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What Is Ageism?

- Ageism is a type of discrimination that involves prejudice against people based on their age. Similar to racism and sexism, ageism involves holding negative stereotypes about people of different ages.

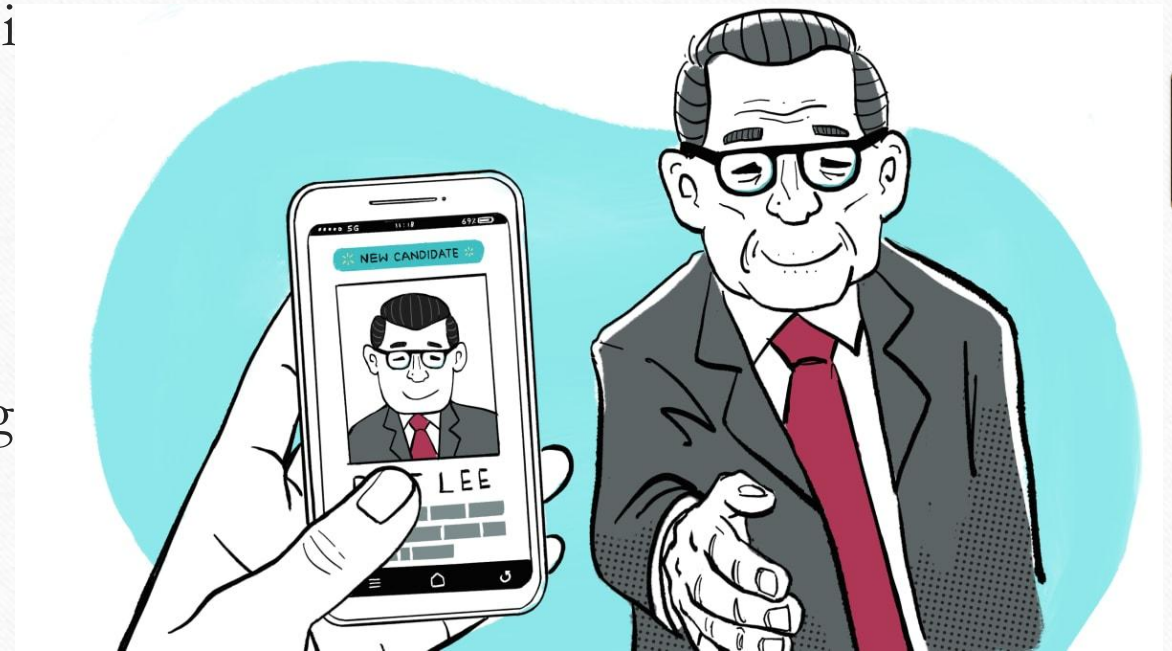


Who does ageism affect?

- Ageism affects everyone. Children as young as 4 years old become aware of their culture's age stereotypes. From that age onwards they internalize and use these stereotypes to guide their feelings and behavior towards people of different ages. They also draw on culture's age stereotypes to perceive and understand themselves, which can result in self-directed ageism at any age.

How Common Is Ageism?

- Researchers have also found that ageism is surprisingly commonplace. Prevalence estimates suggest that one out of every two people hold moderately or highly ageist attitudes. Ageist attitudes were found to be most common among young men of lower educational status.



Impact of Ageism

- Today, the term is often applied to any type of age-based discrimination, whether it involves prejudice against children, teenagers, adults, or senior citizens.



How to Combat Ageism

- Ageism is a serious issue that should be treated the same as sex, race, and disability-based discrimination. As the population of older adults continues to increase, finding ways to minimize ageism will become increasingly important.



How to Combat Ageism

Research suggests that some different interventions can be effective for combatting ageism. These include:

- **Education:** These interventions are designed to provide intentional instruction that helps people better understand the aging process, ageism, and its effects.
- **Intergenerational contact:** Increased contact with people of different ages can be helpful for reducing age discrimination and prejudice. Interventions that combine the two approaches appear to be the most effective, particularly when it comes to reducing negative attitudes towards aging.

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