

Senior Living Poised to Attract More Diverse Residents

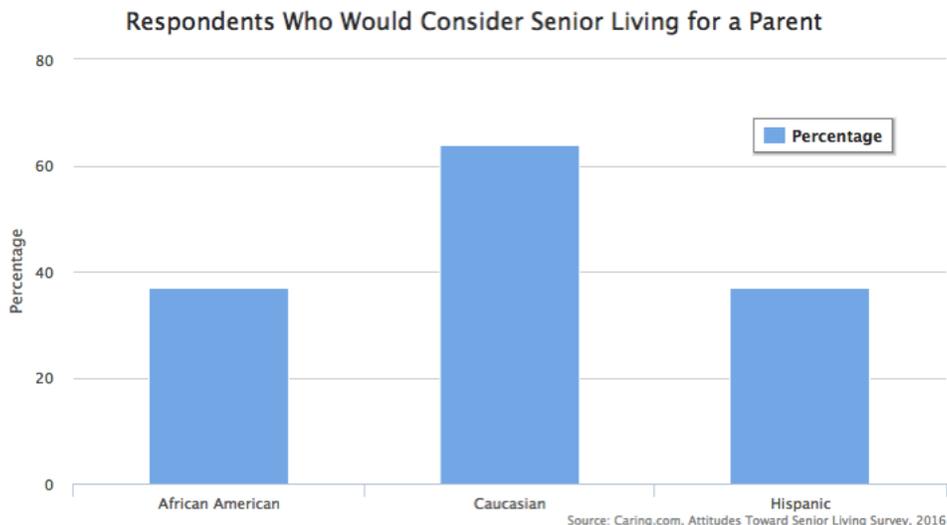
March 21, 2016 by [Kourtney Liepelt](#) SHN

Race, age and income all play a significant role in who is looking at senior housing, but recent survey findings suggest a possible inflection point, as minorities express more interest in senior living for themselves than for their parents.

Caucasian Americans are significantly more likely to consider a senior living community for their aging parents than African Americans and Hispanics, according to a new report from third-party referral agent Caring.com. Still, the findings point toward a shift in attitude moving forward, as more Hispanics and African Americans indicated the potential of senior living for themselves.

The study consists of responses from 1,0002 adults who answered how they felt about placing themselves or loved ones in assisted or independent living when they got older. It was conducted by Princeton Survey Research and Associates International in February.

Just 37% of African Americans and Hispanics surveyed said they would think about putting a parent in a senior living community, as compared to 64% of caucasian Americans. However, 49% of Hispanics and 46% of African Americans would consider living on such a community themselves one day, according to the survey's findings.



The report mirrors findings from other outlets, including the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, which reported in 2010 that 91% of assisted living residents were Caucasian. This highlighted a significant demographic divide and lack of diversity in senior living communities.

Economics and age have their part in senior living perception, as well. Overall, Americans' interest in senior living communities increases with both income and education, according to the survey.

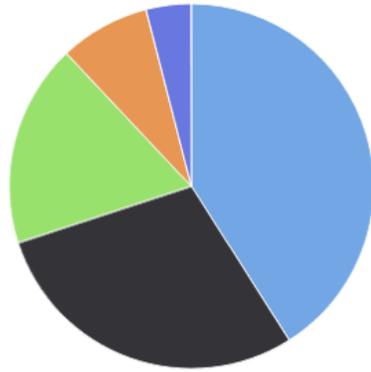
Meanwhile, 64% of participants between the ages of 50 and 64 said they would consider a senior living community for themselves one day, while just 53% of Americans age 65 and older indicated the same. This disparity likely stems from an increasing fear of change that goes hand-in-hand with getting older, said Tim Blattel, CEO of Twin Oaks Senior Living in Missouri.

“When we’re young, we don’t see change as that significant,” he [told Caring.com](#). “So when a 30-year-old considers the possibility of one day moving to a senior living community, he basically sees it as just a change of address. However, when you get older, it’s more than [that]. It’s a change in lifestyle, and that can be intimidating.”

Respondents' reasoning for not considering senior living varied, with 41% saying they'd prefer to live on their own, 29% hoping to live with family and 18% noting a bad impression of senior living overall. Yet only 8% cite senior living's affordability as why they won't consider it.

“While there is an increase in interest in senior housing as income rises, very few said price was the reason they wouldn't be interested,” Katie Roper, Caring.com's vice president of sales, tells Senior Housing News. “It might be because they don't know how much it will cost, but it's encouraging that they're not immediately ruling it out because of affordability.”

Main Reason for not Considering Senior Living



■ Prefer to live on their own ■ Prefer to live with family ■ Bad impression of senior living
■ Too expensive ■ Don't know enough about senior living

Source: Caring.com, Attitudes Toward Senior Living Survey, 2016

Written by [Kourtney Liepelt](#)