

EDUCATION

INTELLECTUAL GROWTH AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING



AGING TEXAS WELL MEANS THAT TEXANS PREPARE FOR AGING IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE AND THAT STATE AND LOCAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITATES AGING WELL THROUGHOUT THE LIFESPAN.

ISSUES

- Education levels of older Texans continue to be lower than those of younger age groups. Only 16 percent of older Texans have a Bachelor's degree or higher.
- Poor hearing and vision (more common in older adults) can negatively influence the way some people process information.

61.7 percent of Texans age 65 plus graduated high school versus 76.7 percent of Texans age 18 - 64.

- The education level of older Texans will increase in the coming decades as well-educated Baby Boomers reach older age. Older adults who completed high school increased 32 percent from 1970 to 2000.
- Research shows that people can learn and retain new information throughout their lifespans.

POLICIES, PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- **Institutions for Higher Education** may offer courses to older adults free or at a reduced rate (Education Codes 54.210 (b & c) and Code 54.067). Implementation of these programs is left to the discretion of each institution.
- **Elderhostel** combines travel and adventure packages with liberal arts study programs in friendly, supportive academic environments.
- **Institutes for Learning in Retirement** are planned and operated by people 55 and older to provide an array of academic programs, cultural offerings, and community service initiatives.
- **Local Senior Centers** provide a wide range of services, including educational opportunities ranging from foreign languages to using personal computers.
- **Adult Education** provides basic and secondary education through various public and private organizations that receive funds from the Adult Education and Family Literacy Program.
- **Internet** usage is increasing faster among older adults than any other group, providing them numerous tools to encourage life-long learning.

GET INVOLVED!

- Take advantage of life-long learning opportunities described above.
- Encourage education institutions to modify teaching techniques to accommodate older learners. Strategies include allowing more time, using more concrete examples, and promoting self-pacing.
- Support of older learners by including a multidisciplinary curriculum, stressing commonalities between older adults and other learners, and emphasizing easy access to buildings of learning.

Increase awareness of: free or reduced-rate courses at public colleges/universities; community education programs; services available through public libraries; distance learning; and the Internet.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EDUCATION

Contact your local **area agency on aging** at: **800.252.9240** for Aging Texas Well resources and services in your community. Or, visit TDoA at **www.tdoa.state.tx.us** for this and other Aging Texas Well publications.