

AGESENSE

adapting to life's changes

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Thank you for your interest in the *AgeSense: Adapting to Life's Changes* educational program.

As a leader in your community, you have an important part to play in offering research-based information regarding the process of aging, including providing an accurate, unbiased presentation of the losses and gains associated with growing older. You also act as an important role model in your local community. Your willingness or reticence to address comments, suggestions, or jokes that perpetuate stereotypes about older people or the process of growing older is an important aspect of this material and will likely be noted by others.

This leader's guide, a PowerPoint presentation with a complete script, reference list, and an assessment process will help you plan, implement, and evaluate this program. A website is available with additional information (www.aging.ksu.edu). The program has been designed as an easy to implement, comprehensive package. As you move forward with this educational effort in your community, this leader's guide will provide you with additional information, helpful ideas, and resources.

Overview

Many beliefs that Americans hold about aging are false¹ and the majority are also negative.² This presents a challenge in today's society, as changing demographics are leading to an older population, with many of these citizens holding negative attitudes about growing older. Negative beliefs and attitudes can be expressed through discrimination in a variety



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of channels, including health care, nursing homes, emergency services, the workplace, and the media.³ “Ageism” is “more than images, words, actions, or attitudes. It is deeply embedded in society in many areas,” according to Robert Butler, a professor of geriatrics at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine.⁴

One way to reduce ageism is through education.⁵ People who know more about the aging process are think more positively about aging.⁶ People who have positive self-perceptions of aging take part in additional health-related behaviors⁷ and may live longer.⁸

More Information and Resources

For additional information and research about aging, the process of growing older, and attitudes and beliefs, please see the reference list provided. For a list of references for the fact sheet, as well as the PowerPoint, program assessment, MyPlan form, and other materials, visit www.aging.ksu.edu/p.aspx?tabid=203.

Audience

This program is designed for the general public. Any adult with an interest in learning more about older adults and the process of growing older may be interested in attending.

Key Ideas and Objectives

Groucho Marx once remarked that anyone can get old — all you have to do is live long enough. But growing older is more than merely marking time. Individual and societal beliefs and attitudes about growing older fall onto a continuum of negative to positive views. Research provides a balanced understanding of what it means to age and also offers a way of thinking about aging as another stage in life’s journey. Upon completion of the session, participants will:

- examine their own beliefs about aging;
- explore the dual ideas of loss and opportunity as they relate to aging; and
- discover a model for understanding the aging process.

Format

The program is designed to be delivered in 60 to 75 minutes. The program consists of five main items:

- PowerPoint presentation found on the website (or your adaptation/creation of another visual aid)

- Speaker’s script
- Participant engagement activities
- Fact sheet (MF3079)
- Program assessments

PowerPoint Presentation

The program is designed to be delivered in your communities. The PowerPoint presentation provides visual interest for the material presented, but, as a leader, you may adapt the PowerPoint presentation, create an alternative visual aid, or provide the lesson without its use.

Speaker’s Script

The information in the speaker’s script covers all the objectives and includes notations of when to use the participant engagement activities, the program assessments, and other important information.

Participant Engagement Activities (PAE)

There are four opportunities for you to directly involve your audience members with the program content.

- **Who is Old?** (written comments) In this PAE, participants are asked to anonymously write a truthful answer to this question on notecards. You will collect these and read a few of the answers.
- **What’s Your Aging IQ?** (written quiz) Several weeks before the presentation, order this booklet (you may also download copies) from the National Institute on Aging (see below for ordering information). As you will not have time to allow your audience to read and complete all 28 questions, have your audience choose a few at random to answer. Alternatively, you can decide before the program what questions you want to have them complete. You may want to tailor your choices for different audiences. Allow participants to take the booklets home to complete the rest of the questions.
- **Discussion Question.** Ask participants why the majority of people do not want to consider themselves “old.” Engage in a brief discussion of this topic. It is important to respect people’s opinions while addressing implicit stereotypes.

- **Complete the “My Plan” Form.** Pass out the “My Plan” form to participants and ask them to commit to one action that will positively influence their personal aging process.

Fact Sheet

The fact sheet mirrors information provided in the PowerPoint presentation. You may choose to give the fact sheet to participants at the beginning of the program to use as a guide as you present the content. The fact sheet may also be used as a “take-home” message for participants.

Program Assessments

It is important to understand and communicate the impact of the program both in the short- and medium-term. Please view the assessment process as an integral component of the overall program. The assessment process has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Kansas State University. The post-assessment will gauge perceived changes in knowledge from participants as a result of attending the program and is voluntary and confidential. There is no way to trace the answers back to individuals unless they voluntarily leave their contact information.

There is an option of conducting follow-up telephone interviews with participants in order to gather data regarding the medium-term outcomes of the program. A telephone interview protocol has been provided with a script and questions to ask. Please enter all of your data into the K-PICS system. This allows you to have immediate feedback and data for your reporting needs.

Supplies Needed:

- Pens
- Notecards
- PowerPoint presentation (or your adaptation)
- Technical equipment to present the PowerPoint (computer, LCD, screen, extension cord)
- Fact sheet (MF3079)
- *What’s Your Aging IQ?* booklet from the National Institute on Aging. Free. Delivery of printed materials will take 2 to 4 weeks. Order or download (28 pages) from: www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/whats-your-aging-iq
- “My Plan” form
- Post-assessment form
- Telephone interview form (used approximately 90 days after program end)

Getting Started

Before you implement this program, you will want to:

- Choose date(s).
- Choose an alternative date in case of weather-related problems or another event.
- Determine the registration process.
- Schedule a facility and room large enough to meet your needs.
- Ensure the facility has tables, because participants are asked to complete forms.
- Arrange for refreshments (if provided).
- Market the program.
- Review all the resources, including the speaker’s script.
- Print copies of the fact sheet and “My Plan” form for your participants.
- Order the booklet from the National Institute on Aging.
- Decide if you will use the PowerPoint presentation and ensure you have the equipment needed.
- Gather all needed supplies (notecards, pens, other materials).
- Decide how you will incorporate the assessment process and print copies of the form.

Summary

AgeSense: Adapting to Life’s Changes is a research-based, educational program designed for the general public. The objectives include helping people understand their own beliefs about aging and discover ways to adapt to the aging process. Thank you for your interest in providing this program in your local communities.

Information

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