

# Family in Later Years

# Main Task:

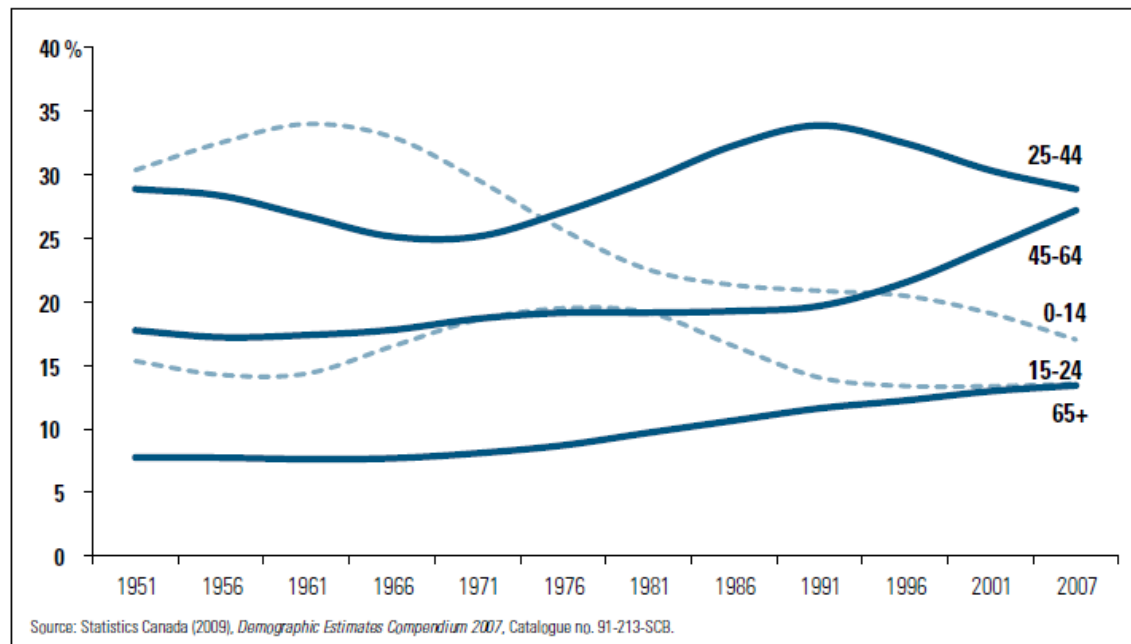
## Accepting the shifting of generational roles

### Subtasks

- ✓ Maintaining own and couple functioning and interests in the face of physiological decline, exploration of new familial & social role options
- ✓ Support for a more central role for middle generation
- ✓ Making room for the wisdom of the older generation, supporting them without over functioning for them
- ✓ Dealing with loss of spouse, siblings and other peers, and preparation for own death / Life review and integration

- Canada has an aging population, the proportion of elderly to other age groups in the population is growing
- During the 1960s seniors (over 65) made up 8% of the population, now it is closer to 13% and it will reach 20% over the next two decades

Canadian population - Percentage distribution by age group (1951-2007)



- Women live longer than men and are more likely to be widowed and subsequently more likely to be living in poverty than men
  - 5 :4 ratio women and men over the age of 65 in Canada
  - At every other age grouping the ratio is closer to 1 :1
- There is an impetus (push) toward helping the elderly stay in their homes and to have children support their elderly family members- however there are limitations to the care that families can expect to provide

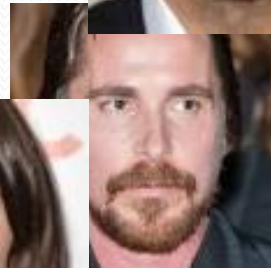
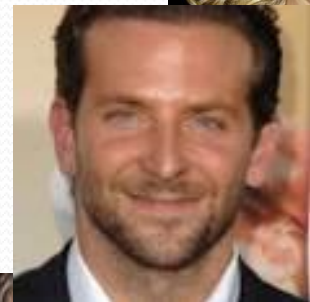


# 1. Why are we increasingly concerned about families in middle and older ages?

- We don't have a lot of research from past or present about midlife, midlife families or aging and the elderly
- Midlife families and the elderly are dynamic
- We want to have a better understanding of stressors, rewards, and experiences of today's mid lifers and elderly
- We are interested because the largest demographic group is now in midlife and aging into the early stages of being elderly

## 2. Why is middle aging a changing social construct? How do you think it might change in the next decade or two?

- The average life expectancy is increasing which places the mid point or mid life to a different position
- Today in Canada, midlife is 40 for men & 42 for women
- We don't look our age en masse ~ there are lots of variations...
- We are more likely to spend **more time** taking care of our **parents** than our children
- We are more likely to live a long time with our adult children 66% women and 60% men aged 35 to 54 still have kids at home



# There is a wide range of lifestyles today for the middle aged in Canada,

Some are...

- Becoming grandparents
- Becoming first time parents
- Starting new relationships
- Continuing long term relationships
- Ending current relationships
- Reentering the work force after raising children
- Scaling back on work
- Looking after both children and aging parents



### 3. How is aging different for men than women in families? Do you think this is changing? How?

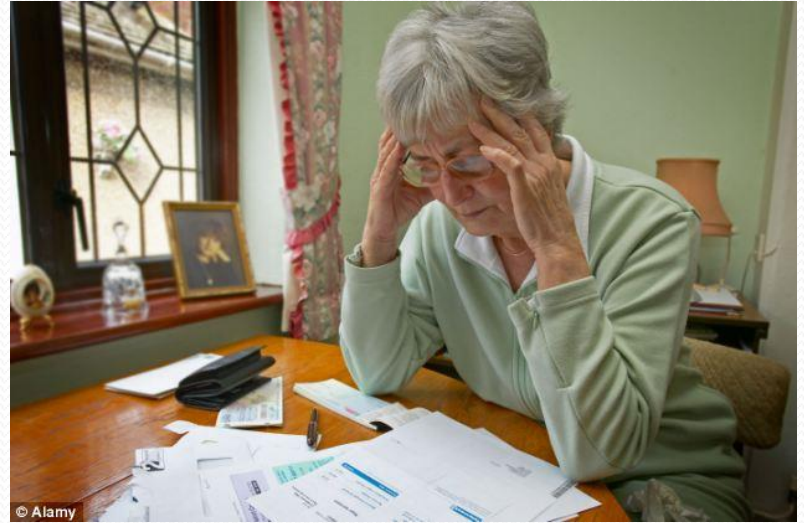
- Women live longer than men
- Women are more likely to live alone as seniors than men at age 65
  - 35% women live alone compared to 16% of men
  - 61% of men will be married and only 35% of women





- Women are more likely to live in poverty due to

- less financial security and lower incomes
- lower pensions
- no access to x partners pensions and savings
- economic uncertainty because of care giver role



- Women are more likely to be care givers and these responsibilities affect job security, retirement, well being, and they are less likely to get help, care giver burnout
- Men are more likely to have savings and better job security