



Reframing Aging for Age-Inclusive Infrastructure

Trish D'Antonio, Executive Director and VP, Policy & Professional Affairs, Gerontological Society of America

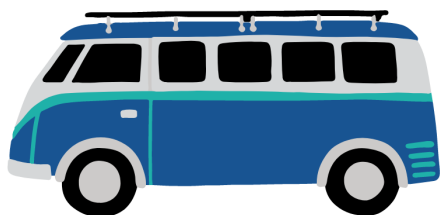
Hannah Albers, Program Director

July 10, 2024

**10 years from now...
what is the headline you want to
see about the services for and
well-being of older people in your
community?**

Key Barrier Standing in Our Way

National Center to Reframe Aging



Climb aboard the caravan!
#ReframeAging

Dedicated to reshaping the conversation about aging

Core Elements of Reframing Aging Workshop

Trusted source for proven communication strategies



Cultivating a movement

ReframingAging.org

Leaders of Aging Organizations



american federation
for aging research



Funding Provided by:



The
John A. Hartford
Foundation



RRF | Foundation
for Aging



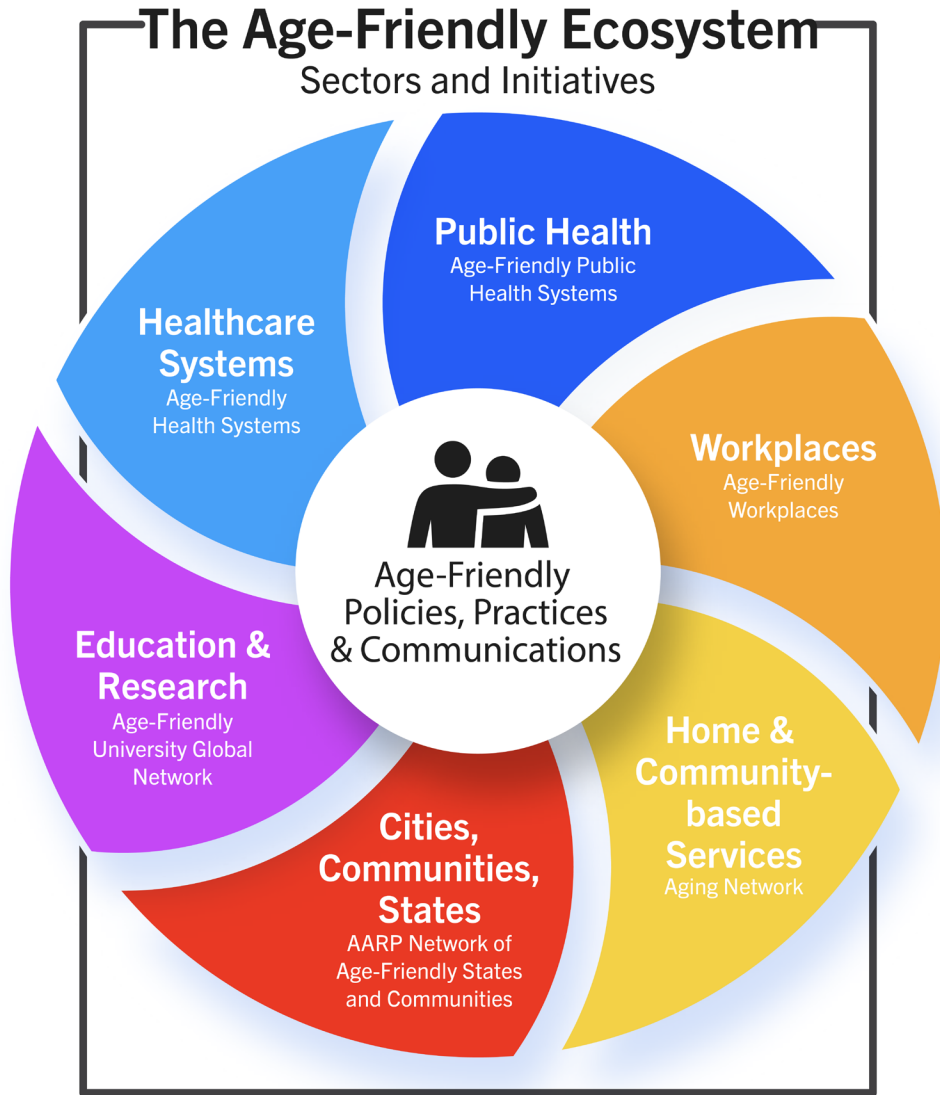
ARCHSTONE
FOUNDATION

Research Partner



- Nonprofit think tank with the mission to advance the nonprofit sector's capacity to reframe social issues.
- Conducts original, scholarly research on the communications aspects of social and scientific issues.
- Recognized in 2015 with the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.
- Original research conducted by FrameWorks Institute Distributed for educational purposes by the National Center to Reframe Aging

ReframingAging.org



Ageism Defined

**Ageism exists in
several forms**

- Stereotypes: *How we think*
- Prejudices: *How we feel*
- Discrimination *How we act*

**Ageism exists on
multiple levels**

- Interpersonal
- Compassionate
- Systemic/ Institutional
- Self-directed

Implicit Bias Defined

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

Simply being aware of our implicit bias reduces ageism.

Busso DS, Volmert A, Kendall-Taylor N. "Reframing aging: Effect of a short-term framing intervention on implicit measures of age bias." *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B* 74.4 (2019): 559-564.

Why We Need a New Story!



Media Coverage

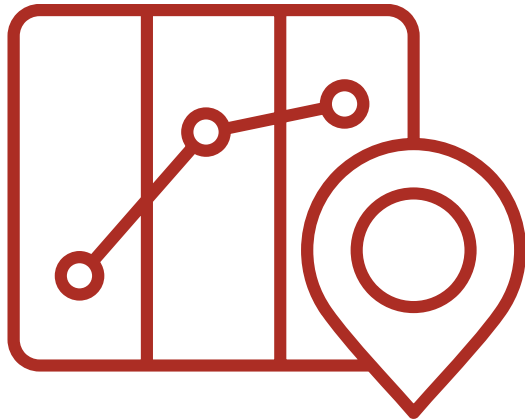


Academic Press



Personal Consumption

What does it take to reframe an issue?



Map the terrain



Develop a strategy
to navigate to higher
ground



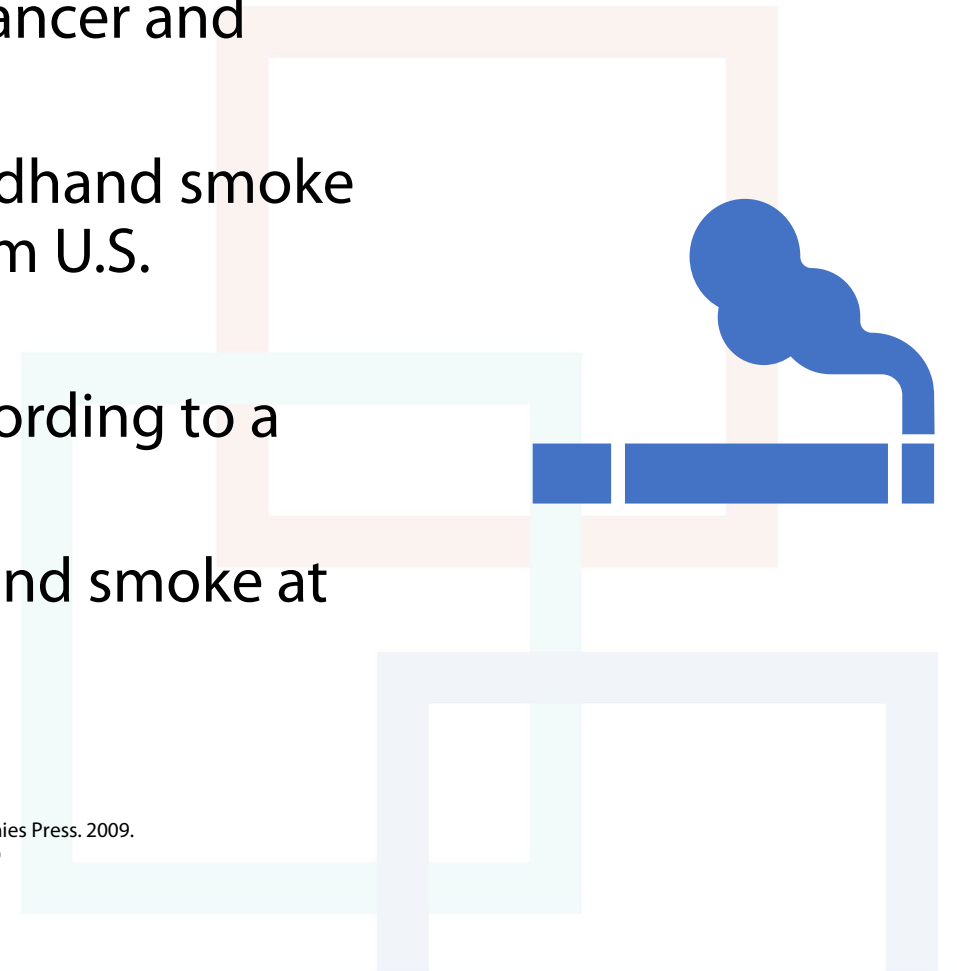
Build a caravan,
equip the travelers,
and start moving

We've done this before!



Second-Hand Smoke

- Causes approximately 7,330 deaths from lung cancer and 33,950 deaths from heart disease each year.
- 2.5 million people died from exposure to secondhand smoke between 1964 and 2014 according to report from U.S. Surgeon General.
- Secondhand smoke can cause heart attacks according to a report by the Institute of Medicine.
- The health of nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke at work is at increased risk.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. 2014.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Report on Carcinogens, Tenth Edition 2002. National Toxicology Program.

Institute of Medicine. Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Cardiovascular Effects: Making Sense of the Evidence. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. 2009.

American Lung Association Website <https://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/health-effects-of-secondhand-smoke.html> Accessed 7/26/19

Smoke-Free Environments

- As of July 1, 2019, 66% of the U.S. population (or more than 200 million people) live in areas that have passed strong smoke-free laws covering restaurants and bars.
- Smoke-free policies did not have an adverse economic impact on the business activity of restaurants, bars, or establishments catering to tourists; some studies found a small positive effect of these policies.





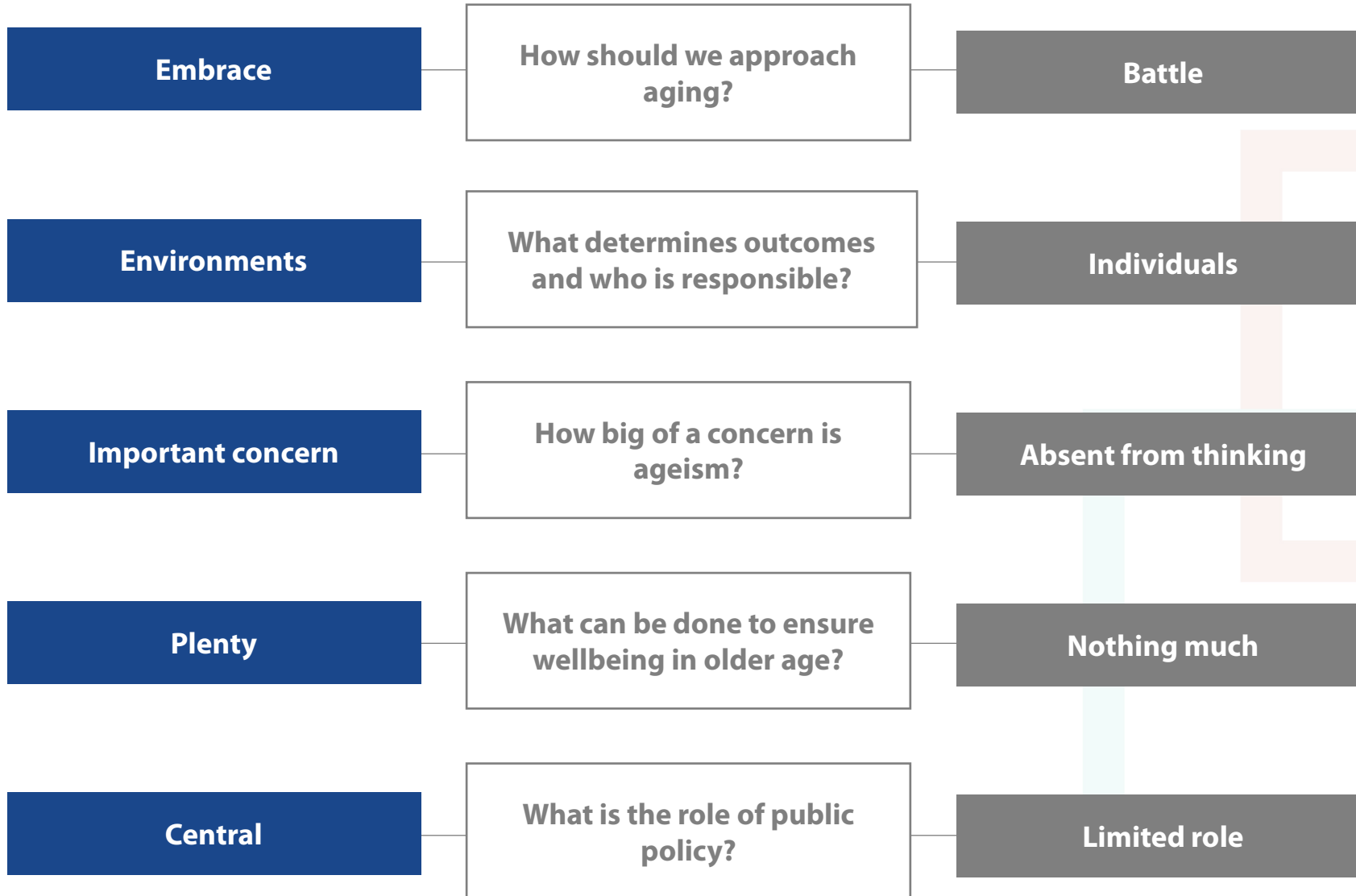
Aging Field



Public



Why we need to reframe aging



What is Framing & Why it Matters

Framing is About Choices!



What to emphasize



How to explain it



What to leave unsaid

Shared Communications Lead to Systems Change



Commun-
ications



Discourse



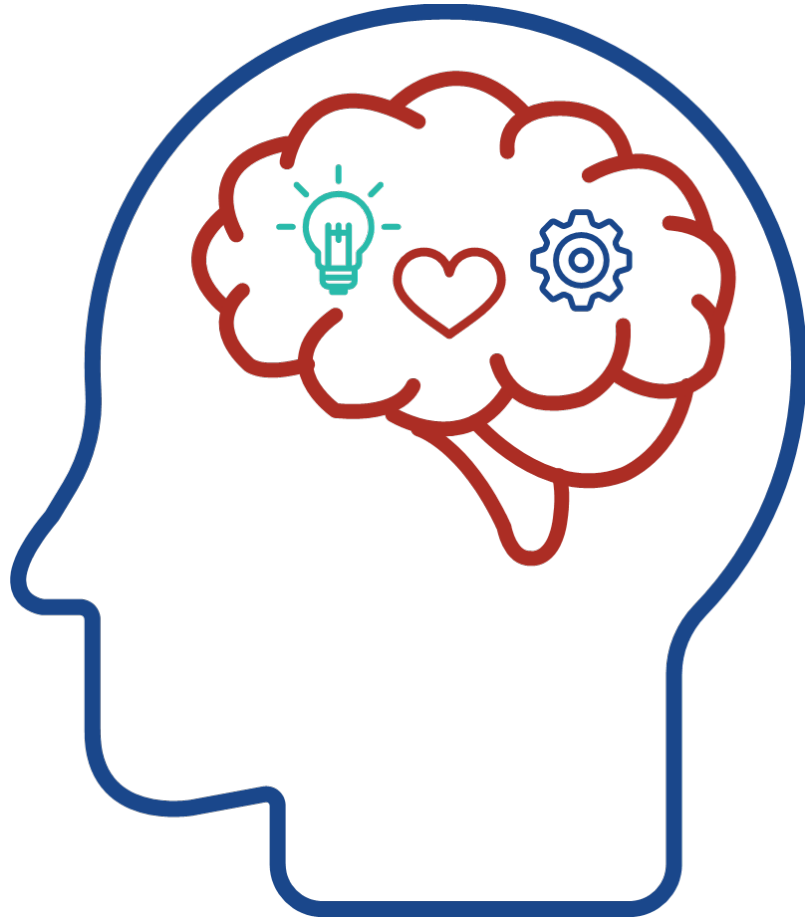
Thinking



Policy



Cultural Models Drive People's Thinking



- Cultural models are patterns of thinking
- They are taken-for-granted and largely automatic assumptions.
- People rely on cultural models to interpret, organize and make meaning out of all sorts of stimuli, including experiences, feelings, thoughts ... and your communications.

Navigating Public Understanding

Traps to Avoid &
Strategies to Advance

Navigating Understanding



Traps to Avoid

Individualism

Us vs. Them

Ideal vs. Perceived Real

Nostalgia & Threat of Modernity

Fatalism

Strategies to Advance



What Surrounds Us Shapes Us

Collective Responsibility

Problems can be Solved

Public Perceptions of Aging We Need to Navigate



What did you hear/notice?

Navigating Understanding

Traps to Avoid

Individualism

- Lifestyle choices
- Financial Planning

Us vs. Them

- Older as “other”
- Zero Sum thinking
- Digital incompetence

Ideal vs. Perceived Real

- **Ideal:**
 - Accumulated wisdom
 - Self-sufficiency
 - Staying active
 - Earned leisure
- **Real:**
 - Deterioration
 - Loss of control
 - Dependency
 - Determinism

Nostalgia & Threat of Modernity

- Family dispersal
- Economic challenges
- Social Security is doomed

Fatalism

- Fatalism/Crisis—nothing can be done
- Better individual choices and planning
- More education and information

Strategies to Advance

What Surrounds Us Shapes Us

- Our environments share our lives

Collective Responsibility

- We are interconnected
- We can all help improve our communities

Problems can be Solved

- We know how to effect positive change
- We can do it in on a large scale

Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Talk about frailty without paternalism

Talk about ageism as a problem that can be solved

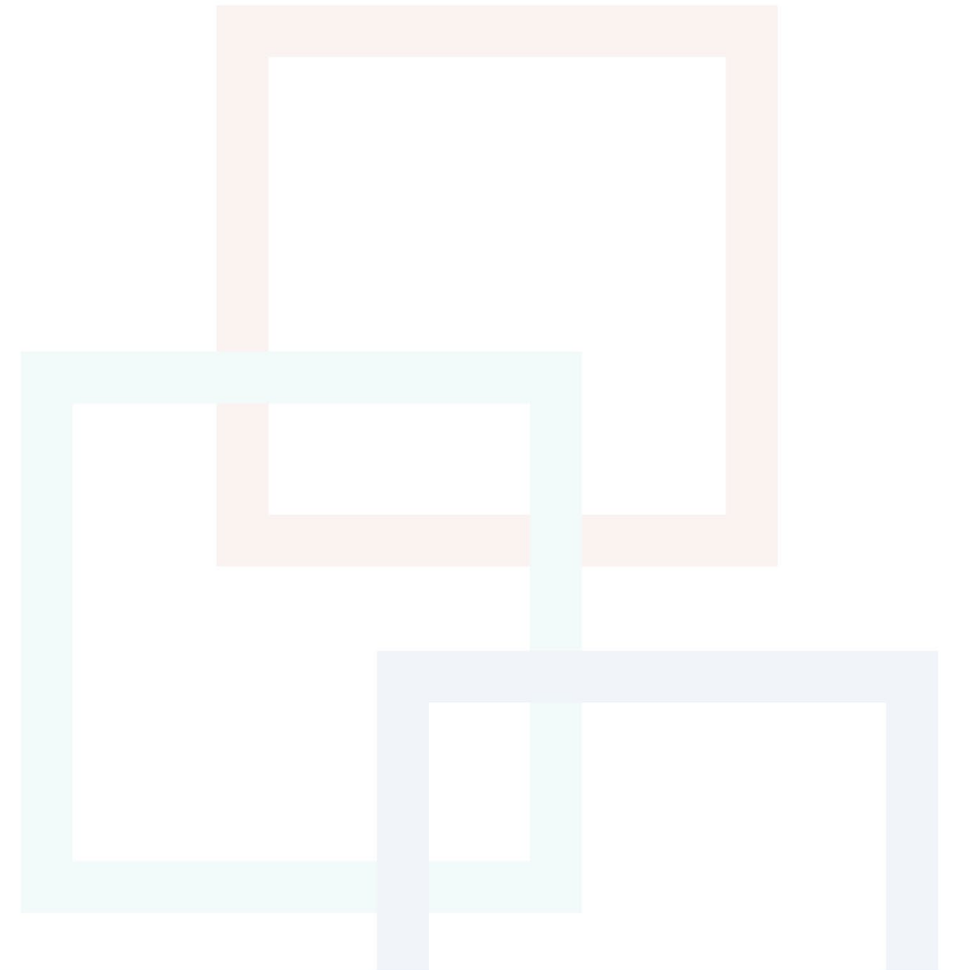
Highlight innovative and creative solutions

To spark a more accurate and complete conversation about aging, **advance** these communication strategies.

Framing Vulnerability

The message

Many people who are older are frail, vulnerable, cannot help themselves, and depend on others to meet their most basic needs. This leaves them at risk for all kinds of challenges and potential harms.



Framing Vulnerability

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Many people who are older are **frail, vulnerable**, cannot help **themselves**, and depend on others to meet **their** most basic needs. This leaves **them** at risk for all kinds of challenges and potential harms.

What the message does

Traps

- Individualism
- Us vs. Them

Solutions

- People think of solutions at an individual level – guardianship, family support, etc.

Impact

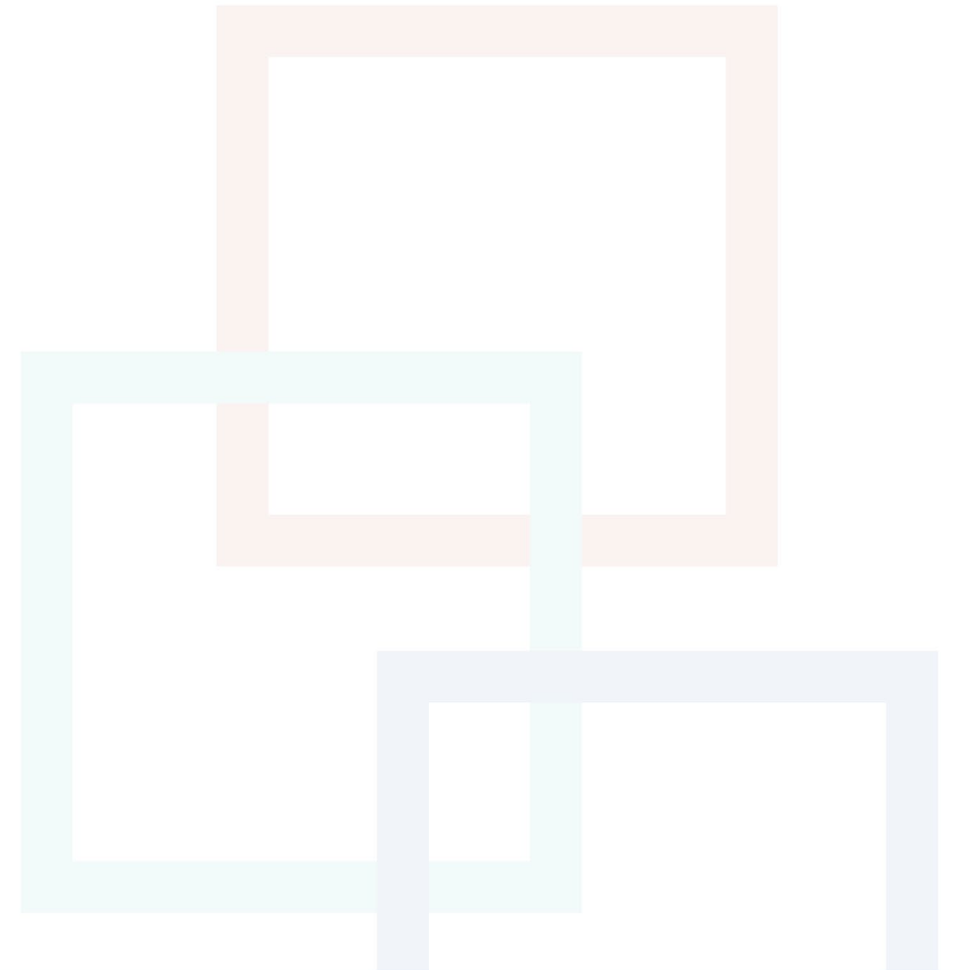
- No policy or systems change

Framing Vulnerability – Reframed



The message

When community bonds are weak, older people who are frail are more at risk of experiencing harm. We need to build solid connections and strengthen our social structure to better support older people, families, caregivers, and our entire community.



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What the message does

Strategies

- **Context matters**

Solutions

- **People think of solutions at a systemic level – more likely to think of community programs**

Impact

- **Policy & systems change**

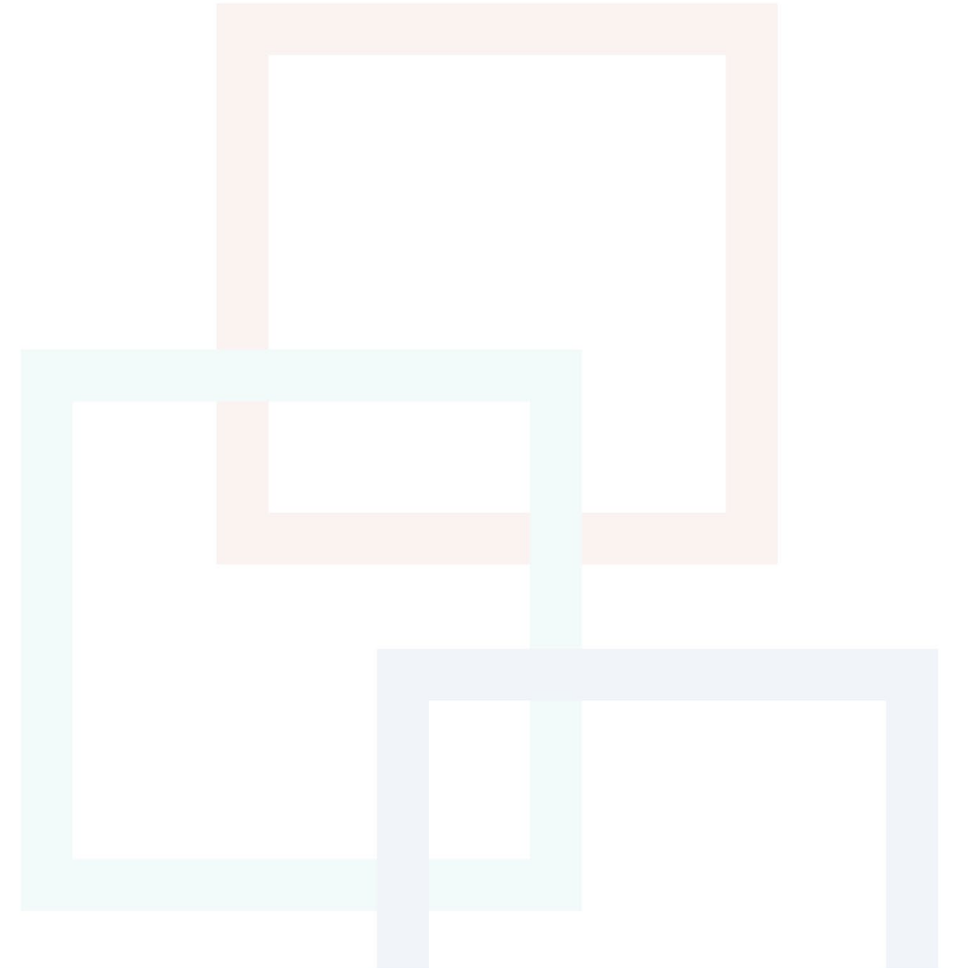
Workforce Challenges



The message

“This is the first time ever that five different generations are in America’s workforce at the same time, from Gen Zers up to baby boomers,” says XXXXX. And there are growing pains.

To be sure, boomers (age 60-80) bring knowledge and experience to the workplace, and many companies are trying to coax them into staying on as they struggle to find workers amid unemployment.



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To be sure, **boomers** (age 60-80) bring knowledge and experience to the workplace, and many companies are trying to **coax them** into staying on as they **struggle** to find workers amid unemployment.

What the message does

Traps

- Us vs. Them
- Crisis, challenges focused
- Battle against change

Solutions

- The solution is to go back in time vs. looking for opportunity

Policy

- No policy or systems change

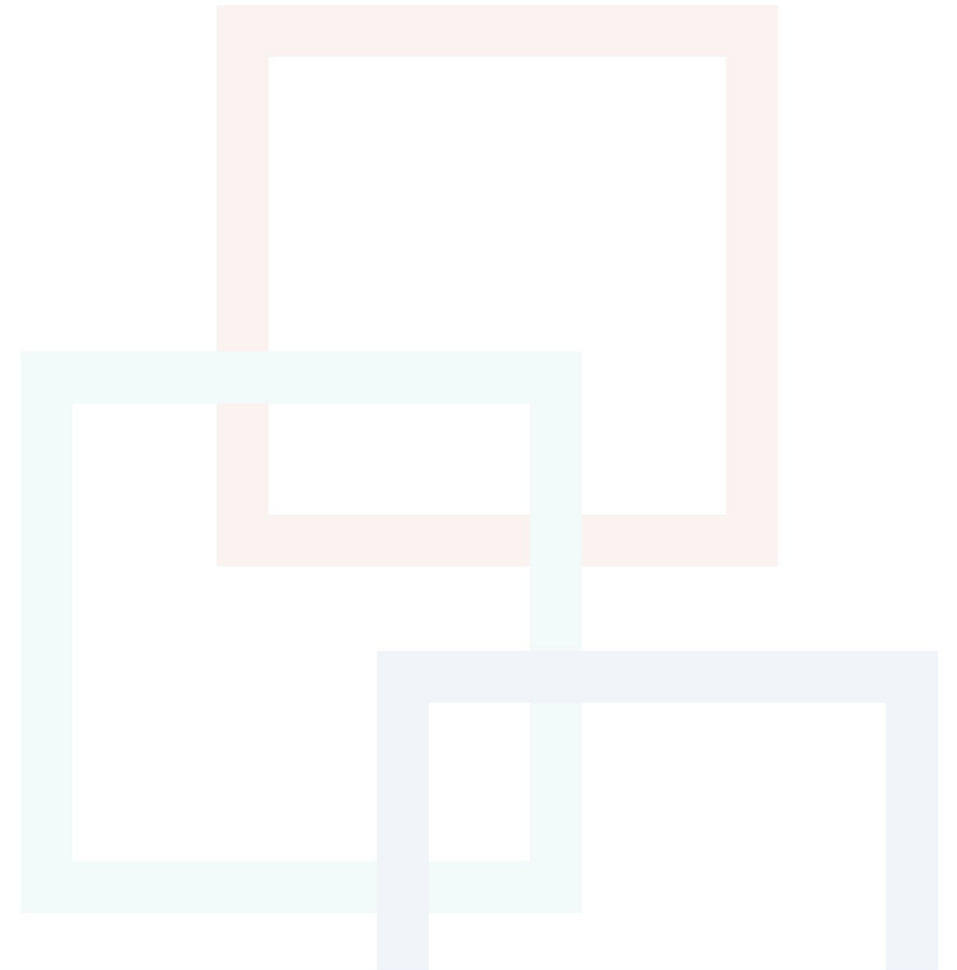
Workforce Challenges – Reframed



The message

For the United States to continue as one of the most productive nations, we must think creatively about the resources available. “This is the first time ever that five different generations are in America’s workforce at the same time, from Gen Zers up to baby boomers,” says XXXX. **This gives rise to opportunities for collaboration across generations.**

To be sure, the diverse knowledge and experiences all workers bring to the workplace can lead to creative business solutions. And companies should work hard to retain dynamic workers regardless of age.



Workforce Challenges – Reframed



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What the message does

Strategies

- Problems can be solved
- Innovative, creative, and resourceful

Solutions

- There are ample opportunities

Policy

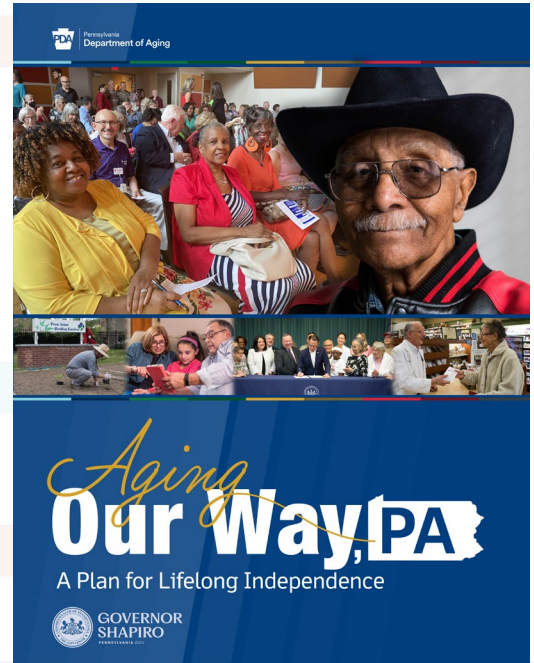
- Helps the reader imagine what policies or norms could support this future

Strategies in Practice

George

George is a 95-year-old widower and a father of seven. He is a retired master welder with the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and a Korean War combat veteran. George lives with his daughter, a registered nurse, who currently owns the house George built in the 1950s with money he received through the GI Bill and where he raised his family. George can still drive and to ensure his safety and the safety of others, he voluntarily takes a driver's exam every year. He has a history of cardiac problems and suffered a massive heart attack that resulted in a double bypass surgery. George's doctors diagnosed him with congestive heart failure, but he has not experienced any changes in cognition or thinking skills. George's primary sources of income are Social Security, a pension, and a small amount of savings. He is unwilling to consider nursing home services because he does not think he needs them. His other children agree, although his daughter who lives with him worries about his overall health and safety when he is at home alone and when he is driving. He occasionally experiences loneliness and depression and often reflects on the number of people in his life that he has lost.

The *Aging Our Way, PA* plan will help veterans like George, by bolstering the continuum of community supports on which we all rely as we age.



<https://www.aging.pa.gov/publications/MasterPlan/Pages/default.aspx>

Strategies in Practice



Before



After

Age Strong Shuttle Redesign

AGE+



City of Boston
Age Strong
Commission

Strategies in Practice



City Center Signs

Age Friendly Worthington: Worthington, Ohio

When a
Frame “works,”
It Shifts
Thinking in
Multiple Ways



**Knowledge
Increases**



**Attitudes
Improve**



**Policy Support
Grows**

Resources & Next Steps

Responding to Ageist Election Coverage

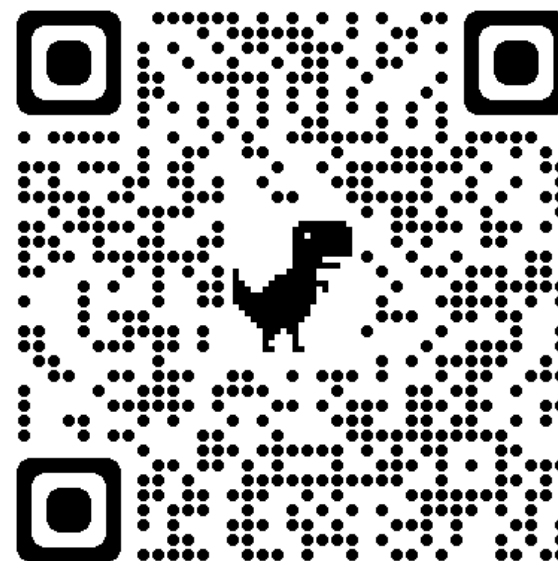


Emphasize older people's unique skills and capacities.

Appeal to the value of justice.

Avoid repeating harmful stereotypes
reframe don't rebut

Webinar & Resource Guide



<https://learning.reframingaging.org/products/addressing-ageism-in-election-media-coverage-webinar>

National Center Resources



Reframing Aging
Quick Start Guide

Reframing is the process of making choices about what to emphasize and what to leave out.
Here's a quick list of terms to avoid and alternatives to embrace.

Instead of these words and uses:	Try:
"Older men," "husband," and similarly unhelpful terms for the growing population of older people	Talking affirmatively about changing demographics: "As Americans live longer and healthier lives..."
"Disin," "agingless," "husband," and other individual demographics of aging experience	Emphasizing how to improve social contexts: "Let's find creative solutions to ensure we can all thrive as we age."
"Aging," "elderly," "aging disparities," and similar "othering" terms that shift responsibility	Being more neutral ("older people/communities") and inclusive ("we" and "us") better
"Struggle," "burden," "right," and similar words without words to describe aging experience	The Reframing Movement narrative: "Aging is a dynamic process that leads to new abilities and knowledge we can share with our communities."
Using the word "ageism" without explanation	Referring systems: "Systems to discrimination against older people due to ageism and economic inequalities."
Making generic appeals to the need to "do something" about aging	Bring concrete examples into intergenerational community activities to illustrate creative solutions

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www.reframingaging.org
@reframingaging

Learning Center

You have successfully logged in!

Changing the Conversation Toolkit

The National Center to Reframe Aging is pleased to announce, the Changing the Conversation Toolkit is now available! This new toolkit provides new and existing audiences with an introduction to the principles of reframing aging and how to apply them to popular topics including nursing home care, day to day activities, DEI, and intergenerational work. Contents of this toolkit include webinars, YouTube videos, resource guides, and tip sheets. Click the button below to access the toolkit and join in on the movement to changing the conversation on aging!

Access Toolkit

View Catalog and Your Dashboard!

To get started, find the "Catalog" icon in the navigation pane to the left or by selecting the button below. Browse our current products and events! Once you have registered for a product/event you can view it in your Dashboard, find the "Dashboard" icon to the left. Click the link and view the courses on your dashboard.

Reframing Aging
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

Partnership with LiveOn NY Trains New Cohort of Reframers

The Reframing Aging Initiative welcomes its newest partner, **LiveOn NY**, an advocacy and direct service organization that represents 100 member agencies who serve older people in the NYC area. With funding from the **Earl and Lucie B. Scaevan Foundation**, LiveOn NY has embarked on a multi-year strategy to employ reframed communications to confront ageism and improve the way policymakers, stakeholders, and the public think about aging and older people. New York City currently is home to more than 1.8 million people over the age of 60 living across the five boroughs.

Under the new partnership, the Reframing Aging initiative is training a cohort of 30

WORDS MATTER

The National Center to Reframing Aging
24K subscribers

HOME VIDEOS PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT

The Why and How of Reframing Aging

Watch this short video, **Frame of Mind: The Why and How of Reframing Aging**, to learn why our reframed understanding of aging empowers regular conversations of older people and how we can do something about it by changing the way we communicate about aging.

Videos ▶ Play all

- Frame of Mind: Starting Strong, Avoiding Traps (2:13)
- Frame of Mind: Reframing Aging from Them to Us (2:05)
- The Why and How of Reframing Aging (2:28)
- Reframing Aging A Primer for Health Care Professionals (1:05:06)
- Everyday Ageism and Health Results of a National Poll (3:40)

reframingaging.org/Resources

Learn from our partners!



Scan the QR code to reach the whole story

Reframing Advocacy to Increase Budgetary Support for Aging in Ohio

Example from an Association of Area Agencies on Aging

IS YOUR COMMUNITY part of the movement to reframe aging?

WHAT CHANGES is your community and you influence by using well-framed messages about aging?

HOW CAN THE National Center to Reframe Aging help you shape policies that work for all of us as we age?

Historically underbudgeting for aging services has created today's challenges, like unjust wages for care workers and a care shortage. Both Kowalsky, Chief Policy Officer for the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), is using the tools of the National Center to Reframe Aging to rally advocates to demand greater investment in the systems serving older Ohioans.

When both visits the Ohio State House, she wears a button with a special message, "Aging so cool, everyone's doing it." As more people understand we are all in this together - public opinion and government funding will support a system of care for all of us.

They have reshaped the conversation and are seeing results. This year, the Legislature created a budget that significantly increases funding and raises rates for aging services by over 30%. This means care worker wages will likely increase to \$18/hour within three years.

Trained by the National Center, both shared well-framed messages with the network of AAA, age-friendly communities, and other advocates. Through social media, op-eds, press conferences, and testimony, they

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AGING: SO COOL EVERYONE IS DOING IT!

Example from an advocacy organization

WHAT MESSAGES are you promoting when you talk about aging?

HOW CAN YOU ENLIST PEOPLE of all ages and backgrounds to reframe aging in your community?

WHAT TOOLS AND TIPS from the National Center to Reframe Aging will you use to change the conversation about aging?

"We are all aging, all the time, all together." That's the message Maria Sheldon and Christine Krappel 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 #AgingSoCool 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 flow 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!

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How Advocates Reframed the Aging Agenda

Example from an advocacy organization

IS YOUR COMMUNITY part of the movement to reframe aging?

ARE YOU AN ADVOCATE working to improve funding and services for older adults?

HOW CAN THE National Center to Reframe Aging help you elevate your advocacy efforts?

In 2018, LiveOnNY used the National Center to Reframe Aging's tools and research to rally advocates and increase the "solvency of senior services" by adding \$10M to the City of New York's budget. Then, in 2021, 70% of City Council seats were on the ballot. LiveOnNY rallied local foundations to fund the National Center's training for local advocates and leaders in aging. Fortified with new skills and tools, citywide advocates seized the moment and created a movement to put aging issues into conversations with candidates.

They didn't stop there. Next, advocates and policy experts produced Aging is Everyone's Business Policies for Building a New York for All Ages. The well-framed policy agenda outlined steps for newly elected leaders, businesses, nonprofits, and everyday people to make the City a great place to age.

Whether you advocate for older adults in a rural community or one of the world's largest cities, the National Center to Reframe Aging has the tools and knowledge to help you make aging everybody's business.

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One well-positioned person can change a state:

Example from a State Unit on Aging

IS YOUR STATE part of the movement to reframe aging?

WHO IN YOUR community can you influence to increase the use of well-framed messages about aging?

WHAT TOOLS AND TIPS from the National Center to Reframe Aging can help you change the conversation about aging?

In March 2020, Claire GAN was new in her role at Connecticut's Department of Aging and Disability Services and excited to share what she learned in a two-day training presented by the National Center to Reframe Aging when the pandemic changed everything. Suddenly, older adults were at high risk of COVID and under attack by governing agencies.

Claire tapped her professional network of advocates and aging services providers who used the tools and principles developed by the National Center to Reframe Aging to promote the resilience of older adults. Since 2020, she has led by example, modeling well-framed language in everyday communications, and using her role inside government to influence the framing of the State's Plan on Aging.

Like Claire, staff who work within a State Unit on Aging and have access to and influence with aging services providers, can be a vital liaison between the National Center and the field of aging within their state.

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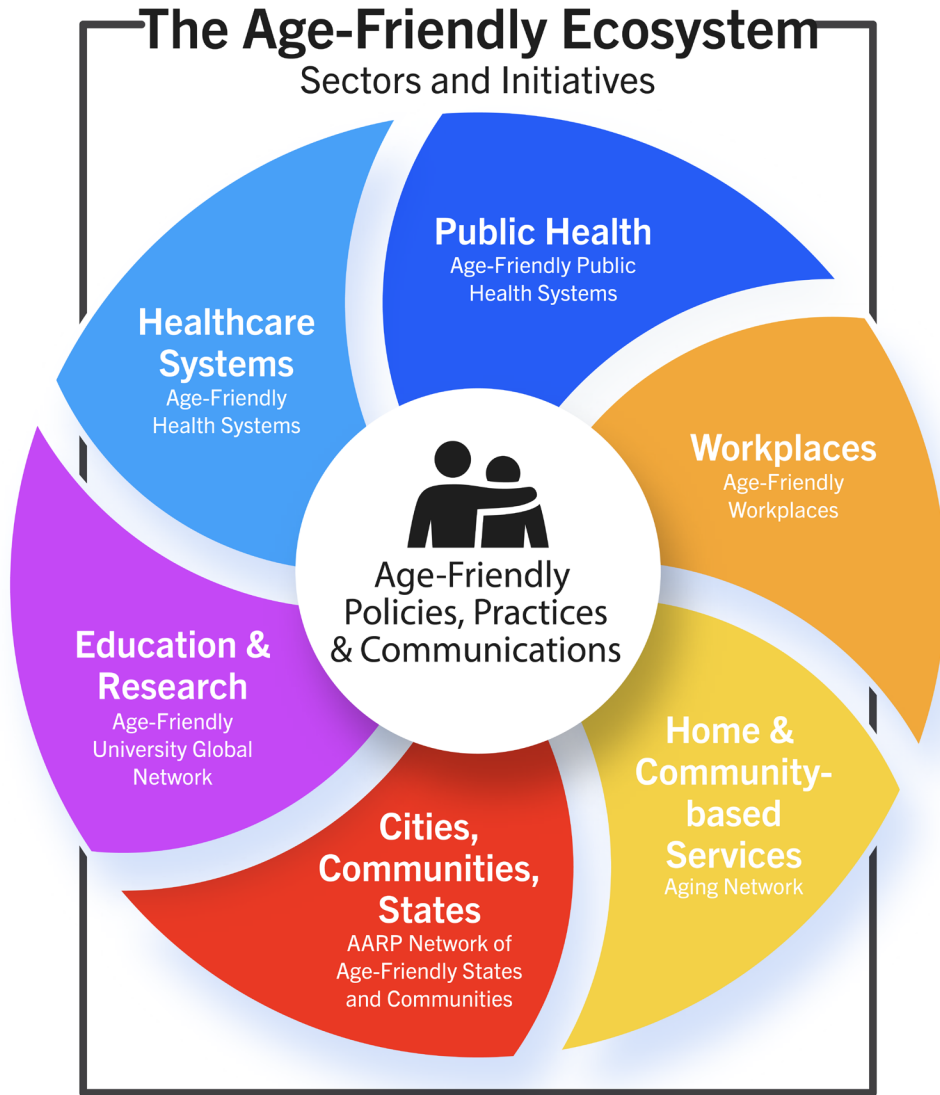


reframingaging.org/about-us/impact

Summit 2024 Archive



The archive is coming soon, use the QR code to be among the first to access it.



Let's set-up a reminder!

1. Open your calendar app
2. Go to Wednesday, August 7 at 9 a.m.
3. Create a new calendar appointment
 1. Subject: What have I done to reframe aging this month?
 2. Message: Review the resources from the National Center to Reframe Aging (link: www.reframingaging.org/Resources) and reach out to the team if I have questions! Reframingaging@geron.org
4. Make it a monthly recurring calendar invitation!



Frame On!

**Productive
perceptions of aging
are priceless**

Join in the conversation!



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