



NCR Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Cultural Observances, Awareness Information and Events

DEI News #33
December 2022

WHAT IS AGEISM?

How To Combat Ageism

There are several ways in which we can combat ageism.

Point out to the person making ageist comments or jokes that they are harmful. Ask for an explanation. "Can you explain what you mean by that comment?" Start a discussion to address ageism comments. Remind everyone that ageism can be seen from both older and young people, biases can come from all sides.

Take time to get educated on how ageism affects others by listening to personal stories, reading books, and researching.

Learn how and practice advocacy skills, such as knowing when to speak up and when to step back.

Take action by putting this knowledge into practice. Try correcting ageist stereotypes, challenging ageist jokes, or speaking out against ageist discrimination. Remember that this does not involve rescuing people, but supporting and advocating for them in situations where they are struggling to be heard.

To eliminate ageism and reverse ageism encourage youth and older adults to work together, connect and share expertise with each other on projects, activities, and events.

Respect and acceptance are necessary for a successful multi-generation team.

What Is Ageism?

A comment about a person's age disrespects their identity. The term "ageism" is a type of bias or discrimination. Younger and older can be targets for ageism similar to racism and sexism. Ageism involves holding negative stereotypes biases about people of different ages.

Age is one of the first things we notice about other people. We live in an age segregated society where it is rare for us to habitually interact across generations. Social media promotes cliques and niches that excludes and belittles perceived outsiders.

Often younger people stereotype older people as to how they expect them to behave. Younger people may feel that older people should make way for younger generations. Perhaps they think resources should be spent on younger people or that older people should act their age. The older generation may not realize that the younger generation may have a helpful view of new technology or new trends, on the other hand, older generations have years of insight about and experience. We all have something to learn from one another.

Studies revealed that youth ages 15-29 experience more age discrimination than older individuals. This form of discrimination is known as reverse ageism which can be damaging to younger people. Older people may dismiss younger people as inexperienced, unprofessional, and not qualified.

Studies also find one of three people have experienced ageism. Ageism should be treated the same as sex, race, and disability discrimination. Ageism can result with stress, disruptive sleep, and anxiety.

It is important that all people, both young and old need to recognize age-related discrimination and prejudice. Older people bring experience and wisdom to the table, while younger people bring innovation that needs to be heard. Acceptance comes when we acknowledge we are fundamentally different people but are treated with equally valuable insights to offer. There needs to be respect and understanding.