

# Older Americans Month

## HISTORY OF OLDER ADULTS IN AMERICA

1935

Social Security Act passed

1961

The first White House Conference on Aging

1965

The Older Americans Act was signed - established Medicare

1967

The Age Discrimination Act

1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act



## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:

- History of Older Americans Month
- Health statistics and fall prevention
- Ageism Concerns
- Combating Ageism

## STATISTICS TODAY

- Those 65+ make up 16% of the population, expected to increase to 21% by 2040
- Nearly 1 in 4 older adults are members of racial or ethnic minority populations
- During March and April 2020, the unemployment rate of older adults more than quadrupled



African Americans are 2 to 3 times more likely to have Alzheimer's disease than the non-Hispanic white population.



African Americans are more likely to be misdiagnosed or diagnosed with Alzheimer's in the later stages of the disease.

# Older Adult Health



## FALL PREVENTION

### Increased Chance for Falls

- 1 in 3 of Americans aged 65+ fall each year
- 2/3 of older adults who fall once will fall again in 6 months
- Every 15 seconds – an older adult is treated in ER for a fall
- Every 29 seconds – an older adult dies following a fall
- 60% of fatal falls occur in the home
- Only 22% of hospitalizations for falls can return home

### Resources to Help Your Loved One Prevent Falls:

- <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures>
- <https://www.ncoa.org/article/6-falls-prevention-steps-to-help-your-older-loved-ones>
- [https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/check\\_for\\_safety\\_brochure-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/check_for_safety_brochure-a.pdf)

## MENTAL HEALTH

- Over 20% of adults 60+ years old suffer from a mental disorder
  - ~7% experience Depression
  - ~3.8% experience Anxiety
- In older adults, depression may be disregarded as frailty
- Common mental health concerns = loneliness, bereavement, social isolation, etc.
- Older adults with physical health conditions (i.e., heart disease, diabetes, cancer) have higher rates of depression



### Resources to Help Your Loved One with Mental Health:

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-of-older-adults>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/depression/>
- <https://medlineplus.gov/olderadultmentalhealth.html>
- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/older-adults-and-mental-health>

# Ageism



Psychiatrist and Gerontologist, Dr. Robert N. Butler coined the term "ageism" to describe stereotyping and discrimination against older adults.

Dr. Becca Levy, Psychologist and Epidemiologist, has published over 140 articles pointing to the negative impact of age discrimination on physical and cognitive health.

Dr. Levy estimates that age discrimination, negative age stereotypes, and negative self-perceptions of aging lead to \$63 B in excess spending annually.

## COMBATING AGEISM

Ashton Applewhite - TED talk  
"Let's End Ageism"  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfjzkO6\\_DEI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfjzkO6_DEI)

UA Osher Lifelong Learning Institute - offers non-credit courses and learning opportunities for people over 50

Age-Friendly University Initiative - intergenerational exchanges and age diverse workplaces  
<https://www.geron.org/programs-services/education-center/age-friendly-university-afu-global-network>

## Combating Ageism on Tiktok



@oldgays 7.1 million followers. Posts about aging and LGBTQIA+ issues

@dolly\_broadway 2.4 million followers

@gbandme 5.7 million followers  
A grandson and grandmother document intergenerational and social issues