

Ageism



PRESENTATION TO TB VETS

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Welcome

Thanks for having me present to you this afternoon.

The 2021 Census of Population collected detailed data on members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

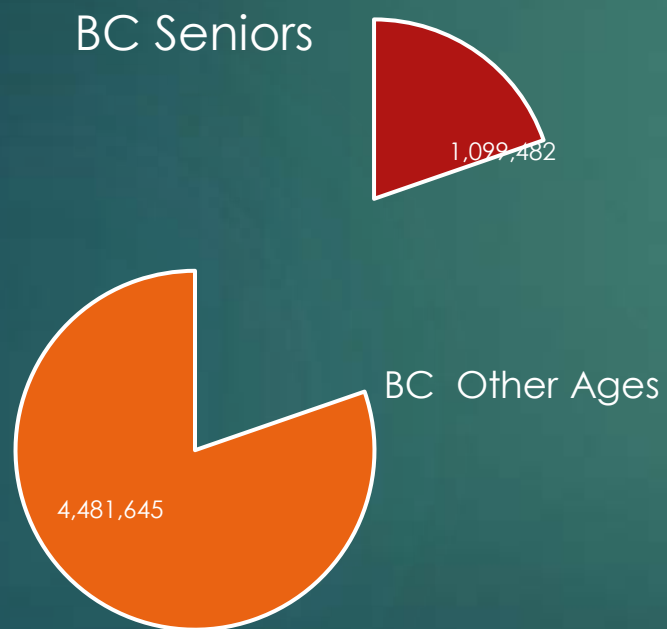
There were 97,625 Canadians serving in the CAF in the spring of 2021—as members of the Regular Force or Primary Reserve Force—and 461,240 Canadians counted as veterans.

More than 4 in 10 veterans were seniors aged 65 years and older.

Setting the context:

British Columbia Demographics

BC Population 2023



BC Population 2023	5,581,127	100%
BC Seniors (65 and over)	1,099,482	20%
BC Other Ages	4,481,645	80%

Data, released by Statistics Canada in 2022 found that people 85 years of age and older are the fastest-growing age group in the country

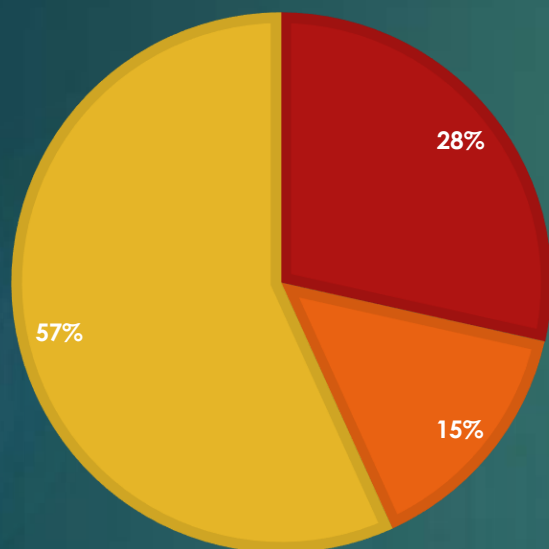
- ▶ **B.C. is also home to the seven municipalities with the oldest populations in Canada:**
 - ▶ **Qualicum Beach** (more than half of its population is 65 years and older)
 - **Osoyoos**
 - **Sidney**
 - **Parksville**
 - **Southern Gulf Islands**
 - **Nanaimo E**
 - **Nanaimo**

- ▶ **Global news April 27 2022**

West Vancouver Demographics

WEST VANCOUVER

■ Over 65 ■ 55-64 ■ Under 54



West Vancouver Population 2021

Over 65	12,575	28.5%
55-64	6,500	14.7%
All others	25,045	56.8%
Total Population	44,120	100%

What is Ageism?

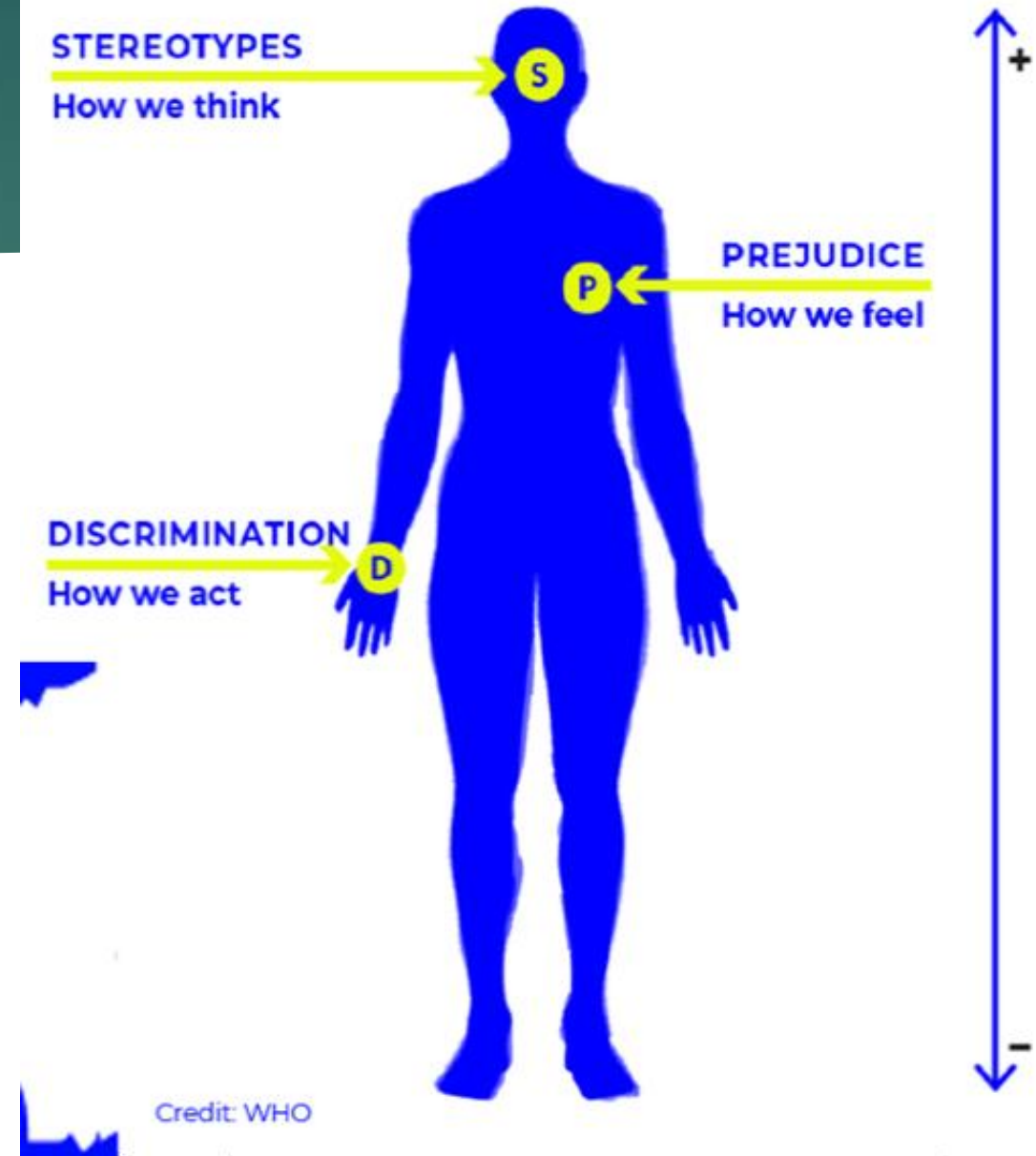
Stereotypes (how we think)

Prejudice (how we feel)

Discrimination (how we act)

towards others or oneself based on age

The World Health Organization



Ageism can do real harm to seniors

- ▶ Ageism is rife in our society.
- ▶ One in two people are ageist when it comes to older people.
- ▶ Unfortunately, this includes seniors who have internalized stereotypes about older people.

World Health Organization's website

Why is there Ageism?

Myths about aging

- ▶ Stereotypes and false assumptions about older people underlie ageism.

Older people are often assumed to be frail or dependent and a burden to society

Only a small percentage of older people live in care facilities.

- Seniors should prepare to live a long life, most of it independently at home.

Seniors living in their own home

- 94 per cent over 65
- 74 per cent over 85

Older people are often thought to be declining in cognitive ability (continued)

As we age, minds do change -

- ▶ Some might experience memory loss.
- ▶ But seniors adapt to the aging process.

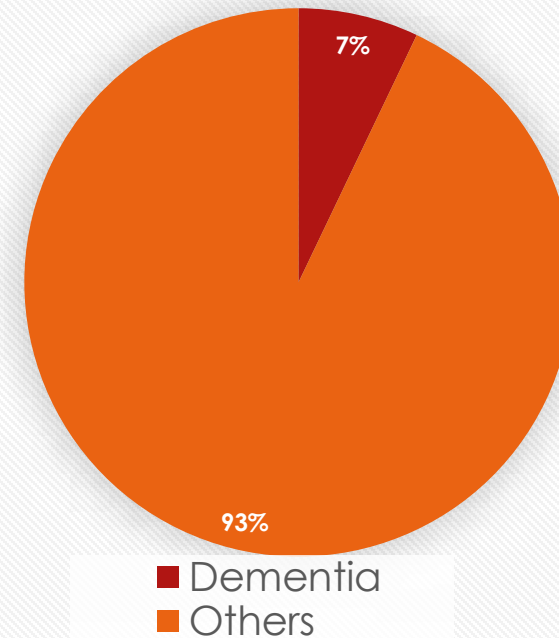
Mental capabilities can be sharpened by staying mentally active.

Dementia is not an inevitable part of aging

Only 7.1 per cent of the total seniors' population of Canada has dementia.

Alzheimer's Canada

Canada Seniors Population



Older people are often thought to be declining in physical ability, making them a burden on society.

As we age, our bodies change -

- ▶ Most of us lose physical abilities.
- ▶ But Seniors adapt to the aging process.

The loss of our physical abilities can be compensated through assistive devices such as hearing aids, eyeglasses, and walkers, and through modifications of the older person's environment.



Photo by Kampus Production: www.pexels.com



Myth:

Seniors are not
productive in society.

Many seniors continue in paid work.

Seniors contribute the most volunteer hours in Canada as a group.

They also volunteer as unpaid caregivers to friends and family saving the economy many thousands of health care dollars.

Seniors also pay taxes and are consumers of goods and services.

Seniors and Volunteering



In an address on the International Day of the Older Person in 2019, Isobel Mackenzie, BC Seniors Advocate said:

“There are literally hundreds of thousands of seniors throughout this province volunteering to deliver meals; provide rides to medical appointments; raise money for hospital foundations; lead chair yoga sessions and visit those who cannot get to the seniors' centre. Without this selfless donation of time, government would be spending close to a billion more dollars each year on services.”

► Myth:

Older people are often thought to be resistant to change.



Change is inevitable for all of us.

- Seniors have successfully lived through amazing changes – giant strides in technology, men on the moon, wars, recessions and upswings in the economy and pandemics.
- In terms of the recent pandemic Adults aged 60 and up have fared better emotionally compared to younger and middle-aged adults. *UBC research published recently in the Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences.*

► Myth:

Older people are often thought to be unable to learn new skills such as using computers or tablets.



Over the last few years of the pandemic, many older people learned how to use technology to stay connected to community. For example, they went to Zoom fitness classes and care giving support groups. Both of which are still popular today.

LSPS and the library have been running tech connect training for seniors and sessions are always fully booked.

Other technologies such as smart phones, wearable devices like watches which monitor our exercise programs and tablets are increasingly being used by seniors.

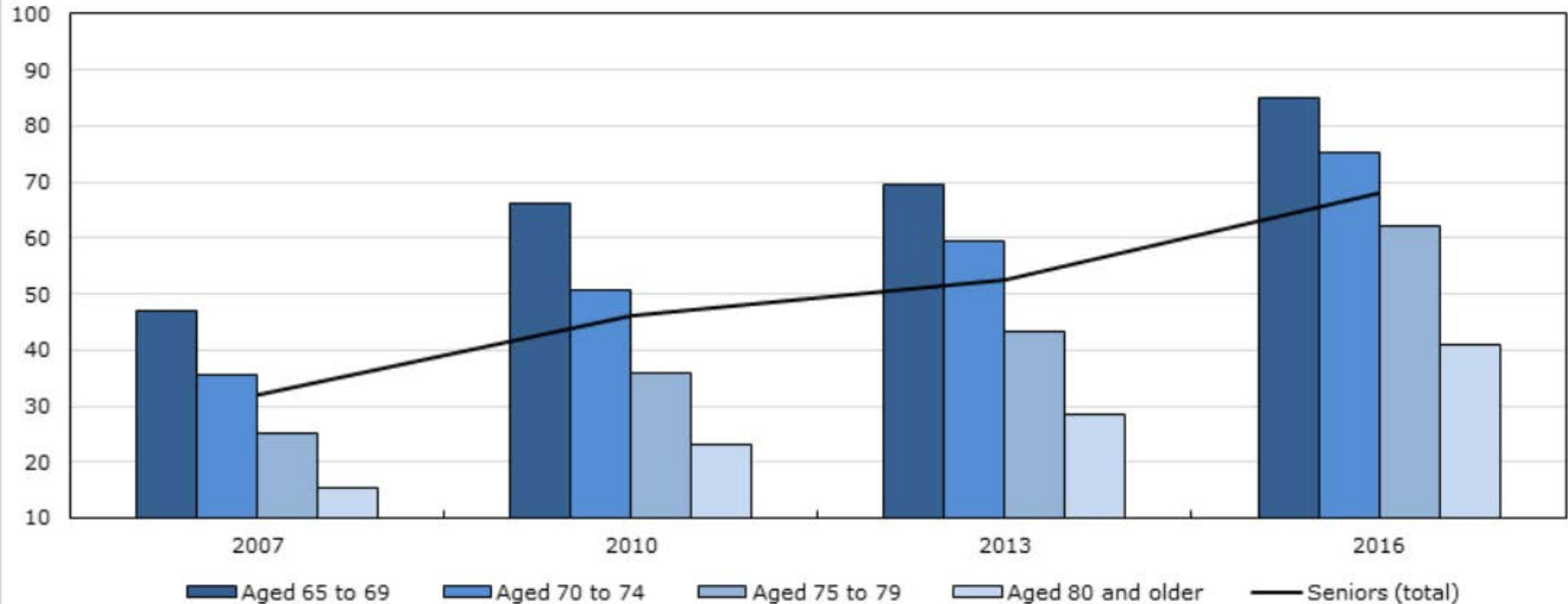
Internet use by Seniors is growing

Nearly 9 out of 10 BC Seniors used the internet in 2022

Chart 1

Internet use by seniors (aged 65 and older) across selected data points, 2007 to 2016

percent



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2007, 2010, 2013 and 2016.

Myth:

Older people are all the same.



Seniors are not a homogeneous group.

There are as many types and varieties in the seniors' population as there are in younger age groups.

"Canadian seniors have multiple identities and experience different life circumstances that make broad generalizations problematic."

Canadian government website

"The only thing all seniors have in common is that they are all older than the rest of the population."

Seniors Advocate Isabelle Mackenzie

Sometimes the historical contributions of seniors have been overlooked.



People sometimes forget that seniors contributed to building this country and community.

Seniors contributed to the economic and social growth of their communities through their paid work, taxes, and their contributions to culture and Canadian values.

They created systems like the national health care and pension plans and organizations such as universities, schools, museums and libraries which help all Canadians live improved lives.

Seniors contribute to the fabric of our community in as many ways as younger generations do.

Ageism is harmful and costly

Global report on
ageism
28/02/2024

- ▶ Ageism has far-reaching impacts on all aspects of people's health - their physical health, their mental health and their social well-being.
- ▶ Ageism intersects and **exacerbates other forms of disadvantage** including those related to sex, race and disability
- ▶ Ageism takes a **heavy economic toll** on individuals and society

World Health Organization

Effects of Ageism

Compelling research shows that ageism has detrimental effects on the health and well-being of older adults.

Negative age stereotypes, for example, have been found to be associated with a greater likelihood of future hospitalization, poorer hearing and memory, and early biomarkers for Alzheimer's.

Older people can also be infantilized and are seen to have decreased ability to make good judgements. Sometimes people treat seniors like children and often people act like they know what's best for a senior. Whether it is doing an errand or making a financial decision, never assume you know what seniors want.

Social stigmatization or stereotyping of older adults can reduce an older persons access to services and opportunities. Communities and individuals must provide the supports seniors need, while at the same time not stereotyping them.

Dispelling Myths and Stereotypes

- ▶ Whether it's about ourselves, our friends, or our family members, we need to reject misconceptions about older people.
- ▶ There are changes that come with the aging process, but our discussions about aging need to be evidenced-based and not rely on stereotypes and misinformation.
- ▶ Age is a merely a number, ability is the key for being productive in our society.

The WHO says, “Public health professionals, and society as a whole, need to address these and other ageist attitudes, which can lead to discrimination, affect the way policies are developed and the opportunities older people have to experience healthy aging.”



Thanks

QUESTIONS?

This report can be viewed on our website:

lionsviewseniorsplanning.com

