

What is ageism and why is it harmful?



Ageism refers to stereotyping, discrimination or prejudice directed towards a person because of their age.

Evidence shows ageism can have a **hugely damaging impact on us as we get older** – on our health, on our job prospects and the way we live our lives, and on wider society and the economy.

Ageism is often dismissed as being harmless, but research shows that ageist ideas or beliefs can be incredibly damaging for us as individuals and for wider society. They affect how we think about and act towards other people - how we talk to older people and how we talk about them, how we treat older people in our workplaces, in our communities, and even in health settings.

Learn more at [AgeWithoutLimits.org](https://www.AgeWithoutLimits.org)



Why See and Be Seen?

Conversation starter

This is all about challenging the often narrow, negative and stereotypical way that older people and ageing is portrayed in our society - after all, you cannot be what you cannot see.

Will you join the ageism debate as part of our Action Day?

How we are represented as we grow older can have a profound impact on other people's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours towards us - this is particularly important if some or all of those representations are negative or stereotypical.

More worryingly, we often internalise those negative misconceptions about ageing that we are bombarded with everyday.

They become a self-fulfilling prophecy, affecting the way we perceive ourselves, and what we think we are capable or worthy of, limiting the kinds of activities we do, even the way we dress.



Over half of people think **older people are less visible** in society



Older people have been found to **be systematically excluded from health research**, despite many conditions being more common in older age



Just **1 in 4 TV** ads feature characters aged **50 or older**, and **1 in 20** feature characters aged **70 or older**



4 in 5 people aged over 55 say their favourite retail brand **no longer understand** them or their needs