

# newsworthy trends

## The Maturing Home Buyer

(NAPSA)—Americans lead longer and healthier lives than ever before. In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau reports people age 60 and older now account for 16 percent of the population, or about one in every six Americans.

This growing group of older Americans has a number of specific needs and has become a strong consumer force—one that contributes to virtually every aspect of the economy, ranging from healthcare to real estate.

The 2000 *Census of Population and Housing* reports almost 10 million older Americans own their own homes. Analysts expect many of them to purchase new residences in the near future. The trend is called downsizing. It refers to the process by which many older people choose their new homes.

Real estate organizations such as Century 21 Real Estate Corporation—which among national full service real estate firms, ranks highest in overall satisfaction for first time home buyers and highest in overall satisfaction with Internet services provided to home sellers—and its System members now specialize in helping older home buyers who want to downsize.\*

The CENTURY 21® **Mature Moves™** program trains real estate agents to work with older Americans, helping them find new homes that meet their unique needs and wants.

“Because many older home buyers have been out of the real estate market for decades, it’s important to listen closely to them and explain everything, to help reduce the anxiety many of them feel about purchasing a house,” says CENTURY 21 agent Sherri Goss.



**Older home buyers have wants and needs different from many younger people in the market.**

Goss says older buyers may focus on the safety of a house—including an attached garage so they can walk directly from the car to the house. Other safety features of interest are well-lit stairs, wider doorways and a ground level entrance.

The CENTURY 21 **Mature Moves** program recommends the following tips for older Americans who plan to downsize:

- **Neighborhood**—Look for areas with well-lit roads and sidewalks, a neighborhood watch program and convenient shopping and medical resources.
- **House Exterior**—Single level homes with gardens and attractive landscaping are generally favorites of mature buyers.
- **Bathroom**—Look for easy-grip faucets and a walk-in shower or tub.
- **Kitchen**—Homes with easy to reach cabinets, rounded countertop corners and matte surfaces can be best for seniors.

In addition, older Americans may benefit from having low-level carpeting or hardwood floors.

To locate a nearby CENTURY 21 office, visit [www.Century21.com](http://www.Century21.com).

\*J.D. Power and Associates 2001 Home Buyer/Seller Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup>. Study based on responses from 3,252 home buyers and sellers. Study conducted for Cendant Corporation by J.D. Power and Associates.