

STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 9, 2024

B.C.'s first Ageism Awareness Day aims to reduce misconceptions of ageing

VICTORIA – “Often referred to as the last socially-acceptable form of prejudice, ageism is discriminating against someone based on their age. Older people are often the targets of inaccurate and negative stereotypes about ageing.

“The Office of the Seniors Advocate asked the Province to proclaim October 9, 2024, as Ageism Awareness Day to amplify a growing global movement highlighting the existence and impacts of ageism. This year, awareness days are being observed in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States and elsewhere. Highlighting and challenging ageism and its impacts on B.C. seniors is an area my office will be exploring in the future.

“Ageism can impact an older person’s self-worth, independence, safety, mental and physical health, social life and even financial well-being. Most seniors live healthy, fulfilling lives, and make significant contributions both in the workplace and through unpaid work such as caregiving and volunteering. However, ageism frames growing older as a state of decline, frailty or dependency, rather than one that celebrates experience, knowledge and continued potential.

“In daily life, ageism can manifest as infantilization by denying a senior autonomy or agency over elements of their life; bias by being overlooked in favour of younger people with less experience and qualifications; exclusion by not being included in decisions, events or activities; harassment through jokes and insults about someone’s age; elder abuse by being denied care or a victim of fraud; and discrimination or internalized ageism from a perception that grey hair and wrinkled skin is undesirable.

“Unlike ageing, ageism is not inevitable. Let’s all work together to be aware of our own biases and assumptions and more mindful of the language used about ageing. Creating opportunities for positive interaction between older and younger people also helps address ageist views.

Seniors deserve to be recognized for their abilities, and not have their age in years be the measure of their value.”

Dan Levitt
BC Seniors Advocate

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The Office of the Seniors Advocate is an independent office of the provincial government with a mandate of monitoring seniors’ services and reporting on systemic issues affecting seniors. The office also provides information and referral to seniors and their caregivers by calling toll-free 1 877 952-3181, BC211, via email at info@seniorsadvocatebc.ca, Canada Post and seniorsadvocatebc.ca.



View B.C.'s Ageism Awareness Day 2024 proclamation here: [Ageism Awareness Day Proclamation 2024 \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

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