



#ElderWisdom TOOLKIT

Join the CELEBRATION

We are honouring ten years of #ElderWisdom, a program dedicated to challenging the stigma and ageism that older adults often face in our society.

Share
online



2025



#ElderWisdom | elderwisdom.ca



Celebrating a decade of connections

For 10 years, the #ElderWisdom Green Bench has travelled across Ontario, standing as a powerful symbol in the movement to combat ageism.

It invites people of all ages to take a seat, slow down, and engage in meaningful conversations with seniors.

What began in 2016 as a simple bench and a shared idea has grown into a national campaign sparking intergenerational connections in parks, libraries, city halls, schools, and online.

History

2016

The beginning

The Green Bench visited 13 Ontario communities, the first conversations took place with residents like Joan at Kitchener City Hall. Each Schlegel Village received a Green Bench built by residents and team members.

2017

Classroom connections

80 residents visited 16 local schools in one day, sharing stories with over 500 youth. One student called it 'the best history lesson they'd ever had.'

2018–19

Public engagement and viral reach

From Trinity Bellwoods Park to Pride festivals and the KW Oktoberfest Parade, the campaign reached millions on social media with the help of CBC News.

2020–21

Digital expansion and podcast launch

In response to the pandemic, the ElderWisdom: Stories from the Green Bench podcast was launched, hosted by Erin Davis and Lloyd Hetherington. Barry Hickling became an intern with WeTech Alliance, and the Green Bench received the Pioneer Network's Community Commitment Award.

2022

Return to community spaces

In 2022, Green Bench conversations returned to public spaces across Ontario, including events in Toronto, Hamilton, London, Mississauga, and Kitchener—resulting in over 100 hours of intergenerational dialogue.

2023

Passions in focus

Photographer Christine Kufske captured portraits of 28 residents for the Pursuit of Passions x ElderWisdom exhibit. [View Images](#)

2024

Libraries and lasting bonds

Residents visited 13 libraries across Ontario. In Tecumseh, a conversation between 83-year-old Cecile and 13-year-old Matthew sparked a heartwarming friendship featured by CBC.

**As we celebrate our 10th year,
the message is clear:**

*"Our elders have wisdom to share,
and our communities are richer
when we take the time to listen."*

Let's keep the conversation going.



Resident travel stories

Going home and dreaming big

As part of the 10th Anniversary, selected residents from Schlegel Villages are sharing their stories in a unique way – returning to their hometowns or visiting lifelong dream destinations this summer.

Each destination will feature conversations, storytelling, media opportunities, and a Green Bench gift to the host community.

The Green Bench will travel to:

- St. John's, Newfoundland
- London, England
- Ottawa, Ontario
- Elmira, Ontario
- A local Indigenous-led program in Ontario

Community conversations

Green Bench June 2025

This Seniors Month, the Green Bench is on the move – appearing in communities across Ontario. You're invited to join local seniors from Schlegel Villages, take a seat, and share in a conversation that celebrates the stories and wisdom they have to offer. The setup is simple: a green bench, a senior, and a warm invitation to sit and connect.

Tuesday, June 3	Mississauga
Wednesday, June 4	Whitby
Saturday, June 7	Kitchener
Tuesday, June 10	Hamilton
Tuesday, June 10	London
Tuesday, June 10	Mississauga
Tuesday, June 17	Brampton
Thursday, June 19	St. Jacobs
Thursday, June 19	Barrie
Thursday, June 19	Hamilton
Tuesday, June 24	Windsor
Tuesday, June 24	Guelph
Wednesday, June 25	Toronto
Wednesday, June 25	Tecumseh
Wednesday, June 25	Burlington

How to participate

Visit the Green Bench

Join us in one of the participating cities and take a seat beside a senior.

Host conversations with seniors

Invite the conversation to your school, community centre, or workplace.

Start a conversation

Whether with a neighbour, a family member, or a stranger – take a moment to listen.

Share the wisdom

Post a quote, story, or photo using the hashtag #ElderWisdom.



Event details and updates elderwisdom.ca



#ElderWisdom | elderwisdom.ca

Community resources

Download resources

Canva templates

- Fillable poster
- Social media graphics

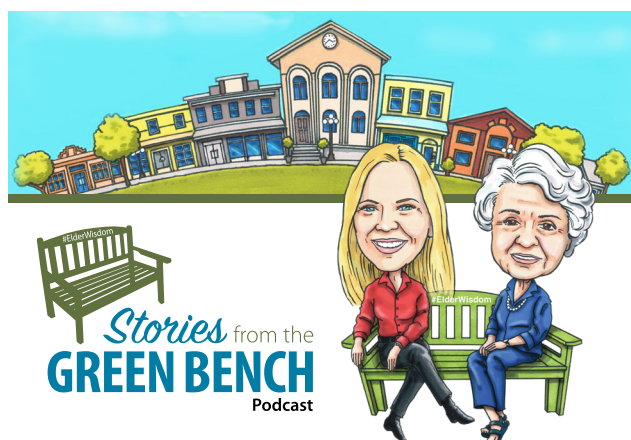


Promotional images

Past stories

Printable posters

Conversation starters



Listen and learn

The #ElderWisdom Podcast now features over 80 episodes of rich storytelling and wisdom from seniors across Ontario and beyond.

SUBSCRIBE



Why It Matters

Ageism remains one of the most pervasive and harmful forms of discrimination – and it affects us all. By listening to the voices of older adults and creating space for shared connection, we move toward a more inclusive, respectful, and age-friendly society.

Contact

For more information, media requests, or to get involved:

Ted Hudson – Director of Digital Marketing
ted.hudson@schlegelvillages.com



#ElderWisdom | elderwisdom.ca