



SEEFA Policy Panel on Later Life and Ageing

Ageism in the Media

- There was concern about the emphasis in the media upon older people being vulnerable, not coping or being a drain on the economy
- Old age is often portrayed as something to fear
- Terminology can be negative e.g. 'old granny/granddad' being equated with being out dated
- When older people are viewed negatively by the media there can be unintended consequences e.g. older people can feel worthless or that they are a problem; fear of crime can cause unnecessary isolation; younger people can show lack of respect or not know how to communicate
- When older people do not appear in the media it makes them seem less important, less mainstream, less visible, of no consequence
- Where older people do appear in the media it can seem this is just 'box ticking'
- Older women are especially absent from the media
- Marketing theory seems to link stereotypical youthful images with increased sales. This seems to apply even when targeting sales at older people
- We would like to see more portrayals of older people as they really are on a day to day basis
- We would like to see older people being valued for their experience, wisdom and skills, contributing to their communities and supporting each other, their families and younger people
- We would like to see ageist language and stereotypes in the media being challenged