

## We're getting older!

by Brian Bethell, IAMAW EAP representative, Vancouver

*Statistics Canada confirms what we've known for some-time – the Canadian workforce is aging.*

The last-published census showed that in 2006, there was just one person entering the job market for each person leaving it, down from 1.4 joining the workforce at the time of the previous census in 2001, and 2.3 in the 1970's.

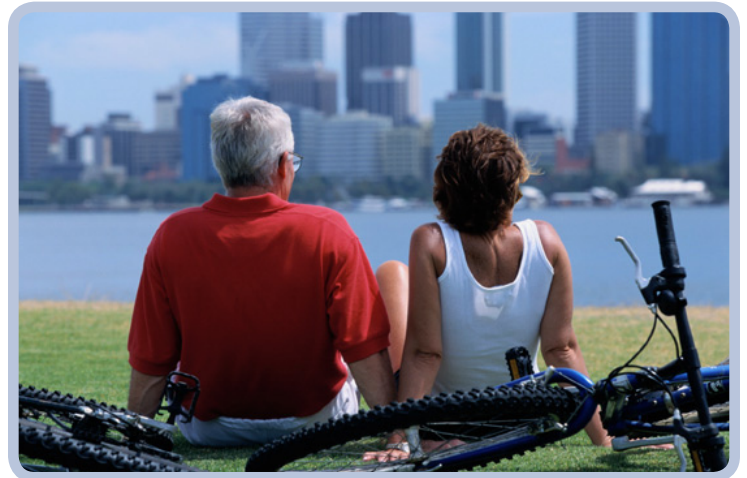
The median age of Canadians has risen steadily since 1966 to what was 39.5 years in 2006, up from 37.6 in 2001, the third largest census increase in the past 50 years.

That means more and more employees at organizations across Canada are dealing with issues associated with growing older.

Growing older is an experience we all share and is a source of concern to some of us. More often than not, it is the physical changes we start noticing that creates much of the stress attached to this common life experience.

Here are just some of the suggestions provided by The Canadian Mental Health Association to help individuals cope with the physical changes associated with aging.

- Accept reality. Get the things that will help you, such as eyeglasses.



- Maintain a positive attitude and a sense of humour. Keep doing what you've been doing – but learn to pace yourself if you have to.
- Changing your eating habits is solid advice for any age group! Adopt a balanced diet with fewer fatty foods.
- Drink less alcohol. Your body will have more difficulty coping with it as you grow older.
- See a doctor regularly of course. That way, any changes or symptoms can be dealt with immediately.

In addition, those employees approaching retirement may be dealing with a different set of issues associated with leaving a longtime job.

Keep in mind that retirement can be one of the best times of your life. Making a list of your skills and abilities (and perhaps

even starting a small business), renewing contacts with family members and old friends, recharging your interest in the hobbies and activities you enjoy, and traveling more can all make for a happy and fulfilled life in retirement.

If either you or a loved one is concerned about getting older, there are books at the local library or bookstore that can help guide you, as well as professional counselors who specialize in problems associated with aging.

Please contact any of your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) coordinators who can help guide you to the resources you need.

### Need help?

Your EAP coordinators are here to assist you with any issues that may be impacting you or the well-being of those close to you. Give us a call.



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