STAND UP SPEAK OUT
27-29 JULY 2026

2026 AUSTRALIAN ELDER ABUSE CONFERENCE

Embedding age-positive attitudes across communities and workplaces

Vanessa Hill

Better Place Australia / SMEAPN

EAAA Elder Abuse Action Australia

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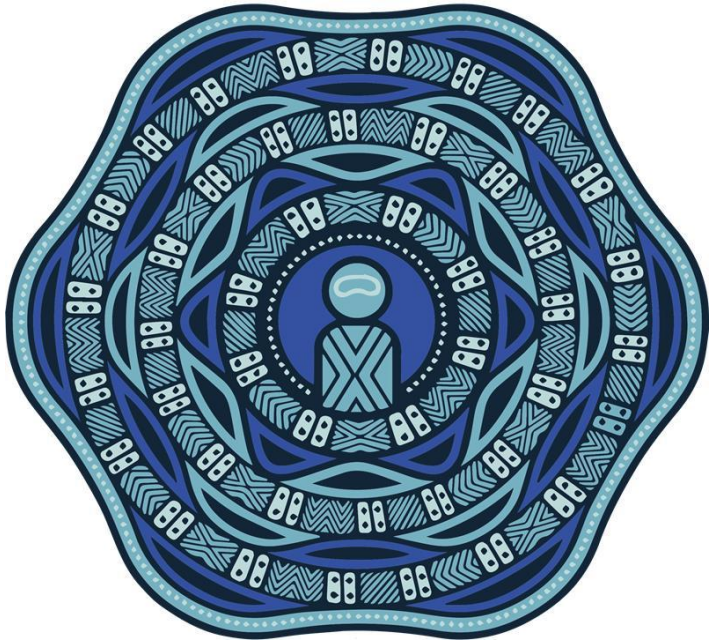
Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners



I acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work.

I pay respect to Elders past and present and celebrate their continuing connection to Country.

About SMEAPN

The Southern Melbourne Elder Abuse Prevention Network

- Focussed on the primary prevention of elder abuse
- Address the drivers of abuse - ageism, gender inequality
- Funded by the Victorian Government DFFH

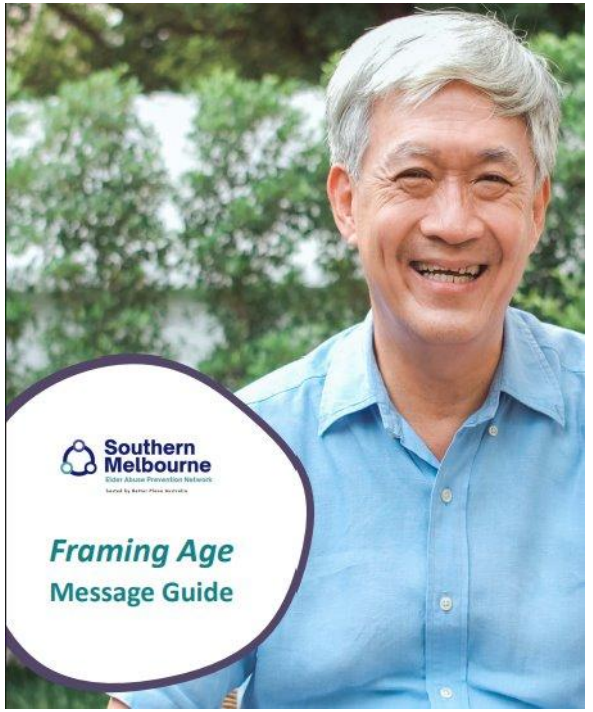
Our Partners

GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

Our Focus

The Framing Age Message Guide

- Based on national research
- Values-based messaging
- Tips on framing age
- Reducing ageist language and imagery in our communications
- Workshops
- Community of Practice



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Framing Age Online Training

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- Shows us how to talk about age, ageing in ways that reduce ageist attitudes
- Presented by Common Cause Australia
- Five self –paced modules
- 1.5 – 3 hours to complete

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Framing Age Community of Practice (CoP)

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- Peer-led initiative
- Graduates of Framing Age Workshops
- Meets quarterly for 1 hour
- Ongoing learning and practice of age-positive messaging
- Safe space to share experiences, refine messaging and co-develop resources

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CoP Membership & Impact

- 150 members across Victoria
- Collaboration of local government, health & community sectors

20 councils

200,000+ households

Focus: real-life examples

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Resources Developed

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Messaging

WEAAD Comms

Conversation Guide

Social media

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Benefits

- Collaboration and support
- Improved communication skills & message cut through
- Positive and inclusive language and imagery in communication
- Ready-made messaging examples you can apply to your role
- More positive outlook about age and ageing
- Confidence to challenge ageist language & imagery
- Ongoing learning and practice
- Access to resources

Join the CoP

1. Attend the Framing Age Online Training
2. Sign up via the link/QR code
3. Receive a MS Teams meeting invitation
4. Attend as an observer or contributor

https://eapn.org.au/community-of-practice/

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The Guide for Addressing Ageism in The Workplace

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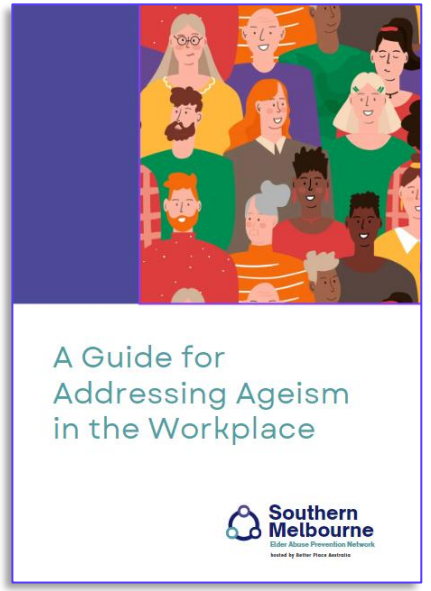
What does the Guide do?

1. Describes ageism and impacts
2. How do we respond to ageism?
3. Tips on what to say and do
4. Keeps things positive and respectful



Ageism

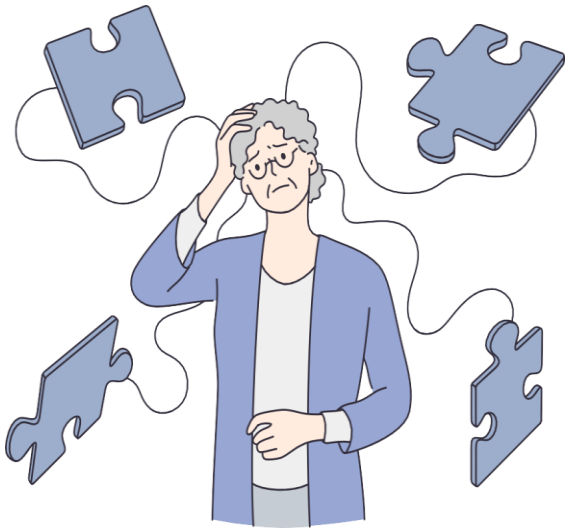
Ageism affects how we **think**, **feel** and **act** towards other and ourselves based on age and it can lead to unfair treatment.

It comes in many forms such as:

- Making jokes about being old
- Making assumptions about someone based on age
- Not employing someone because of their age

Impacts of Ageism

- Reduced career opportunities
- Lower morale and wellbeing
- Workplace exclusion
- Premature exit risk
- Financial hardship and insecurity
- Loss of talent and innovation
- Discrimination and abuse



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Responding to Ageism in the Workplace

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Being an active bystander

- Sends a message ageism is not ok
- Encourages people being disrespectful to consider their behaviour or change their ways
- Shows support for older people
- Gives staff confidence to speak up
- Makes ageism unpopular
- Creates a culture where ageing is celebrated

Approaches

- Delegate
- Check in
- Diffuse
- Call in
- Call out
- Report

Scenarios

Check in

- Provide support and understanding to the affected person

What do you need right now?

How can I support you with this situation?

What would you like me to do with this information?

Scenarios

Diffuse

- Diffuse the situation
- Redirect the topic
- Remain light-hearted and firm

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Scenarios

Calling in

- Inform someone with compassion that what they have is ageist
- Gently question their actions or language
- Ask them to explain what they mean

You're having a senior's moment!

What do you mean? Everyone forgets things.

Scenarios

Calling out

- A direct response to an ageist statement, action or behaviour
- Calling it out in the moment.

They shouldn't do that at their age!

Shouldn't we be able to choose for ourselves, no matter our age?

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Scenarios

Document and Report

- Take notes of the incident
- If someone was targeted, ask them what they want to do with your notes
- Always ask for consent

In your organisation

What would work for you?

- Share with P&C, Diversity and Communications teams
- Training for staff
- Circulate the Guide in shared areas
- Share social media posts
- Adapt messages to your organisation
- Own self-reflection, conversations

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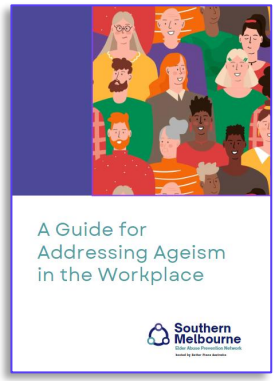
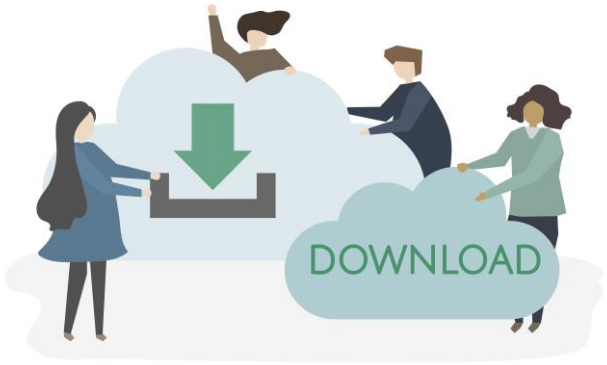
Download the Guide





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Prevention of elder abuse

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- Conversations about ageism
- Shifting stereotypes and attitudes on ageing
- Sharing practical tools & resources to apply in the workplace
- Ongoing support to embed practice in workplaces
- Workplaces are age-inclusive and diverse
- Collaboration in design of an age-positive communications library
- Expanding reach of community members and workplaces
- Communities are age-inclusive

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Contact

- Email: enquiries@eapn.org.au
- Web: eapn.org.au

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Questions

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