

### INTRODUCTION

Young and old thrive when resources are used to bring the generations together rather than separate them. The power of connecting the generations is realized every day at intergenerational shared sites throughout the country. Intergenerational shared sites are defined as programs in which children, youth and older adults participate in ongoing services and/or programming concurrently at the same site, and where participants interact during regularly scheduled planned intergenerational activities, as well as through informal encounters.<sup>1</sup> They allow for multiplying the use of resources by sharing those readily available. In addition to satisfying the needs of children, youth and older adults, appropriate design and facilitation breaks down barriers that have the potential to inhibit interaction between younger and older people.

### BENEFITS OF INTERGENERATIONAL SHARED SITES

- Enhances quality of life for all participants
- Improves attitudes about different age groups
- Provides needed services to the community
- Increases cost savings and creates opportunities to share resources
- Attracts additional funding sources and acts as a positive public relations/marketing tool

*“Whether we’re a preschooler or a young teen, a graduating college senior or a retired person, we human beings all want to know that we’re acceptable, that our being alive somehow makes a difference in the lives of others.”*

- Mister Rogers

- Enhances employee benefits for programs with on-site childcare

### WHY SHARED SITES?

Young and old people walk the same streets together, but routinely find themselves on opposite sides. Primarily in the last 50 years, changes in Western cultures have led to an increased generational disconnect.<sup>2</sup> Technological innovation, a continually changing economy, increased work hours, and the weakened role of a family’s

elders all further an already age-stratified society.<sup>3</sup> Children often spend their days in school and/or childcare centers, while many elders live and socialize in age-isolated facilities. America’s cultural landscape is molding a relatively new sort of segregation; now, not only by race and class, but by age as well.<sup>4</sup>

Intergenerational shared sites serve and provide care to children, youth and older adults, increase the potential for resource sharing, but also act as a mechanism to address some of the social implications of an increasingly age-segregated society.

### INTERGENERATIONAL SHARED SITE COMPONENTS

Intergenerational shared sites vary in structure, but are generally composed of two program components; one that serves older adults and another that serves children or youth. In addition, many facilities make use of designated “shared spaces” that concurrently accommodate both generations, and create additional opportunities for spontaneous intergenerational interaction.<sup>5</sup> *The chart below lists common program components.*<sup>6</sup>

#### Older Adult Components

- Adult Day Services Center
- Assisted Living/Residential Care
- Continuing Care Retirement Community
- Nursing Home
- Senior Center
- Senior Housing Facility
- Community Recreation Program
- Geriatric Care Unit
- Alzheimer’s Care Unit

#### Child/Youth Components

- Childcare Center
- Before/After School Program
- Head Start Program
- Early Childhood Program
- School (K–12, College/University, Vocational/Technical)
- Youth Recreation Program
- Camps
- Pediatric Care Unit



### PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Intergenerational shared sites have been established in communities throughout the country. Most intergenerational shared sites serve participants that are under the age of 12 and those over the age of 50. There are also programs that serve middle school, high school and even college-age youth and young adults. The facilities are designed for age appropriate activities with specific goals. The following programs vary in facility structure and composition.

#### CHILDREN'S FAMILY CENTER AND MESSIAH VILLAGE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - MECHANICSBURG, PA

- Childcare and educational facility for children six weeks through six years of age that is located on the campus of a continuing care retirement community.
- The program builds on-going, intimate, mutually beneficial relationships between the young and old.
- The children and teachers participate in between 60 to 100 activities a month with residents and a group of the residents volunteer as "Grandbears;" they participate in regularly scheduled activities with the children in the classroom, go on field trips, and help with swimming and crafts.
- For additional information, please contact Christine Noll at (717) 697-5126, [cnoll@messiahvillage.org](mailto:cnoll@messiahvillage.org) or visit [www.messiahvillage.com](http://www.messiahvillage.com)

#### EASTER SEALS MIAMI-DADE - MIAMI, FL

- Adult Day Care clients interact with children from the Child Development Center and students from the Demonstration

School and Culinary Arts Program. The program primarily serves Miami's Spanish-speaking community.

- The agency wide team meets regularly to develop a comprehensive monthly intergenerational calendar and programming curriculum.
- In addition to local efforts, the program benefits from tools and resources provided by the national office.
- For additional information, contact Angela Aracena at (305) 325-0470, or visit <http://miami.easterseals.com>; for national information contact Jed Johnson at (202) 347-3066, [jjohnson@easterseals.com](mailto:jjohnson@easterseals.com) or visit [www.easterseals.com](http://www.easterseals.com)

#### FELLOWS - OAHU, HI

- Hawaii Intergenerational Network (HIN) sponsored program trains volunteer older adults to tutor, mentor, raise funds, work in the classroom, and provide after-school care.
- A senior center (shared space) is required on all campuses and encourages additional informal and spontaneous intergenerational exchange.
- The program model is being developed in twenty-two schools throughout Hawaii.
- For additional information, please contact Mae Mendelson at (808) 220-8686, [director@hingeneration.com](mailto:director@hingeneration.com) or visit [www.hingeneration.org](http://www.hingeneration.org)

#### GENERATIONS OF HOPE - RANTOUL, IL

- Hope Meadows, a small-town residential neighborhood, accommodates foster/adopted children, adoptive parents, and surrogate grandparents that live together in family homes and apartments and develop supportive relationships.
- The Intergenerational Center (IGC) houses a children's library, a computer room, a space for tutoring, a kitchen, and a large multi-purpose space.
- The Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois is home to the Generations of Hope Research and Policy Program, which has helped produce a range of projects and materials of interest to practitioners, policy-makers, and researchers.
- For additional information, please contact Carolyn Casteel, Program Coordinator at (217) 893-4673, [contact@generationsofhope.org](mailto:contact@generationsofhope.org) or visit [www.generationsofhope.org](http://www.generationsofhope.org)

#### GRANDMA'S HOUSE - ORLANDO, FL

- The community orientated intergenerational housing facility cares for seniors in need of long term care and children with

rehabilitative and chronic needs. The facility houses 24 adult and 36 pediatric residents.

- The home follows the Eden philosophy of creating an environment filled with plants, animals, along with children to combat loneliness and isolation in long term care.
- For additional information, contact Julie Cole at (407) 843-3230, ext. 113 or Rebecca Perrine at (407) 383-8121 or visit [www.westminsterretirement.com/grandmas-house](http://www.westminsterretirement.com/grandmas-house)

### **Mt. Kisco Intergenerational Community - Mt. Kisco, NY**

- A collaboration of two, private, not for profit agencies, Family Services of Westchester and Mt. Kisco Day Care Center, are located in a specially constructed building with a home-like design on the interior and exterior.
- The Intergenerational Program Coordinator supervises and trains Child & Adult Care staff; inter-generational activities occur daily, and monthly special events involve parents and caregivers.
- Edible Education Program teaches “farm to table” choices that foster nutrition using intergenerational gardening and cooking lessons.
- For additional information, contact Dawn Meyerski, Director, MKDCC, at (914) 241-0770, [dmeyerski@mkdcc.org](mailto:dmeyerski@mkdcc.org) or visit [www.mkdcc.org](http://www.mkdcc.org) or contact Lois Pellegrino, Director, My Second Home (FSW) at (914) 241-0770, [mysecondhome@fsw.org](mailto:mysecondhome@fsw.org) or visit [www.mysecondhome.org](http://www.mysecondhome.org)



### **ONEGENERATION - VAN NUYS, CA**

- Theory based, research driven program that provides co-located day care services for both frail seniors (stroke victims and those suffering from Alzheimer's and Parkinson's) and children (ages 6 weeks to 6 years).
- All staff members are cross-trained and plan at least seven intergenerational activities a day.
- NAEYC accredited childcare and CARF accredited adult care; the only dually accredited program in the nation.
- For additional information, contact Kelly Bruno at (818) 705-2345, [kbruno@onegeneration.org](mailto:kbruno@onegeneration.org) or visit [www.onegeneration.org](http://www.onegeneration.org)

### **PROVIDENCE MOUNT ST. VINCENT, INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING CENTER - SEATTLE, WA**

- Operates a licensed childcare center for 91 children, is integrally connected in the heart of this residential eldercare facility providing 215 residents nursing care, assisted living, adult day health, and rehabilitation services.
- Staff of both the children's and elder's programs plan and evaluate activities together that reflect the interests and developmental needs of both groups involving volunteers,

parents, family members, other staff, and the community.

- This holistic approach to care for all participants, connected to the natural cycles of life, has become a vital part of the vision and mission.
- For additional information, contact Joan Whitley, (206) 938-6195 or visit [www.providence.org/long\\_term\\_care/mount\\_st\\_vincent/e50Child.htm](http://www.providence.org/long_term_care/mount_st_vincent/e50Child.htm)

### **THE EDGEWOOD CENTER - PORTSMOUTH, NH**

- Operates an on-site childcare program for the children of nursing home staff members. The children and their teachers interact with the nursing home residents by doing exercises and enjoying activities together on a weekly basis.
- Hosts a “Golden Bonds” program where middle school aged children and residents are paired up for bi-weekly visits and activities.
- Residents host monthly intergenerational special events-such as harvest festivals and a grandparent's tea to which hundreds of local schoolchildren and their families are invited.
- For additional information, contact Susan Battye at (603) 436-0099, [Susan@edgewoodcenter.com](mailto:Susan@edgewoodcenter.com) or visit [www.edgewoodcenter.org](http://www.edgewoodcenter.org)

### **THE MACKLIN INTERGENERATIONAL INSTITUTE - FINDLAY, OH**

- Operates Marilyn's Life Long Educational Center, which offers quality childcare in an intergenerational setting including daily interactions with seniors.
- Makes use of the “Family Room Approach” that creates an interactive, home-like environment, heightening the social, physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development of all participants.



- Provides training, consultation, completes research and evaluation that substantiates the benefits of intergenerational learning.
- For additional information, contact Dr. Vicki Rosebrook at (419) 425-3043 or visit [www.mackliniginstitute.org](http://www.mackliniginstitute.org)

### VIRGINIA TECH - BLACKSBURG, VA

- Co-located Adult Day Services and Child Development Laboratory School in the Department of Human Development at Virginia Tech.
- Beyond providing intergenerational activities, the facility allows for research in recreational activities, exercise, and inter-generational programming.
- For additional information, contact Shannon Jarrott at (540) 231-5434, [sjarrott@vt.edu](mailto:sjarrott@vt.edu) or visit [www.humandevlopment.vt.edu](http://www.humandevlopment.vt.edu)

### ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

These are just some of the different intergenerational shared site program models. Considering the potential components listed in the chart on the front of this fact sheet as well as sites which serve multiple generations (community centers, faith-based organizations, housing facilities, hospitals, family support centers, etc.) - the possibilities for intergenerational shared sites are endless. Some other program models are: senior center with before and after-school program; housing for older adults and college students; and computer lab in senior housing facility used by children, youth, and older adults. For more information on additional programs or to see if there is a shared site in your area, visit [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org) or contact Generations United.

### HOW-TO GUIDE

Generations United, with the support of MetLife Foundation, has created a user-friendly how-to guide for individuals and groups who either are, or will be, involved in the development of inter-

generational shared sites. This guide, with chapters written by noted professionals from various disciplines, provides general information on program development, highlights tips from different programs, and coalesces many disparate strands of information. Chapters include Visioning and Assessment; Funding and Partners; Facility Design and Building; Staff Development, Training and Retention; Marketing; Curriculum Development and Intergenerational Activities; and Evaluation. The guide is available on-line at [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org) or for purchase by contacting Generations United.

*Generations United (GU) is the only national membership organization focused solely on improving the lives of children, youth, and older people through intergenerational strategies, programs, and policies. GU represents more than 100 national, state, and local organizations representing more than 70 million Americans. GU serves as a resource for educating policymakers and the public about the economic, social, and personal imperatives of intergenerational cooperation. GU provides a forum for those working with children, youth, and older adults to explore areas of common ground while celebrating the richness of each generation.*



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### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> A. Goyer, *Intergenerational Shared Site and Shared Resource Programs: Current Models*. (Washington D.C. Generations United Background Paper: Project SHARE, 2001).
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- <sup>3</sup> A. Kalache, Ageing worldwide. In Shah Ebrahim and Kalache. (Ed.), *Epidemiology in old age* (pp. 22-31). (London: BMJ Publishing Group, 1996).
- <sup>4</sup> J. Johnson and B. Bytheway, Ageism: Concept and Definition. In Johnson and Slater, *Ageing and Later life*. (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 1994).
- <sup>5</sup> A. Goyer.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.