

# What is a Men's Shed?

A Men's Shed is a group of men who get together in their community to develop new skills, discover new interests, and make new friends. But it's so much more than that. For many men, aging and retirement can lead to a loss of identity, loneliness and a lack of meaning and purpose; and that's where Men's Sheds come in. Symbolic of that backyard workshop where men share stories and tinker with woodworking, mechanics, or electronics, a Men's Shed is grounded in the idea that men communicate more effectively when they're "shoulder to shoulder" with other men. Men's Sheds offer a place to go, something useful to do, and someone to talk with while they do it.

As health concerns related to social isolation and depression are often unrecognized, and men can be reluctant to seek help, Men's Sheds have a vital role to play in fostering emotional well-being and transformative, fulfilling relationships for men in their senior years. Shed members cross age, culture, and socioeconomic status, and no two Sheds are quite alike. Some Sheddens gather in a workshop to build and fix things. Others focus on hiking or gardening or cooking. Most team up with local organizations to do special projects that support their community. But what all Sheds have in common is a welcoming environment where men create shared experiences, celebrate accomplishments, and build community.

Over the past 30 years, the Men's Sheds movement has expanded from its humble origins in Australia in the 1990s to over 3000 Sheds in 17 countries. This growth and accompanying research reflect how Sheds are an effective remedy to isolation in many countries, cultures, and contexts.

Since the launch of the first Shed in Canada in 2011, there are now more than 170 autonomous Sheds across the country, offering low-barrier, peer-led support for social connection, health, and well-being, and MSC plans to reach 1,000 Sheds by 2032. In partnership with leading gerontologists, academic institutions, and health agencies, we are committed to engaging in research on the impacts of Men's Sheds on men's health and well-being and on the value of Men's Sheds in communities throughout the country.