

## Sample Communications Website

Your website is the first, and in some ways, easiest, place to begin to reframe how the public thinks about elder abuse. Because organizations' websites are often the first place non-experts go to learn more about an issue, changing the ways you talk about elder abuse and related issues on this highly visible communications platform is a great way to begin shifting public thinking on these topics.

This sample homepage, for the fictitious American Institute on Aging and Elder Abuse, illustrates how reframing research can be used in organizational communications. Look at the framing strategies on display here for ideas on how you can give your own website a framing make-over.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [www.aiaea.org](http://www.aiaea.org). The website has a blue header with the AIAEA logo and navigation links for ABOUT AIAEA, STAFF, NEWS, and CONTACT. The main content area features a large image of an elderly man smiling, with a dark overlay containing the text "AIAEA Annual Report" and three buttons: "Read Report", "Infographic", and "Future Goals". Below this, the "MISSION STATEMENT" and "VISION STATEMENT" are displayed. A purple callout box on the right side of the page contains two points:

- Appealing to the tested value *Justice* opens up space to discuss ageism and its effects on all people.
- Choose inclusive language that avoids reinforcing the dominant *Us vs. Them* model that the public uses to think about older people and instead helps people to think about collective action and community-wide benefits.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The American Institute on Aging and Elder Abuse advances a culture rooted in justice, equity, and impact, where older people may continue to participate, contribute, and thrive.

**VISION STATEMENT**

We envision a world where people at every age apply their collective energy to create and nurture safe and vibrant communities for all.

**AIAEA** ABOUT AIAEA | STAFF | NEWS | CONTACT

**IT'S ON US**

We all know the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child.” In the same vein, creating a society where all people thrive, no matter their age, requires collective effort. The strongest communities are those in which everyone has the chance to contribute and nobody lives in isolation. To change the conversation on aging and improve the national response to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, we must commit to building stronger communities through innovative research, policy-based and citizen-engaged solutions, and investment in one of our greatest community resources—older adults.

**WHO WE ARE**

The American Institute on Aging and Elder Abuse is a national think tank and resource center dedicated to **engaging and empowering older adults so that they may be an advocate for themselves and their communities.** Established by a small network of scholars, advocates, and activists in 2002, the AIAEA was founded on the principle that, when properly supported, aging is a dynamic experience.

**OUR COMMITMENT**

At the American Institute on Aging and Elder Abuse, we are committed to ensuring Americans are safe, secure, and able to flourish at every stage of life. Through collaborative research, advocacy support, and civic engagement, AIAEA and its stakeholders are building a social movement that centers on older adults. As people age, increased social isolation can create the conditions that lead to elder neglect or abuse. **But with the right social structures in place, people can remain connected to the community and to society as a whole, reducing the likelihood of elder abuse. Working together, we can create a sturdy social structure—through evidence-based policies, initiatives, and civic engagement—that can support all of us as we grow older.**

This heading reinforces the need for collective solutions, steering readers away from the default assumption that elder abuse is a problem for individual families to address. “Us” invokes collective responsibility. Look for opportunities to boost people’s understanding that the responsibility of addressing elder abuse rests with all citizens.

Steer clear of cues that frame older adults as dependents in need of protection, which can prime the public’s paternalistic attitudes towards older people. Instead, look for opportunities to prime the public’s more recessive “Elders as Agents” model and remind people that older adults’ participation in their communities is important for preventing elder abuse.

Use the *Social Structure* metaphor to direct the public’s thinking towards the necessary social supports and policy initiatives that can prevent and address elder abuse.

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