

UNDERSTANDING MEDIA:

Positive Ageing

Positive Ageing is “the process of maintaining a positive attitude, feeling good about yourself, keeping fit and healthy, and engaging fully in life as you age” - The Australian Psychological Society

Wellness Gallery aims to raise awareness of ageism in media and reinforce the use of appropriate, authentic and diverse imagery by organisations and individuals across South Australia, through the creation of a free-to-access stock resource gallery depicting wellness and positive ageing.

WHY? REPRESENTATION OF AGEING IN MEDIA

INACCURATE AND INAPPROPRIATE DEPICTIONS OF AGEING IN MEDIA:

- Negative (lonely, sad, helpless, age as a disability, focus on medication /pain / care support)
- Satirical (aims to make a joke out of ageing)
- Stereotypical (obviously staged: i.e. a large group drinking tea and laughing straight at the camera)
- Positive but inaccurate of Australian culture
- Ageing is not equal to or as important as youth (for example, if an image is of both a younger and older person, the young person is the focal point)

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Media should aspire to portray diversity and inclusivity within their imagery. People aged 50 and over are not all the same. Diversity encompasses age, gender, race and ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, geography and more. Older people are valuable, important members of society as well as respected equals, mentors and friends. Media should aspire to portray ageing in this way.



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IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA

Media is important to influence daily interactions and reflect societal practices. It can have a positive or negative effect on attitudes. Ageism in media has the potential to create and reinforce negative attitudes about ageing and older people.

ONLY YOUTH SELLS?

Media often emphasises beauty and youth, underrepresenting people over 50 years old. People over 50 have reported feeling like advertisements reinforce outdated stereotypes and wish they included more realistic images of people their own age.

BALANCE

‘Age-positive’ doesn’t mean showing only older people in a euphoric state or positive situation – the other extreme of skydiving or running marathons isn’t a realistic narrative of Ageing Australians either. Imagery should avoid representing diversity inauthentically by resorting to stereotype and caricature.