



Reframe Aging: A Generation's Work

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Wisconsin's Aging, Disability, and IL Network Forum
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Imagine the future!



10-years from now, what is the
headline you'd like to see about
services for older people and
people with disabilities?

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National Center to
**Reframe
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Key Barrier Standing in Our Way


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National Center to Reframe Aging

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Aging**

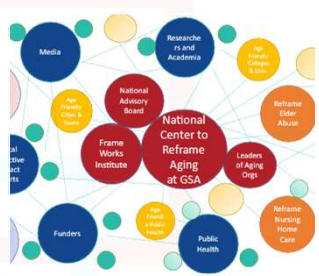


Climb aboard the caravan!
#ReframeAging

Dedicated to reshaping the conversation about aging

Core Elements of Reframing Aging Workshop

Trusted source for proven communication strategies



Cultivating a movement

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Leaders of Aging Organizations



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Research Partner

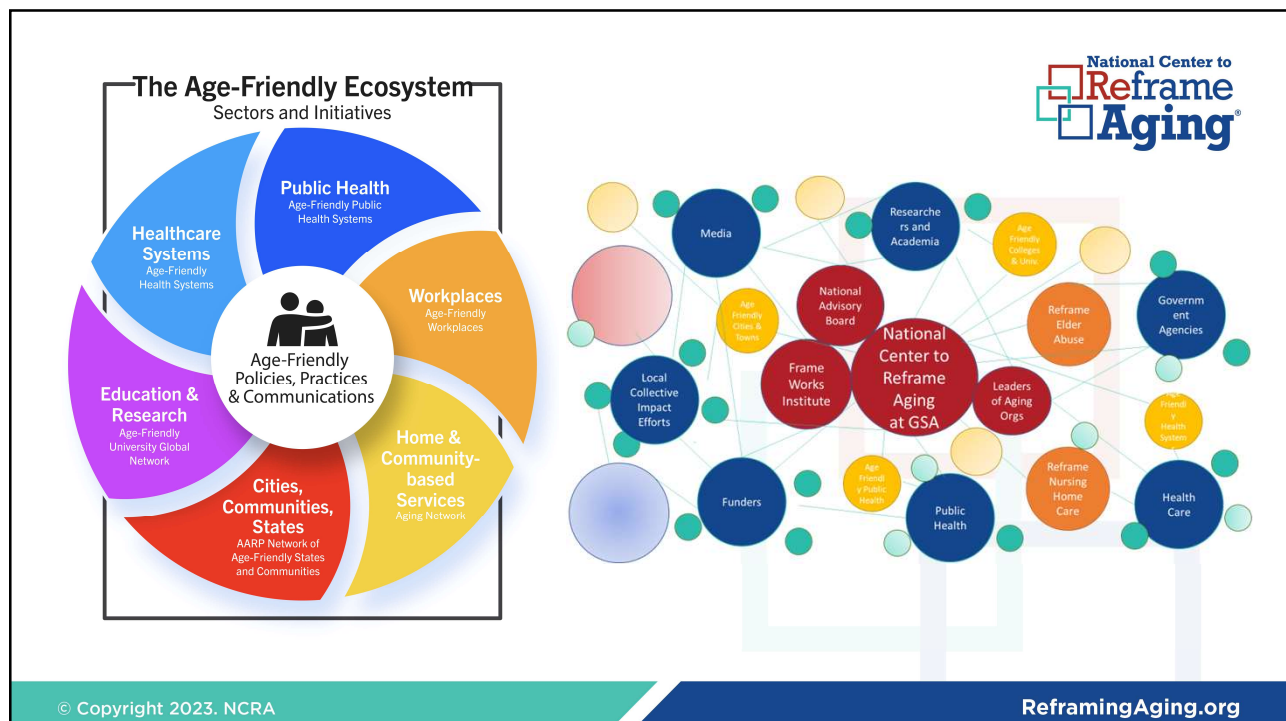


- Nonprofit think tank with the mission to advance the nonprofit sector's capacity to reframe social issues.
- Conducts original, scholarly research on the communications aspects of social and scientific issues.
- Recognized in 2015 with the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.
- Original research conducted by FrameWorks Institute Distributed for educational purposes by the National Center to Reframe Aging

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Ageism Defined



Ageism exists in several forms

- Stereotypes: *How we think*
- Prejudices: *How we feel*
- Discrimination: *How we act*

Ageism exists on multiple levels

- Interpersonal
- Compassionate
- Systemic/ Institutional
- Self-directed

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Implicit Bias Defined



Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

Simply being aware of our implicit bias reduces ageism.

Busso DS, Volmert A, Kendall-Taylor N. "Reframing aging: Effect of a short-term framing intervention on implicit measures of age bias." The Journals of Gerontology: Series B 74.4 (2019): 559-564.

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Why We Need a New Story!



Media Coverage



Academic Press



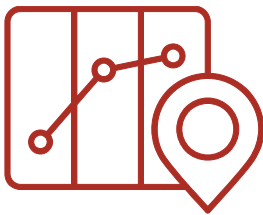
Personal Consumption

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What does it take to reframe an issue?



Map the terrain



Develop a strategy
to navigate to higher
ground



Build a caravan,
equip the travelers,
and start moving

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Ageism's Impact on Health

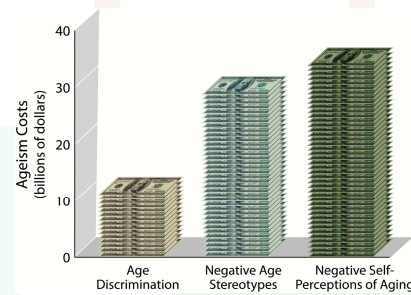
1-year cost of ageism \$63 billion

\$1 in every \$7 spent for 8 most expensive health conditions

Negative attitudes and beliefs



Figure 1. Health care costs of age discrimination, negative age stereotypes, and negative self-perceptions of aging in ...



Gerontologist, Volume 60, Issue 1, February 2020, Pages 174–181,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gny131>

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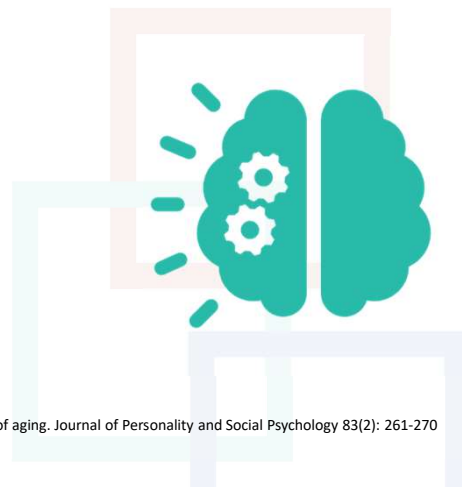
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The Power of Positive Thinking



Positive age beliefs can have a positive impact on health by:

- reducing stress
- increasing longevity ²

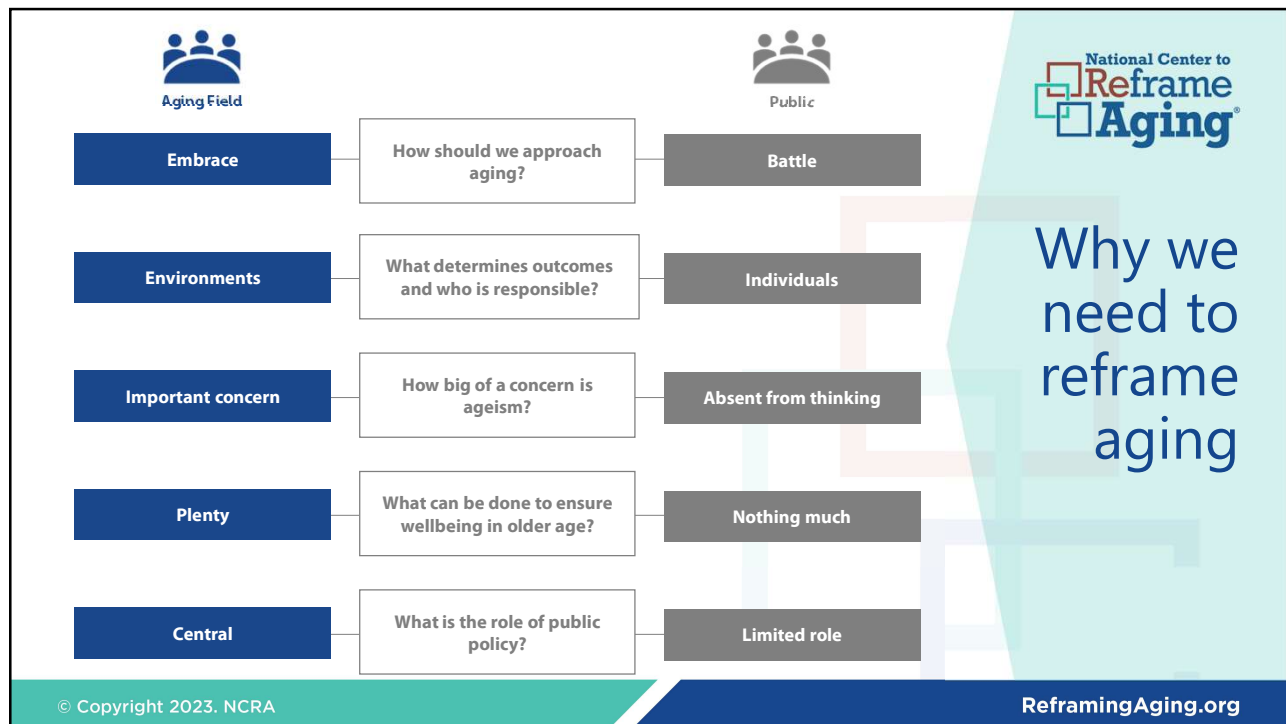


1. Levy BR, Slade MD, Kunkel SR, Stanislaw V (2002) Longevity increased by positive self-perceptions of aging. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 83(2): 261-270

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You Say... They Think

"We are all aging"

Aging Professional/Advocate

Collective Responsibility & Benefit

Public

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What is Framing & Why it Matters


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Framing is About Choices!






**What to
emphasize**



**How to
explain it**




**What to leave
unsaid**


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Shared Communications Lead to Systems Change







**Communi-
cations**



Discourse



Thinking




Policy

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Navigating Public Understanding

Traps to Avoid & Strategies to Advance

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★ Strategies to Advance

- Talk about the process of aging as building momentum
- Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age
- Prompt the can-do attitude

To spark a more accurate and complete conversation about aging, **advance** these communication strategies.

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Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Prompt the can-do attitude



The idea we're communicating:

- As we age, we gain new insights and experiences that can power up our communities

What it does:

- ✓ Inspires a different story about aging
- ✓ Reduces bias
- ✓ Steers people away from othering older people

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Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Prompt the can-do attitude



Before



After

Age Strong Shuttle Redesign

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Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Prompt the can-do attitude



The idea we're communicating:

- We all rely on web of services and supports throughout our lives.

What it does:

- ✓ Steers people away from othering older people
- ✓ Cultivates understanding that what surrounds us shapes us
- ✓ Prompts appreciation for the idea that age inclusive policy is good policy for everyone
- ✓ Cues collective responsibility and benefit

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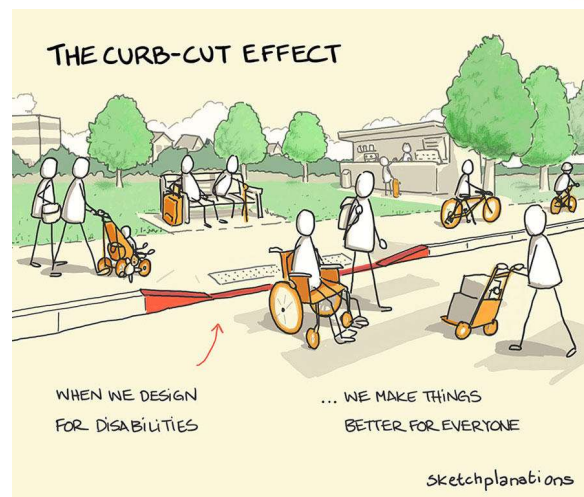


Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Prompt the can-do attitude



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Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Prompt the can-do attitude



The idea we're communicating:

- We are creative, inventive, problem-solving people. We have solved big problems before, and we can do it again!

What it does:

- ✓ Steers people away from fatalistic thinking (that nothing can be done)
- ✓ Encourages solutions-oriented thinking
- ✓ Cues collective responsibility and benefit

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Strategies to Advance

Talk about the process of aging as building momentum

Explain the supports we need to live meaningful lives as we age

Prompt the can-do attitude




City Center Signs

Age Friendly Worthington: Worthington, Ohio

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Traps to Avoid

Individualism

Us vs. Them


Vulnerability

To help your messages be understood as you intend, avoid these communication traps.

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Individualism

Individualism Trap:

- Lifestyle Choices
- Financial Planning

Examples of Trap:

- "To age well all you have to do is exercise and eat healthy"
- "You have to ensure you're saving enough money to be able to retire, poor decisions now will have consequences later"

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“Us” vs. “Them”

“Us” vs. “Them” Trap:


- Older as “other”
- Zero sum
- Digital incompetence

Examples of Trap:

- “We cannot support everyone, if we increase support for older people, we won’t be able to support the needs of others”








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Vulnerability

Vulnerability Trap:

- Paternalistic Language
- Victim / Savior Complex

Examples of Trap:

- “Many people who are older are frail, vulnerable, cannot help themselves, and depend on others to meet their most basic needs.”






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When a Frame “works,” It Shifts Thinking in Multiple Ways

-  Knowledge Increases
-  Attitudes Improve
-  Policy Support Grows

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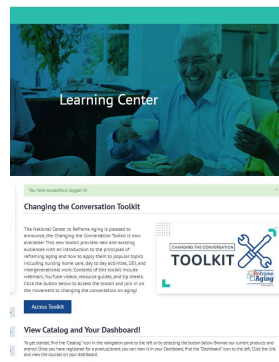
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Resources & Next Steps

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National Center Resources



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Learn from our partners!

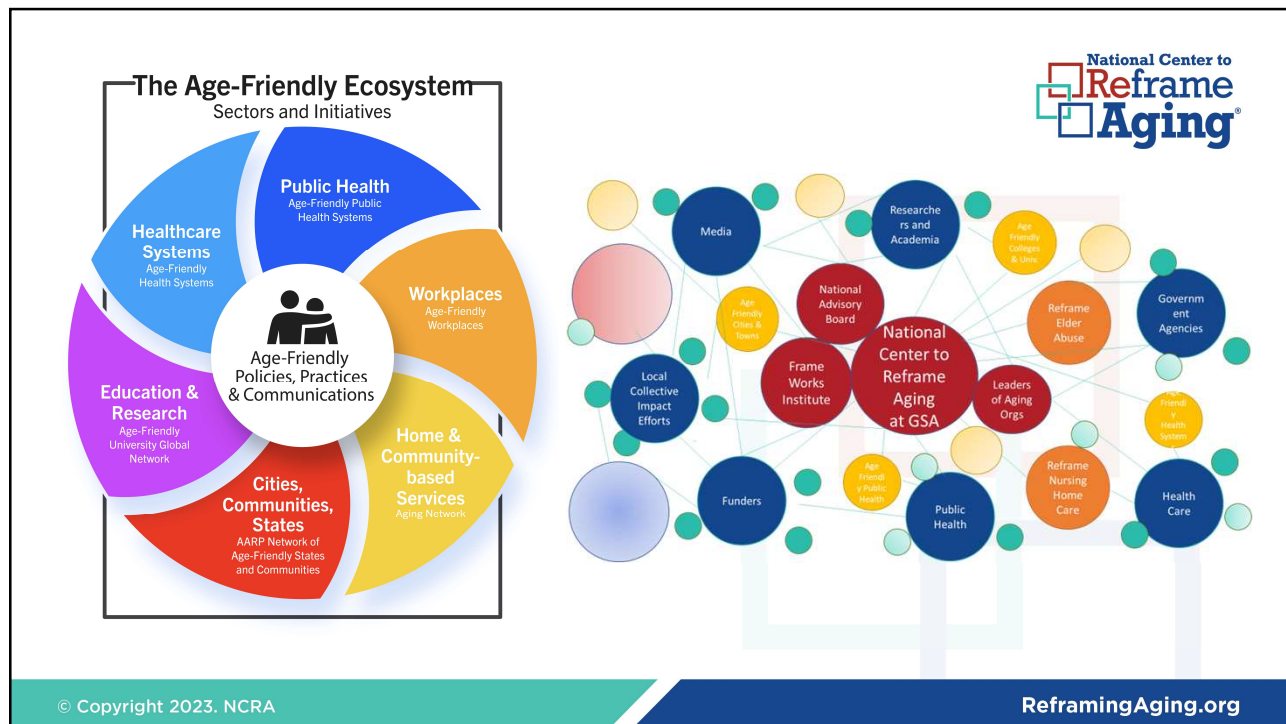


reframingaging.org/about-us/impact

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Let's set-up a reminder!



1. Open your calendar app
2. Go to a date one month from today at 9 a.m. (your local time)
3. Create a new calendar appointment
 1. Subject: What have I done to reframe aging this month?
 2. Message: Review the resources from the National Center to Reframe Aging (link: www.reframingaging.org/Resources) and reach out to the team if I have questions! Reframingaging@geron.org
4. Make it a monthly recurring calendar invitation!



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Frame On!



**Productive
perceptions of aging
are priceless**

Join in the conversation!



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Building Our Narrative

Tips to get you started in how this applies to your work

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Framing is About Choices!



**What to
emphasize**



**How to
explain it**



**What to leave
unsaid**

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Framing Vulnerability



The message

Many people who are older are frail, vulnerable, cannot help themselves, and depend on others to meet their most basic needs. This leaves them at risk for all kinds of challenges and potential harms.

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Framing Vulnerability



The message – unframed

Many people who are older are **frail, vulnerable**, cannot help **themselves**, and depend on others to meet **their** most basic needs. This leaves **them** at risk for all kinds of challenges and potential harms.

What the message does

Traps

- Individualism
- Us vs. Them

Lack of solutions thinking

- People think of solutions at an individual level – guardianship, family support, etc.

No impact

- No policy or systems change

Framing Vulnerability – Reframed



The message – reframed

When community bonds are weak, older people who are frail are more at risk of experiencing harm. We need to build solid connections and strengthen our social structure to better support older people, families, caregivers, and our entire community.

Framing Vulnerability – Reframed



The message

When community bonds are weak, older people who are frail are more at risk of experiencing harm. **We** need to build solid connections and strengthen **our social structure** to better support older people, families, caregivers, and **our entire community**.

What the message does

Strategies
to
advance

- Context matters

Effective
solutions
thinking

- People think of solutions at a systemic level – more likely to think of community programs

Broad
Impact

- Policy & systems change

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Housing Shortages



The message

“The population of seniors in the United States is expected to grow, as is the number of seniors who have a chronic disease or functional limitation. The current U.S. housing stock is ill-equipped to meet the needs of this population. By employing strategies such as improving the accessibility of the housing stock, partnering with health service providers to link health care and housing, and matching services and amenities to resident needs, local governments and housing providers can help these seniors meet their needs and age outside of an institutional setting.”

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Housing Shortages

The message

"The population of seniors in the United States is expected to grow, as is the number of seniors who have a chronic disease or functional limitation. The current U.S. housing stock is ill-equipped to meet the needs of this population.

By employing strategies such as improving the accessibility of the housing stock, partnering with health service providers to link health care and housing, and matching services and amenities to resident needs, local governments and housing providers can help **these seniors** meet **their needs** and age outside of an institutional setting."

What the message does

Traps

- Us vs. Them
- Fatalism

Solutions

- People are more likely to be passive in their support for solutions

Impact

- Little support for policy or systems change

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Housing Shortages – Reframed

The message

As our population ages, we can tap into the innovation and can-do attitude that Americans are known for to address the challenges that come with this changing demographic. The current U.S. housing stock is ill equipped to meet the needs of older people and those with chronic disease or functional limitations. Now is the time to show our resourcefulness to help people thrive and remain rooted in their communities.

By partnering with health service providers to link health care and housing, and matching services and amenities to resident needs, local governments and housing providers can address unmet needs while allowing us to remain in our communities for as long as possible.

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Framing Vulnerability – Reframed



The message

As our population ages, we can tap into the innovation and can-do attitude that Americans are known for to address the challenges that come with this changing demographic. The current U.S. housing stock is ill equipped to meet the needs of older people and those with chronic disease or functional limitations. Now is the time to show our resourcefulness to help people thrive and remain rooted in their communities.

By partnering with health service providers to link health care and housing, and matching services and amenities to resident needs, local governments and housing providers can address unmet needs while allowing us to remain in our communities for as long as possible.

What the message does

Strategies

- Prompt the can-do attitude
- Collective responsibility/benefit

Solutions

- People think of solutions at a systemic level and have a belief that something can be done

Impact

- Policy & systems change

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When a Frame “works,” It Shifts Thinking in Multiple Ways



Knowledge Increases



Attitudes Improve



Policy Support Grows

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