



**LRM**  
Longevity Ready  
Maryland

# Aging Reframed through Community Conversations

Ageism Awareness Day Workshop  
October 9, 2025



**Maryland**  
DEPARTMENT OF AGING



**LRM**  
Longevity Ready  
Maryland



[LRM.Maryland.gov](https://LRM.Maryland.gov)

 Paving the way for a  
**Longevity Ready  
Maryland**

Maryland's Multisector Plan for Aging: July 2025

Visit [LRM.Maryland.Gov](https://LRM.Maryland.Gov) for more information.



# Governor Moore Proclaims October 9<sup>th</sup> as Ageism Awareness Day in Maryland



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National Center to  
**Reframe**  
**Aging**

LED BY THE GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

[ReframingAging.org](https://ReframingAging.org)



The Maryland Department of Aging and the National Center to Reframe Aging have partnered together to change the way society talks about aging, work to end implicit bias toward older people, and create more age-inclusive communities.



*follow along*

as we **#TalkAboutAgeism**

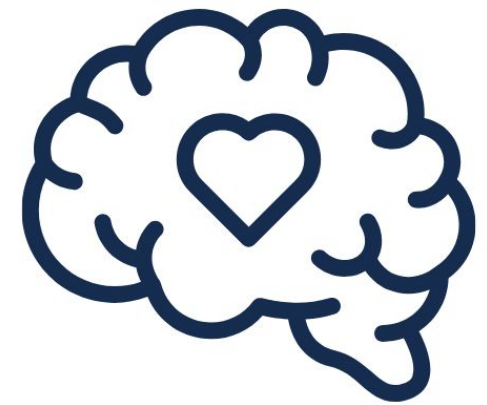
# AGEISM AWARENESS DAY



[asaging.org/ageism-awareness](https://asaging.org/ageism-awareness)



Older individuals with more positive self-perceptions of aging **live 7.5 years longer** than those with a less positive perception of aging




[asaging.org/ageism-awareness](https://asaging.org/ageism-awareness)



# Ageism Awareness Program

## Resource Overview and Replicability



**Morgan Spliedt, MS, CDP**  
Livable Communities Program  
Manager  
Office on Aging & Independence  
[mspliedt@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:mspliedt@howardcountymd.gov)



*“The single most important factor in determining longevity – more important than gender, income, social background, loneliness or functional health – is how people think about and approach the idea of old age.”*

Dr. Becca Levy (2024)

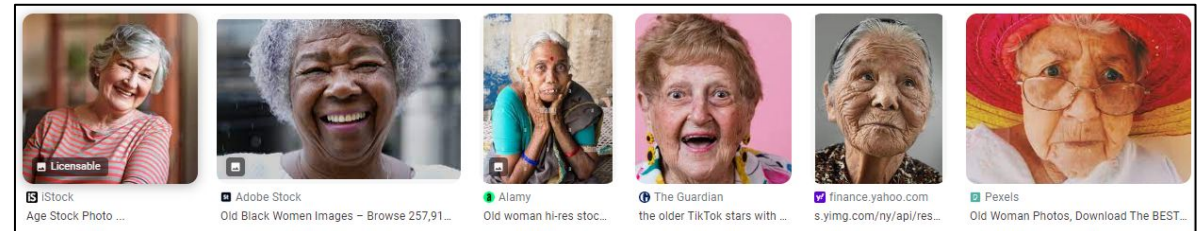
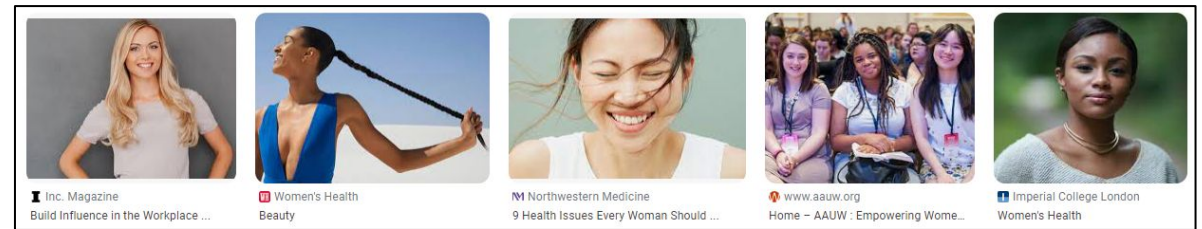
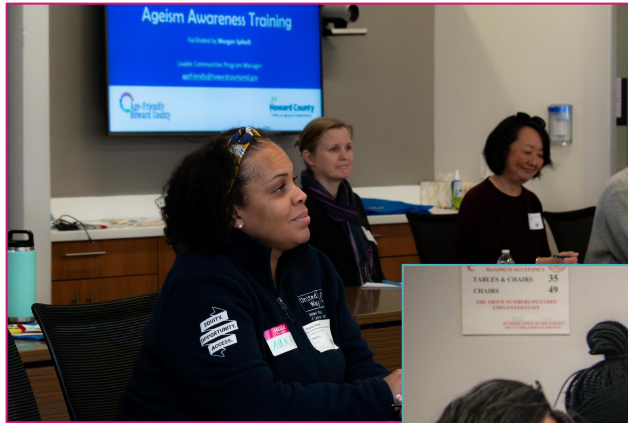
# Why and How We Got Here

- Aging is a rich, varied and uniting experience.
- Aging offers an opportunity to build a community that works for us all—once we get past ageism.
  
- Synthesized research findings and used plain language
- Prioritized community input and values
- Followed the Age-Friendly Howard County Action Plan
- Implemented continuous quality improvement

# 3-Pronged Strategy to Address Ageism



# Ageism Awareness Training





**Ageism has no age bias**

# Community Conversations

- Open-ended
- Active listening
- Probing questions
- Validation

**East Columbia Ageism Awareness Discussion with Seasoned Sisters**

**Welcome:** My name is Morgan Spillett. I work for Howard County's Office on Aging and Independence as their Livable Communities Program Manager. Part of my role is to provide opportunities for people to connect and learn from one another. That's why I am here today and am so glad you are here with me. Does anyone know what we are talking about today? Today, I'd like us to have an open guided discussion about ageism and age stereotypes and ways these things might impact how we experience aging. First though, let's go around the room and introduce ourselves.

**Ground Rules:** Thank you! Now, before we jump into the discussion, let's go over a few ground rules that will help us all.

- 1) You are invited to participate actively, we all want to hear from each other. But I will ask that we allow each other to share one at a time. This helps us engage with the speaker and hear what they are saying more clearly.
- 2) As we discuss and share, please remember that there are no right or wrong responses. So please listen and treat everyone's ideas with respect.
- 3) Lastly, let's keep focused on the discussion points at hand and try to minimize side conversations.

Does anyone have any questions?

**Discussion Point #1** – The first questions I want to pose to the group are about how you define things like age and “being old.” Would anyone like to share what “age” means to you?

What is age? Is it important or not, in what ways?  
What is old? At what point is someone considered old?  
Is there a difference between aging and being old?

**Discussion Point #2**

What are your personal views and experiences of aging and becoming older?  
What have you learned or experienced? Is your life now different than what you expected? In what ways?

**Discussion Point #3**

How do you feel about telling people your age?  
What do you think are the [social] attitudes/beliefs people hold towards older adults? What does society/the community think about older people?  
How do you know this? Where did you learn this?  
When do you recall first noticing age differences?

**Discussion Point #4**

What is ageism? Have you heard of ageism before?  
*Dr. Robert Butler coined the term ageism in 1968 to recognize the discrimination he observed against the elderly. Since then, the term ageism refers to the stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination towards others or oneself based on age.*  
Who do you think is likely to experience ageism? Why?  
Are there certain actions, beliefs, or behaviors that constitute ageism?  
Where or in what situations might someone experience ageism? Do you notice ageism in your life, where?

**Discussion Point #5**

Has anyone here ever experienced ageism or age discrimination? Have you ever been treated a certain way because of your age – or the age you were perceived to be? What happened, what did you see, feel or notice?  
Have you ever experienced a situation in which your age seemed to contribute to a problem or uncomfortable situation?  
What do you think drives ageism and certain (negative/positive) beliefs about aging?  
Can you think of an example of how younger and older people are respected in your community? What about ways that younger and older people are not respected in your community?




Several members from East Columbia's Seasons Sisters who participated in the first Ageism Awareness Community Conversation.

# Self-Guided Learning


**POSITIVE AGING AFFIRMATION**

I am valuable at every age.



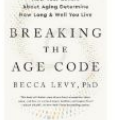
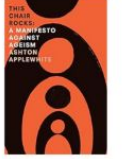
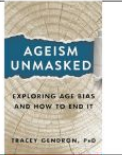
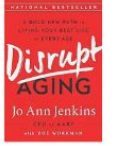
**POSITIVE AGING AFFIRMATION**

I will live my life fully and with joy.



Affirmation Cards

Ageism Awareness Resources

BOOKS ON AGEISM			
Title	Author	Quick Synopsis	Cover Art
Breaking the Age Code	Becca Levy	Explore a revolutionary paradigm shift in how we think about aging. Examine how our mindset and beliefs shape our behaviors, ability to heal, and our lifespan in invisible but powerful ways.	
This Chair Rocks	Ashton Applewhite	Examine the roots of ageism in history and in our own age denial, examine how ageist myths and stereotypes cripple the way our brains and bodies function, expose the cost of the all-American myth of independence, critique the portrayal of elders as burdens to society, describe what an all-age-friendly world would look like, and conclude with a rousing call to action.	
Ageism Unmasked	Tracy Gendron	Offering an all-inclusive approach, Dr. Tracey Gendron reveals the biases behind our false understanding of aging, sharing powerful opportunities for personal growth along with strategies to help create an anti-ageist society.	
Disrupt Aging	Jo Ann Jenkins	This book focuses on health, wealth, and self to show how to embrace opportunities and change the way we look at getting older. This is for all the makers and doers who have a desire to continue exploring possibilities, to celebrate discovery over decline, and to seek out opportunities to live the best life there is.	

Resource Sheet

**Age-Friendly Howard County**  
www.howardcountymd.gov/agefriendly

**An Age-Friendly Guide for Creating Readable Material  
Tips for Written Communication**

Whenever you create or edit educational and marketing materials, follow these guidelines to help people of all ages read and act on your message.

**GENERAL GUIDANCE**  
(See Graphic Guidance on page 2)

**Consider Your Reader**

- Who is the reader you are trying to reach?
- What does the reader want to know, find, understand or do?
- Will some readers need accommodations (e.g., for low vision or limited English skills)?

**Choose Words Carefully**

- Use active voice and a positive, conversational tone.
- Avoid technical terms and jargon.
- When writing about older adults, use age groups (e.g., 50+) or "older adults/older people" rather than using terms that suggest stereotypes, such as "elderly," "mature" or "seniors."
- Don't use "they" or "them" when referring to specific groups or subgroups, such as older adults.

**Be Precise**

- Keep sentences short and direct. Discuss one concept in two or three sentences per paragraph. Focus on the reader's needs.
- Delete fluff, especially promotional, redundant or trivial words. Readers tend to skip dense or overdone text.
- Bullets and itemized lists can make concepts easier to understand.

**Help Readers Scan**

- Headings and subheads help readers know what a document is about and get to the information they need.
- Bold text can help readers scan for important concepts. However, bold text isn't identified on a screen reader.
- Avoid underlining, especially on the web, where only web links should be underlined.

**Ask Questions... and Answer Them!**

- Questions make useful headers.
- Use FAQs with caution. Answer questions within your content.

**Use Examples and Stories**

- Examples and stories can help readers connect to the content.
- Using humor is not recommended because it easily can be misinterpreted.

**Use Effective Graphics**

- Simple charts and tables can help make detailed information easier to understand.
- Graphics or pictures can draw in the reader.
- Graphics should convey information, not merely decorate.

agefriendly@howardcountymd.gov | Age-Friendly Howard County | Communication and Information 1

Communication Guide



**The end of ageism begins with you.**

# Replicability

- Program can be tailored to meet your audience where they are and be expanded to include related topics (e.g., ableism) and engage populations of all ages
- Sample materials are available today
- Access the full digital program package by emailing Morgan
  - [mspliedt@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:mspliedt@howardcountymd.gov)
  - You may also request a one-on-one so I can answer your questions and brainstorm strategies.



**You are all the ages you've ever been.  
You are a role model for aging.**





A nonprofit organization that leverages art and creativity to combat ageism and advance positive beliefs around age and aging.

OUTDOOR

When you want a whole cake to  
yourself because you're turning 30,  
which is basically 50,  
which is basically dead.



Dessert.  
We get it.

Postmates

121-053

## STUFF THAT MILLENNIALS KILLED



## STUFF THAT BABY-BOOMERS KILLED



**BUT THOSE MILLENNIALS SURE  
ARE RUINING AMERICA, RIGHT?**

MAY 20, 2013

Obama's New Boss / Syria face-off / McCain vs. Brzezinski / PLUS: Summer's best movies & more

# TIME

## THE ME ME ME GENERATION

Millennials are lazy, entitled narcissists  
who still live with their parents

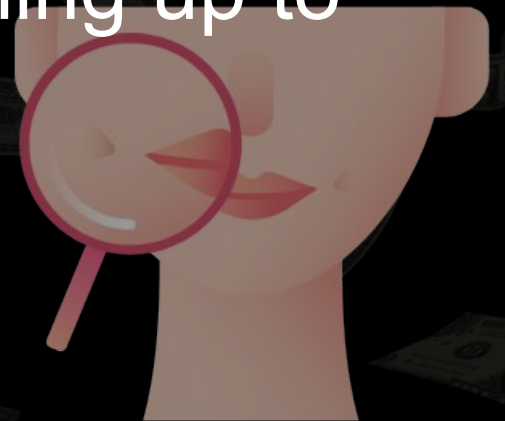
Why they'll save us all

BY JOEL STEIN



time.com

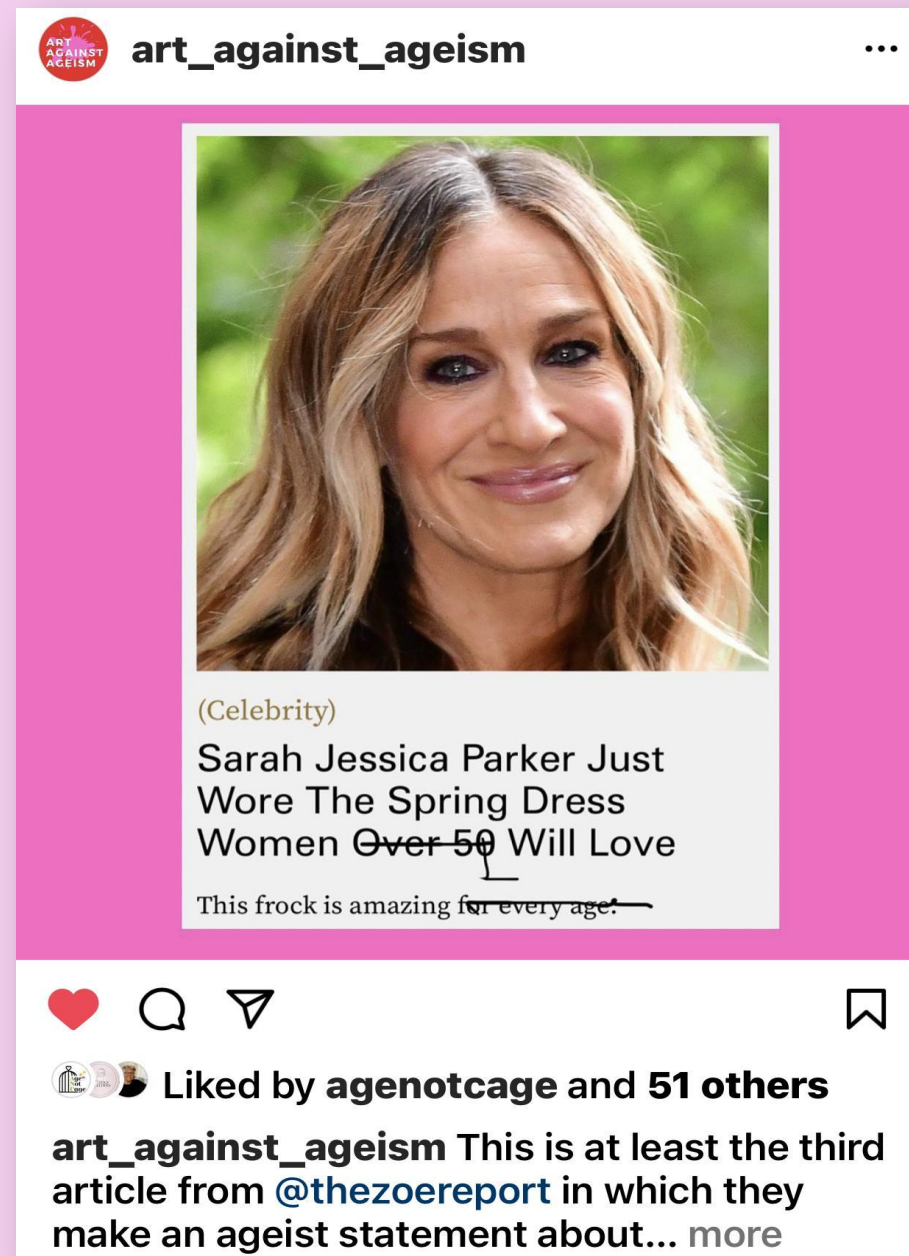
The anti-aging market's worth is between \$55 to \$75 billion, with projections for 2033 reaching up to \$122.9 billion.





# Fixed It!

We took an editor's pen to ageist headlines and products and called them out on social media.

#FixedIt








 art\_against\_ageism ...



(Celebrity)  
Sarah Jessica Parker Just Wore The Spring Dress  
Women Over 50 Will Love

This frock is amazing for every age!

 Liked by **agenotcage** and **51 others**

**art\_against\_ageism** This is at least the third article from [@thezoereport](#) in which they make an ageist statement about... [more](#)



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1K

100 comments

54 shares

637K views



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The customer voted product of 20... See more



HOW TO:  
~~LOOK 25 IN 2025??~~

own your age

owning your  
age



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**TRY BEFORE YOU BUY**

Learn more

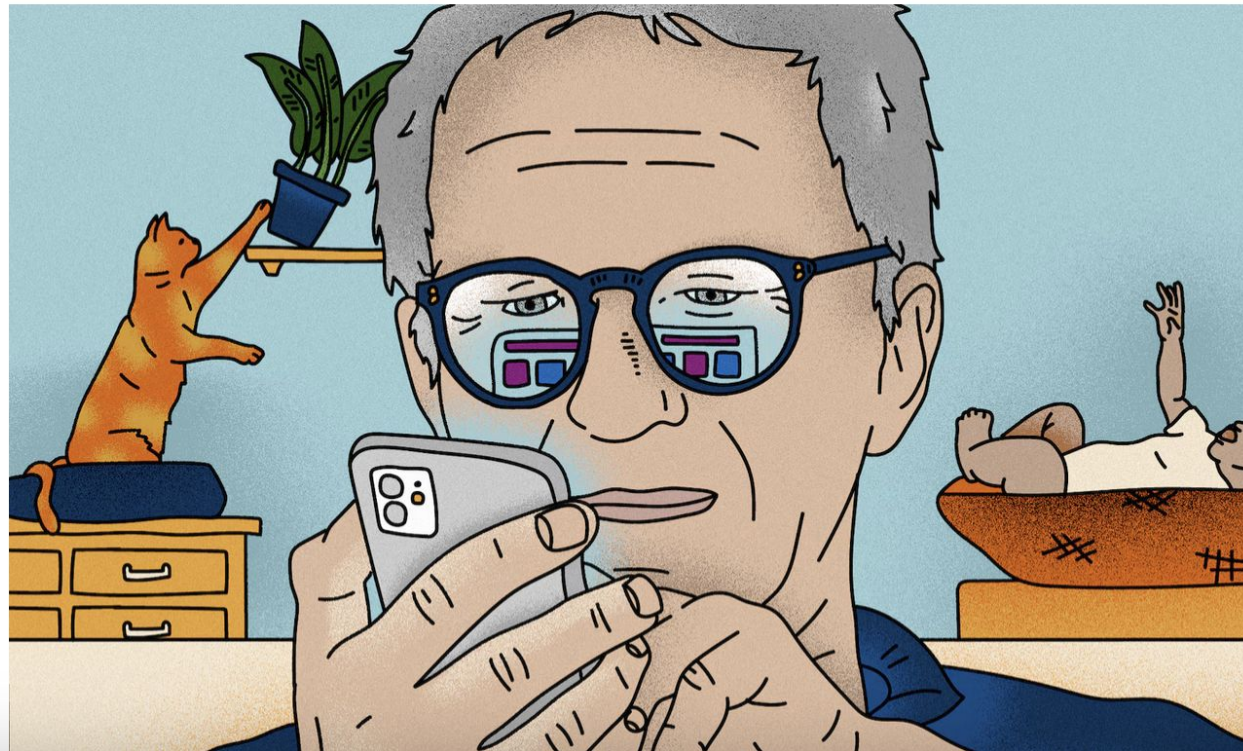
👍👍 1K 100 comments 54 shares 637K views

# Baby boomers can't stop staring at their phones

Everyone struggles to put down their phones, but some families have had enough

November 12, 2022 **More than 2 years ago**

🔒 6 min 🔄 📌 🗨 1,585



Home / ETNT Health / 10 Ways to Look 10 Years Younger

ETNT HEALTH

✓ Expert-Recommended

# 10 Ways to Look 10 Years Younger, Say Experts

Look and feel younger by doing a few simple things.

Published on September 5, 2021 | 1:01 PM

FACT CHECKED BY



ALEX KOSLOV





CULTURE

# 15 style mistakes that make you look older

Keep people guessing about your real age for years to come with these fashion tips and style swaps that turn back the clock.

Style

## 35 Clothing Choices That Are Making You Look Older

THINKING OF TYING A SILK SCARF AROUND YOUR NECK? THINK AGAIN.

By ASHLEY MOOR OCTOBER 23, 2018



Whether you're 25 or 55, your clothing is an essential part of your look, especially when it comes to determining your age. Sure, glowing skin and **luscious locks** and a flawless physique can indicate you're in a certain, enviable age range. But an ill-fitting blazer or an outdated pair of "mom" or "dad" jeans can

# Eat This Once A Day For Younger-Looking Skin, Study Finds

By [Jamie Schneider](#)



July 27, 2022 - 5:03 PM

# Bracing For The Silver Tsunami

By [Deborah Wince-Smith](#), Contributor. ⓘ I write about manufacturing, comp... ▾

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Published Feb 25, 2022 at 04:50pm EST, Updated Feb 28, 2022 at 10:31am EST

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🕒 This article is more than 3 years old.





**see\_u\_lateron** 1w 

I was 96 years old & used this cream, now I Look 30 & back dating & working at a disco where I now dance my weekends away, I am now 100 and still Look 30 ,my boyfriend is 39 and cannot keep up with me ,He cannot believe how beautiful this cream has made me,Its Like I started my life over again.I just finished running a marathon and people were saying I run like a teenager..I had a baby blanket from 1921 that I now sleep with again ,and I will be passing it down to my child as I believe i am with Child ,I am planning to take a pregnancy test tonight .Things are certainly going Wonderfully since using this cream 🥰

55 likes Reply



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AND JOIN OUR ALLIANCE**



[ArtAgainstAgeism.org](https://www.artagainstageism.org)

**Newsletter Sign Up:**



*Connecting youth & older adults*



## Reframing Aging through Intergenerational Collaboration

Ageism Awareness Day

Lori N. Marks, PhD

October 9, 2025

## Mission of Link Generations

- To educate middle and high school aged youth about aging and connect them with older adults in interactive activities that benefit both populations.
- The mission is to combat ageism and social isolation.
- Youth are trained about aging and effectively communicating with older adults. They learn about history from those who have lived through it.
- Adult participants feel a sense of purpose, connection to others, and increased understanding of today's youth.

## How it Works: Youth Training



## Bringing the Generations Together



# Connecting now takes many forms!



## Outcomes

- *“This program works. We don’t always know how it’s going to work, but it works.”* – 94 year old participant
- Survey findings: youth report feeling more comfortable with older adults following the program; older adults report feeling more positive about the future
- Qualitative statements reflected program objectives for younger and older participants:
  - Increased connection to others
  - Decreased loneliness
  - Better understanding of another generation
  - Discovering commonalities

<b>Program Objectives for Youth Participants</b>	<b>Statements Demonstrating Objectives</b>
Feeling more connected to others	“I loved meeting new people and learning about their experiences.”  “We have a lot in common. One resident talked about coming to this country because of war. She felt abandoned and alone. I can relate to this.”
A better understanding of another generation	“I was really focused on my own experiences that I didn’t realize they have it harder.”

<b>Program Objectives for Older Participants</b>	<b>Statements Demonstrating Objectives</b>
Decreased loneliness	“It has been surprising to me and has warmed me to know that these young people want to give their time to share with us and also to learn about us. I hope that this will continue on in the future.”
Better understanding of another generation	“I enjoy meeting the students and engaging in their lives.”  “I feel comfortable they [these youth] are our future.”

## Stories about Strengthening Community

- *“The program is about sharing experiences of different ages and from different cultures. That’s how people learn to understand each other. We need that, especially today.”*



## New Training: Communicating with People Living with Dementia

- 1/3 of people over age 85 have Alzheimer's Disease
- Cases of dementia are increasing globally due to longer life expectancy
- As this trend continues, more and more people will come into contact with people with dementia
- Memory care facilities have reached out to Link Generations to connect youth with their residents
- Developed and piloted a new training module in a memory care day program.

## Making Connections in the Moment



## Lifelong Lessons

- *“Being with them made me feel younger.” – older participant*
- *“I learned about disruptions with language, memory loss, attention, recognition, problem solving, and decision making. But that doesn’t change anything! People living with dementia are the same as the rest of us.” – youth participant*
- *“People living with dementia still have strong identities and experiences that give the younger generation a glimpse of what life was like many decades ago.” – youth participant*

## Let's See How This Works: Questions to Facilitate Conversations

- Think about a time when an assumption was made about you based on your age. How did that make you feel?
- How have your views of aging changed over time?
- Be prepared to share some highlights or lessons learned from your table's conversation.

## Questions

- Thank you for inviting me today!
- Contact Information:  
Lori N. Marks, PhD  
[lori@linkgenerations.org](mailto:lori@linkgenerations.org)





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Work in Progress  
Planning



Program  
Development



Data and Public  
Evaluation



Resources for  
Participation



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# THANK YOU!



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