from the Age-Friendly Innovation Center at Ohio State University’s College of Social Work want everyone to know. They have engaged people of all ages and their creativity through a #ButtonUpAgeism campaign to hand craft over 5,000 buttons with age-positive messages — including a middle school student who says, “Aging is Rad!”

One message has gone viral, it says, “Aging: So Cool Everyone is Doing It!” Christine thinks the popularity of the button they created is due to its playfulness. It invites everyone to share their experiences of aging and makes space for us to listen and learn from each other.

The National Center to Reframe Aging celebrates this phrase! When more of us understand that we are all in this together and change the way we talk about aging, we will change the policies that shape our communities. When that happens — everybody wins!
What Can I Do?

Quick Start Guide

Our Words Matter
Here Are Tips on How to Choose Them Well

Instead of these words and cues:  
“Tidal wave,” “tsunami,” and similarly catastrophic terms for the growing population of older people

Try:  
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

Practice using the tips on the Quick Start Guide

Partner with the National Center, connect with us at reframingaging@geron.org

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Access tools and resources via our Learning center at https://learning.reframingaging.org/

Learn more at www.reframingaging.org