

# Positive Evaluation Methodology: Unpacking the Positive Ageing Initiative

Anthea Rutter

Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne



# Presentation Content

- Views of Ageing
- Differing Needs of the Older Population
- Education Provision for the over 60s
- Two Positive Ageing Evaluation Projects
- Reflections on What has been Learnt
- Conclusion

# Views of Ageing

- Demographics
- Are older people a “Drain” or a “Bonus”
- Education for the Older Population
- The lack of Homogeneity
- The Rise and Rise of U<sub>3</sub>A

# **A Positive Experience – A Snapshot of the Victorian Government’s Positive Ageing Initiative Implemented 2005-2009**

- Description of the Initiative
- The Role of the Centre for Program Evaluation
- Involvement of Older People in the Research Process
- Their Role in the Research
- The Benefits to the Research Assistants
- Benefits to the Centre

# Education for the Over 80s in the Mornington Peninsula Shire: A Literature Synthesis and Responses from Older Residents

## Project Description

- Literature Review
- Eight Telephone Focus Groups Reflecting a Range of Living Arrangements

# Reflections on What has been Learnt from these Two Evaluation Projects

- Older Adults are quite Capable of Learning and Acquiring New Skills
- The Ability to be Creative can Undergo a Late-life Resurgence
- There are Brain Changes and Growth that Come with Ageing
- Education is one of the Strongest Predictors of Sustained Cognitive Functioning, Intelligence and Adjustment in Older Age

# Use of Older Adults in Research Projects

- Benefits to the Research Project on Older Adults
- Benefits to the Research Assistants
- Benefits to the Community/Families

# Learning Styles for the Older Person

- Pace of Learning
- Venue.
- Learning in Small Groups
- Short Sessions
- Back up Notes
- Importance of Computers
- Importance of Transport



# Examples of Projects



# More Presentations





# Glenroy Production



# Differing Models of Educational Provision for Older Age Groups

- Programs Attached to Universities
- Special Senior Centres/Colleges for Older Adults, Supported by Government
- Schools for Seniors in Australia
- Peer Teaching
- Learning through the use of Technologies
- U<sub>3</sub>A

# The Role of Libraries/Government

## ● Libraries

- Utilise all Library spaces
- Provide Lists of new Books for Older Adults
- Provide Social/Meeting Areas
- Bring the Less Mobile into Libraries by Use of Volunteers
- Provide Computer Classes
- Invite Regular Speakers
- Advertise Events Well
- Extend Mobile Library Services

## ● Government

- Carry out a Needs Assessment
- Ensure Facilities and Programs are Available Equitably
- Make full use of Existing Facilities for Older Adults
- Employ a Person to Promote, Liaise and Organise Education
- Create a pool of Volunteers
- Look at Transport Options

# Conclusion

- Assumptions behind “Old”
- Ageing Presented in Negative Terms
- Role of Government in Lobbying
- Role of Advocate Bodies
- Role of U3A
- Education Policy