Open Doors, Open Hearts

A Guide to Bringing Long-Term Care Residents and Young People Together

Temple University
Center for Intergenerational Learning

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Designed and produced by the
Office of Publications/Rose Caporaletti

194-01

Funding provided by the Retirement Research Foundation

A Publication of the Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning, 2002

Acknowledgments

This manual is based on the experiences of Project OPEN: "Opportunities for Productivity, Empowerment, and Nurturing." Over the past two years, we have seen how important the concept of "openness" is to the success of this project. With support from the Retirement Research Foundation, the Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University developed a network of five long-term care facilities to explore ways to most effectively and creatively integrate a variety of intergenerational programs into the life of these organizations. The staff from the five facilities—Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home, Saunders House, Martins Run, Souderton Mennonite Homes, and Cliveden Convalescent Center—were willing to step outside their defined roles, cross age boundaries, and alter predictable environments in exciting ways. Their assistance in brainstorming program ideas and strategies, organizing focus groups, and filming the video was invaluable. Our deepest appreciation is extended to these facilities and to the staff at their partner organizations.

Our special thanks to the following people for their assistance in preparing this manual:

- Margene Biedermann, Diane Mokrzycki, James Lambert, and Marian Levine for their invaluable contributions and for serving as our readers and advisors over the months of writing
- Juliette de Koning, Bob Paeglow, Janet Kaplan, Jami Scott, Heather Scattergood, Brenda Moody, Joyce Green, Eva Mayo, and Elisa Goldberg for their wonderful program ideas
- Teachers Alison Bookheimer, Valerie Denton, Anna Guerin, Ayesha Imani, Cyvi Levin, Nick Perry, and Thomasina White for sharing their learnings with us
- Margene Biedermann, Juliette de Koning, Sharon Geller, Robb Hutter, Helen Haynes, Joe Brenman, Rob Tietze, and Susan Perlstein for their substantive contributions to the chapter on the arts
- Andrea Leerman and Andrea Taylor from the Center for Intergenerational Learning for reviewing multiple drafts of this manuscript
- Denise Logan from the Center for Intergenerational Learning for her ongoing support
- Melanie Adler, Daphne Northrup, and Jennifer Davis-Kay at Education Development Center, Inc., and Shelley Washburn for their helpful editorial comments
- Rose Caporaletti from Temple University's Office of Publications for designing such a beautiful manual

The video that accompanies this manual movingly and effectively portrays these splendid programs. Our thanks to filmmaker Michael DiLauro for his enthusiasm, creativity, and talent and to Sam A. Cohen for his invaluable help with our video shoot.

Finally, we express our sincerest gratitude to the following:

- Sharon Markham and the Retirement Research Foundation for their ongoing support, patience, and guidance
- Dr. Nancy Z. Henkin, Executive Director of the Center for Intergenerational Learning, for her vision, knowledge, and dedication
- The children, youth, and older adults who talked to us and let us observe and film them

Jeanette Bressler, PhD, MSW

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Introduction

CHAPTER 1

The colorful paintings decorating the residents' rooms at the Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home were created by a team of three artists: a resident and two sixth grade companions. The artwork, which depicts events in the resident's life, is just one of the many fruits of an innovative long-term care facility-school project that provides opportunities for companionship, school credit, and strong personal connections. One student describes the benefits she gained from the project:

I know they didn't have a childhood as good as mine. Since I started going there, I have been acting better. And every time I do something wrong, I think about them and what they went through, and I look back and I see what I did wrong.

The discussion is lively in this book group; seven tenth graders and seven residents from a Mennonite retirement community have read the same novel on rural Shaker culture and eagerly pair up for discussion. The students keep a log and receive credit for reading and writing. The residents are delighted to find that they have so much in common with teenagers whose lives are so different from their own. A resident reflects:

I realized that I was talking with persons who were but a fraction of my age. I was surprised by the number of times our feelings coincided.

Open Doors, Open Hearts is a practical guide designed to help long-term care facilities and schools and youth organizations form partnerships and create intergenerational programs. These exciting programs can do several important things:

- Build understanding between young people and older adults
- Promote greater appreciation for what people of different ages can give to one another
- Foster development of meaningful relationships
- Provide opportunities for youth and older adults to both give and receive support

Information is provided for people in the following areas:

Long-term care facilities:

- Activities directors and staff
- Community outreach coordinators
- Social workers
- Administrators
- Chaplains
- Staff development coordinators
- Volunteer coordinators
- Volunteers
- Student interns

Youth organizations:

- Program coordinators
- Executive directors
- Chaplains
- Volunteer coordinators

Schools:

- Teachers
- Service-learning coordinators
- Principals
- Counselors
- Creative arts teachers
- Community service coordinators

The community:

- Consulting artists
- College and graduate student volunteers or interns
- Collaborating museums, historical associations, and horticultural clubs

With commitment, planning, training, and creativity, these programs can be cost-effective, meet the needs of individuals, and help to achieve institutional goals. This manual will take you through the steps involved in starting, sustaining, and enhancing intergenerational programs. We hope that you, too, will open your doors and form partnerships that will open hearts.

How This Manual Came About

From 1999 to 2001, the Retirement Research Foundation provided support to the Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University to offer technical assistance and training to long-term care facilities that wanted to significantly enhance their intergenerational programs. The Center selected five diverse long-term care facilities for this project:

- Souderton Mennonite Homes, a rural continuing care retirement community
- Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home, an inner city nursing home located in a neighborhood with a high level of poverty
- Saunders House, a nursing home with an extensive creative arts program, located in an affluent suburban area
- Martins Run, a suburban continuing care retirement community serving the Jewish community
- Cliveden Convalescent Home, an urban nursing home located in a middle class, racially integrated neighborhood

The Center has been running model intergenerational programs and providing training and technical assistance for more than 20 years. The five facilities all had either some or a lot of experience with intergenerational programs. During a two-year period, Center staff, multidisciplinary long-term care professionals from the five facilities, teachers working with young people of all ages, and community artists evolved into a team, trading ideas and documenting their experiences. The quality, quantity, and variety of the intergenerational programs they created exceeded everyone's expectations. This manual represents the cumulative knowledge of these dedicated and creative professionals.

They learn from us because we're older. The kids forget how old we are and how young they are. The young people—they don't take anything from you—you give to them. That's the way it was, giving to them.

—NURSING HOME RESIDENT

What Are Intergenerational Programs?

Intergenerational programs purposefully bring together people of different generations in ongoing mutually beneficial planned activities designed to achieve specified program goals. Through intergenerational programs young and old share their talents and resources, supporting one another in relationships that benefit both the individuals and the community (Goyer and Henkin, 1996).

Successful intergenerational programs include four essential elements:

Roles that are meaningful for all participants. Younger and older people may have different capabilities and skills, but they all have something to contribute. Programs are planned that allow participants to build on their existing skills and/or learn new skills.

Relationships that are fostered between youth and older adults. As they form personal bonds, residents and youth experience affection, support, and companionship. The more contact that residents and young people have together, the more meaningful the program will be—with time spent together, relationships deepen.

When residents come here, they leave their personal belongings and memories behind. They pack their lives into a suitcase and have to start all over again. When the kids come, it creates a different environment. The children have nothing to do with medicine or being examined or seeing therapists. Intergenerational programs give residents projects to commit to, goals to focus on. They're fun.

—ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

Reciprocity between residents and youth. Participants have the experience of simultaneously giving and receiving in a relationship with someone from a different generation.

Recognition of the value of all generations. Young and old sometimes believe stereotypes about the other's age group. By sharing time together in ongoing projects and reflecting on their experiences, participants have the opportunity to confront and shatter stereotypes.

Why Intergenerational Programs Are Important in Today's Society

Three overlapping social trends have contributed to the growth of intergenerational programs:

- **The aging of society.** One hundred years ago, 3.1 million Americans were 65 or older. In 1999, 34.5 million Americans were 65 or older. Over the course of the century, there have been other astounding demographic changes as well:

  The greatest growth among the elderly population is among those 85 or older.

  Life expectancy at age 65 is now an additional 16 years for men and 19.2 years for women.

  By 2030, 20 percent of the U.S. population, more than 70 million Americans, will be 65 or older (Administration on Aging, 2000, page 2).

  When today's youth are adults, there will be as many people over 65 as there will be people under 18. By encouraging today's young people to learn to feel comfortable interacting with older people, we plant the seeds of long-lasting trust between the generations.

- **Fewer family and community supports for young people and older adults.** Over the past 50 years, divorce rates and single parenthood have reduced the amount of time many young people spend with caring adults. Our very mobile population results in separated extended families, depriving children and grandparents of regular contact with one another.

  At the same time, adult children of older people may not be nearby to provide practical assistance (e.g., shopping, transportation, housekeeping) or social support to parents with disabilities. Older people who need assistance are much more likely to live in a nursing home if they do not have children. Residents of nursing homes often have few visitors because they have either outlived their peers or their families live far away.

  Intergenerational programs reduce isolation by providing youth and older adults with additional caring companions.

- **Age segregation.** In our society, there are limited opportunities for individuals of different ages to interact. According to Dr. Peter Uhlenberg (2000) of the University of North Carolina:

  "The absence of friendships and collaboration among persons of different ages tends to reduce the feelings of common purpose and unity among members of the society. Reducing age barriers and increasing cross-age interactions —age integration—may be an effective way of reducing fragmentation and thus promoting a more civil society" (pp. 262–263).

Older adults who live in age-segregated environments, such as senior housing or long-term care facilities, are surrounded by their contemporaries and may rarely see young people. The role of young and middle-aged adults in their lives is to provide service or care. When children or youth are frequent visitors, the environment more accurately reflects the "real" world.

Students are similarly locked into an environment where they socialize only with peers and interact with young and middle-aged adults only as authority figures. Such age segregation limits young people's ability to see continuity between the past, present, and future. Through planned interaction with older adults, students' perceptions of aging and older adults change; they come to understand that the world is a place for all ages.

Benefits of Intergenerational Programs

Researchers at Temple University conducted interviews and focus groups with more than 70 long-term care staff, residents, students, and teachers to learn about the impact of intergenerational programs (Bressler, 2001). Participant accounts of their experiences revealed a host of benefits:

- **For residents:**

  Improvements in mood, motivation, energy, feelings of self-esteem, and sometimes in cognitive and physical abilities.

  Decreased isolation. Participants who do not have family visitors are more likely to come out of their rooms—even after the young people are gone.

  Fulfillment from the opportunity to give.

  Better appetite and more food intake when children are around (for residents with nutritional problems).

- **For young people:**

  Emotional growth. The bonds they form with residents provide them with the experience of mutual caring.

  Improved behavior. Students who are restless or have behavior problems in the classroom are respectful and calmer when they are with residents, and their behavior at school improves.

  Improved involvement in schoolwork. The quality of schoolwork associated with participation in intergenerational programs is infused with creativity and energy. Students want the residents to feel proud when the residents read students' essays or see their artwork.

- **For the long-term care facility:**

  A more natural environment. The overall environment changes with regular visits from young people. It is no longer an age-segregated "old people's home," but rather a more natural reflection of the community. Visitors enjoy coming more often.

  Improved staff morale. With young people around, the long-term care facility is a place where people feel good about working. Staff members begin bringing their own children in as visitors or volunteers.

- **For the school or youth organization:**

  Achievement of community service goals. Schools are able to meet their curricular requirements and youth organizations can meet their missions for providing community service in a way that deeply engages young people.

  An opportunity to connect youth with a caring adult. Schools and youth organizations that are concerned about the emotional well-being of youth have access to caring older adults who can form relationships with students.

How to Use This Manual

This manual can be read cover to cover or consulted as an ad hoc resource. If you are thinking about launching an intergenerational program, reading this manual from start to finish will give you the knowledge and tools to begin and run the program. If you are already managing a successful program, you may want to consult selected chapters to help improve your efforts. All materials are designed to be adapted to fit the requirements of a variety of organizations.

The manual contains 10 chapters followed by a resource section:

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION:
Covers the what and why of intergenerational programs.

CHAPTER 2 BUILDING INTERNAL SUPPORT:
Explains how to build support for an intergenerational program within your own organization, whether it is a school, youth group, or long-term care facility.

CHAPTER 3 CREATING AND SUSTAINING OUTSIDE PARTNERSHIPS:
Outlines the needs of schools or youth organizations and long-term care facilities so that each organization knows what to expect from the other. Includes tips for identifying partners, building interest, and sustaining partnerships.

CHAPTER 4 PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM:
Presents key elements for program planning. Contains a planning worksheet.

CHAPTER 5 PREPARING YOUTH:
Provides an overview of training content and techniques for orienting youth to a long-term care facility. Contains handouts and activities.

CHAPTER 6 RECRUITING AND PREPARING RESIDENTS:
Provides goals and tips for recruiting and preparing long-term care facility residents for intergenerational programs. Contains a sample recruitment flyer.

CHAPTER 7 IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROGRAM:
Describes techniques for group facilitation and reviews solutions to common challenges.

CHAPTER 8 ENHANCING PROGRAMS THROUGH THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES:
Offers tips, examples, and ideas for using the arts to bring children and long-term care facility residents together in creative and engaging projects.

CHAPTER 9 REFLECTING ON AND ASSESSING YOUR PROGRAM:
Explains why reflection and assessment are critical to intergenerational programs and offers methods for incorporating both into your program.

CHAPTER 10 ACTIVITIES:
Provides 26 intergenerational activities for participants of all ages and abilities.

RESOURCES
Lists additional sources of information on intergenerational programs, including where you can find the books and programs referenced in this manual.

Activity Plans

Chapter 10 presents 26 Activity Plans that have been successfully implemented in retirement homes, assisted-living residences, or nursing homes working in partnership with preschool programs; elementary, middle, and high schools; colleges.

About the Companion Video

The video *Open Doors, Open Hearts* captures some magic moments between young and old. A youth steps up to an old woman; he takes her hands, and they dance. Two girls charge under a striped parachute, pushing a giggling woman in a wheelchair before them. A teenager turns to a 79-year-old man and says, "We have a lot in common." This lively video offers a glimpse of the powerful connections that flourish in intergenerational programs.

Only 14 minutes long, *Open Doors, Open Hearts* is an excellent introduction to intergenerational programs. Use the video to recruit and inspire youth, long-term care residents, community partners, and your own co-workers.

See "Resources" at the end of this book for ordering information on how to obtain this video.

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Building Internal Support

CHAPTER 2

You can't carry out programs without internal support. For every program, a list of participating residents is given to the nursing department in advance. We have a lot of communication. We make sure to thank people.

—LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY STAFF MEMBER

Cooperation between everyone was the part that made the program feasible. The art department helped out. My two teammates had to put up with a lot because we moved kids out of English or math on the day they went down to the nursing home. Cooperation included the principal because he had to be aware of the fact that we were missing school time.

—SIXTH GRADE TEACHER

Building Internal Support

Building internal support and creating sustainable partnerships are essential first steps for starting an intergenerational program. Typically, developing internal support precedes looking for an outside partner, but you will find that internal support is strengthened when your co-workers meet the partner. Maintaining these supports requires ongoing attention and is critical to ensuring that intergenerational programs grow over time and expand in scope and creativity.

As your colleagues come to see that intergenerational programs help further their goals for clients, students, and the organization, their enthusiasm will increase along with their willingness to make a contribution to the effort. Involving colleagues at the planning stage enhances creativity and increases the likelihood that the programs will be permanently woven into the fabric of the organization.

Involving Colleagues

- In two facilities where intergenerational programs were widely endorsed, people other than activities staff ran the programs. A social worker conducted a reading discussion group, and a rabbi established partnerships with local youth groups to run Sabbath services.
- An administrator contributed funds to hire a local artist to work with residents and students on a tile mural that was permanently installed at the facility.
- A staff development director helped orient a group of Girl Scouts working with frail older adults.

Building Support in Long-Term Care Facilities

In a long-term care facility, many staff in multiple departments provide service to residents. For most resident activities—including residential programs—collaboration between staff members is essential. When activities and nursing staff work together, the residents will be on time to meet their young visitors. In addition, while a teacher may have one intergenerational partnership, many care facilities have multiple partnerships with a variety of people of different ages and backgrounds.

Whom to Enlist

While intergenerational programs are usually led by staff in the activities department, institutional support from the following individuals and groups is critical to program success:

- Administrator and/or assistant administrator
- Residents' council
- Department of nursing, including the director of nursing and nurse aides
- All department heads
- Direct care, housekeeping, maintenance, and dietary staff
- Residents' families

Tips for Achieving and Sustaining Internal Support

- Include the administrator and/or assistant administrator in the initial partnership meeting.
- Use a variety of methods, such as memoranda, staff/facility newsletters, in-service trainings, presentations at staff meetings, and/or displays of products created in the program to inform all staff about plans for and the benefits of intergenerational programs.
- Integrate a presentation about the importance of intergenerational programs into the orientation provided to new staff. You might show the video *Open Doors, Open Hearts* or a slide presentation from your intergenerational program. This lets employees know from the start that the facility values these programs.

- Establish a voluntary, interdisciplinary committee to plan programs and rally additional staff to help implement the program (for example, the dietary staff may make special refreshments for a program's celebration event). Invite representatives from all departments to participate. By opening up the committee to people such as nurse aides and housekeeping staff, you are acknowledging their pivotal roles as team members. As the committee evolves, you can expand it to include residents, young people, families, and school or youth organization representatives.
- Collaborate with staff in other departments to establish and use written procedures for ensuring that residents are on time for intergenerational activities.
- Express frequent appreciation for colleagues who help prepare residents for and then transport them to activities.
- Encourage staff to bring their own children into the facility as volunteers.
- Invite residents' families, administration, and facility board members to special intergenerational events, such as end-of-the-year celebrations.
- Invite the media to attend your intergenerational program.
- Encourage your admissions staff to bring visitors to see the programs in action.

Building Support in Schools and Youth Organizations

Whom to Enlist

Schools and school districts, as well as community-based youth organizations, have diverse infrastructures. Building internal support in schools is especially important in regard to scheduling and meeting curricular requirements and to the number of authority figures involved in decision-making. If you are a teacher planning an intergenerational program, support from the following individuals will make it easier to implement your program and can enhance the quality of the experience for everyone involved:

- Principal and/or assistant principal
- Parents
- Department heads
- School counselors
- Creative arts teachers
- Service club leaders
- Administrative representatives from your school district or local youth organization

Involving Colleagues

- A school counselor met with sixth grade classes on a monthly basis to talk with the students about their emotional responses to visiting the residents at a long-term care facility.
- An art teacher helped out with an oral history project by teaching children and residents how to paint on canvas. The students and residents were able to collaborate on paintings based on the residents' life stories.
- A school district administrator was so enthusiastic about the program, he used his discretionary budget to pay for school buses to take children to a long-term care facility.

Tips for Achieving and Sustaining Internal Support

- Include the principal, assistant principal, or youth organization director in the initial partnership meeting.
- Talk informally to your colleagues about the impact of the program on students and residents.
- Get your intergenerational program on the agenda for a faculty or staff meeting; show the video *Open Doors, Open Hearts.*
- Have students do a presentation on the intergenerational program at a school assembly.
- Bring in members from your partner organization to meet with your principal.
- Present the intergenerational program at a parents' meeting.
- Invite members of school district's administration and students' parents to special intergenerational events, such as end-of-the-year celebrations.
- Invite local media, including representatives of internal publications (such as newsletters and Web sites), to attend and write about your program.
- Display program results, such as artwork, photos, essays, and poetry, on a school or youth organization bulletin board.

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Creating and Sustaining Outside Partnerships

CHAPTER 3

The characteristics of a good partner are commitment, enthusiasm, being communicative, "buy-in" from the top, a match in objectives, flexibility, accountability, creativity, and a sense of humor.

—LONG-TERM CARE STAFF MEMBER

Part of our regular programming is with a middle school that's right up the hill. They've been coming for 15 years for weekly visits with our residents. An exciting aspect of that relationship is that the kids come back, either as part of a high school service program or on their own as volunteers.

—DIRECTOR OF THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Creating and Sustaining Outside Partnerships

The vast majority of programs for older adults and for young people are provided by separate organizations in different locations. Implementation of intergenerational programs therefore usually involves a partnership between at least two unaffiliated organizations. These partnerships succeed when each participant has a basic understanding of how the other organization functions, adequate time for planning, clarity about each participant's role, and a commitment to ongoing nurturing of the programs.

What Long-Term Care Facilities Should Know About Schools

- **Curriculum requirements.** Schools and school districts vary enormously in their curricular requirements and levels of teacher autonomy. Intergenerational programs often fit well with goals relating to community service, citizenship, and the involvement of more caring adults in the lives of children.
- **Staffing.** Many schools and school systems have a shortage of teachers and other staff. Teachers' schedules are tight, and they often have no access to phones during the day. You need to be persistent, understanding, and flexible when communicating with teachers.
- **Scheduling.** Many of your partners may have only one or two set class periods in which to fit the intergenerational program. This means that residents need to be ready when the students show up. With adequate notice, some schools can be flexible with their schedules. Schedule flexibility is more likely if the principal is enthusiastic about the intergenerational program. Youth organizations tend to have more flexibility and can often bring young people to the facility during non-school hours, including late afternoons, evenings, and weekends.
- **Service-learning.** Service-learning is a method used in education to connect what students are studying in school to the world outside of the classroom. Some schools, school districts, colleges, and universities mandate service-learning; in others, it is an option. The growth in service-learning provides an opportunity for long-term care facilities to form sustained partnerships with schools and teachers and to bring more young people into their facilities for structured activities. For more about service-learning, see page 21 at the end of this chapter.

What Schools and Youth Organizations Should Know About Long-Term Care Facilities

- **Categories of long-term care facilities.** Facilities that are particularly well suited for intergenerational programs include the following:

  Nursing homes. These are residences for people who find it difficult or are unable to live on their own. Residents usually have physical disabilities and/or problems with memory and cognition. Residents often have fewer family supports than other older people have.

  Assisted living. Residents have their own apartments with access to supportive services, such as personal care aides and housekeeping. The availability of formal programs varies.

  Continuing care retirement communities. These are retirement communities where some people live in apartments on their own, others require a moderate level of support, and still others require more intensive support due to physical disabilities or cognitive declines. Formal activity programs are offered throughout the community.

- **Licensing.** Long-term care facilities, particularly nursing homes, are highly regulated and licensed. They must comply with extensive rules about staffing, therapeutic and medical services, paperwork, and other issues. Intergenerational programs can help facilities meet the requirements for therapeutic recreation.
- **Staffing.** The long-term care industry is experiencing severe staff shortages and high staff turnover, particularly among nursing staff. It is extremely important that the person responsible for the intergenerational program has buy-in from the nursing department, since these are the people who help get residents ready for activities on time. Staff shortages may create time pressures among all staff.
- **Scheduling.** The schedules at a long-term care facility can be routine and are often rigid, particularly in nursing homes. Residents usually depend on these routines and expect few disruptions in their schedules, particularly the times when they eat, sleep, and get dressed. Activity programs rarely start before 10 a.m., as residents often require considerable time to get ready. Medical appointments take precedence over all activities. Be sensitive to these concerns when you ask a facility to make adjustments in its routine in order to accommodate the program.
- **Recent trends.** A recent movement in long-term care de-emphasizes "the routine" and aims to change the culture of nursing facilities so that they can be more homelike. Leading this movement is a national organization called the Eden Alternative. An important component of the Eden Alternative is the integration of children and youth into the environment. Some facilities sign on for full-fledged "Edenization," while others are interested in adopting elements of the Eden Alternative. This movement presents a wonderful opportunity for schools and youth organizations to partner with long-term care facilities. Further, intergenerational programs may provide additional incentive for a facility to be more flexible in its scheduling.

Steps in Creating Partnerships

Five key steps will help you create sustainable partnerships:

1. **Identify partners**
2. **Build interest**
3. **Schedule an exploratory meeting**
4. **Plan and implement your program**
5. **Keep an eye on the future**

1. Identify Partners

Long-Term Care Facilities Looking for School/Youth Organization Partners

Where do you look?

Initiate contact with one or more of the following organizations:

- Public and private schools
- Child day care centers
- Faith-based youth groups
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Preschools
- After school programs
- Scout troops
- 4-H Clubs
- Colleges and universities, (especially those with departments of allied health, social work, and therapeutic recreation)

The principal, assistant principal, or person who is in charge of service-learning or community service is usually the first point of contact at a school.

What are your selection criteria?

- **Ease of transportation.** Try to identify schools or organizations in your immediate area in order to avoid problems with transportation. If you want to partner with an organization that is somewhat of a distance from your facility, you will need to be creative in arranging for transportation (see "Anticipating and Addressing Challenges" in Chapter 7 for ideas about transportation).
- **Availability of a committed individual** at the school to plan and implement the program.
- **Support** from the school administration.
- **Funds** or in-kind support to help cover project expenses.
- **Resident preference.** Talk to your residents to find out what type of program they would like. Ask them, for example, whether they would prefer a program with first graders or tenth graders. Some residents will tell you that they love being around little children; others will indicate that they would enjoy having an older student to talk with more intimately. If there is more than one school or youth organization interested in a partnership, you may decide to work with multiple partners (as many facilities do). You may also choose to focus on one or two partnerships at first.

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- **Staffing.** The long-term care industry is experiencing severe staff shortages and high staff turnover, particularly among nursing staff. It is extremely important that the person responsible for the intergenerational program has buy-in from the nursing department, since these are the people who help get residents ready for activities on time. Staff shortages may create time pressures among all staff.
- **Scheduling.** The schedules at a long-term care facility can be routine and are often rigid, particularly in nursing homes. Residents usually depend on these routines and expect few disruptions in their schedules, particularly the times when they eat, sleep, and get dressed. Activity programs rarely start before 10 a.m., as residents often require considerable time to get ready. Medical appointments take precedence over all activities. Be sensitive to these concerns when you ask a facility to make adjustments in its routine in order to accommodate the program.
- **Recent trends.** A recent movement in long-term care de-emphasizes "the routine" and aims to change the culture of nursing facilities so that they can be more homelike. Leading this movement is a national organization called the Eden Alternative. An important component of the Eden Alternative is the integration of children and youth into the environment. Some facilities sign on for full-fledged "Edenization," while others are interested in adopting elements of the Eden Alternative. This movement presents a wonderful opportunity for schools and youth organizations to partner with long-term care facilities. Further, intergenerational programs may provide additional incentive for a facility to be more flexible in its scheduling.

When are the partners available?

- **During the school year.** Most school-based intergenerational programs begin early in a school term (i.e., October or February). Other youth organizations frequently, though not always, operate over a school year. Allow two to three months to plan the project. If you can establish the partnership in the spring for the following school year, then planning will be much easier and programs will start on time. Sometimes (particularly for the first year of a partnership), the school and long-term care facility may plan a project in the fall term and implement it in the spring term. Then, in the second year, they will run a project that spans the entire school year.
- **During the summer.** Many communities have a variety of summer programs for youth, such as summer school, camps, YMCA/YWCAs, classes, and faith-based service programs. Consider tapping into these organizations over the summer months. Usually, long-term care facilities have fewer intergenerational programs over the summer. To maintain young people's presence, a long-term care facility can organize its own volunteer program (see "Volunteens" in Chapter 10, Activities).
- **Year-round.** Contact local youth and service organizations in your community to learn which operate year-round. Child day care programs run throughout the year.

Recruiting Volunteers from Youth Organizations or Schools

Usually students join an intergenerational program through their schools or another program where they are members. Sometimes, though, long-term care staff will directly solicit young people's participation as volunteers. When talking to youth, remember to do the following:

- Define the goals of the project or program and specify the roles and responsibilities of youth.
- Identify the characteristics you want young volunteers to have. For example, what is the ideal age range for volunteers? Are you looking for young people with specific skills or interests?
- Identify the incentives for youth, which might include some of these:
  - Volunteering is fun, different, and interesting.
  - It provides an opportunity for leadership.
  - Volunteering strengthens a college or job application.
  - It provides a potentially valuable job experience.
  - Youth can learn new skills.
  - They can earn community service credits for school or college.
  - They can earn respect and recognition.
  - They can make new friends.
  - They can spend time with older adults and learn from the experience and wisdom of these people.
  - They can make a difference in their communities.

Visit the facility to get a sense of the environment. Is this a place where your students can become comfortable? One of the exciting aspects of intergenerational programs is that students' comfort level in the facility improves with time. They learn that although this may be a place with different smells or noises, it's also their new friends' home.

School/Youth Organizations Looking for Long-term Care Partners

Where do you look? Initiate contact with one or more institutions. Get in touch with nearby long-term care facilities. Look in the phone book for nursing homes, assisted-living communities, and retirement homes. In most cases, intergenerational programs are administered by the activities department.

What are your selection criteria? If you find more than one long-term care facility that is interested in a partnership, learn more about them before making a decision. Your criteria for selection might include the following:

- Ease of transportation
- Availability of a committed individual or team to plan and implement the program at the facility
- Ability to meet criteria of school-mandated programs, such as community service or service-learning
- Support from the facility's administration
- Funds or in-kind support to help cover program expenses
- Residents' capabilities and impairments

You will need to balance the intellectual challenge of the school assignments with residents' capabilities. For example, residents who live independently in a continuing care retirement community or assisted-living facility can be stimulating partners for a range of activities, such as communicating details of history, debating current events, and doing more physically demanding activities, like going on trips or exercising or dancing together. Students learn from these adults that old age can be an exciting time of life. (However, these residents sometimes have busy social schedules and may be reluctant to make a commitment to a long-term intergenerational program.)

On the other hand, residents in nursing homes do not have as many opportunities for social interaction and may be more interested in an on-going project. As they are more likely to be isolated than those in a continuing-care retirement community or assisted-living facility, they can greatly benefit from involvement with young people and be wonderful partners. From them, students learn that people with disabilities and impairments have much to offer, and they may form meaningful bonds with the residents. Even residents with moderate cognitive impairment can fully participate in oral history and art projects.

Ideally, children should be exposed to people with varying degrees of disabilities so that they more fully understand the diversity of the aging population. It is important to balance students' experiences with older adults. Consider including older adults with different needs and lifestyles in your program orientation (see Chapter 5 for more information).

When are the facilities available? Long-term care facilities operate around the clock 365 days a year. Activity schedules at some facilities are planned months in advance. Do not call a long-term care facility and expect to bring in 30 students the following week. Although the activities staff will most likely be your primary contact, they have to coordinate schedules with other departments. In addition to other important steps in preparation, your contact at the long-term care facility will need time to get the internal support she or he needs to implement your joint program. See the section "What Schools Should Know About Long-Term Care Facilities" on page 15 for information about daily scheduling.

2. Build Interest

Your first contact with a potential prospective partner can be by phone or letter. Here are some suggestions for making this contact as productive as possible:

- Learn about your potential partner first. Visit the organization's web site or read a sample newsletter to learn about its priorities. Some schools explicitly emphasize community service or other themes relevant to intergenerational programs. Some long-term care facilities are enthusiastic about intergenerational programs and feature them in their publications.
- Explain that you want to explore how collaboration between the groups can help meet both organizations' needs.
- Describe a project that you have in mind. If you are indeed flexible, explain that you are open to other ideas. Indicate that you can start with a small program, with a potential for growing the partnership if things work out.
- Point out that both groups will have fun, learn, and make a difference in each other's lives.
- Tell your potential partner what you can offer as resources in planning and implementation; ask about the partner's resources and capabilities.
- Offer to show the *Open Doors, Open Hearts* video.
- Ask if there is a particular staff person or teacher who may be looking to establish a new partnership, and get that person's name and phone number.
- Offer to answer any questions your potential partner may have.

Consider starting with a relatively simple or small project as you build your partnership. Ideally, the intergenerational partnership will become so integral to both the school/youth organization and the long-term care facility that it will transcend the participation of any one staff person.

3. Schedule an Exploratory Meeting

An initial meeting should be held at the site where the program will be conducted (usually the long-term care facility) and should include a brief tour. You may decide at this meeting whether to pursue a partnership. If you are confident that you will proceed, you can make it a planning meeting, as well.

Guidelines for the Initial Meeting

- Involve key players. Invite the following individuals; if they can't come, ask them to send a representative:
  - Long-term care administrator or assistant administrator
  - School principal or assistant principal
  - Youth organization director
  - Project liaisons or leaders
  - Staff who will be assisting with program implementation
  - Director of nursing
  - Consulting artist or additional community partner
- **Keep the meeting to an agreed-upon length.** Bear in mind that all parties—long-term care and school or youth organization staff—have very full work schedules.
- **Avoid using acronyms or other professional jargon.** People from different systems do not always speak the same language.

Creative Partnerships

Your project can be enhanced by participation from organizations with specific programmatic expertise. Consider contacting horticultural societies, history museums, art schools, theater troupes, animal shelters, and choral societies.

Sample Agenda for Exploratory Meeting

- How an intergenerational program can meet the goals of each organization
- The resources and constraints of each organization and what impact these may have on the proposed program
- The types of programs that could be implemented
- Transportation and scheduling possibilities and challenges, and suggestions for how to overcome these challenges
- A preliminary budget indicating who will pay for what
- Division of labor, roles, and responsibilities
- Next steps for deciding if there will be a partnership and for proceeding with planning

Following the meeting, the person who convened the meeting should write and distribute a summary of the meeting notes and a letter thanking the participants.

4. Plan and Implement Your Program

After the initial meeting, you and your partner will meet to plan the actual program. Chapter 4, Planning Your Program, lays out the steps involved in program planning, all of which support your partnership. Three planning steps are the most crucial to maintaining and strengthening your partnership:

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Developing a written plan
- Ensuring ongoing communication

5. Keep an Eye on the Future

Your first collaboration with your new partner should be kept simple while you work out the kinks and build your relationship. As you move ahead and your work together deepens, you will be able to take on increasingly creative programs. Evaluate your program and build on that feedback to strengthen the partnership. Begin planning for your second year together before the first year ends. If key people in your partner organization change jobs, you will need to meet the new people, review the partnership's accomplishments, and fortify the partnership.

Service-Learning

Service-learning allows students to apply academic knowledge to real-world problems and issues while performing valuable service in the community. Many school districts and colleges require or encourage teachers to incorporate service-learning into their curricula. In service-learning projects, students must do the following:

- Identify a community need
- Provide service to meet that need
- Complete academic assignments that relate to the service
- Reflect on their experience

Service-learning has many benefits—to schools, students, and their communities:

- Allowing students to strengthen their academic skills and increase their knowledge of "real-world" applications
- Providing critical service to the community
- Providing new resources to long-term care facilities and other community organizations
- Offering opportunities for students to explore their community
- Contributing to community development and change
- Fostering positive relationships among students and older adults
- Connecting the school with the surrounding community
- Expanding students' awareness of varied career opportunities
- Helping teachers and students meet state and local academic standards
- Allowing students to see how and where they fit in the world and gives them hope for their future

Service-learning projects are not simply about providing volunteer service through the school. Two essential elements make service-learning a more integral part of the curriculum:

Planning. To integrate service into the school curriculum, planning is required. The teacher must prepare learning goals and objectives, sequenced activities that lead to a tangible student product, and a formal process for reflection and evaluation. Students can be part of this planning process by designing projects that interest them and are linked to their classroom instruction.

Reflection. In service-learning programs, students synthesize the information they gain from the project and their classroom studies. They analyze, classify, combine, assess, explain, and evaluate this new information, which helps them understand and remember what they have learned. Reflection can also have a positive impact on long-term care residents. For detailed information about reflection, see Chapter 9, Reflecting on and Assessing Your Program.

An Example

In a novel blend of lessons in math, horticulture, and issues confronting people with disabilities, a tenth-grade math class collaborated with residents to design and build a garden for their facility. Students measured wheelchair heights and widths to ensure access for all. They then researched the cost of lumber for the sides of the flowerbeds and calculated the cubic feet of soil they'd need. They measured and cut the wood and used a level to straighten the tops and sides. The students took great pride in creating an elegant and efficient place to grow plants. The residents loved the finished beds. Residents and students then worked together to plant the beds with tomatoes and marigolds.

Service-Learning Project Ideas

The best way to find projects for service-learning is to look around the community, identify a problem or a need, and think about how it could be part of a curriculum. Long-term care facility staff will have many good ideas about what students could do to solve problems or meet needs in their facility. Most activities in Chapter 10 can be expanded and adapted into service-learning projects. In addition, consider these ideas:

- **English.** Students can read books to residents with visual impairments, discuss the books with the residents, and write book reviews to be published or posted in the long-term care facility.
- **Science/Environment.** Students can conduct a recycling survey at the long-term care facility and make recommendations for saving money and reducing waste. They can also study how the human body ages and create a helpful brochure on best practices for physical and mental health.
- **Social Science.** Students can survey residents about their opinions on such issues as health care, patients' rights, and age stereotyping. Students can research laws regarding these issues and publish a report or article expressing the residents' concerns.

See the Resources section of this manual for materials that can help teachers turn community service into service-learning.

Planning Your Program

CHAPTER 4

Two programs involving a long-term care facility and the local high school—two very different outcomes. The first, an oral history program, started with a meeting between long-term care staff and the teacher, a written plan, and clear expectations for both teens and the residents regarding their roles. From all accounts, the project was very successful. The residents were impressed by the students' courtesy and respect. In contrast, plans to hold a year-end prom at the nursing home were last-minute and hasty. The event was chaotic, and residents commented that the teens were rude and unruly. The residents did not realize that the exact same group of students were in both programs.

Planning Your Program

As the example on the previous page shows, simply bringing together young and old does not always result in instant intergenerational "magic." To make magic, coordinators from participating organizations need to work carefully and closely on the details before, during, and after the project.

Program Planning

Key Steps to Program Planning and Implementation

For your project to be a success, key participants must collaborate on the following steps:

1. **Set goals for residents and young people**
2. **Specify the program activities that will take place to meet each goal**
3. **Determine needs for logistical support**
4. **Clarify each group's roles and responsibilities**
5. **Develop a budget**
6. **Establish a timeline**
7. **Document steps 1 through 6 above in a written plan, signed by program coordinators and the leadership of both organizations**
8. **Schedule regular meetings or conversations among partners**

Involve Residents and Youth in Planning

Youth and residents will be more motivated if they have a voice in planning the program. Ask residents and students what they would like to do together. Involve them in an intergenerational committee. Evaluate your program and integrate their feedback into future planning. If participants cannot be part of the formal planning process, give them a voice in substantive matters over the course of the project; for example, let them choose what subjects they want to paint together, which songs to sing, or what book to read for a discussion group.

At the end of an oral history project, the teacher asked the residents what they thought about the program. They said they found the conversations one-sided, with students asking questions and residents answering. They wanted more interaction. Using that feedback, the teacher designed a discussion activity based on essays in the book Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul. *This new activity was enormously popular with students and residents.*

1. Set goals for residents and young people

A goal is what you want to achieve through your program. Goals may be broad—such as, "To form a bond with a person from a different generation"—or very specific, such as, "To learn a new language." The specific goals of a program will vary according to the priorities of the participating organizations. The goals that are listed in the activities in Chapter 10 were written by long-term care and school/youth professionals to reflect the impact the activity would have on the participants. All of your programs should include goals that are consistent with the four essential elements of successful intergenerational programs described in Chapter 1:

- Roles that are meaningful
- Relationships
- Reciprocity
- Recognition of the value of all generations

An example of goals that incorporate all four of these elements comes from the activity entitled "Survivor," a structured discussion of how people cope with life's challenges (page 100). Goals for residents participating in this discussion include the following:

- Reminiscing about lessons of survival from their past (meaningful roles)
- Developing and/or strengthening relationships with students (relationships)
- Identifying problems, heroic qualities, and coping strategies (reciprocity)
- Understanding the challenges facing young people and appreciating their strengths (recognition of the value of all generations)

Goals and Objectives

Program planning commonly begins by defining goals and objectives. A goal is what you want to achieve through your program. An objective is a measurable occurrence that contributes to successful achievement of the goal. More ambitious projects, especially those that will be rigorously evaluated, can benefit from well-conceived objectives. However, defining specific program objectives may not be necessary given the scope of the projects described here. It is important for planners to make sure that the overall impact of a project's activities are consistent with the original goals for residents and youth.

2. Specify the program activities that will take place to meet each goal

Plan your program step by step to ensure that you will meet your program goals. Write down each activity that the young people and the residents will do as part of the project. For example, here is how the specific activities in "Survivor" are designed to meet the program goals:

- Interactive icebreakers help the group members feel more comfortable with one another before embarking on a substantive discussion of meeting life's challenges. This contributes to meeting the second goal of strengthening relationships.

- Residents and students fill in the blanks on the "We Survived" story; this provides a structure for reminiscence, which moves participants toward meeting the the first goal, establishing meaningful roles.
- By collaborating in teams of two to create and perform a story based on "We Survived," participants can achieve the third goal, reciprocity.
- Young and old participants discuss how people cope with life's challenges. This helps participants appreciate the strengths of the other generation, which is the fourth goal, recognition.

3. Determine needs for logistical support

At the outset, you will need to address numerous logistical issues, for example:

- Determining transportation needs
- Addressing scheduling concerns
- Notifying residents about programs and/or having residents ready on time
- Finding adequate space for group or one-on-one interactions
- Providing snacks and/or meals
- Having staff available to assist residents who may need personal care

See Chapter 7 for ideas on dealing with some of the logistical challenges that may arise.

4. Clarify each group's roles and responsibilities

Individuals' roles should be negotiated during program planning and will vary depending on the program design, staff talents, and organizational resources. If a third organization or consultant is involved, include them in the planning process too. Try to ensure that no one person is unfairly burdened with program responsibilities. Many programs find it helpful to identify a project liaison (and back-up person) for both organizations. Keep expectations clear: Long-term care staff are not responsible for teaching or supervising students, and school personnel are not responsible for care of residents.

5. Develop a budget

Intergenerational programs have both direct and indirect costs. Some examples of direct expenses associated with intergenerational programs are transportation, art supplies, video equipment, tickets to museums or special events, and refreshments. Indirect costs appear mostly in the form of staff time.

Conduct a frank discussion of financial needs during the planning process. Both organizations should consider how much financial support they can contribute. When asking for financial support from the long-term care or school/youth administration, consider presenting the direct cost in per-participant terms. For example, if 20 students and 10 residents are involved in a project that is budgeted for $300, the cost per participant is $10. The highest indirect cost of intergenerational programs is staff time spent on planning and implementation. Approval for this use of time will increase as administrators come to value the impact of the programs.

To help cover direct costs, you may be able to obtain mini-grants through state and local departments of education, offices on aging, or arts organizations. The applications for small grants are often quite simple to complete. You may also be able to get in-kind contributions, such as art or horticultural supplies, from art or gardening stores. Horticultural societies, music schools, museums, and graduate schools may have volunteers interested in assisting with your project. A phone call or letter may be adequate for soliciting this type of support.

6. Establish a timeline

With your partner, outline all the steps for your program and the expected dates of implementation. The sample timeline on page 30 is for "Who's Who: Version 2", found in Chapter 10, Activities. This timeline does not include soliciting a new partner—a process that should begin three to four months before you expect the program to begin. Note that long-term care staff are available to work on aspects of program planning during summer months, when teachers may not be.

7. Document steps 1 through 6 in a written plan, signed by program coordinators and the leadership of both organizations

The process of developing a written agreement can help partners think through their programs, consolidate their partnership, and strengthen the organizations' commitment to a project. *The Intergenerational Planning Worksheet* at the end of this chapter can help you devise your plan and can be used as the final document to be signed by both project coordinators, the school principal or youth organization administrator, and the long-term care facility administrator. Copies of the completed, signed form should be given to both project coordinators. Whether you use this format or a Memorandum of Understanding, **a written agreement should include all information from Steps 1 through 6 above, plus the following:**

- Names and contact information for both coordinators
- Names and contact information for back-up liaisons
- Brief description of project
- Evaluation methods
- Signatures
- Timeline, including a schedule of meetings, orientations, activities, data collection, and coordinator check-ins

8. Schedule regular meetings or conversations between the partners

Regular communication helps to identify and resolve problems and keep relationships strong. It provides opportunities to change the program as needed, plan the next intergenerational session, do necessary problem solving, and process your own perceptions and feelings about the project. Use fax and e-mail. If your partner is particularly hard to reach during the day, see if your partner will give you his or her home phone number for brief check-ins and/or to call if an urgent situation arises (such as snow days, illness, or death of a resident). Whenever possible, put things in writing to confirm what was discussed.

Intergenerational Planning Worksheet

Long-term care (LTC) facility name: _____

LTC coordinator: Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Title _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Back-up person _____ Phone _____

School/youth organization (YO) name: _____

School/YO coordinator: Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Title _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Back-up person _____ Phone _____

PROJECT THEME: _____

Brief project summary:

Age(s) of children/youth:_____ Resident population (level of impairment): _____

Number of residents:_____ Number of youth:_____

Goals for Residents:

Goals for Youth:

Number of Visits: _____

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:	DATES:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Final product of the program (e.g., special presentations, booklets, art work, events, etc.):

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES:	DATES:
LTC FACILITY 1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
School/YO 1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Evaluation methods and activities:

Supplies/materials needed:

Logistical needs (e.g., room/space, transportation, outside support, media, residents' families, parents):

SIGNATURES FOR

LTC FACILITY:

ADMIN./DEPT. HEAD

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

DATE

SCHOOL/YO:

PRINCIPAL

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

DATE

Prepared by: The Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University

"Who's Who: Version 2" Project Timeline

In this oral history project, high school and college students interviewed family members of residents with dementia. The students then wrote biographies that were framed and posted at the entrance to each resident's room.

April	• Hold Planning Meeting 1: Preliminary project planning.
May	• Hold Planning Meeting 2: Complete and sign Intergenerational Planning Worksheet.
August	• Contact residents' families to solicit participation. Get signed consent forms.
September—early October	• Prepare students (this may take several sessions). Orient students to general issues around aging and communication with persons with dementia. In class, review interviewing skills and methods for collecting information about residents. • Orient long-term care staff and families to full project.
mid-October	• Introduce students to residents and family/friend oral history informant.
late October—December	• Hold weekly interviews and conversations between students, residents, and family members. • Have students gather artifacts and photos. • Provide in-class support on researching the social/historic issues that arise. • Conduct ongoing reflection and support with all participants. • Engage in weekly check-in with project liaisons.
January—February	• Create Who's Who biography in student/family/resident teams. • Continue reflection and support with all participants and weekly check-in with project liaisons.
March	• Hold celebration and present biographies to family and residents. Hang biographies outside residents' rooms. • Have family members and students complete brief questionnaire and participate in separate focus groups to evaluate project. • De-brief project with all participating staff.
April	• Begin planning next year's project, using feedback from this year's participants.

The kids feel that our residents are so helpless and needy that they need to come here because they are going to make all the difference. I need to level that out and say that our residents do have needs, but they also have a lot to offer.

—LONG-TERM CARE STAFF MEMBER

The kids have done so much for me. When I see them, if anyone says to me, "Who's that?", I say, "That's family, that's family." But when the kids look at me, they get tears in their eyes. I've got to let them know, don't feel sorry for me, please. I want them to feel proud of me.

—RESIDENT

Preparing Youth

Orientation for students is essential at the beginning of your program. Without preparation, young people may feel uncomfortable—or even fearful—of visiting a long-term care facility and working with older people. They may not know how they should act or what they should do. In contrast, with effective preparation young people:

- **feel engaged**
- **have fewer fears and misconceptions**
- **are prepared for their roles**
- **know how to behave appropriately when visiting a facility**

Effective training covers specific content areas and uses engaging techniques. This chapter provides an overview of that content and suggests approaches to training. Forms and handouts are included.

Content Areas

Youth orientation generally includes four broad subject areas:

- Understanding Aging and Ageism
- Learning About the Program
- Learning About the Long-term Care Facility
- Understanding Rules and Expectations

Understanding Aging and Ageism

It is very important that young people have a broad view of aging so that they appreciate the heterogeneity of the older adult population. Young people who will be in a project with disabled elders need to understand that most older adults are able to take care of themselves. Youth who will be involved with healthy elders also need to recognize that sometimes older people have to face challenges and require assistance in meeting their daily needs. Students should learn that older adults can have productive and satisfying lives, whether or not they are disabled. The older adults with whom the young people will be working all have something to offer. However, it is important for students to acknowledge that there are both positive and negative aspects to the aging process.

Some strategies that increase understanding about aging and ageism include the following:

- Ask students to describe older people they know or who are famous.
- Have an older adult(s) visit the classroom and tell about his or her life.
- Read and discuss books or watch videos featuring older adults.
- Explore the concepts of stereotyping and diversity, especially if there are cultural and ethnic differences between the youth and the residents. This discussion can be folded into a discussion of stereotypes of older people. See Chapter 10, Activities, for some diversity-related activities.
- Conduct exercises that explore stereotypes about older people, such as "Who are the Elderly?" at the end of this chapter.
- Discuss the demography of aging. Students might be surprised to learn that by the time they are middle-aged adults, one out of every five Americans will be a senior citizen. Students may also be surprised to know that fewer than 5 percent of all older people live in nursing homes. For more information about demographics, see the U.S. Administration on Aging's Web site: http://www.aoa.gov.

Two websites provide curricular materials and reading lists on aging for use in classrooms:

- National Academy for Teaching & Learning about Aging at the University of North Texas: http://www.unt.edu/natla/
- Positively Aging at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio: http://positivelyaging.uthscsa.edu/

When Working with People in Nursing Homes

Young people who will be working with a nursing home population will require additional training. Students need to be prepared in advance for some of the sensory losses, frailties, and disabilities that they will witness. This information should be presented in a way that diminishes students' fears and assures them that, while residents may have varied difficulties, they can socialize and participate in the program. Students should understand the residents' experience and feel empathy, but not pity, for them. The Instant Aging activity on page 40 is a sensitization exercise that can help students better understand the sensory and physical changes frequently experienced by nursing home residents.

Key Facts for Students

Students who learn about aging and older adults will be more empathetic and engaged in an intergenerational program. Help them to remember the following:

- **Residents have much to offer.** Although many residents are disabled, this does not mean that they are unhappy or that they cannot understand what is going on. Young people have much to learn from older people.
- **People are in nursing homes because they need some assistance.** Students should expect that they will need to be patient and sometimes helpful.
- **Residents may have difficulty hearing and seeing.** Sensory problems can be frustrating for residents. Communication may take time and skill.
- **Certain techniques should be used for communicating with residents who have hearing or visual problems or other physical disabilities.** For example:
  - Talking at eye level and not standing over someone who is sitting or lying down
  - Speaking loudly in a low pitch, rather than yelling
  - Speaking slowly
  - Listening to residents and not finishing their sentences for them
- **Residents can forget things or become confused.** Sometimes when people get older, they become forgetful. While they are most likely to forget things that happened recently, they may clearly remember things from long ago (like old stories and songs). If a resident repeats something, the student should answer the resident respectfully and politely.
- **Physical problems are frequent.** Some residents may have arthritis that causes them pain, so young people need to be gentle when touching or hugging them. However, even a person who has difficulty moving or speaking can be aware of and interested in being with students. Some days residents do not feel well and may not be up to having visitors.
- **Long-term care facilities at times have an unpleasant smell.** Students who visit a nursing home should be prepared for occasional unpleasant odors, usually associated with cleaning products or residents' incontinence. Students should be tolerant of this and ask for staff assistance if the problem is acute or persistent.
- **Get help if a resident appears to be having a problem.** Students should know the location of a nursing station or nursing office in the event that a resident needs medical or nursing attention.

Understanding Aging and Ageism

It is very important that young people have a broad view of aging so that they appreciate the heterogeneity of the older adult population. Young people who will be in a project with disabled elders need to understand that most older adults are able to take care of themselves. Youth who will be involved with healthy elders also need to recognize that sometimes older people have to face challenges and require assistance in meeting their daily needs. Students should learn that older adults can have productive and satisfying lives, whether or not they are disabled. The older adults with whom the young people will be working all have something to offer. However, it is important for students to acknowledge that there are both positive and negative aspects to the aging process.

Some strategies that increase understanding about aging and ageism include the following:

- Ask students to describe older people they know or who are famous.
- Have an older adult(s) visit the classroom and tell about his or her life.
- Read and discuss books or watch videos featuring older adults.
- Explore the concepts of stereotyping and diversity, especially if there are cultural and ethnic differences between the youth and the residents. This discussion can be folded into a discussion of stereotypes of older people. See Chapter 10, Activities, for some diversity-related activities.
- Conduct exercises that explore stereotypes about older people, such as "Who are the Elderly?" at the end of this chapter.
- Discuss the demography of aging. Students might be surprised to learn that by the time they are middle-aged adults, one out of every five Americans will be a senior citizen. Students may also be surprised to know that fewer than 5 percent of all older people live in nursing homes. For more information about demographics, see the U.S. Administration on Aging's Web site: http://www.aoa.gov.

Two websites provide curricular materials and reading lists on aging for use in classrooms:

- National Academy for Teaching & Learning about Aging at the University of North Texas: http://www.unt.edu/natla/
- Positively Aging at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio: http://positivelyaging.uthscsa.edu/

When Working with People in Nursing Homes

Young people who will be working with a nursing home population will require additional training. Students need to be prepared in advance for some of the sensory losses, frailties, and disabilities that they will witness. This information should be presented in a way that diminishes students' fears and assures them that, while residents may have varied difficulties, they can socialize and participate in the program. Students should understand the residents' experience and feel empathy, but not pity, for them. The Instant Aging activity on page 40 is a sensitization exercise that can help students better understand the sensory and physical changes frequently experienced by nursing home residents.

Key Facts for Students

Students who learn about aging and older adults will be more empathetic and engaged in an intergenerational program. Help them to remember the following:

- **Residents have much to offer.** Although many residents are disabled, this does not mean that they are unhappy or that they cannot understand what is going on. Young people have much to learn from older people.
- **People are in nursing homes because they need some assistance.** Students should expect that they will need to be patient and sometimes helpful.
- **Residents may have difficulty hearing and seeing.** Sensory problems can be frustrating for residents. Communication may take time and skill.
- **Certain techniques should be used for communicating with residents who have hearing or visual problems or other physical disabilities.** For example:
  - Talking at eye level and not standing over someone who is sitting or lying down
  - Speaking loudly in a low pitch, rather than yelling
  - Speaking slowly
  - Listening to residents and not finishing their sentences for them
- **Residents can forget things or become confused.** Sometimes when people get older, they become forgetful. While they are most likely to forget things that happened recently, they may clearly remember things from long ago (like old stories and songs). If a resident repeats something, the student should answer the resident respectfully and politely.
- **Physical problems are frequent.** Some residents may have arthritis that causes them pain, so young people need to be gentle when touching or hugging them. However, even a person who has difficulty moving or speaking can be aware of and interested in being with students. Some days residents do not feel well and may not be up to having visitors.
- **Long-term care facilities at times have an unpleasant smell.** Students who visit a nursing home should be prepared for occasional unpleasant odors, usually associated with cleaning products or residents' incontinence. Students should be tolerant of this and ask for staff assistance if the problem is acute or persistent.
- **Get help if a resident appears to be having a problem.** Students should know the location of a nursing station or nursing office in the event that a resident needs medical or nursing attention.

Learning About the Program

Provide students with an overview of the project and their roles. Give them opportunities to be involved in decision-making about program activities; this will increase their enthusiasm. Review with young people their roles, the roles of the residents, and the skills they will need. Assure them that there will be school/youth organization and long-term care staff available to provide assistance. Distribute a written description of the program that lays out the necessary information and the project timetable, and encourage them to show it to their parents and families.

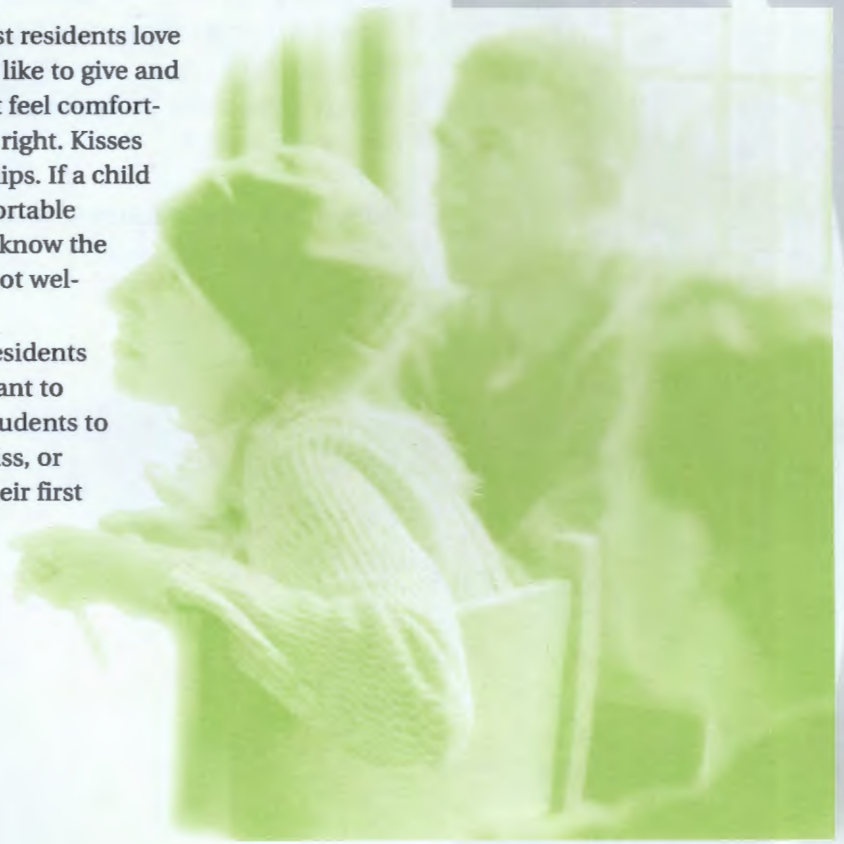
Learning About the Long-term Care Facility

Students need to be oriented to the facility and introduced to the people with whom they will work most closely. These staff can either come to the school to talk with the young people about the facility, or they can provide this information during a tour. This overview should cover the history of the facility, the services provided, and information about the residents (age, gender, religion, ethnicity, marital status, and where they are from). An effective and fun tool for familiarizing middle school students with the facility is the "Scavenger Hunt," on page 43, in which teams of students search a specified area of the facility.

Understanding Rules and Expectations

A discussion of what is expected of young people, should include the following:

- **Rules for appropriate behavior.** The long-term care facility is the residents' home; remind students that they are guests in it. Students should always wear name tags, move quietly and carefully throughout the facility, and dress and speak appropriately.
- **Guidelines for touching residents.** Most residents love being with children and they frequently like to give and receive hugs. If a young person does not feel comfortable hugging the resident, that too is all right. Kisses should always be on the cheek, not the lips. If a child is unsure about what a resident is comfortable with, they can ask. After students get to know the resident, they will know what is and is not welcome.
- **Accepted ways to address residents.** Residents will have preferences about how they want to be addressed. It is most respectful for students to initially address the residents by Mr., Miss, or Mrs.; if residents want to be called by their first names, they will say so. Always err on the side of politeness. Even when the resident's name tag lists the first name only, it is still respectful to ask, "May I call you by your first name?"



Confidentiality

By law, confidentiality is an essential right of people in long-term care facilities. This means not discussing any personal information relating to a resident's health, unless sharing information is required for providing care. There are three implications of confidentiality in intergenerational programs:

- Young people should not be told confidential information by long-term care staff.
- Students must keep any information they learn about the residents confidential. They may talk to other people about the resident, but they may not use the resident's name without explicit permission.
- Program leaders are also expected to maintain confidentiality.

Confidentiality issues often arise when a resident is ill. When staff have to discuss a resident's health publicly, they should protect that person's privacy by saying, for example, "Mrs. Smith is not feeling well and can't join us today," or "Mrs. Smith became very ill and will not be able to participate in the program at all." An added comment could be, "I will let her know that you were asking for her."

If a student and a resident have a strong bond and there is a desire on the part of one or both to see each other during the illness, the child's parents and the resident (or the person who has the resident's power of attorney if the resident is unable to express his or her own wishes) might be contacted to explore the practicality of this. Another option is to encourage the student to write a letter or card to the ill resident.

Journals and oral history projects also raise privacy issues. Before the program begins, partners need to address how to handle the publication of these materials. Publicly sharing any part of students' journals, discussions, and/or written pieces requires permission and a mutual agreement between the student and the resident. The facility may also recommend obtaining a signed consent from the resident. When appropriate, the long-term care facility should contact the person who has the resident's power of attorney for authorization.

Submitted by Diane Mokrzycki, Souderton Mennonite Homes

Effective Approaches for Training Youth

The best learning is interactive learning. Students remember better, are more enthusiastic, and apply knowledge more readily when they are actively involved in discovering ideas. More specifically, genuine learning occurs when students make sense of new information in the context of their own knowledge and life experiences. By engaging students in role plays, skits, games, races, contests, discussions, and problem-solving based on real-life issues, you will help them build a solid foundation for working with long-term care residents.

Interactive activities almost always require processing after they are completed to help young people understand their impact. For example, a role play might feature an older adult asking a young person personal questions that make the youth uncomfortable. Afterward, the trainer and all the young people involved should give constructive feedback on the role play by discussing what worked well and what did not, how the actors felt, and alternative ways the young person might have responded.

When appropriate, you may need to have training presented by teachers or professionals who are knowledgeable about the issues related to aging. It is preferable that the staff from the long-term care facility who will have the most contact with the youth conduct the sessions on sensitization to people with long-term care needs. This will help the youth develop confidence in the knowledge of the long-term care providers and introduce them to the people they will work with at the facility. Most long-term care facilities have staff who are responsible for employee orientation. Much of what is covered for new staff can be adapted for young visitors.

Practical Tips for Trainers

- Begin training sessions with an icebreaker. This process relaxes the youth, helps them become comfortable with the group and the trainer, and serves as a transition into the process and content of the training session. (Several icebreakers are included in Chapter 10, Activities.)
- Select a training space that is physically comfortable and contributes to group interaction.
- Be sure that you have adequate supplies, for example, name tags (if the youth do not know one another), manuals, handouts, pens, paper, newsprint, markers, tape, and special supplies required for any activities.
- If the session will last longer than an hour, put up an agenda and review it.
- Be aware that youth may have a range of literacy levels. Teachers and facilitators should discuss reading skills in advance and tailor materials to the group's skill level.
- Draw on the expertise of youth who have previously participated in this or a similar project.
- Encourage but do not pressure people to talk and ask questions.
- Recognize that youth have knowledge and experience on which to build; encourage participants to share their experiences.

- Reinforce important points through repetition using different formats. For example, write key discussion points on newsprint or on a blackboard to help people see and remember their ideas.
- Distribute handouts to young people on critical topics, such as behavior guidelines and confidentiality.
- Model good listening skills.
- Give opportunities for feedback.

For more information on group facilitation, see Chapter 7, "Implementing Your Program."

Orientation Activities

For Preschool-Age Children (under age 5)

Location. Because a tour of the long-term care facility is inappropriate for very young children, the orientation should take place at their school or program site. When they do visit the facility, they should meet with residents in common spaces.

Activities

- Have one or two residents come and tell the children about themselves and their home.
- Read and discuss age-appropriate stories about "grandfriends" (see the Resources section on page 117 for a Web address of book and video lists).
- Draw or show pictures of an older person and create a story based on the pictures.
- Show video greetings from residents.
- Teach a song that will be used later when visiting with residents.
- Show a wheelchair or other items children might see during their visits.

For Elementary School-Age Children

Location. For these young people, the orientation can take place at the school or at the facility.

Activities

- Discuss what the children will do when they visit the facility.
- Read age-appropriate stories about grandfriends.
- Draw or show pictures of one or two elderly people and create a story about them.
- Teach a song to use later with residents.
- Have one or two residents come and tell children about themselves and their home.
- Have children share some of the activities and other fun things they do with their grandfriends.
- Teach children how to escort someone in a wheelchair.
- Facilitate discussion of past experiences with older people, including the children's fears and concerns, and your expectations.
- Give a tour of the areas in the facility where the children will be meeting with residents.

For Middle School, High School, and College-Age Youth

Much of the orientation content for older youth—middle school, high school, and college students—can be folded into science, social studies, and math lessons. For example, older students might study and explain the causes and demography of cognitive changes in humans for a science class. A discussion of residents' rights and confidentiality issues would make a rich social studies lesson.

Location. Some of the orientation activities for older youth could be done at the school or program site and might take more than one session. These students should also receive a full tour of the facility.

Activities

- Do the "Instant Aging" exercise (page 40) if the students are working with a disabled population. "Instant Aging" is best done in a class or youth group setting.
- Engage students in role plays (for example, on problems of the elderly, safety awareness, or appropriate helping behaviors).
- Conduct a tour of the facility.
- Do crossword puzzles and word search games, or lead a scavenger hunt (such as the one on page 43) for safety and information. This is most appropriate for middle school students. Younger students should not be walking around a facility unsupervised, and older students may find these games childish.
- Involve students in art or music activities to discharge anxiety and express feelings.
- Provide older students with handouts about Alzheimer's disease and other problems facing long-term care residents.
- Teach the youth how to escort someone in a wheelchair.
- Facilitate a discussion to provide an opportunity for the students to express fears, and/or share their past experiences with older persons and for you to describe your expectations and the program goals.

Orientation Materials

1. **Instant Aging**
2. **Welcome to Our Facility!**
3. **Facility Scavenger Hunt**
4. **Who Are the Elderly?**
5. **Answer Guide to "Who Are the Elderly?"**

1. Instant Aging

Before You Begin

"Instant Aging" should only be used if youth will be working with frail older adults. If not implemented properly, it may promote negative stereotypes of older people. "Instant Aging" should be one element of a more comprehensive training program.

Goals

- To simulate some of the physical changes that may accompany aging
- To allow participants to experience feelings of dependency
- To help participants learn appropriate ways to assist and communicate with older adults who have disabilities
- To explore the difference between sympathy and empathy

Time

Approximately one hour

Supplies

To simulate the aging experience, you will need any or all of the following: masking tape, unpopped popcorn, eyeglasses with Vaseline on the lenses, wax earplugs, and a wheelchair. The other supplies you will need depend on the activity you choose (e.g., you will need paper and pens if you decide to have the students write a letter). You will also need newsprint and markers or a chalkboard. At least two people are needed to facilitate this activity with a group of 10 or more.

Procedure

1. Introduce this activity by telling students the goals for the lesson and warning them that they might experience some discomfort or frustration. Then walk around the room distributing supplies:

- Tape some students' hands, arms, and legs to simulate strokes and arthritis, making sure that participants have different amounts of loss and mobility (the range should be from thumbs and index fingers taped together to legs and arms completely taped to the chair).
- Give eyeglasses with lenses covered in Vaseline to some students.
- Give earplugs to some students.
- Place popcorn in students' shoes (to simulate arthritis, corns, calluses, and bunions).
- Have one or more students sit in the wheelchair.

2. Choose an activity that requires a motor skill, such as writing a letter or eating a snack. Have supplies for activities in one corner of the room; ask students to get what they need, bring it back to their seats, and then complete the activity. Tell students who can't do it that they may ask for help.

3. After they have completed the activity, have students remove their aging gear.

4. Facilitate a thorough discussion of this activity. Ask questions such as:

- How did you feel when you had limited use of your body?
- What physical condition do you think we were trying to simulate for you? (This question is a springboard for talking about some of the changes that come with aging.)
- How did it feel to be dependent on other people?
- How did you adapt to these limitations?
- How did it feel to be limited and to see others struggling with their limitations?
- Did you reach out to help others?
- Did you ask for help when it was needed? Why or why not? How did it feel to ask for and receive (or not receive) help?

5. Discuss how an older person with a disability might want to be treated. Write the words *sympathy* and *empathy* on the board or on newsprint. Ask students to define these words. Provide clear definitions of both concepts. Ask students if they think the purpose of the exercise is to generate sympathy or empathy. Make sure that the students understand that nursing home residents want to be treated with respect. The purpose of the exercise is to help young people understand one aspect of a disabled person's experience (empathy), not to generate pity (sympathy). Just as they may have had fun participating in "Instant Aging," long-term care residents are all capable of having a great time, too.

6. Discuss how disabilities affect the ways that students communicate with residents (see page 34).

7. Make it clear that these disabilities are not experienced by all older people. You have to be very careful not to feed into stereotypes.

2. Welcome to Our Facility!

[This form for young people, middle school-age and older, can be adapted by your facility. Work with the teacher to adjust the reading level for your group. Give each student two copies, one to keep and one to return to the teacher or long-term care staff. Review the form with the group.]

We're glad that you are spending some time with us. Here are a few things we would like you to know about our residents and our facility before you get started. Please feel free to ask questions along the way!

Our residents value and deserve privacy. Please knock before entering a resident's room.

Some of our residents may have difficulty hearing. When speaking with our residents, please be sure you are facing them. Make plenty of eye contact and speak slowly and clearly. Speak up, but don't shout!

When a resident is sitting, do not stand over her or him while you talk. Sit or crouch so that you are at eye level.

A resident may be forgetful and ask you the same question several times in one conversation. Politely answer the question so you do not embarrass the resident. If a resident seems confused, try to pick out something that he or she is saying that you do understand, and respond to that.

Our residents love to see smiles (especially yours), so please use them.

When pushing a resident in a wheelchair, please check to see that the resident's feet are on the footrests and the resident's arms are inside the chair.

Be sure to put the brakes on the resident's wheelchair when it is in a resting position.

Be sure to put the elevator on hold before transporting residents on and off.

Wash your hands after visiting a resident or pushing a wheelchair.

Please wear your ID badge/name tag at every visit.

Always conduct yourself in a calm and polite manner.

Respect our residents by not talking about their confidential information when you leave the facility.

If the resident has an unexpected problem, tell the resident that you are getting help, and immediately find the nearest staff person or go to the nursing station.

Our fire alarm system is checked frequently. If you hear the alarm sounding, please ask the closest staff person if the alarm is just a test or a real emergency. If in doubt, assume it is an emergency and leave the building. During a fire emergency, stay out of the elevators.

Have fun!

I have read, understand, and have had the opportunity to ask questions concerning the above information. I agree to follow **Facility Name** guidelines for visitors.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Submitted by the staff of Saunders House

3. Facility Scavenger Hunt

[In teams of five to eight, children should be given approximately 15 to 20 minutes to walk around designated areas of a facility to fill in their scavenger hunt form. Adapt this form to reflect what you want young people to know about your facility. This activity is most appropriate for middle school-age children.]

Write down the number above the elevator brake switch.

Name a resident who has the same color shirt as you do.

Find out the name of a resident with the same birthday month as you.

Write down the occupation of someone who lives on the third floor.

Find out the color of the button in the stairwell that will unlock a closed door.

List one item found on the nurses' station desk.

Name two locations of visitor bathrooms.

Name a resident with the same color eyes as you.

Describe two objects in hallways that are unfamiliar to you.

Submitted by the staff of Saunders House

4. Who Are the Elderly?

Most older people live in institutions, such as nursing homes.	TRUE	FALSE
Old people are ill and unable to care for themselves.	TRUE	FALSE
Most old people are productive and active.	TRUE	FALSE
The major problems of the elderly are not determined by their age.	TRUE	FALSE
Most older people become senile.	TRUE	FALSE
Old people become rigid, demanding, and irritable.	TRUE	FALSE
The elderly have many of the same problems as other minorities.	TRUE	FALSE
Illness is a natural part of old age.	TRUE	FALSE
Nowadays, adult children don't take care of their elderly relatives as they did in the "good old days."	TRUE	FALSE

Adapted from A Guide to Caring for the Elderly, *published by The Partnership Group, Inc., 1988*

5. Answer Key: Who Are the Elderly?

False. Fewer than 5 percent of those 65 or over live in institutions.

False. Although 81 percent of individuals 65 and older do have various chronic conditions, including high blood pressure, arthritis, heart trouble and diabetes, these ailments are seldom limiting. Statistically, older people suffer from fewer acute illnesses than younger people.

True. Older people provide substantial services to young family members including repairs, homemaking, errands, shopping, baby-sitting, and nursing the ill. Seniors are also active volunteers.

True. The major problems of the elderly are caused by such variables as reduced income, lack of employment, lack of meaningful activity or medical care, absence of dignity, and boredom.

False. Senility is not an inevitable consequence of growing old. In normal aging, there is no decline in intelligence and very little change in memory. Dementia can be symptomatic of disease, depression, side effects of medications or nutritional deficiencies. A very small number of people actually become "senile" or "demented."

False. Changes in personality are not caused by aging. Young people who are rigid, demanding, and irritable will most likely have those same personality traits when they grow older.

True. In many situations, older persons are oppressed and underprivileged. People associate old age with fear, prejudice, and stereotypes. Just as our society has racism and sexism, so it has ageism.

False. Illness is a natural part of life, no matter what your age. Many of the chronic diseases associated with the elderly (arthritis, back problems, and pulmonary and heart disease) become symptomatic during youth and middle age and can be treated and controlled with today's medical technology.

False. Studies show that older people are not separated or alienated from their families. As a matter of fact, these days we provide more care and more complex care over a longer period of time than ever before.

Recruiting and Preparing Residents

CHAPTER 6

If someone is new here, I talk with them individually about the programs with kids. One resident said, "I have no stories to tell." So I gave her a few sample questions, and she got into it.
—LONG-TERM CARE STAFF MEMBER

When we got to the nursing home, the resident didn't even know that we were interviewing her, and it was like we were just barging in on her time. I felt uncomfortable at first because she's sitting there on her bed, and now all of a sudden we want to do an interview. She didn't know what was going on. They should have talked to the residents before we came.
—HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

Recruiting and Preparing Residents

Many residents are enthusiastic about intergenerational programs and will not miss an opportunity to be with young people. Others are not interested, and their choice not to participate must be respected. Still other residents may be reluctant to participate and may need encouragement from the staff.

Goals for Recruitment and Preparation

Staff should encourage residents to attend the first meeting of an intergenerational program before deciding if they want to continue. Recruitment and preparation activities should aim to do the following:

- Introduce the program and describe its goals.
- Excite the residents about the program.
- Clarify the residents' roles and responsibilities.
- Address and alleviate their fears.
- Build residents' confidence.
- Provide general information about the students that residents will be working with.
- Explore residents' attitudes about young people.
- Break down age-related stereotypes.
- Provide information about where residents can go for help and support.

Tips for Recruiting and Preparing Residents

- Announce the program at a residents' council meeting or during another activity. Ask attendees to spread the word. Advertise the project on a central bulletin board. Post photos, artwork, and written materials from past intergenerational programs. You can also use an appealing flyer to announce the project and to provide basic information about the activity and the schedule. (See the sample flyer for recruiting residents to "Reading Partners" at the end of this chapter.)
- Approach residents individually to build their interest. One-to-one conversations allow you to provide thorough information about the project, clarify the residents' and young people's roles, and identify and address specific concerns.
- Inform the residents of the time commitment involved. In deciding the length of a program, you will want to strike a balance between having enough time for the residents and students to bond and some residents' reluctance to make a substantial time commitment. Residents who are more active or who are new to a facility may be more interested in trying out a program if it doesn't take too much time. As residents become more accustomed to and enjoy intergenerational programs, they may be more open to lengthier programs.

- Emphasize what the residents can offer the young people. Residents are particularly responsive to the concepts of being mentors and teachers. If residents voice the concern that they have nothing to offer, remind them of their strengths. Emphasize to the residents that they are the keepers of history; they know things and have experiences the young people can learn from.
- Describe what the young people can offer the residents: affection, a fresh perspective on current events, and knowledge of new technologies, along with surprises and fun. Explain that each resident's participation will contribute to the program's success.
- Explore the residents' perceptions and feelings about young people. Point out that ageism can go both ways—people not understanding older adults, and people not understanding youth. (See the "Teenagers Are..." activity at the end of this chapter for an exercise on stereotyping.)
- Ask residents experienced in intergenerational programs to recruit new residents. Encouragement from a peer is often more persuasive than from a staff person.
- Show residents samples of final products from previous programs. For example, books and paintings based on other residents' oral histories may motivate residents to participate themselves.
- Involve residents in planning intergenerational projects, for example, by serving on an intergenerational planning committee.
- Encourage residents to come and see, to give the program a try at the first meeting. They can then decide whether they want to continue.
- If the program involves trips to the students' school or with the young people, emphasize the opportunity the project gives for the residents to be in a different environment.
- All participating residents, regardless of level of cognitive ability, should be reminded verbally and/or in writing about an activity the day before it is scheduled.
- Residents with cognitive impairments may not be able to fully understand and integrate all the information described above, and you may have to remind them of specific details closer to the time of the program. Direct care staff, and nurse aides in particular, should be fully informed about all scheduled activities so that they can encourage the resident to participate, assist in getting the resident ready on time, or assess if the resident should not or does not wish to participate. In some cases, staff will decide that certain residents with severe cognitive impairments might not be suited for intergenerational programs.

Younger Adult Residents

The nursing home population is undergoing demographic changes. About 12 percent of nursing home residents in the United States are now 65 and younger.[1] Most have chronic care needs resulting from illness, accidents, drug use, or injuries due to violence. Interacting with children and teens may be particularly meaningful for these adult residents.

Younger adult residents often enjoy talking with teens or middle school students about current events and having the opportunity to teach or influence them. For example, one resident who was in a long-term care facility following gun shot injuries talked with his teen partner about avoiding gangs.

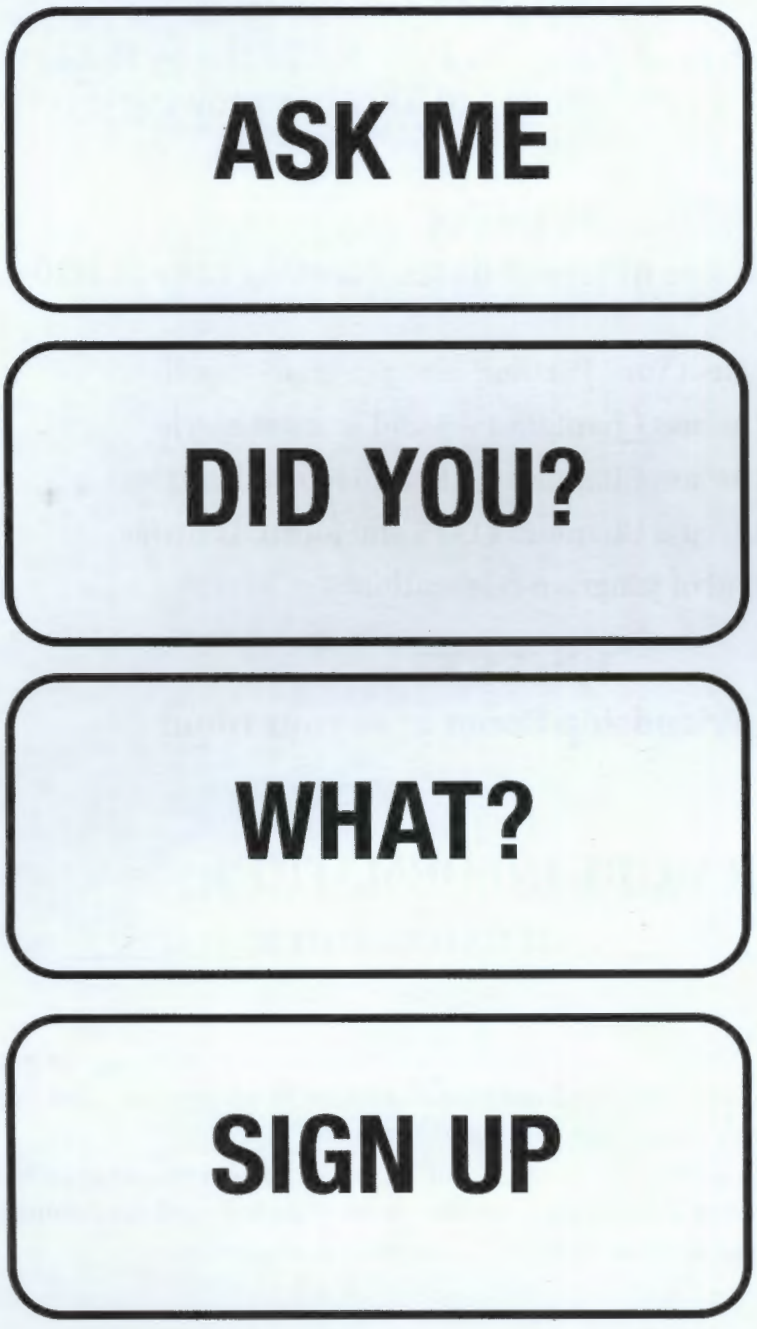
However, some young adults may feel especially stigmatized by being in a long-term care facility and as a result be reluctant to participate in intergenerational programs. In these cases, it is essential that staff talk individually with the resident to realistically address his or her concerns. Often, participation in group activities with children can help to enhance younger residents' relationships with older adults living in the facility and may increase their comfort with group activities.

Youth who will be working with younger adult residents should receive specialized training and follow-up. Preparation should include discussion of the reasons that younger people live in nursing homes, a reminder that they can still have a good quality of life, data on the prevalence of institutionalization among adults under age 65, and an emphasis on the need to treat all residents with respect. Work between younger residents and youth may be emotionally charged and require follow-up attention. As with all programs, reflection is of great importance to help residents and youth process their experiences.

[1] Spector, W. et al (2000). *AHQR research report: The characteristics of long-term care users.* Available on-line at http://www.ahcpr.gov/research/ltcusers.

Sample Activity for Residents to Recruit Other Residents

The badges below were used by Martins Run Retirement Community as a tool for residents to recruit other residents to a special weekend-long intergenerational event (see "L'Dor v'Dor" in Chapter 10, Activities). A committee of approximately 10 residents wore these badges for the two weeks leading up to the event. The committee was oriented so that they could answer questions about the weekend. They also had written information to distribute. The badges created a buzz at the facility—other residents asked the committee members what these badges were about. Ultimately, more than 100 residents participated in the weekend event, demonstrating the impact of resident enthusiasm on other residents' attitudes toward projects. This strategy can be used to recruit residents to participate in any intergenerational project.



Sample Flyer for Recruiting Residents to "Reading Partners"

WANTED: Book Lovers!

WHY?

A small group of students from Area High School have invited residents to join them in a reading project. Each student is seeking a partner with whom to meet, discuss, and share writings.

WHAT?

Participants will each read *A Day No Pigs Would Die* by Robert Newton Peck. This is a story about a Shaker boy growing up on a farm in the 1920s.

WHEN?

Students will visit on five different dates. Meeting time is 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm:

FEBRUARY 7	**"Meet Your Partner" and program overview**
FEBRUARY 21	**Discuss Chapters 1 – 5 and journal entries**
MARCH 7	**Discuss Chapters 6 – 10 and journal entries**
MARCH 21	**Discuss Chapters 11–15 and journal entries**
MARCH 29	**End of program celebration!**

WHERE?

You can meet in the Friendship Room or in your room or apartment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call _____ at extension x_____

Notes: This flyer is in large type, is easy for residents to read, and includes a catchy clip-art graphic. The book chosen reflected the interests of both residents and youth. In this case, the youth participants lived in a rural community and the residents were Mennonite.

When dealing with residents in independent living facilities—many of whom have busy calendars—it is preferable to create a flyer that specifies dates and the extent of the expected commitment.

Adapted from materials submitted by Diane Mokrzycki, Souderton Mennonite Homes

Sample Activity for Sensitizing Residents to Youth

Teenagers Are...*

Conduct this group activity with residents before their first meeting with students.

Goals

- To encourage older adults, in a nonjudgmental atmosphere, to express their stereotypes, misconceptions, and perceptions about teenagers
- To teach older people about the dynamics of ageism

Time

Approximately one hour

Supplies Needed

Paper, pencils, newsprint, and markers

Procedure

1. Write "teenager" on the newsprint.

2. Ask participants to tell you the first thing they think of when they see this word. Record all responses on the newsprint. If the group gets stuck, have them think about how teenagers look, what they do each day, what their personalities are like, and other qualities and habits. Try to record at least 30 responses.

3. Next, ask the participants to think about a teenager with whom they have or had a relationship. Ask them to write a paragraph about that person. If writing is difficult for participants, you can instead have them talk in small groups.

4. Ask volunteers to read their paragraphs or report on their small-group discussions. Record key phrases on the newsprint.

5. As the first list is almost always different from the second, see if participants can identify the differences and ask them why they think the lists are so different. Try to elicit responses about the stereotypes in the first list and impressions based on experience in the second list.

6. Introduce the word "ageism" and explain that it works the same way as sexism and racism. Discuss the ways that older people are stereotyped by younger people and the ways that the young are stereotyped by older adults.

Repeat this activity at the end of the project, so that residents can reflect on what they learned and how their attitudes toward teenagers were affected.

** This activity can be adapted for other age groups (e.g., "College students are...", "Elementary pupils are...").*

Implementing Your Program

Implementing Your Program

The program is planned. The students are trained. The residents are ready. Now it's time to implement your program. This chapter presents tips on group facilitation, reviews strategies for dealing with common challenges, and discusses issues related to ending your program.

Group Facilitation

Facilitators play a key role in implementing intergenerational programs. They are most active at the beginning of a project. Facilitators have the following responsibilities:

- Informing participants of the day's agenda
- Working with the group to establish ground rules
- Helping youth and elders come together as a group and relate to each other comfortably
- Directing the group toward its goals
- Helping youth and elders part from one another comfortably
- Ensuring participation from all

Who Facilitates?

Intergenerational group activities may be facilitated by a long-term care facility staff person, a teacher or youth leader, and/or an outside consultant. These persons may facilitate individually or as a team. An effective facilitator is:

- enthusiastic, warm, and caring
- skilled in communication and group leadership
- aware of his or her personal values and attitudes toward youth and older adults
- knowledgeable about human development
- understanding of the needs and capabilities of the participant populations

What Are the Guidelines for Facilitation?

- **Be human.** It's all right to make a mistake and not know everything. Facilitation is not an exact science.
- **Be the facilitator, not a group member.** Rather than participate in the group activity, continue to observe and direct the group.
- **Be prepared.** Review and focus on the goals and plan for the activity. Try to take a few moments to relax before the group begins.
- **Arrange the space where the group will meet.** Seating should make it as easy as possible for people to interact with one another and complete the program task. Make sure that you have the supplies you need and that the facilities are in good order.
- **Welcome participants as they arrive.**
- **Use name tags and call participants by their names.**
- **Clarify participants' expectations.** This will help to ensure that everyone has similar goals for the day.

- **Use your strengths and foibles to your advantage.** If you are funny, be funny. If you are dramatic, be flamboyant. If you are shy, let the group know, and discuss how people get over shyness to make connections. If you sing off-key, ask for the group's assistance in leading a welcome song, then show them that anyone can sing.
- **Keep your finger on the pulse of the group.** Notice participants' level of involvement and listen to what the group is telling you. Be aware of body language, yawns, and side conversations for signs of how involved your group is. Ask participants how they are feeling; ask yourself what you are feeling.
- **Be flexible with your agenda.** If the group is deeply involved in one activity, stick with it and skip the next agenda item. If the group is bored or restless, move on to another activity or take a break.
- **Be inclusive.** Politely cut off those who monopolize a discussion or activity, and ask quieter participants if there is something that they would like to add or do.
- **Welcome the expression of feelings and emotions.** This may be very satisfying to participants.
- **Set appropriate limits.** If someone expresses a strong emotion in a group or reveals sensitive or very personal information, decide whether you think it is appropriate to discuss it within the group. If not, gracefully move the focus away from these matters (e.g., "I think you and I might want to talk about that later, one on one. Let's keep the group discussion general"). Make sure to either talk personally to this individual afterward, or share the information with other involved staff to follow up; don't leave the person hanging.
- **Seek feedback from group members after the activity.**

Group Facilitation with Infirm Residents

Sometimes the residents may be sleepy and lethargic, while the young people are extremely energetic. Talk about these differences, and give the youth an activity that lets them burn off some of that energy while the residents watch. Then do an activity to gently energize the residents.

A resident's cognitive status can change from session to session, which can be frustrating for young people. Model for the students how to break an activity into steps or modify a task to make it simpler. Also, during their orientation, tell them to expect that their partners may have both up and down days, and that they, like detectives, must try to deduce ways to meet the residents' needs.

Some residents may get upset or irritable if overstimulated. During orientation, role-play solutions for dealing with this problem, such as refocusing the resident's attention, giving the resident more physical space, or finding a quieter area to move to.

Deal with problems as they arise. Do not expect everything to go exactly as you planned. As you work together to resolve problems, recognize and respect the validity of your partner's experiences and perspective.

Anticipating and Addressing Challenges

While many challenges may arise over the course of an intergenerational project, you will find that most problems can be solved if your program has strong internal support and a strong external partnership. Below are some typical challenges that intergenerational programs face and some strategies for dealing with them.

Feeling Overburdened

A great deal of effort is involved in implementing intergenerational programs. Sometimes staff use their own personal time to do the planning. They may feel overburdened or get burned out. Here are some helpful strategies for dealing with this challenge:

- Plan in advance who will do what, and put it in writing.
- Delegate. At long-term care facilities, ask activity aides and members of other departments to coordinate a program. This is both a satisfying professional challenge and a way for people to share in the effort. At schools and youth organizations, look to teacher aides and parent volunteers for assistance.
- Arrange for liaisons to take turns facilitating groups and doing other needed preparation.

Remember, things will become easier as you get more experienced.

Scheduling

Both long-term care facilities and schools have tight schedules. The following strategies can help:

- Ask school and long-term care facility administrators for help in modifying schedules. If fixed mealtimes are making scheduling difficult, have youth and residents eat together.
- Encourage residents to keep their commitment to the program and avoid scheduling other activities during program time. Remind them that they are important to the children.

Transportation

If the school is not within walking distance of the facility, then transportation arrangements can become difficult. Here are some tips for solving transportation challenges:

- Find out whether the school or district owns buses or vans that can be used for field trips.
- Use long-term care vans to transport children. Make sure that there is proper insurance coverage and that you have signed permission slips from parents. Explore what to do when the van is being used for other essential purposes, such as taking residents to medical appointments.
- Ask older teens and college students to drive themselves to long-term care facilities if transportation is not available.

- Encourage older students to take public transportation. Some communities give discount fares to students. When using public transportation, it is important to have adequate supervision and to make sure that the students have written information about the route they are taking and about how to get in touch with the facility and school in the event that they get separated from the group.
- Try transporting residents to where the young people are. While this may be logistically complicated, residents often enjoy a change of scenery.

Staff Turnover and Leaves of Absence

Staff turnover can be disruptive. Sometimes it causes programs to end altogether, which is very upsetting to both residents and children. To help your program endure through these changes, consider these suggestions:

- Build your partnerships between organizations, not individuals. This is one of the most important reasons for getting signatures from administrators at both organizations.
- Designate a back-up liaison during the planning process.
- Get buy-in from a variety of staff within each organization. The more people who have signed a written plan and are involved, informed, and enthusiastic, the less vulnerable your program is to being disrupted if a key person leaves.

Resident Death

In many intergenerational programs, particularly those in nursing homes, a time may come when a resident dies. Young people should be informed at the beginning of a project that residents may get sick or die during the course of the program. This can effectively be addressed in the context of discussing the life cycle: Residents are nearing the end of life, and death is natural. When a resident dies, a number of steps should be followed:

1. A member of the long-term care staff should immediately notify the liaison at the school or youth organization. The children should not learn about a death when they arrive at the facility for a visit.

2. The child who has been working as a partner with that resident should be informed privately. Let him or her know that it is all right to be upset. Encourage the child to remember and discuss the things that the two of them enjoyed together. If the teacher has any concern about a particular child, the teacher should involve the school counselor.

3. Inform the parent of the child who was closest to the resident about the death. Consider sending a note to all participants' parents saying that there was a loss.

I used to visit somebody; she passed away a couple of weeks ago, which was really sad because I was seeing her every other week. I was in shock because it didn't seem like anything was wrong with her. The staff told me that she had gotten up in the morning and she took a nap in the middle of the day and she passed away. I'm OK, but I miss her. But I visited somebody else and that makes me feel good.

—SIXTH GRADER

Tell the youth that they were among the last new friends the resident made in his or her life and that this is a gift that they gave the resident.

4. If the young person was working on a project for or about the resident, such as an oral history, encourage the student to complete the assignment. Final projects can be given to the family or long-term care staff.

5. Depending on the nature of the resident's relationship with the group, the teacher could consider talking with the whole class about the resident. The school counselor should be present for additional support. This can lead to a general discussion about the end of life.

6. At some point after the children are informed, check in with them to see what they are thinking and feeling. For many children, this may be their first experience dealing with death.

7. When answering questions about a resident's death, teachers will need to use their own judgment about how to balance honesty and privacy and at the same time protect the young people from disturbing information. Ask the long-term care staff if there is something they can share with the students about the resident's death that is both honest and uplifting, such as "she died peacefully" or "he had his family with him."

8. Let the young people who worked with the resident know that they brought pleasure to the resident at the end of his or her life. Tell them about the positive experiences that the resident had in the intergenerational program.

9. Incorporate the death into planned reflection activities.

10. Make arrangements for a new resident partner at the next visit, if it is feasible and deemed appropriate.

11. If a young person expresses interest in attending the resident's funeral or memorial service, have the teacher get information from the long-term care facility and contact the parents.

12. Encourage students to create a memento for the family that describes the students' memories of the resident.

These steps can also be adapted for instances when a child or resident unexpectedly leaves a program due to illness or relocation.

Program Endings

I hate to see them go. I feel kind of lonesome.
—Resident

The thing I didn't like is you got to know the residents so well and then all of a sudden you have to leave because it's not in the school project. It's like moving away; you don't see them anymore.
—Sixth grader

Frequently, residents and youth are sad at the end of a project. They have formed a new friendship but do not have a structure for continued visits. When programs conclude, usually at the end of a school year, residents feel a void. Children give them personal attention, bring vitality to their environment, and provide them with an opportunity to be affectionate. Youth miss their partners as well. Children sometimes feel concern about leaving their residents alone; they express feelings of guilt.

Tips for Ending Programs

- While continuing the relationship should be encouraged (and sometimes actually does happen), it is essential that children are told not to promise to stay in touch with residents unless they are certain that they will follow up. Such unfulfilled promises cause residents to feel rejected and let down.
- At the conclusion of a program, lead a structured reflection on separation. Have individuals speak first with their partners, then with the whole group. Have them discuss their shared experiences and meaningful ways to say goodbye to one another.
- Have residents and children exchange mementos. For example, it is comforting for participants to receive photos of themselves with their partners. It may be even more special if they personalize the mementos, for example, by painting the picture frames together.
- Include a celebratory event toward the end of the project. Provide time during this event or at an additional visit for residents and children to say goodbye.
- Remind residents and children that another group of young people will be coming to the facility and that the residents will have an opportunity to make other friends. If there are no groups coming in over the summer, tell residents that, like the children, they too are taking a summer break but can expect to see children again in the fall. Whenever possible, staff should attempt to accentuate the positives of the program so that participants end with feelings of hope and satisfaction.

Enhancing Programs Through the Arts and Humanities

CHAPTER 8

It's like you help them paint their past so you can help them keep it in their memory.
—SIXTH GRADE STUDENT

I was doing something positive with the kids, doing it together. I painted with them and they showed me how to paint. I don't know anything about painting. . . I'd do it with them again.
—NURSING HOME RESIDENT

Enhancing Programs Through the Arts and Humanities

The arts and humanities entertain, engage, empower, enlighten, and educate. When young people and older adults collaborate as artists or historians, when they explore the meaning of diversity or discuss literature, age differences lose significance. These collaborations offer an exciting way for children and the elderly to learn about one another's lives and develop meaningful relationships. This chapter presents information and tips for using music, dramatic arts, visual arts, poetry/writing, and oral history in intergenerational programs, and contains information on how to engage an outside artist in your project.

The Arts

The arts can be the primary focus of a project or be used secondarily to enhance a partnership. You do not need a trained artist to incorporate the arts effectively. However, when an arts teacher, a community artist, or a person trained in arts therapy is involved, your projects can be more ambitious.

Music

Singing, drumming, clapping, finger-snapping—people respond to music. Young and old enjoy playing tambourines, maracas, wooden sticks, and drums. The combination of music and young people gets long-term care residents moving and energized, even those who are in wheelchairs. Sometimes residents who are not able to remember what they said or did a few minutes earlier can sing along with songs from their youth. At one retirement community, a woman in her 90s, who was trained as a pianist at a top conservatory, played piano duets with the children who visited her.

If you cannot find someone who is trained in leading music groups, do not give up. Find out if an enthusiastic volunteer, teacher, staff person, or parent would be willing to share some musical talents with your intergenerational group. Even if no one is available to play an instrument, you can learn how to lead activities using recorded music. Chapter 10, Activities, suggests two music-focused exercises: "Songwriting Workshop" and "Social Event/Celebration."

Tips for Using Music in Intergenerational Programs

- When possible, enlist a music therapist to facilitate or help design your intergenerational groups. He or she will have knowledge of the developmental needs and abilities of both age groups and how to use music to achieve the group's goals. Contact the American Music Therapy Association or a local university for recommendations.
- Look for grant sources to involve local musicians in your intergenerational groups. Check universities and music societies for community service programs that may send musicians or students free of charge.
- Plan structured programs. Find or create group "theme songs" to signal the beginning and end of sessions.
- Be an enthusiastic musical model, no matter what your musical skill or experience level is.
- Avoid overstimulating your participants. Music should not be loud or constant.
- Use familiar material. American favorites, like "Home on the Range," and children's songs are good choices.

- Use songs with simple structure.
- Sing rounds and partner songs; these are a beautiful and easy way to achieve harmony.
- Have groups teach each other popular songs of their own generations.
- If you use song sheets, make sure the print is readable.
- Sing in a vocal range that is comfortable for all ages.
- Use music with strong rhythms like big band, blue grass, or world music to entice movement.
- Bring props, such as a parachute, scarves, balls, or streamers, to encourage movement and communication.
- Adapt musical games (Name that Tune, Hot Potato, Musical Chairs) to fit the needs of your group.
- Add music to well known games: Bingo, Jeopardy, Trivia, Follow the Leader.
- Make sure that the instruments you use make a pleasing sound and will not easily break.
- Draw on existing resources for ideas, but also be creative.

Dramatic Arts

The use of the dramatic arts in intergenerational programs provides participants with many opportunities to be creative:

- trying out new roles and behaviors
- using their imagination
- exploring and acknowledging the importance of fantasies
- being playful
- being permitted to do what they are often told not to do
- being a different age, sex, and race from who they "usually" are
- bringing to life images they would like to see in themselves
- discovering how much everyone has in common, regardless of age and other apparent differences

Here are some possible activities, which range in complexity. You can tailor them to your group's skills and interests:

- **Warm-ups** or "icebreakers" are brief full-group activities that are used to help people get to know one another and feel comfortable together. They break down barriers, get people involved, loosen them up, and get them laughing. Icebreaking activities should be included at the beginning of all projects, but may also be used intermittently throughout a project to reinforce group cohesion. With icebreakers, the facilitator should explain each exercise in an uncomplicated, easy-to-understand fashion. Icebreakers only slightly challenge people's creativity and are suitable for residents with some cognitive impairment. Multiple warm-ups should last approximately a total of 15 minutes. (See "Icebreakers" in Chapter 10, Activities.)
- **Games** go one step further than warm-ups. They involve participants in basic dramatic activities. A game should be simple to explain, and easy to execute, and it should challenge participants on a slightly higher level than the warm-ups. Games are done in subgroups of four to five people. Two to three games usually last 30–40 minutes total. (See "Games" and "Mask Characterizations" in Chapter 10, Activities.)

Improvisation is Teamwork

Most effective intergenerational drama activities are improvisational, i.e., the participants—actors—make things up on the spot as they go along. Even though improvisation is unrehearsed and spontaneous, it is not unstructured. You will need a skilled facilitator to set parameters for the improvisational exercise and give clear instructions. The audience may also participate by suggesting topics or joining a scene.

Part of the beauty of improvisation is that it is about teamwork. With improvisation, the actor "accepts the offer"; actors go with the flow provided to them by their partners. Actors cannot negate the offers made to them. If, for example, one actor acts like a dog, the partner must respond as though that actor is a dog and not treat the actor like a cat. Actors make the best of what is offered. Actors learn how to give and take and let their partners shine.

- **Scene work**, or role plays, involves improvisational performance followed by discussion. Two to four group members get in front of the group to act out a structured scene, incorporating audience input. The audience and actors imagine issues or scenarios, and the scene develops from there. Scene work allows participants to explore a variety of personas. Two to three scenes with discussion can be done in 25–35 minutes. (See "Dialogues" in Chapter 10, Activities, for an example of scene work.)
- **Planned performances** grow out of the experiences and expressions of participants and may be the culmination of a long-term project. Performances provide an opportunity to expound on individuals' personal histories or on the history of the intergenerational relationships that have developed over time. Performers have the opportunity to delve deeper into a character—to look at the nuances and shadings that make up the whole of a person. Final performances may or may not use a script; in either case, the performance should grow out of improvisational interactions done by group members over time.

  Performances may be comprised of vignettes or be one cohesive play. Planned performances should be facilitated by a drama teacher or consulting artist with experience in group work. For more information about planned performances and other intergenerational arts projects, consult the book *Generating Community* by Susan Perlstein and Jeff Bliss (described further in the Resources section).

Visual Arts

Whereas music and theater projects are typically done in large groups, the visual arts provide an opportunity for residents and students to feel a sense of individual accomplishment by collaborating on a tangible product. Two or three students and one resident can work together on a variety of projects, such as painting the resident's life story, sculpting tiles, creating paper or fabric quilt squares, painting photo frames, building a miniature town. (See Chapter 10, Activities, for project suggestions.) In addition to building relationships, these projects build group identity when artwork is assembled and displayed, as in the case of a tile mural or a paper quilt.

Visual arts projects give youth and the elderly a chance to help one another. When residents do not have the physical ability to do artwork, they can supply ideas and select content and colors. Other residents with some physical impairment may be able to create art only with the student's help. Some residents have skills in the visual arts; they can help students, particularly younger children, draw.

Tips for Using the Visual Arts in Intergenerational Programs

- Have a plan in advance that includes a list of the materials you will use. More ambitious projects require more time and planning.
- Create a thematic structure for art projects, rather than just handing supplies to participants and saying "Go." The group will be more motivated when they choose a theme, such as "the seasons" or "favorite places."
- Keep your group a manageable size (i.e., 30 or fewer).
- Choose materials that are easy to use and that enable participants to see immediate results. For example:
  - Magic markers make vivid pictures and don't require participants to press hard.
  - Manipulating clay is relaxing; even residents with limited abilities can push into and roll clay.
  - Colorful pipe cleaners can be made into shapes and mobiles.
  - People can be expressive with watercolors and acrylic paints that mix and dry easily.
- Have materials ready ahead of time.
- Make sure that everyone wears appropriate clothing.
- Give clear demonstrations of techniques.
- Allow participants to be artists and to express themselves. Do not criticize the art or do the art for participants. If residents or students need help, encourage them to help one another.
- Have adequate supplies for covering furniture and cleaning up afterward.

Using a Consulting Artist

Using an artist as a resource can enliven, enrich, and deepen a program. A consulting artist may advise on designing a project, lead groups, provide training, assist in creating the art, buy supplies, and/or take care of logistics. Your community is full of artists in a variety of disciplines that can work with you and your program. Many organizations compile artist directories and/or can refer artists to your organization. Check the following organizations for links to artists:

- **State arts agencies:** Most have an Arts-in-Education program which list resource artists and grant programs that can help support a consulting artist.
- **Local arts agencies:** This could be your city arts council, city or county office of arts and culture, or local arts commission.
- **Local community arts organizations:** This includes community theatres, galleries, community arts centers, and dance companies.
- **Local college and university art departments:** Senior-level art students and part-time faculty are a great resource.

Selecting a Consulting Artist

It's important to select the right artist for your program. Plan your project with the artist and decide what you want to accomplish in terms of products and outcomes. If projects involve repeated contact and interaction with the artist over a specified period of time, you want an artist who you are confident will work well with both generations. When reviewing their backgrounds and interviewing potential artists, look for the following:

- Professional training in the arts at a college or art school. For visual artists, ask to review slides or a portfolio and find out if they have exhibited their work professionally. Folk Arts and Crafts artists may not have professional training, but should have an exhibition or workshop history. Ask to see examples of their work and references. For performing artists, check their performance history.
- Teaching background. Find out where they have worked (art schools, community centers, etc.) and with whom (e.g., children or adults). Ask for and check references.
- Experience working with your target population. Find out if they have worked with people of multiple ethnicities, races, and ages.
- Planning capabilities. Find out if they have ever written a curriculum or project outline.

Sources of Support

- Local arts agency
- State arts, education, and aging agencies
- National Endowment for the Arts, Access and Heritage and Preservation Programs (these applications should be made by organizations with a track record for utilizing the arts in programming and involve high-quality recognized artists)
- Local humanities council for oral history projects, community history projects, and public programs that involve area scholars
- Local school district
- Local department of human services
- Long-term care facility's general and activity budgets

The Humanities

The "humanities" refers to the realms of human thought and culture, such as literature, philosophy, and art. Exploring these areas is a natural way to learn about different heritages, traditions, and histories. Multi-age discussion groups about literature, diversity, and contemporary issues are intellectually challenging and stimulating to both old and young participants. For examples of a variety of activities that incorporate the humanities, see the sample flyer for "Book Lovers" at the end of Chapter 6, Recruiting and Preparing Residents and projects described in Chapter 10, Activities.

Poetry

Poetry and creative writing provide a base for stimulating intergenerational activities. Creative and personal, poetry is also attractive to teachers and schools. In addition, poetry programs allow for readings both inside and outside the participating institutions. Poetry uniquely taps cognitive and memory capacities through life reminiscence and self-expression.

Poetry is well-suited as a one- or two-session activity or as a longer-term program. See "Hand Poem" in Chapter 10, Activities, for a sample of a short-term poetry program that is especially appropriate for younger children and for residents with some cognitive impairment.

Poetry programs offer several key benefits:

- Adaptability to a variety of activity goals and situations (pairs, small groups, larger groups)
- Opportunity for individuals (residents and youth) to learn about one another and establish a context and foundation for ongoing communication
- Stimulation in cognitive, creative, and emotional realms
- Flexibility to focus on a wide variety of themes and subjects that encourage expression of participants' thoughts and feelings
- Suitability as community special events

Poetry projects are most successful when they include the following key elements:

- The project is facilitated by an experienced poetry and writing teacher or a seasoned local poet. Contact your local arts council for recommendations. Ideally, the poet/facilitator will have experience in facilitating poetry workshops in long-term care settings and working with older adults.
- Facilitators from all participating organizations agree on the goals of the program and set a schedule for large- and small-group activities. Activities should include readings by a variety of poets and brief discussions about the poems; a variety of fun warm-up writing exercises that provide context and focus; and opportunities for participants to read their own poetry.
- After one or two group sessions, pairs of participants (young and old) meet separately from the large group.
- Program leaders provide instructions and exercises for the one-on-one collaborative process (e.g., a youth can interview an older adult and write a poem based on the interview, or a youth and older adult could write poems together).

- Once pairs are established, they schedule their own one-on-one sessions.
- The large group meets regularly to discuss the project and any barriers or problems.
- The poetry program allows sufficient time for participants to create a body of work (i.e., four to eight one-on-one sessions).
- The project publishes a compilation of poems, which is distributed to all participants.
- A poetry reading is held for staff, families, and community members.

Oral History Projects

Oral history—historical information gathered through interviews with firsthand participants—is an ideal intergenerational activity. By recording individuals' recollections of the past for use in the future, the wisdom and experience of older generations is shared and preserved. The process provides the opportunity for the past to come alive and for young and old to gain insights into themselves and one another. It enables participants to reflect on which values are permanent and which are transitory. Oral history projects ensure the continuity of one's people and one's traditions. Bringing individuals from different backgrounds together to explore the past can foster cross-cultural understanding and strengthen communities.

Oral history projects are commonly featured in service-learning programs. They blend well with instruction and academic requirements in writing, history, social studies, science, art, and other areas. For more information, refer to the sample oral history projects in Chapter 10, Activities: "Unity in Diversity," "Collaborative Painting," "Our Town," "L'Dor v'Dor," "Songwriting Workshop," and "Who's Who, Versions 1 and 2."

Here are some tips for implementing oral history projects:

- Make sure that the conversation between the youth and the older adult is two-way. A common pitfall of oral history programs is that the young people learn about the older adults, but the older adults do not learn about the students. Even when the final product will focus on the older adult, one of the most valuable aspects of these projects is discussion, comparison, and reflection. Residents should be encouraged to ask the children questions; young people have histories, too.
- Help students practice interviewing techniques. Emphasize how to make an interview conversational, using open-ended and follow-up questions. When young people have a pre-set list of close-ended questions or do not follow up on answers, conversation may become stilted. Residents frequently say how they value being listened to. Spontaneous follow-up questions are an important demonstration of good listening.
- Have students prepare a list of questions in advance, including the questions that are essential for completion of the assignment and some that are optional. Have them formulate some open-ended questions to help get the interview flowing.
- Remind students to be patient; they should not finish residents' sentences or interrupt. Residents may have to tell stories at a slower pace than students are accustomed to. If the student needs to move on to another question, the student should say "Excuse me," and indicate the need to ask the next question.

- Recognize that long-term care residents may not have the stamina for lengthy interviews. Several short interviews may be preferable.
- Residents with cognitive impairments may be very good candidates for oral history projects. Long-term memories are the most long-lasting, and residents may enjoy reminiscing. Memories may be provoked by old music or visual cues, such as photos. Questions should be kept simple, and interviewers should be prepared to be particularly patient.
- Prepare residents for interviews. If residents know in advance the topics to be discussed or are given a list of questions, they can reflect on their reminiscences and gather memorabilia.
- Memorabilia, such as photographs, documents, and heirlooms, can add depth to reminiscences and may be used to produce a scrapbook or memory box. It is very important that participants know how to handle these materials so that they are not damaged. For preservation tips, go to www.myhistory.org, a Web site of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
- Sometimes students record or videotape interviews. Depending on available resources and the need for exact quotations, this is a valuable technique. However, listening to a tape can be tedious, and transcription is time-consuming. If students take notes in long hand or on a computer, have them work in teams and take turns with interviewing and recording.
- Frequently, oral history projects include a final product, such as a scrapbook, booklet, theater presentation, or painting. To the degree possible, involve the residents in creating the final product.
- At the conclusion of an oral history project, have a party to celebrate the residents' stories. Students can practice public speaking; residents should be invited to make speeches about their experiences with the project.

Dealing with Sensitive Topics

A number of our residents are Holocaust survivors. One year, several schools were sending students here to learn about the Holocaust from our residents. While the residents may feel that it's important to share this history, continually being asked about it was difficult for them. There were other things they would have enjoyed talking to the children about.

—LONG-TERM CARE STAFF MEMBER

Many older adults have experienced multiple losses or traumas in their lives. The deaths of close family members, serious illnesses, or experiences with violence may be particularly difficult to discuss. Some residents' religious or cultural backgrounds may increase their reticence to talk about sensitive topics. On the other hand, some residents may be eager to talk about personal matters; they may feel that the student can learn from their own experiences and/or they may enjoy the opportunity to talk honestly about something that is important to them.

These guidelines can help participants as they encounter sensitive issues:

- Make it clear to both residents and students that it is all right not to answer or ask any questions that make them uncomfortable.
- As the students and residents get to know one another, conversations may become more personal. It usually works well to cover less personal subjects early on.
- Sensitive topics, such as the death of family members, should only be broached in an established relationship. Students and their teachers should look to long-term care staff for guidance on whether a resident is willing to discuss certain issues. When such topics arise spontaneously, the student should take cues from the resident. Students should respect residents' preferences, and propose alternative topics if necessary.
- When preparing young people to discuss sensitive topics, let them know that the resident may get upset. Students should be taught techniques for providing comfort and support. If the resident cries, the student should communicate that it is all right for the resident to do so. It is also all right if the student cries along with the resident. The experience of sharing life's tragedies may be very meaningful to them both: residents have an opportunity to teach about life and be listened to, and students will learn about resilience.

Reflecting on and Assessing Your Program

CHAPTER 9

We wrote in a journal every day when we would come back from there. We would discuss it, and it was real nice. I still have it and it is filled with memories, so I am not going to throw it away.
—SIXTH GRADER

I'm learning as I go along. And I'm amazed at the difference in this generation and the generation past because they catch on so easily. I wonder, how did they get so smart in such a short time?
—LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENT

Reflecting on and Assessing Your Program

During and at the conclusion of an intergenerational project, it is important for facilitators to collect information about the impact of the project on participants, including information about their attitudes, emotions, learning, growth, self-perceptions, and concerns related to the project. Collecting such information serves two purposes:

- **REFLECTION. When youth and residents reflect on their experiences, their learning and understanding is enhanced. The reflection itself heightens the meaningfulness of the project and promotes critical-thinking skills. Reflection also helps to identify problems that may have occurred during the project.**
- **ASSESSMENT. This step, also called program evaluation, primarily benefits the program planners and facilitators. Staff can learn the degree to which the program met its goals and objectives, the anticipated and unanticipated impact on participants, what worked and what did not work, and ideas for modifying their program.**

There is usually some overlap in reflection and assessment methods. Almost all reflection techniques can produce data that are useful for program evaluation. Both reflection and assessment/evaluation are discussed below.

Reflection

Growth and learning are not automatic results of even the most compelling experience. Systematic reflection deepens experiences and contributes to participants' learning and development. Reflection allows participants to make connections between program activities, life experiences, and academic learning, and enhances skills in self-expression, problem-solving, and critical-thinking.

Reflection is an essential component of service-learning and can be integrated into all intergenerational programs. Group discussion, individual interviews, artwork, poetry, letter writing, and even journal writing can be accessible reflection methods for students and residents alike.

When integrating reflection, try some of the following approaches:

- **Use methods that suit the capabilities and ages of participants.** Young children may use drawing and discussion, middle school children may keep journals, high school students may write essays, and residents may be most responsive to interviews and group discussions.
- **Do it regularly.** Reflection should be built into the structure of the project. Reflection should take place before the youth and residents meet, regularly throughout the project, and after it ends.
- **Have staff participate as well.** Apart from the residents' and students' reflections, the school/youth organization and long-term care staff need to take time to reflect on what the project means to them personally and what they believe the participants are experiencing. After the project ends, all involved staff should discuss and record what worked and what didn't so that they can improve their future collaborations.

- **Make it purposeful.** Reflection is not the same thing as informal sharing of feelings or reporting of experiences. For real learning to take place, participants must be challenged to look at their values, assumptions, and attitudes and make connections between the project and other parts of their lives.
- **Focus on questions and contradictions.** Intergenerational programs often call into question our ways of viewing the world; they can throw us off balance. Rather than provide pat answers, solutions, and comfort, gently challenge participants to delve deeply into the perplexities and contradictions of situations.
- **Focus on specifics.** Encourage participants to reflect on one specific incident that had an impact on them. Careful analysis of what might seem like a small event can lead participants to make connections to larger issues.

Reflection Methods

Most reflection activities fall into one of four key categories:

- **Reading** case studies, government documents, classic literature, and newspapers can deepen knowledge and enhance the program experience. Class discussions or writing assignments contribute to the benefits of reading.
- **Writing** journals and logs, biographies, reflection and self-evaluation essays, case studies, press releases, e-mail, letters to long-term care staff, individual and group poems, and letters to lawmakers helps participants express their thoughts and knowledge. Students should always receive substantive feedback on the content and style of their written pieces. If older adults have difficulty writing, for example, because of arthritis in their hands, vision problems, or mild dementia, student partners can assist.

  A group journal is most suitable for able, mature students or residents. Participants are invited to contribute their reflections on the intergenerational program in a notebook kept in a central, accessible place. Contributions, either anonymous or signed, may be read and discussed by all. Anonymous group journals are particularly useful for program assessment.
- **Doing.** Active participation in projects and activities may have a reflective outcome. "Doing" may include collaborative art projects, such as the visual, dramatic, and musical arts. (See "Songwriting Workshop" in Chapter 10, Activities, for an example of the use of music for reflection.)
- **Telling.** Relaxed, open discussion allows participants to formulate and express their thoughts and learn from their peers. Offering separate discussion groups for youth and residents creates a safe environment for them to express their concerns; however, when the groups are mixed, commonalities are reinforced and bonds are strengthened. Additional "telling" methods include interviewing, speeches about partners at public events, teaching a class, story-telling, and legislative testimony (real or in class).

(Adapted from Eyler, et al. 1996)

Program Evaluation

Most people who run intergenerational programs see immediate positive effects and know intuitively—without conducting any kind of formal evaluation—that their programs are successful. Formal evaluations often seem like unnecessary extra work. Sometimes people are reluctant to assess their programs; they may be concerned that an evaluation cannot capture the nuances of a program's impact or that disappointing results will not accurately reflect their hard work. But formal evaluations provide insights into the expected and unexpected benefits of programs and can provide a road map for program improvement. They can also provide information about:

- the impact of the program on participants
- participants' satisfaction with the program
- whether the program met its goals
- whether the program was implemented as planned
- how the program can be improved

Of course, the ideal evaluation approach would be an "experimental study" in which researchers use statistical methods to compare outcomes among program participants with residents and students who, because of random selection, were not part of the program. These studies are very challenging and complicated to set up and run, especially in long-term care facilities. Further, most facilities are reluctant to randomly exclude residents from programs that interest them.

There are many alternatives to such cumbersome and time-consuming research methods. While evaluation is a kind of research, it needn't be a large-scale undertaking. This section focuses on one research task: gaining information about the degree to which your program is doing what you want it to do.

Evaluating "Process" and "Outcome"

Generally speaking, process evaluation attempts to understand what happens during the development and implementation of a program, while outcome evaluation analyzes the immediate results and long-term impact of a program. These two modes of evaluation are inter-connected. For example, a program with an elders-to-children ratio of one-to-two versus a program with a one-to-five elders-to-children ratio might have different outcomes. An evaluator would study whether the ratio of elders to children (process) affects participants' feelings of engagement in a project (outcome).

Process and outcome can be evaluated using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. On its simplest level, quantitative refers to something that can be measured numerically, such as time elapsed or number of visits. Qualitative data are more open-ended and descriptive, usually coming from narrative sources or observation, with a smaller number of participants.

A Handy Example

The material for this manual was collected from focus groups, interviews, and surveys with more than 70 participants and staff from intergenerational programs associated with Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning. Almost all participants enjoyed the programs and said that the relationships they formed were important to them. However, some unexpected outcomes emerged. For example, one student described a change in her overall behavior: She was more conscientiously being "good." A director of nursing observed that residents ate more heartily when eating with children. Results from the interviews and focus groups were given to the long-term care and school staff, both to validate their high-quality work and to provide ideas for adjusting programs as needed. These discussions also had a direct impact on the recommendations in this book. For example, because a resident told us that it was upsetting when the children felt sorry for him, we reshaped the "Instant Aging" exercise to include a discussion of empathy and sympathy.

Evaluation Methods

Here are some tips for conducting both process and outcome evaluations:

- **Maintain program and partnership logs.** By keeping a log of conversations and observations, you can track what does and does not work. These logs will facilitate problem-solving and internal and external communication, as well as help in planning future programs.
- **Keep thorough attendance records,** accounting for individual attendance and the youth-to-resident ratio. Growth in program attendance may suggest that the program is going well. Declines in attendance may indicate problems with the program or other developments at school or in the facility. When a program is over, study these records for patterns.
- **Keep financial records,** such as tallies of direct expenses like refreshments, art supplies, tickets to shows, and transportation. For per-participant or per-hour costs, divide the costs by the number of participants or hours of programming.
- **Ask participants and staff about the process.** Open-ended focus group, interview, and survey questions can include the following:
  - Which activities did participants like? Which didn't they like? Why?
  - How might the program be run differently?
  - What activities would participants like to do in the future?

Here are some options for learning about program outcomes:

- **Observe participants.** Interactions between residents and youth can be observed, either in person or on video, and recorded on a checklist of desirable behaviors (laughing together, touching, etc.). Over the course of an intergenerational relationship, observers would expect to see an increase in behaviors that reflect that the children and residents feel closer to one another. This kind of research project might appeal to a graduate student.

If evaluation results reveal a concern or problem in your program, discuss it with the project team and modify the program as needed.

- **Survey participants.** Close-ended questions (e.g., multiple choice, true/false) can be scored to measure change over time. For example, the survey "Who Are the Elderly?" in Chapter 6, Recruiting and Preparing Students, can be administered to students before and after an intergenerational program. If the teacher collects each set of surveys and counts the number of correct answers, the teacher can see the degree to which there is a change in knowledge. Open-ended surveys, such as the questionnaires at the end of this chapter, can also be administered before and after a program. Narrative answers may show that participants' attitudes changed over the course of the program.
- **Review records.** Analyzing information you routinely collect can provide insights into a program's impact. For example, count the number of times that residents attend any activity programs before and after an intergenerational program. You may find that you've made progress toward a program goal (e.g., to decrease residents' isolation). You can also review records of residents who do and do not attend intergenerational programs. However, be cautious in interpreting these comparisons; other factors may account for changes in residents' behavior.
- **Ask participants.** Focus groups, interviews, and open-ended surveys can provide information about outcomes, particularly if you ask questions related to:
  - participants' feelings about the program and what it means to them
  - unexpected and unplanned feelings, experiences, and behaviors
  - what people learned

Evaluate Your Goals

Whether using quantitative or qualitative methods, the information you seek should always include an assessment of how well your program is meeting or has met its goals. The sample below suggests how different methods can be used to evaluate the four core program elements:

Goal	Sample Assessment Method
Roles that are meaningful for all participants	**Staff records.** When supervising activities, staff record what the youth and residents actually do together as well as what the staff need to do to insure that both groups are completing expected tasks.
Relationships fostered between youth and older adults	**Interviews and focus groups.** Participants are directly asked about these relationships.
Reciprocity, focusing on residents and youth giving to one another	**Interviews and focus groups.** Participants are directly asked how they helped their partners and how their partners helped them.
Recognition of the value of all generations	**Before-and-after surveys or written exercises.** "Who Are the Elderly?" the open-ended questionnaires at the end of this chapter, and "Teenagers Are..." are three exercises that can be done both at the beginning and the end of a program. Comparison of answers can reveal whether there has been a change over time in attitudes toward the other age group.

Using Outside Evaluators

Inviting people from outside the participating organizations to design and implement parts of the evaluation has many advantages. These people provide objectivity and expertise, and they also save staff time. For quantitative data collection, an evaluator can develop forms and databases, do data entry, and analyze results. Discussion groups, focus groups, and interviews are often more productive when facilitated by an "outsider." While participants initially might feel more comfortable with a familiar staff person, they might also withhold frank comments for fear of hurting the person who ran the program. A skilled outside evaluator will assure participants that their responses will remain confidential and that information shared with program staff will not include participants' names.

To identify a researcher to work with your program, contact a nearby college or university (particularly those that teach social work, education, therapeutic recreation, gerontology, or public health) to help you. Graduate students are often very helpful with evaluation; depending on their experience and skills, they may be able to design your whole evaluation, collect data, design databases, and/or analyze and write reports. If universities do not have personnel available, they may be able to identify organizations or individuals that provide consultation. To determine whether there is a good fit between you and the prospective consultant, ask for the person's curriculum vitae and a copy of any relevant publications; also contact each person's references.

REFERENCES

Eyler, J., D.E. Giles, Jr. and A. Schmiede. 1996. *Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-learning.*

Kuehne, V.S. and Collins, C. 1997. Observational research in intergenerational programming: need and opportunity. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 28(3), 183-193.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS TO COMPLETE **BEFORE** BEGINNING AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM

PLEASE COMPLETE EACH SENTENCE:

When I am an older adult, I will have to stop

When I stop working, I will have time for

You know you're old when

Older people make me feel

If someone said I should work with old people as a career, I would say,

"

."

PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

What would you like to get out of visiting the long-term care facility?

What do you think you will learn from going to the long-term care facility?

What do you expect to like about going to the long-term care facility?

What do you expect to dislike about going to the long-term care facility?

What do you think the residents of the long-term care facility will get out of your visits?

Questions 1–5 adapted from Brodsky, A.L. (1980) Intergenerational interaction and attitudinal change of elementary gifted students toward adults over 60 (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1980). Dissertation Abstracts International, 41/11, p. 4606.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS TO COMPLETE **AFTER** FINISHING AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM

PLEASE COMPLETE EACH SENTENCE:

When I am an older adult, I will have to stop

When I stop working, I will have time for

You know you're old when

Older people make me feel

If someone said I should work with old people as a career, I would say,

"

."

PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

What did you get out of visiting the long-term care facility?

What did you learn from going to the long-term care facility?

What did you like about going to the long-term care facility?

What did you dislike about going to the long-term care facility?

What did the residents of the long-term care facility get out of your visits?

Questions 1–5 adapted from Brodsky, A.L. (1980) Intergenerational interaction and attitudinal change of elementary gifted students toward adults over 60 (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1980). Dissertation Abstracts International, 41/11, p. 4606.

SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

My name is Ms. ___ and I work at "XYZ University." Thank you for being here. I want to talk with you today because we are writing a book about programs for kids who visit nursing homes. Today, for about half an hour, I asked if I could talk with you to learn what you think about going to "Facility Name." Because we don't want to miss anything you have to say, we are tape-recording our conversation. Because we are taping, it is important that only one of you talks at a time and that you speak loudly and clearly. I don't work for "Facility Name" or for your school. Because "Facility Name" and your school do want to know how they can make this program better for students, I am going to tell them the kinds of things that you say. But, so that you can feel okay about saying anything you want to about your experiences, they will not be told who said what. Do you have any questions before we get started?

1. Let's go around the room and have each of you tell us your name and whether you ever visited a nursing home before you came to "Facility Name" with your school.

2. What do you think about going to "Facility Name"?

3. What do you do when you come to "Facility Name"?

4. What do you most enjoy doing when you go to "Facility Name"?

5. Sometimes there are things that students don't like about visiting nursing homes. What things don't you like about going to "Facility Name"?

6. Can you tell me some things you have learned from going to "Facility Name"?

7. Tell me something about the residents you met at "Facility Name."

8. What do you think that the residents get out of your visits there?

9. Have you done anything at school that has to do with your visits here—like, have you written things about coming to "Facility Name" or discussed your visits in class?

10. If someone were to suggest that you could work with older people when you grow up, what would you think about that?

11. If another group of students were to go to "Facility Name" next year, what would you suggest to your teacher or to the people who work at the facility that would make the program better?

12. Those are all my questions. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experiences at "Facility Name"?

Thank you again for talking with me! You've been very helpful.

SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP/INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR RESIDENTS

I'm from "XYZ University," and I am interviewing people at several retirement communities. We want to learn what people think about the programs that retirement communities plan with younger people. Our conversation is being tape-recorded and a transcript will be made from the tape. This discussion is private and confidential. The only people who will listen to the tape recording and read the transcript are researchers at XYZ University. I do not work for "Facility Name." The people who work for "Facility Name" will not be able to see your individual responses. Some of the things you say may be used as quotes in reports, **but your name will not be used in any of these reports.**

To help us prepare reports, I need to ask you to help me with a few things, please. First, it's very important that only one person at a time speaks. Second, please speak loudly and clearly. And lastly, when you are speaking, please state your first name each time before you speak. Do you have any questions for me before we start?

1. Let's go around the room and have everyone state their first names and tell how long they have lived at "Facility Name."

2. Facility Name has some activities where young people come here to do different things. What kinds of things have you done with young people here at "Facility Name"?

3. What do you like about doing those things with the students?

4. What do you dislike about having the students come here?

5. Do you act or feel differently when young people are around? In what ways do you feel different?

6. Sometimes older people don't feel safe around young people, or they may believe that they don't have anything in common with them. What do you think about this?

7. How do you think the young people benefit from coming here?

8. What would you think of participating in more activities with young people?

9. What sorts of things would you like to do with young people?

10. If another group of students were to come to "Facility Name" next year, what would you suggest to the staff here or at the school that would make the program better?

11. Is there anything else that you would like to say about having young people come here that you did not get a chance to say earlier?

Thank you very much for your time.

INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITY RECORD

Facility name:	Date of activity:
Youth organization name:	Number of participating youth:
Age group/grade of youth:	Number of youth organization staff accompanying youth:
Number of residents participating:	Number of long-term care staff implementing/ supervising activity:
Title of project:	
Brief description of activity:	
Visit # ____/ # ____ planned (e.g., for the third of 10 planned visits, write 3/10)	
Comments (e.g., noteworthy observations, return rate for residents and students, successes, challenges, ideas for next steps):	

Person completing form: _____

CHAPTER 10

Activities

Activities

As stated, the four essential elements of successful intergenerational programs are as follows:

- **Roles that are meaningful for all participants**
- **Relationships fostered between residents and youth**
- **Reciprocity, with youth and elders giving to one another, and**
- **Recognition of the value of all generations**

A strong, structured program is needed in order to include these elements. Youth and residents must have something planned to do together. This chapter presents 26 Activity Plans that have been successfully implemented in retirement homes, assisted-living residences, or nursing homes working in partnership with preschool programs; elementary, middle, and high schools; colleges; and youth organizations. Some of these are one- or two-session activities that can also be incorporated into longer-term programs. Others are comprehensive projects, lasting anywhere from five intergenerational meetings to a full school year.

How to Use the Activity Plans:

- **Target populations.** General ages of youth and the recommended resident population are specified for each activity. For residents, the recommendations relate to level of cognitive impairment. This is done to avoid the common pitfall of exclusively including only those residents with no or mild cognitive impairment. Fewer activities are appropriate for people with advanced dementia, but all activities are suitable to people—young and old—with physical disabilities ranging from "none" through "significant." The Activity Guide on the next page can help you find the activities that are best suited to your population.
- **Adaptations.** Activities can be adapted to suit participants with varied characteristics or from different settings:
  - Students with visual and hearing impairments, developmental delays, or significant physical disabilities often participate in intergenerational programs, and program activities should be adapted accordingly.
  - These activities are not exclusive to residential long-term care settings. They can also be used in senior centers or adult day programs.
- **Warm-ups.** Always begin a project with icebreakers. You may want to use icebreakers at the first few meetings between youth and residents. They can also be used periodically throughout a project to strengthen group bonds.
- **Name tags.** Participants should wear easy-to-read name tags throughout the course of a project. This will help participants avoid the embarrassment of forgetting someone's name. People feel more connected to one another when they are called by their names and when they say their partners' names.

Activity Guide

Activity by Youth Age	Page	Activity by Level of Resident Cognitive Impairment			
		None	Mild	Moderate	Advanced
MULTIPLE AGES: ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL, AND/OR COLLEGE					
Ice breakers	86	*	*	*	
Games	87	*	*		
Hand Poem	88	*	*	*	
Social Event/Celebration	89	*	*	*	*
Tile Mural	90	*	*	*	
Horticultural Project	91	*	*	*	*
Unity in Diversity: A Paper Story Quilt	92	*	*		
Songwriting Workshop	94	*	*		
Age Collage	95	*	*		
INFANTS AND PRESCHOOL—ELEMENTARY SCHOOL					
Baby and Me (A Baby and Mom Program)	96	*	*	*	*
Let's Learn!	97	*	*		
The Magic of Our Hands	98	*	*	*	
ELEMENTARY—MIDDLE SCHOOL					
Parachute Games	99	*	*	*	*
Survivor	100	*	*		
Our Town	101	*	*	*	*
MIDDLE—HIGH SCHOOL					
Reading/Discussion Group	102	*	*		
Diversity Discussion	103	*	*		
Diversity Sculpture	105	*	*		
Collaborative Painting/Oral History	106	*	*		
Mask Characterizations	107	*	*		
Who's Who: Version 1	108	*	*	*	
Dialogues	109	*			
"Volunteens"	111	*	*	*	*
HIGH SCHOOL AND/OR COLLEGE					
Who's Who: Version 2	113	*			
L'Dor v'Dor (From Generation to Generation)	115	*	*	*	*
Teen Parenting Skills Training	116	*			

- **Endless possibilities.** These activities are only the tip of the iceberg of creative possibilities for intergenerational activities. Here are some additional program ideas:

cooking projects	nature walks
computer lessons and e-mail pen-pals	field trips
intergenerational choirs	discussion of current events
exercise and movement activities	projects involving animals

Icebreakers

Icebreakers are essential for helping people of different ages feel comfortable when they first meet. Each icebreaker should last approximately 5 to 10 minutes. Altogether, 10 to 15 minutes should be spent doing icebreakers at the beginning of a project.

Name and Gesture. It is important that all participants have an opportunity to be introduced and to be called by their names. Group members sit in a circle integrated by age. Going around the circle, each person says his or her name, incorporating a sound and a movement. Examples of sounds are yodeling or whistling; a movement might be stomping feet or waving arms. The group repeats the person's name in the same manner in which it was presented, i.e., with the same sound and gesture. This acknowledges each person and begins to help the group learn one another's names.

Me, Too explores the common bonds that everyone has, regardless of age, race, or religion. One person stands up and says a true statement about herself (e.g., "I love ice cream"). If this statement is true for others in the audience, those people raise their hands or stand up and shout, "Me, too." Before lowering hands or sitting back down, group members look around to see who else shares this characteristic. After doing this for a few minutes, the exercise changes its focus to look at what makes each of us an individual. Someone in the room stands up and says a true statement about herself that she thinks only applies to her (e.g.,"My cat's name is McCartney"). Group members are given an opportunity to say "Me, too" to these statements as well. The facilitator encourages the group to point out that this exercise emphasizes both what members have in common and what sets individuals apart.

Round up. The group stands or sits in one large circle. The facilitator announces a category, such as the following: named after an ancestor, plays a musical instrument, broke a leg. Participants come into the middle of the circle if the category fits them, with youth assisting residents in wheelchairs or who need help walking. People in the middle look around to see who else has joined them. Group members ask those in the center to tell their stories: Who are you named for and what do you know about that person? What instrument do you play and what type of music? How did you break your leg? This process continues until everyone has had a chance to be in the middle of the circle. The facilitator leads a discussion about what participants learned from this exercise. For example, what were the differences and commonalities among and between age groups?

5-4-3-2-1. Group members raise their right hands and, while shaking them once for each count, says together, "5-4-3-2-1." Then they do the same thing with their left hands, their right feet, and their left feet. People in wheelchairs can tap their feet in place. When this has been done with each extremity, go back to the right hand and start all over again with "4-3-2-1." Repeat the exercise, counting "3-2-1" and so on until you're left with "1." If appropriate, the counting can get faster with each round.

Yes. In this icebreaker, whatever the suggestion, everyone does it. If someone says, "Let's all bark like dogs," all must reply, "Yes!" and then bark like dogs. A few seconds later, someone might say, "Let's all eat ice cream." All reply "Yes!" and then begin to eat ice cream, and so on.

Submitted by Sharon Geller, Full Circle Theatre, Center for Intergenerational Learning

Games

Games are more challenging to participants than icebreakers and help to form group cohesiveness.

Spelling Bee. This game emphasizes teamwork. Four people from the group—two younger and two older—volunteer to stand (or sit, if needed) in a line facing the full group/audience. The facilitator asks the audience a broad question, for example, "This is June. Tell me a word that makes you think of June." Group members shout out words. The facilitator selects a word and gives the word to the spelling team, directing the spellers to say the word together as a unit. Then the team spells the word—one letter and one person at a time. They then repeat the word together. Next, the spellers make up a sentence as a group, using the word—again, one person and one word at a time. The group finishes by repeating the word. This is done several times, one or two additional audience members may join the spellers. The facilitator asks the full group what the exercise is really about, guiding them to realize that it is not about accurate spelling or grammar, but rather about teamwork, collaboration, and trust.

Two Truths and a Lie. This one allows participants to use their imaginations and to get to know one another. Ask participants to sit in age-integrated groups of three or four. Within each group, each member should tell the others two true things about her- or himself and one complete fabrication. The partners must try to guess which is the lie. Stories about adventures, famous people they've met, strange occurrences in their families, or major life achievements all work well in this exercise. When everyone has told their truths and lies within their groups and clarified which was which, ask participants to introduce one of their partners to the larger group by reporting one interesting true thing that they learned about him or her.

The Where Game. Divide the room into two groups. Each player is handed a piece of paper with a location on it, such as a church, synagogue, psychiatrist's office, fire station, circus, or zoo. The lists are different for each team. The players alternate trying to help their team members guess the correct "where" by doing things that a character or animal would do in that location. They may use objects, but they are not allowed to talk. For a competitive edge, teams can be timed to see who guesses the most correct answers within two minutes.

Submitted by Sharon Geller, Full Circle Theatre, Center for Intergenerational Learning

Hand Poem

Age of Youth: All ages

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with moderate, mild, or no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To form bonds with their partners and the group
- To enjoy and feel safe touching and being touched
- To experience the satisfaction of creating a group poem

Number of Visits: One

Specific Activities

1. Tell residents and students to partner with one another, choosing someone they do not know well.
2. Ask them to greet their partners by shaking hands and then taking time to notice how the other's hand feels to hold, holding that person's hand with their own two hands. The holder's job is to explore the hand being held in a variety of ways. Give these instructions: Ask your partners to relax their hands as you hold them. Everyone take a deep breath. If your hand is being held, allow it to really be held. Holders, look at the hand—at the back and the front. Slowly rub the hand to help it relax. Ask your partner if that feels OK. Your partner should tell you if you are rubbing too hard. What do you notice about this hand? Is there any jewelry? Is it smooth or rough? Are there scars or calluses? How are these hands the same as or different from yours? Ask questions to learn about what you see. What stories can you discover by asking questions about this hand? Exchange those stories now.
3. Tell partners to remember what they can of the stories they are told. Have the partners reverse roles and repeat the exercise above.
4. Bring the group back together. Get someone to record the group's responses on newsprint. Ask people how their hands felt before the exercise and how they feel now. Ask participants to share one story they learned about their partners.
5. Review the stories for themes, and record these themes for possible discussion later. Ask people to discuss how they felt about the activity, including those who felt uncomfortable.
6. The group can create a poem from the material they have shared. Ask each person to add a line, saying anything at all about hands. The lines don't need to rhyme. Participants can contribute a thought they had while working with their partner, or something they saw, heard, or felt. Copy each line verbatim on newsprint and read it back. Ask the group to title the poem.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Newsprint, markers

Residents and young people create a group poem based on the ideas and feelings generated while exploring how they use their hands. A more detailed description of this activity is provided in *Generating Community*, listed in the Resources section.

Adapted from Generating Community *by Susan Perlstein and Jeff Bliss*

Social Event/Celebration

Ages of Youth: All ages

Recommended Resident Population: All residents

This is a party with structured activities to enhance existing relationships in the middle of an ongoing project.

Goals for Residents

- To encourage social interaction with students
- To be stimulated through music, fun, and games
- To provide mild aerobic exercise through physical interaction
- To have fun and laugh with youth

Goals for Youth

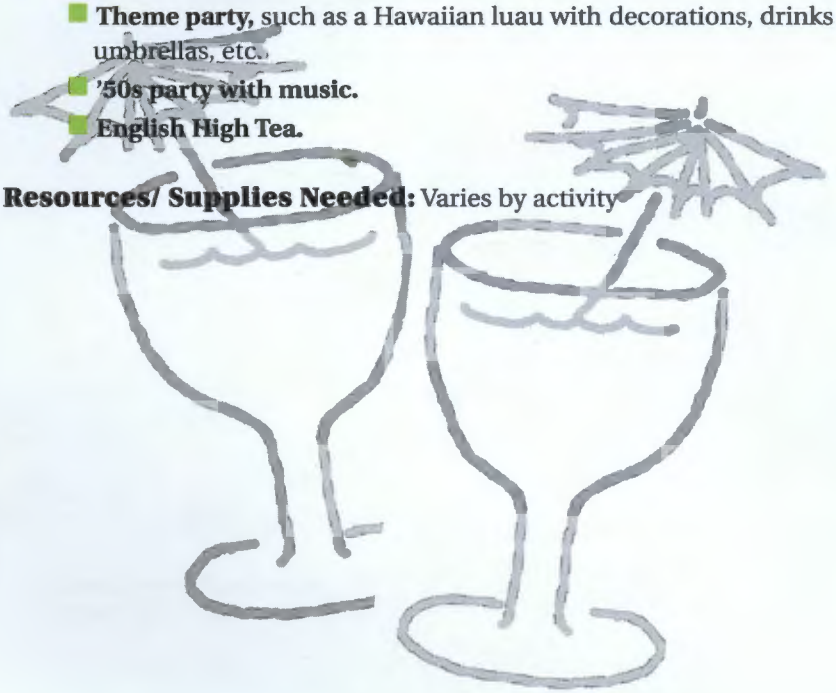
- To develop trusting relationships with seniors
- To understand that they have much in common with the residents, including moving to music and enjoying games together
- To have fun and laugh with older adults

Number of Visits: One

Specific Activities

Offer social activities involving games, music, and dance. Students can develop themes and help with setup. Here are some ideas:

- **Happy hour** with hors d'oeuvres, non-alcoholic champagne, and light jazz or old standards (this is best with teens and college students).
- **Dance party.** A disc jockey plays dance music for students and residents to do group dancing and/or for residents to watch the young people dance. Give percussion instruments, such as tambourines and maracas, to residents who must observe due to disability, which allows them to join in and move along with the young people.
- **Theme party,** such as a Hawaiian luau with decorations, drinks with umbrellas, etc.
- **'50s party with music.**
- **English High Tea.**



Resources/ Supplies Needed: Varies by activity

Submitted by James Lambert, Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home

Tile Mural

Ages of Youth: All ages

Recommended Resident Population: All but the most impaired residents

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To help children and older adults bond as they work together to express their ideas
- To offer participants the opportunity to enjoy the tactile pleasure of working with clay
- To help participants feel a sense of accomplishment

Number of Visits: 11 (more or less)

Specific Activities

1. At the first session, describe the project and lead a group discussion to select a theme for the mural (for example, "springtime" or "learning").
2. For the next two sessions, have participants work in intergenerational teams (one or two students and one resident) to draw their ideas based on the group theme. By the end of the second drawing session, the group will have decided on an idea or design for their tile.
3. Have 5" x 5" precut squares of wet clay ready for the fourth session. Tell teams that they can draw their ideas/designs on the wet tiles and also make the designs three-dimensional by putting rolled-up pieces of clay on the tiles. Residents with limited mobility can roll clay into strips for children to place on the tiles. Wrap tiles in plastic to keep them damp between sessions.
4. Next, have participants paint underglaze on wet clay to add color to the tile. If tiles need to be transported to another location for firing, it is preferable to paint on wet clay since it is less fragile than dry clay.
5. Do the first firing.
6. If the kiln is on-site, participants can apply clear glaze before the second firing.
7. Now have participants get into four groups and come up with design ideas for the full mural. They can draw designs on a large sheet of paper.
8. Have the whole group meet and discuss an overall design for the artist to create for the central portion of the mural.
9. Residents and students can assist with and watch installation of the mural, which is framed by their tiles.
10. Hold a celebration to unveil the mural.

Resources/Supplies Needed: This project requires the services of a consulting artist and access to a kiln. Supplies: clay, tools, underglaze, mosaic materials for central portion of mural, glue, grout. Approximate budget (small mural) $3,000.

Residents and students collaborate on clay tiles that frame a professionally rendered glass or tile mural based on the group's design. This project requires the assistance of a professional artist.

Note

Youth and residents will be able to be involved in steps 5 and 6 if the kiln is located at the long-term care facility or school. If the kiln is at a community art studio, your consultant artist may have to do these steps. If feasible, have a field trip to the studio to show participants how the kiln works.

Submitted by Joe Brenman, sculptor and mural artist

Horticultural Project

Ages of Youth: All ages—the complexity of plants may vary according to the ages of the youth

Recommended Resident Population: All residents

Goals for Residents

- To bond with youth through ongoing creative collaboration
- To experience sensory stimulation and pleasure
- To have an opportunity to share their knowledge of horticulture
- To experience the satisfaction of creating something with youth

Goals for Youth

- To bond with an older adult through ongoing creative collaboration
- To have an opportunity to share their knowledge of horticulture
- To integrate service in the community with classroom science lessons

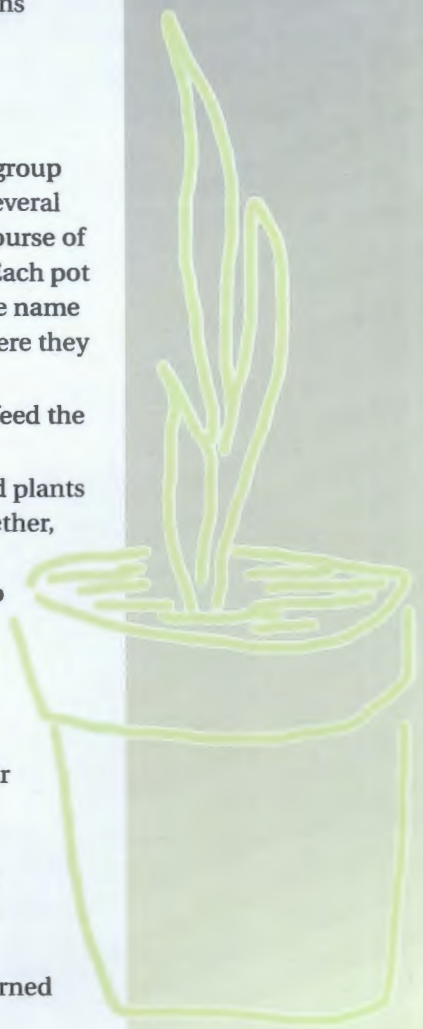
Number of Visits: Weekly over a school year

Specific Activities

1. Match each resident with two young people. Have each small group choose plants to grow from seeds. Participants should select several different plants to ensure that at least one will grow over the course of the project. Residents and children plant seeds in small pots. Each pot is labeled with the resident's and children's names and with the name of the plant. Students escort residents back to their rooms, where they will keep and maintain the plants until the next visit.
2. Between visits from the children, the residents will water and feed the plants.
3. At subsequent visits, have the children escort the residents and plants back and forth between their rooms and the activity area. Together, residents and children monitor the plants' progress. Also during visits, participants take time (approximately 45 minutes) to talk with their partners.
4. Give students suggestions for conversation starters before each visit. Students can take notes in their journals to remember things the residents have shared with them.
5. At some point during the project, participants can decorate their pots together. This may be easiest if done before planting. An advantage to doing it later on in the project (with the plant in the pot) is that participants will be creating art with people they know. Pots can be decorated with paint, stickers, or decoupage, as preferred.
6. Students can write up their experiences, sharing what they learned about their residents at a final event.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Potting soil and seeds for indoor, easy-to-grow plants; pots with bases; decorative supplies for pots; newspaper; spritzer with plant food.

Residents and youth partners grow and maintain plants and flowers. Residents are responsible for daily upkeep and children monitor the progress of plants during visits.



Submitted by James Lambert, Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home

Unity in Diversity

A PAPER STORY QUILT

Ages of Youth: All ages

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

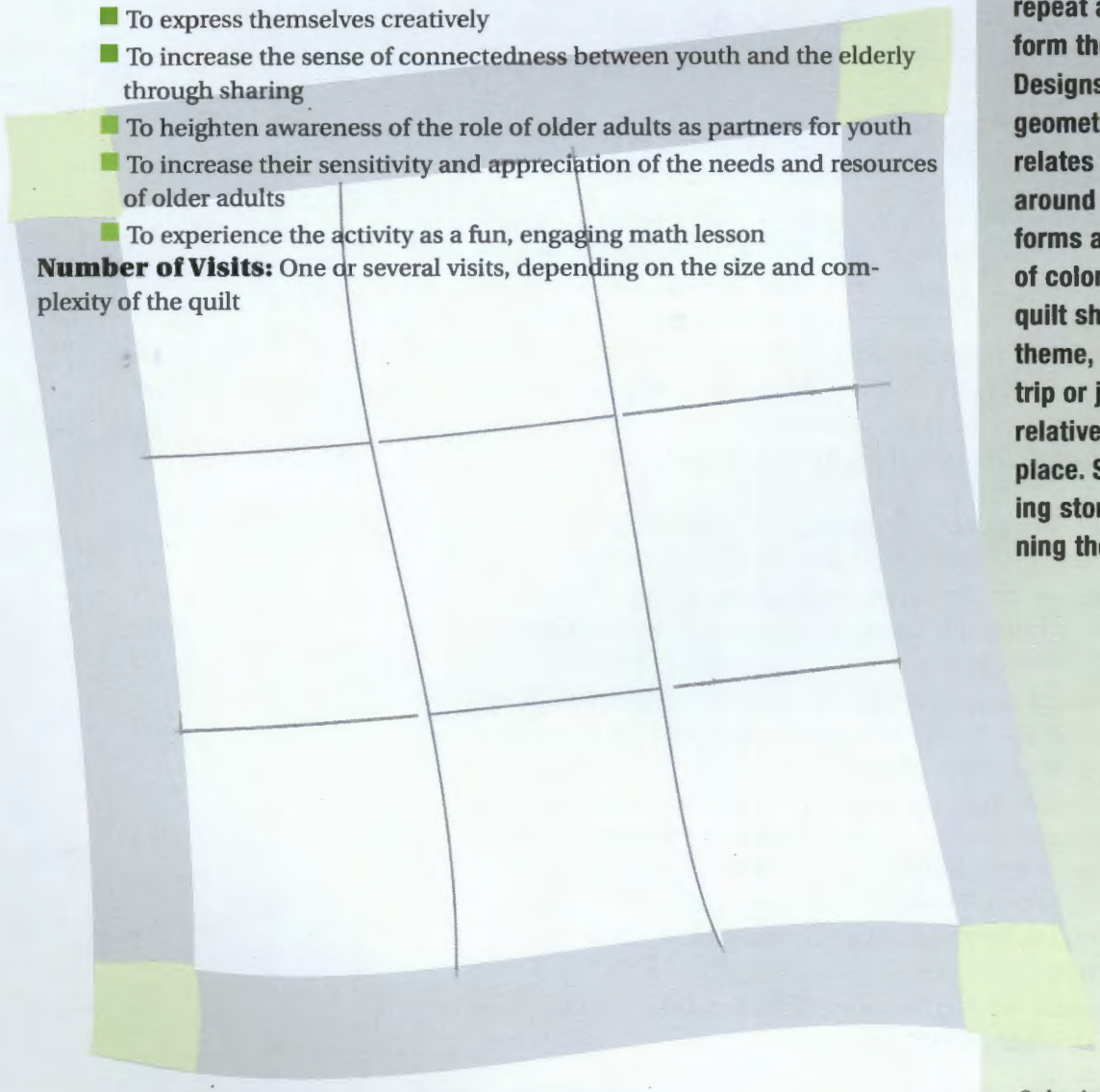
Goals for Residents

- To express themselves creatively
- To increase the sense of connectedness between youth and the elderly through sharing
- To increase their confidence and self-esteem in their role as partners with youth

Goals for Youth

- To express themselves creatively
- To increase the sense of connectedness between youth and the elderly through sharing
- To heighten awareness of the role of older adults as partners for youth
- To increase their sensitivity and appreciation of the needs and resources of older adults
- To experience the activity as a fun, engaging math lesson

Number of Visits: One or several visits, depending on the size and complexity of the quilt



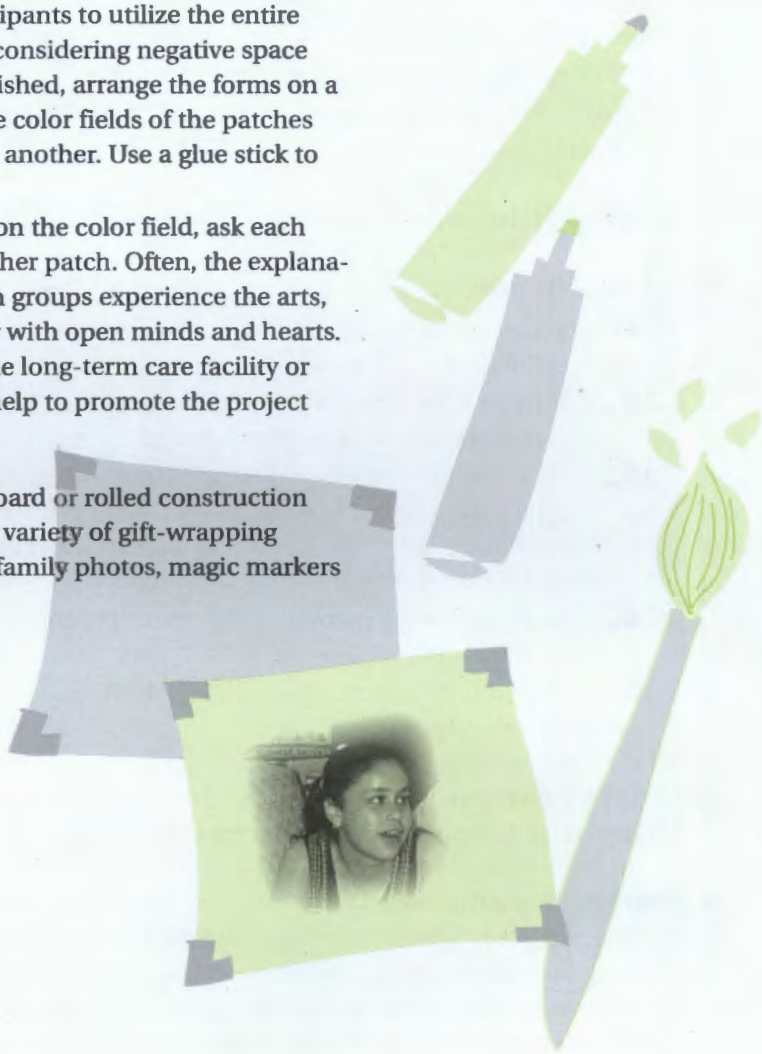
Quilt-making is an ancient craft whose purpose is both artistic and utilitarian. In the past, people socialized, told stories and exchanged ideas as they worked on their patches. Most American quilts are built from blocks that repeat a pattern and form the overall design. Designs are usually geometric—each block relates to the blocks around it to make larger forms and arrangements of color and line. Your quilt should have a theme, such as a favorite trip or journey, a favorite relative, or a favorite place. Spend time sharing stories before beginning the quilt.

Submitted by Helen Haynes, Center for Intergenerational Learning

Specific Activities

1. Find a large wall or bulletin board where you can display the finished quilt. Measure and divide the space, mapping it into sections and remembering to allow for a color border. Calculate how many squares or sections you will need and how they will be arranged based on the number of participants. Students may be able to help with these calculations.
2. Talk with the group about choosing a theme for the quilt. Discuss how feelings and images could be translated to a quilt square.
3. Cut construction paper to size, distributing different color "fields" to each person. Designs may come from printed wrapping paper for patterns, family photos photocopied on brightly colored paper and cut out, magazines for pictures and typography, and magic markers. Allow people to experiment with placement before coming up with the final composition. Encourage participants to utilize the entire space, not necessarily filling it but also considering negative space around the forms. When everyone is finished, arrange the forms on a large sheet or sheets of paper so that the color fields of the patches flow through the piece and balance one another. Use a glue stick to hold the final design in place.
4. After you've arranged the quilt patches on the color field, ask each person in the group to talk about his or her patch. Often, the explanations bring the artwork alive. While both groups experience the arts, they also learn to "re-view" one another with open minds and hearts. The final product can be displayed at the long-term care facility or school/youth organization, which will help to promote the project and its goals.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Large color tag board or rolled construction paper, a stack of multi-colored construction paper, a variety of gift-wrapping paper, scissors, glue sticks, magazines, photocopied family photos, magic markers (optional)



Songwriting Workshop

Ages of Youth: Second grade and up

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild or no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents

- To bond with children through a collaborative process
- To hear their stories come to life through music
- To do something they thought they could never do (i.e., write a song)
- To enhance relationships among residents who learn one another's life stories by singing them
- To enjoy the satisfaction of public performance

Goals for Youth

- To bond with residents through a collaborative process
- To learn through a creative oral history project
- To do something they thought they could never do (i.e., write a song)
- To enjoy the satisfaction of public performance

Number of Visits: A minimum of five, more if possible

Specific Activities

1. Place residents and children in small groups, one resident with two children.
2. Have children interview residents about their life stories. Give children prompts to get them started.
3. Based on the residents' life stories, and with guidance from the music consultant, have the residents and youth write a song together. If they have trouble coming up with music, they can pick a tune that each knows and simply rewrite the words.
4. Once each small group has written a song about the resident's life, have the small groups teach their songs to the large group.
5. Stage a final performance, during which the full group performs all the songs.

Alternative Format: Rather than songs, participants can write poems based on life stories (thus negating the need to hire a musician).

Resources/Supplies Needed: This project was developed and implemented by "Two of a Kind," a Southeast Pennsylvania-based singer/songwriter duo specializing in children's music. Music teachers, music therapists, and local musicians may be available to run this program. For consultation or suggestions on implementation, visit Two of a Kind's Web site at www.twoofakind.com.

Residents and youth collaborate on writing songs based on residents' life stories. All songs are performed by participants at a final event. The services of a musician or music teacher are needed for Step 3 of this project.

Submitted by David and Jenny Heitler-Klevans, Two of a Kind

Age Collage

Ages of Youth: Fifth grade through high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To gain awareness of their beliefs about other age groups
- To develop an understanding that challenges previously held stereotypes
- To facilitate relationships between residents and youth for further contact in other ongoing projects
- To work as a team to create art

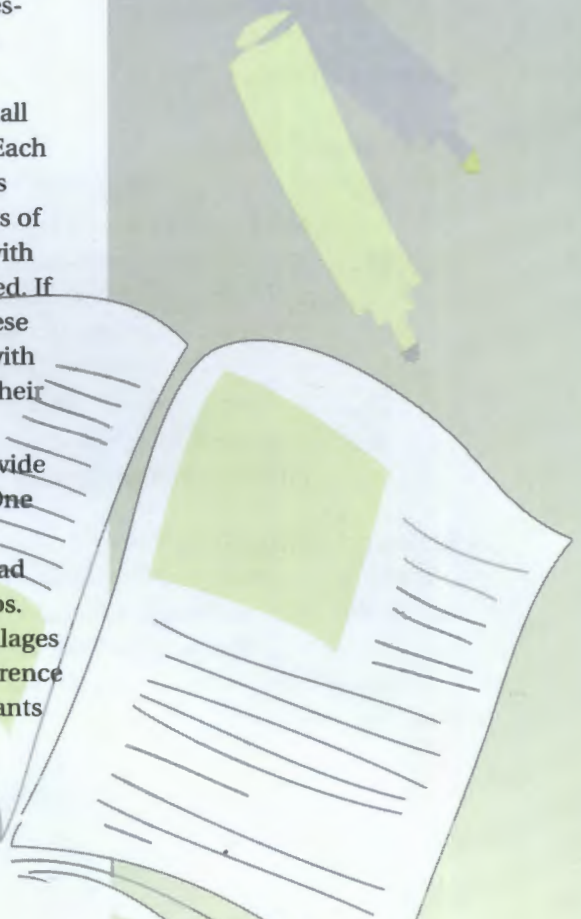
Number of Visits: One or two visits

Specific Activities

1. Prior to a joint meeting, have residents and youth go through magazines and select images and words that represent their impressions of the age group they will be working with. Each person should have at least four items to contribute to the collage.
2. At the joint meeting, ask residents and students to get into small groups of four to six people, half residents and half students. Each group can make two collages, one representing young people's views of older people, and one representing older adults' views of youth. Participants can work together to create the collages, with students assisting residents with pasting and cutting, as needed. If they wish, participants may also make up a story based on these images; they might want to write their stories on the collage with markers and pens. Participants are encouraged to talk about their perceptions during this exercise.
3. Have each group present their collages to the full group (or divide into two groups, depending on the number of participants). One member can hold up the collage while the others explain the choice and placement of images. Allow this presentation to lead into a general discussion of stereotypes about other age groups. Are these stereotypes valid? Why do we have them? Do the collages demonstrate any overt or subtle stereotypes? What is the difference between a stereotype and a generalization? What did participants learn about stereotypes as they worked together?

Resources/Supplies Needed: Magazines, newspapers, scissors, glue, poster board, magic markers.

Participants create collages of images of older adults and young people from popular media and explore their beliefs about the other age group through discussion. This activity can serve as an effective kick-off to ongoing projects.



Adapted from Generating Communities by Susan Perlstein and Jeff Bliss

Baby and Me

A BABY AND MOM PROGRAM

Ages of youth: Five months to two years (it would be helpful to keep the age range smaller)

Recommended Resident Population: All residents, especially those with significant impairments

Goals for residents:

- To have the opportunity to nurture infants and toddlers
- To have the joy of seeing and interacting with infants, little children, and their mothers
- To enjoy musical and other play activities
- To reduce feelings of being isolated from the community

Goals for Babies and Mothers

- To create bonds among young adult women (babies' mothers) and residents
- To have opportunities for babies to be nurtured by older adults
- To have babies participate in stimulating activities

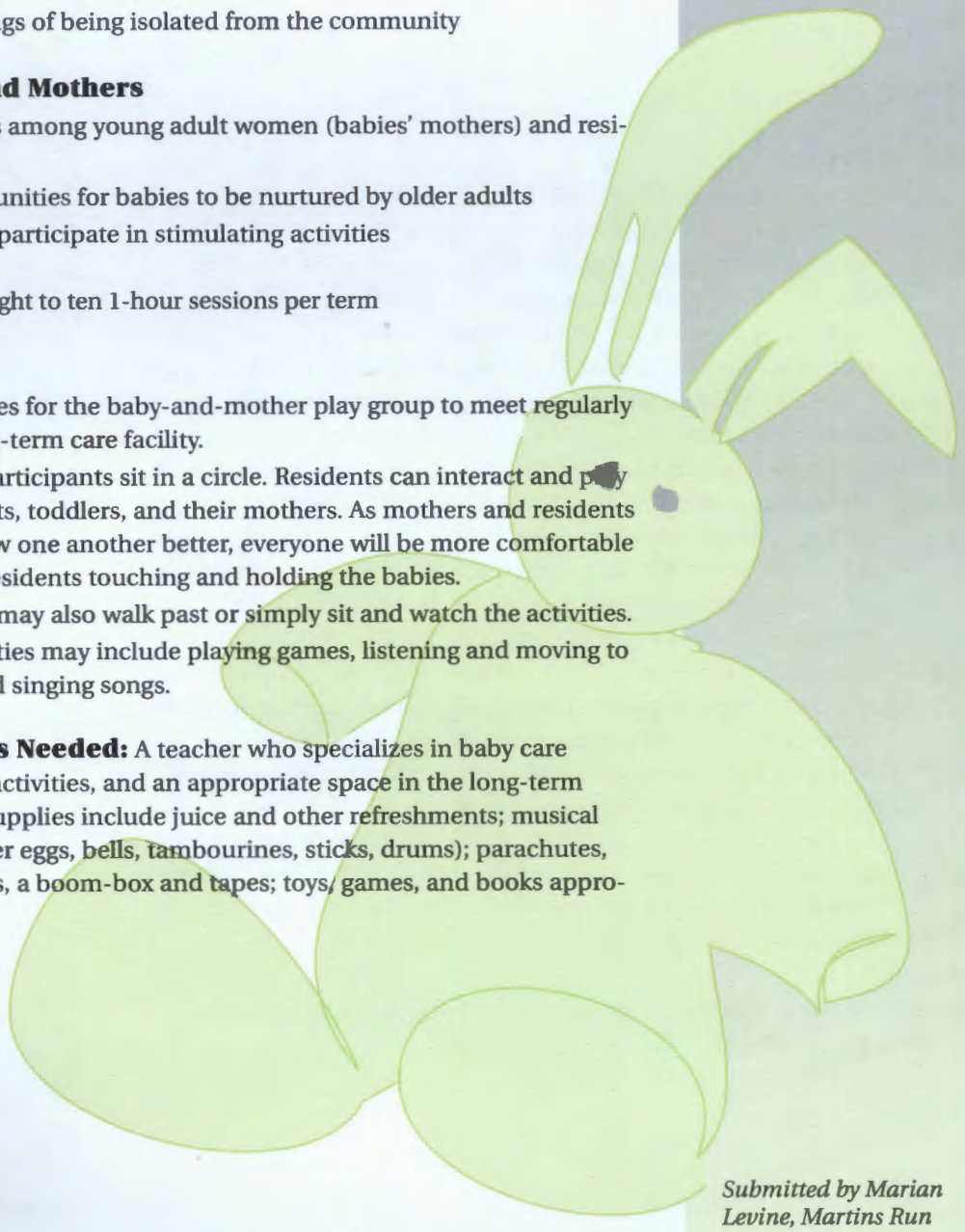
Number of visits: Eight to ten 1-hour sessions per term

Specific activities:

1. Set up times for the baby-and-mother play group to meet regularly at the long-term care facility.
2. Have all participants sit in a circle. Residents can interact and play with infants, toddlers, and their mothers. As mothers and residents get to know one another better, everyone will be more comfortable with the residents touching and holding the babies.
3. Residents may also walk past or simply sit and watch the activities.
4. Play activities may include playing games, listening and moving to music, and singing songs.

Resources/Supplies Needed: A teacher who specializes in baby care and who will facilitate activities, and an appropriate space in the long-term care facility. Optional supplies include juice and other refreshments; musical instruments (e.g., shaker eggs, bells, tambourines, sticks, drums); parachutes, scarves, stuffed animals, a boom-box and tapes; toys, games, and books appropriate for babies.

This interactive program includes babies, their moms and dads, and long-term care residents.



Submitted by Marian Levine, Martins Run

Let's Learn!

Ages of Youth: Four to six years old

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild or no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents

- To be exposed to a different language or type of music
- To have social contact and fun with the children by sharing a mutual experience

Goals for Youth

- To learn the basics of a language in a fun and entertaining way
- To learn new songs about seasons, holidays, and other subjects
- To have social contact with grandfriends by sharing a mutual experience

Number of Visits: One visit per week of no more than one-half hour, for two to three months or the entire school year, if you're ambitious.

Specific Activities

1. Sing a simple hello song, teaching everyone the Spanish words.
2. Go through the Spanish words for the alphabet, colors, shapes, and the daily weather. Play games like What Color is Someone Wearing? and What Letter Does My Name Start With? with everyone answering in Spanish.
3. Teach a Spanish dance, like the cha-cha. Have the children dance with residents by holding hands or dancing around wheelchair-bound residents.
4. Teach the words to simple Spanish songs, and sing them as a group.
5. Close each session with a good-bye song, and then serve snacks.
6. At the end of the year, put on a little show in Spanish.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Someone who can teach Spanish, and room to comfortably seat the residents and children. Optional supplies include posters with Spanish words describing colors, shapes, the weather, and seasons; a CD or cassette player; Spanish music CDs or cassettes; snacks such as cookies, graham crackers, and juice; and whatever else is needed to make this activity a pleasurable experience for the residents and children.

Residents join a preschool class for their lessons in Spanish and/or for a music class. They learn by singing songs and playing games with the class.This experience of learning something together helps to form a greater bond between the "grandfriends" and the children by giving them a common link. Classes can take place at the preschool or long-term care facility.

Submitted by Bob Paeglow, Saunders House

The Magic of Our Hands

Ages of Youth: Four to six years old

Recommended Resident Population: All residents; particularly well-suited to those with moderate cognitive impairment or physical disabilities

Goals for Residents

- To become engaged through reminiscence
- To enjoy interactive work with children
- To be stimulated by socialization
- To feel satisfaction at contributing to project tasks

Goals for Youth

- To derive satisfaction from helping others
- To learn by doing an activity
- To enjoy freedom of artistic expression
- To experience the discipline of organization

Number of Visits: One or two

Specific Activities:

1. Have residents and children pair up or form groups of three (two children to one resident).
2. Ask residents and children to shake hands.
3. Tell the adults and children to discuss the different ways they have used their hands during their lives. Encourage participants to demonstrate how they have used their hands and to touch each other's hands.
4. Have participants help one another trace their hands, decorate the hand drawings, and cut them out.
5. Bring everyone back to the large group and have them organize the hand drawings into one group mural.
6. Ask participants to verbally share what the experience was like for them.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Paper, markers, crayons, pencils, scissors, tape, mural paper

Residents and children explore the uses of their hands then illustrate their hands by tracing and painting, then ultimately combining all of the illustrations on mural paper. This activity may be combined with the "Hand Poem."

Submitted by Eva Mayo, MA, ATR, CGP; Saunders House

Parachute Games

Ages of Youth: Five years and older; best suited for elementary and middle school

Recommended Resident Population: All residents; very effective for residents in wheelchairs

People of all ages and cognitive levels work and exercise together through games using a large, brightly colored parachute and beach ball.

Goals for Residents

- To laugh and have fun
- To exercise their upper body and arms
- To stimulate their visual, tactile, and auditory senses

Goals for Youth

- To realize that all people, regardless of their age, like to laugh and have fun
- To learn that people in wheelchairs are capable of doing a lot of the same activities as ambulatory people
- To learn to work together as a team
- To get supervised experience in safely maneuvering residents in wheelchairs

Number of Visits: As often as desired

Specific Activities:

1. Have the students and residents gather around the perimeter of the parachute and hold it. Children can help place the parachute in residents' hands, if needed. Children who are taller than residents should be seated, particularly if the residents are in wheelchairs.
2. Ask everyone to move the parachute up and down to the beat of the music—slow or fast. Then direct everyone to move the parachute so that it resembles an ocean storm:
   The water is very calm, so the parachute should be moved up and down calmly. The storm is approaching and the waves are beginning to get rough. Move the parachute a little faster. The storm is almost on top of us. Everyone should wave the parachute as quickly as possible. The storm has gone away, and the waves are calm again. Slow down the parachute.
3. Tell the residents and students to hold the edge of the parachute tightly. With the music on, toss a beach ball on the parachute and have participants wave the parachute up and down, without allowing the ball to fall off. Participants should hit the ball into the center of the parachute if it gets too close to the edge.
4. Remove the ball and ask the residents and students to hold the parachute's edge as high as they can. Call out the name of a student and resident, and have them go under the parachute. Call two more names, and have those people trade places with the first resident/student pair. Do this until everyone's had a turn. Students should wheel the residents who are in wheelchairs or hold hands with the ambulatory residents while going under the parachute.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Parachute (a large parachute is better for groups of 10 people or more), beach ball, music tapes or CDs, cassette or CD player.

Submitted by Janet Kaplan, Martins Run Retirement Community

Survivor

Ages of Youth: Eleven to thirteen years old

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents

- To identify problems, heroic qualities, and coping strategies
- To reminisce about lessons of survival from their past
- To increase interaction with students

Goals for Youth

- To identify problems, heroic qualities, and coping strategies
- To respond to the life stories and advice given to them by seniors
- To increase interaction with residents

Number of Visits: 1–2 sessions

Specific activities:

1. Ask the group to break up into student/resident pairs. Each pair is given a page with the following paragraph on it:

WE SURVIVED

The year is _____. Our heroes, _____and _____, are on a trip in _____. They are having a wonderful time, when all of a sudden a big _____ comes across their path. With _____and _____ in their hearts, they decide how to handle this problem. "This is what we'll do," said _____. "We'll _____ _____ _____ _____." _____'s friend added, "Next we can _____ _____." So they did. When they got home, the crowds cheered. The people said, "Those two sure have a lot of _____. They are our heroes."

2. Tell the pairs to collaborate on a story of survival by filling in the blanks.
3. Have the pairs read their stories out loud to the group.
4. After the performance, ask the elders to share some qualities or beliefs that helped them survive tough times and to give advice to the students. Let them briefly tell their own stories. Students could be asked to identify challenges in their lives and to explain how qualities of the heroes in the stories or qualities of their resident partner mentioned could help guide them.

This is a story telling exercise to encourage dialogue between students and elders regarding coping skills, heroic qualities, and creative problem solving. This activity is most suitable for youth and residents who have been working together for a while. It is also important to precede this activity with an interactive icebreaker or icebreakers in which participants all have opportunities to express themselves; see "Group Story Telling" and "Me Too" as examples.

Submitted by Margene Biedermann, Saunders House

Our Town

Ages of Youth: Eleven to thirteen years old.

Recommended Resident Population: All residents; people with more advanced dementia can enjoy the process of constructing parts of the town

In this activity, the group (ideally, 10 residents and 10 students) imagines a town they would like to live in and then constructs it together.

Goals for Residents

- To interact and share the satisfaction of accomplishment in a building project with youth
- To socialize
- To share their values and ideas about what makes a livable community
- To understand what youth would like for their own communities

Goals for Youth:

- To respect the values, ideas, and advice of the elderly
- To help residents participate in the construction of a town
- To contribute to a group project, using their creativity
- To imagine an ideal town that incorporates the knowledge and preferences of the elderly

Number of Visits: Approximately six; ideally, sessions should be held weekly

Note: *Depending on the diversity and capabilities of group, this activity can be concluded with a discussion along the lines of the "Diversity Sculpture" on page 105.*

Specific Activities

1. Divide participants into mixed-age groups of four to five people.
2. Instruct participants to discuss and make drawings of a town they would like to live in together.
3. Tell participants to use these drawings as a basis for constructing their towns. Distribute supplies and have each group work at a table. Tell the groups to decide what they will work on that day: stores, buildings, streets, flowers, trees, people, schools, a long-term care facility, etc.
4. At the beginning of each session, groups should review the previous week's accomplishments and then decide what they will work on that day.
5. At the last construction session, have participants name all streets, stores, etc., and choose a name for their town.
6. For discussion prompts on the group collaboration, see the "Diversity Sculpture."

Resources/Supplies Needed: A large box with low sides (about 5" high) as the base of the town, self-hardening clay, paper (colored and white), magic markers, crayons, scissors, tape, rulers, paints, any other decorations desired.

Submitted by Eva Mayo, MA, ATR, CGP; Saunders House

Reading/Discussion Group

Ages of Youth: Middle school and possibly high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents

- To participate in discussions with students
- To erase stereotypes of youth
- To gain understanding of the values of younger persons
- To share their own values with younger persons

Goals for Youth

- To participate as equals in discussions with older adults
- To erase stereotypes of seniors
- To gain understanding of the values of older persons
- To share their own values with older persons

Number of Visits: One per reading selection; this project could run weekly or bi-weekly over a school year or semester

Specific Activities

1. Meet with the residents and students separately and explain the project to them. Have students and seniors read a selection from *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* before their first visit.
2. Prior to the visit, prepare some discussion questions about the selection.
3. Have the seniors and students form small groups to discuss the reading using the discussion questions as a kick-off. Tell the groups that these questions are only a starting point; they may talk about anything in the reading that interested them.
4. Tell each group to select one member to serve as a recorder to take notes on the discussion and another to serve as a reporter.
5. Ask the reporter to share the highlights of the small-group discussion with the whole group.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Copies of *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*, photocopied discussion questions, paper, pencils

Students and seniors meet to discuss selections from the book *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul: 101 Stories of Life, Love and Learning*, edited by Jack Canfield; published by Health Communications, Inc., a collection of brief stories, poems, and cartoons relating to life issues of concern to youth. Residents and students read a preselected section prior to a joint meeting, during which they hold small-group discussions of the reading.

Submitted by Cyvi Levin, Baldi Middle School

Diversity Discussion

A discussion between older adults and youth about working and playing with people who have different backgrounds and perspectives but who also have a lot in common. It can be done independently or followed by the "Diversity Sculpture" activity. This activity should take place early in an ongoing project, perhaps at the second visit.

Ages of Youth: Middle school and older

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild or no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To gain understanding of the concept of diversity
- To gain appreciation of the differences among the people in the group
- To gain appreciation of the commonalities within the group
- To feel excitement about participating in a project with others who have similar or different backgrounds and life experiences
- To value and celebrate diversity

Number of Visits: One

Specific Activities

1. Begin with a word association exercise. Ask, "What do you think of when I say the word diversity?" Have the group call out answers and record them on newsprint.
2. Call on two volunteers who are visibly different from each other in age, gender, and/or ethnicity. Ask them to stand at the front of the room side by side.
3. Explain that the volunteers are going to role-play two "politically incorrect" people, who must share as many stereotypes about the group represented by the other person as they can think of. Be sure to reinforce that this is a role play and that the stereotypes the volunteers name are not their own. The volunteers are to have a conversation in front of the group about their differences. Encourage them to role-play people who are "politically incorrect" so that they can express stereotypes that are not their own. Tell the volunteers to take a giant step apart for each stereotype they come up with. This should continue until the volunteers are as far apart as possible. Ask the group what is happening here. State (or get the group to state) that when people focus on differences, they create a space that they have to yell across to be heard. This social space can be difficult—and sometimes almost impossible—to get across.
4. Ask the volunteers to describe what they have in common ("We both like ice cream," "We love to read"). As they announce what they have in common, have the volunteers move closer. Ask the group to discuss what happens when you focus on what you have in common.
5. Review and discuss the following definition:
   "Diversity" is the combinations of ways in which each of us is

   like* all *others,
   like* some *others,
   and like* no *other.

(*Source: Kluckhohn, C. and Murray, HA,* Personality in nature, society, and culture. *New York, Knopf,* 1953.)

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6. Optional: If there is enough time and energy in the room, have the participants partner with someone who appears different from themselves. Have the "diverse" pairs come up with three things that they have in common and three things that are different. Time permitting, pairs could introduce themselves or each other to the group by sharing their commonalities and differences.
7. Optional: Talk about the challenges of celebrating diversity, such as, "It is slower to work with people who are different, but more interesting."

Resources/Supplies Needed: If possible, this activity should be facilitated by a group leader who is an experienced trainer on diversity-related issues. Supplies include newsprint and markers.

Submitted by Marie Amey-Taylor, Ed.D., Director of Human Resources Development/Training, Temple University

Diversity Sculpture

Ages of Youth: Middle school and older

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild or no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To further understand the concept of diversity
- To understand the challenges and satisfaction involved in collaborating with people who are different from oneself
- To further appreciate the differences among people in the group
- To further appreciate the commonalities within the group
- To generate enthusiasm for continued participation in activities with people who have different backgrounds and life experiences from their own

Number of Visits: One

Specific Activities

1. Divide the large group into small, heterogeneous groups, mixing participants by age, ethnicity, religion, and gender.
2. Explain that the mayor of their town has decided to build a statue commemorating their small group. The sculpture will be placed in the most prominent location in town. The mayor has specified that the sculpture must be designed by the group, and it must reflect characteristics of all of its members.
3. Distribute the art supplies listed below.
4. Instruct the groups that they have 15 minutes to construct a three-dimensional free-standing model of this statue.
5. After the time is up, have each small group discuss the following questions (write these on newsprint in large print in advance):

   How did the groups' diverse ideas, perceptions, and backgrounds influence how you worked together?

   How did this diversity influence the final product?

   How would the end product look if the group members were all the same?
6. Have everyone return to the large group for discussion. Ask each small group to present their sculpture and describe how it represents their group.
7. Review this definition of diversity: The combinations of ways in which each of us is like all others, like some others, and like no other. (Source: Kluckhohn, C. and Murray, HA, *Personality in nature, society, and culture*. New York, Knopf, 1953.)
8. Discuss what is challenging and what is fun about working with those of similar or different ages, ethnicities and genders.

Supplies/Resources Needed: Multi-colored 3" x 5" cards, masking tape, colored magic markers, modeling clay, feathers, stickers, pipe cleaners, other decorative supplies, questions written on newsprint.

In small, heterogeneous groups, participants create a sculpture that represents them. Groups discuss how the exercise advanced their understanding and appreciation of diversity. This activity may be preceded by the "Diversity Discussion" (previous page). It should take place early in an ongoing project, perhaps at the second visit.

Submitted by Marie Amey-Taylor, Ed.D., Director of Human Resources Development/Training, Temple University

Collaborative Painting/ Oral History

Ages of Youth: Middle through high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

Student teams collaborate with a resident to complete a painting on canvas based on the resident's life story.

Goals for Residents

- To bond with young people through a joint creative process
- To feel like they are listened to
- To feel an increased sense of competency through learning new skills or using existing art skills

Goals for Youth

- To bond with elders through a joint creative process
- To learn about people, history, and the use of visual and language arts as forums for describing life stories
- To increase competencies in one-on-one communication, public speaking, teamwork, and art

Number of Visits: At least nine

Specific Activities:

1. At school, put students into teams of two or three to develop questions to ask the residents. These can be questions about the residents' lives, especially as they relate to historical periods and events. Have students practice interviewing and note-taking.
2. For the next two to four sessions, have each student team work with one resident. They will get to know one another as the students ask questions and tell the residents about themselves. Students can take turns taking notes and asking questions. Following every visit, have students write journal entries, discuss the visit with their teacher or a facilitator, and plan discussion topics for the next visit.
3. In class, with guidance from an art teacher, have students individually make drawings based on their interviews.
4. Ask student teams to review their drawings with the residents. Together the student-resident teams can negotiate the content as they sketch a painting on canvas to illustrate the resident's life.
5. Once the sketch is completed, have the students and residents paint on the canvas. Tell students to encourage the residents to participate in painting to the best of their abilities, from choosing colors to applying paint.
6. Plan a final celebration. Students can present their paintings to the residents and make speeches about the residents, and the residents can have an opportunity to make speeches about the children.

Resources/Supplies Needed: This activity requires the involvement of an artist or art teacher. Supplies needed include varieties of acrylic paint, stretched pre-mounted canvases, brushes, drawing materials, and newspaper and smocks to prevent staining clothes and furniture.

Submitted by Jeanette Bressler, Center for Intergenerational Learning, Temple University

Mask Characterizations

Ages of Youth: Middle through high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To create a sense of freedom in expressing various emotions
- To give participants a chance to pretend they are someone or something else

Number of Visits: One or two

Note: *It is important to let participants know that anything they say or do during these exercises is separate from who they are. Making this clear gives the participants a foundation for releasing their doubts and inhibitions. Give your group time to express their reservations and uncertainties before and after the exercises.*

Specific Activities

1. Name an emotion. Have everyone place their hands on their foreheads and then change their expressions to fit that emotion as they lower their hands across their faces. Explain that they are creating an "emotion mask." Ask the participants to focus on the emotion as they remove their hands.
2. Allow group members to choose an emotion for their own mask. Once that mask has been established, they should bring the feeling of the mask down into their entire bodies. Suggest they find a way to move or speak with this mask on.
3. Put participants into intergenerational pairs. Have them stand or sit back to back and each choose an emotion mask to wear. When the facilitator gives the signal, partners should turn around and have a conversation motivated by their masks. The most important part of this exercise is to stay with the emotion mask they chose. Encourage them to take the time to get beyond the giggling stage.
4. You may follow this exercise with acting improvisations, perhaps at a second session. While the masks are a good starting point, eventually they will become unnecessary; each participant can simply choose a character he or she wants to be. Family roles are exciting to create, but any relationship between two people can work. You can add a further challenge by choosing a topic for the two characters to discuss or the location where the discussion takes place. Improvisations can be done by partners alone or in front of an audience (small or large group).

In these theater arts exercises, participants use facial expressions to express and then discuss emotion. This activity is best for groups that have already gotten to know one another.

Suggestion:

Participants may dissolve into giggling during their first attempts. Try to control this by emphasizing the importance of learning about each feeling, and by praising focused participants.

Adapted from Generating Community *by Susan Perlstein and Jeff Bliss*

Who's Who: Version 1

Ages of Youth: Middle and high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with moderate, mild, or no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents

- To bond with young people through a joint creative process
- To have their stories heard
- To feel the satisfaction of seeing their life stories posted for others to read
- To see that their life stories are valued by the long-term care facility

Goals for Youth

- To bond with elders through a joint creative process by learning their life stories
- To learn more about people and history
- To use visual arts and language arts for documenting life stories
- To increase competencies in one-on-one communication, public speaking, teamwork, and art

Number of Visits: Ten or more

Specific activities:

1. Do an orientation that explains the project to residents and youth. Residents must give permission for students to create biographies that will be hung next to the doors of their rooms. Orientation for students should include a discussion about the link between the posted biography and how staff and visitors interactions with residents can be enhanced by knowing each person's life story.
2. In teams of one or two students per resident, students conduct oral history interviews and review mementos and photographs. (For more information on this process, see "Oral History Projects" in Chapter 8, "Enhancing Programs Through the Arts and Humanities.") Interviews and conversations between the students and residents should last a minimum of two visits and could continue over many more visits.
3. Have the students and residents discuss the possible content for the posted biographies, with the residents selecting what will and will not be included. If photos are included, they should be handled carefully or copied. Since the Who's Who biography will be in large type in a narrow, oblong frame, the biography should contain no more than two or three brief paragraphs. Have participants write and review the text together. It could take up to three visits to discuss the content of the biographies and finish writing them. Students should type the final drafts.
4. Students and residents can then collaborate on the final design of the Who's Who biographies. Check with the long-term care facility's staff about the best places to hang these.
5. Hold a celebration during which residents are presented with their completed biographies. Students and residents may want to speak publicly about the experience of collaborating with one another on this project.

Students interview residents to learn their life stories and then collaborate with them to create biographies that will be framed and posted outside the residents' rooms. These biographies indirectly serve to enhance care, as staff and visitors are regularly reminded that each resident is a person with a life story.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Notebooks, photographs, colored paper, collage materials, scissors, tape, heavy poster board cut to size, oblong frames.

Submitted by Bob Paeglow, Saunders House

Dialogues

Ages of Youth: Middle and high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To explore how people in a relationship can work out conflict
- To try out new roles and behaviors
- To use their imagination
- To be a different age, gender, and race from who they "usually" are

Number of Visits: One or two

Note: *It is important to let participants know that anything they say or do during these exercises is separate from who they are. Making this clear provides the participants with a foundation for releasing their doubts and inhibitions. Give your group time to express reservations and uncertainties before and after the exercises.*

Specific Activities:

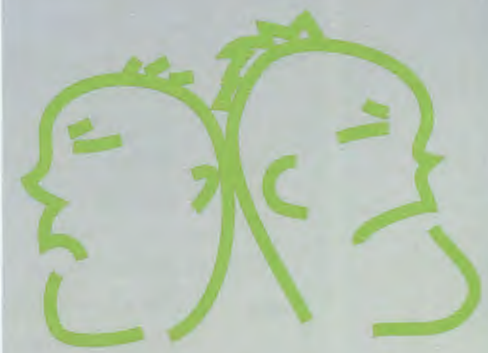
1. Enact a dialogue. Enlist two volunteers from the group to come forward to create an improvisational scene. Assign one actor as character "One" and the other as character "Two." Ask them to read their respective phrases and when they reach the end of the dialogue to simply drop their sheets of paper to the floor and improvise. Be as general or as specific as you want to be in your set up of the scene. Encourage the actors to speak and move around the stage freely.

   Dialogue # 1*:
   One: I'm not happy with the way things are.
   Two: What do you mean?
   One: I feel confined... controlled.
   Two: Who's controlling you?
   One: You are!
   Two: Me? How can you say that?
   One: You don't give me any space.
   Two: Space? What kind of space?

   Dialogue #2*:
   One: You never listen to me.
   Two: You never say anything worth listening to.
   One: That's some attitude.
   Two: I don't have an attitude. You do.
   One: Me?
   Two: Yes, you. You always try to start an argument.
   One: You're the one who's starting it.
   Two: Just shut up, will you?

* Group leaders and group participants can write their own dialogues. These dialogues are from: *Sociodrama: Who's in Your Shoes?* by Patricia Sternberg and Antonina Garcia, Prager Publishers, 2000.

In pairs, small groups, and/or in front of an audience, students and residents enact structured role plays. Sample dialogues provide participants with an opportunity to explore how people resolve conflicts.



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Mask Characterizations

Ages of Youth: Middle through high school

Recommended Resident Population: Residents with mild to no cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents and Youth

- To create a sense of freedom in expressing various emotions
- To give participants a chance to pretend they are someone or something else

Number of Visits: One or two

Note: *It is important to let participants know that anything they say or do during these exercises is separate from who they are. Making this clear gives the participants a foundation for releasing their doubts and inhibitions. Give your group time to express their reservations and uncertainties before and after the exercises.*

Specific Activities

1. Name an emotion. Have everyone place their hands on their foreheads and then change their expressions to fit that emotion as they lower their hands across their faces. Explain that they are creating an "emotion mask." Ask the participants to focus on the emotion as they remove their hands.
2. Allow group members to choose an emotion for their own mask. Once that mask has been established, they should bring the feeling of the mask down into their entire bodies. Suggest they find a way to move or speak with this mask on.
3. Put participants into intergenerational pairs. Have them stand or sit back to back and each choose an emotion mask to wear. When the facilitator gives the signal, partners should turn around and have a conversation motivated by their masks. The most important part of this exercise is to stay with the emotion mask they chose. Encourage them to take the time to get beyond the giggling stage.
4. You may follow this exercise with acting improvisations, perhaps at a second session. While the masks are a good starting point, eventually they will become unnecessary; each participant can simply choose a character he or she wants to be. Family roles are exciting to create, but any relationship between two people can work. You can add a further challenge by choosing a topic for the two characters to discuss or the location where the discussion takes place. Improvisations can be done by partners alone or in front of an audience (small or large group).

In these theater arts exercises, participants use facial expressions to express and then discuss emotion. This activity is best for groups that have already gotten to know one another.

Suggestion:

Participants may dissolve into giggling during their first attempts. Try to control this by emphasizing the importance of learning about each feeling, and by praising focused participants.

Adapted from Generating Community *by Susan Perlstein and Jeff Bliss*

2. Freeze the action when the conflict seems at its peak moment. Invite the two actors to "stay in character" throughout the discussion. Let them know that you and the audience will be dialoguing with them at certain moments and that they should respond as they feel their character would respond. Ask questions that can serve to clarify the interaction.
   See: What do you see happening? What makes you see it that way? Does anyone see the very same thing happening in a different way?
   Feel: How do you think the characters are feeling about what is happening.? Let's ask them.
   Reflect: How do you feel about what is happening? Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? What did you do?
3. Resolve the conflict. Ask what the characters could do to resolve their conflict. What options or alternative ways might be available to them? Invite the characters to return to an earlier moment in the scene when a different path could have been taken. Have them play out one or some of these solutions. Or invite audience members to come up, replace the characters and replay the scene. Remind them to work at solving the problem and not escalating it.
4. Close the activity. Make sure to allow the persons who played the scenes some time to "de-role" from the characters they played. They can share their reactions and feelings during the role play. They can speak to their connections to the character they played. Have audience members share:
   - What they learned from the session (about themselves, the group, the program, etc.)
   - How they can apply the learning to their lives.

To Increase Group Participation in Scenarios:

Pass out the dialogues to all participants. Pair them up and have each member select a character. Give a signal for beginning and ending the role plays. Have them all interact for a minute or so in their seats. You can also invite them to switch seats and switch characters and even engage them all in a discussion about which role they liked best and least. What did they learn about the two characters, etc.?

Submitted by Robb Hutter, Full Circle Theater, Center for Intergenerational Learning, Temple University

"Volunteens"

Ages of Youth: Twelve to eighteen years old.

Recommended Resident Population: All

A summer volunteer program for teenagers. Recruitment takes place at schools, churches/ temples, and youth organizations in May and June.

Goals for Residents

- To offer residents some positive experiences with "volunteens" (teenage volunteers)
- To maintain the presence of young people in the facility over the summer
- To use the energy of youth to interact with residents who enjoy learning and doing new things
- To provide individual residents with assistance in tasks that staff do not necessarily have the time to provide
- To provide assistance to facility staff with a variety of tasks

Goals for Youth

- To offer "volunteens" some positive experiences with the elderly
- To provide teens with a fulfilling and fun summer experience
- To introduce teens to the long-term care facility as a potential work environment

Number of Visits: In July and August, teenagers work as volunteers in the care facility. Schedules vary per youth. At a maximum, volunteens may work for four hours per day. Volunteens may come to the facility between one and five days per week.

Specific Activities

1. Interview interested youth in June to explore their reason(s) for wanting to volunteer, their areas of interest, and their comfort level with elders in various levels of care. Give prospective volunteens a tour of the facility and introduce them to key staff.
2. At the beginning of the program, provide volunteens with orientation to the facility and give them all a Volunteen Handbook. The volunteens and their parents are required to read the handbook and to sign a form indicating that they have done so.

Note: You will need to develop the Volunteen Handbook beforehand. It should provide an overview of the facility's philosophy, policies/procedures for volunteens, and guidelines for working with residents. See Chapter 5, Preparing Youth, for more ideas about what to include in the handbook.

3. Since the majority of volunteens prefer interacting with residents, they can be carefully integrated into the recreational therapy program, either becoming involved with existing activities or participating in a "tailor made" activity based on the individual volunteen's unique talents or skills. Examples of activities include card-playing, craft projects, socials, preparing and distributing resident birthday balloons, decorating activity boards, and assisting with pet therapy visits.

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4. Volunteens may also work individually with residents. They can provide companionship through friendly visits, assist residents by reading to them (correspondence, newspapers, etc.), help residents who have difficulty writing correspondence, and teach residents to use computers.
5. You should deliver ongoing training to volunteens as needed.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Copies of Volunteen Handbook, form to be signed by parents, materials as needed for activities.

Submitted by Diane Mokrzcki, Souderton Mennonite Homes

Who's Who: Version 2

Ages of Youth: High school, college, and graduate students

Recommended Resident Population: Advanced cognitive impairment.

When individuals with advanced cognitive impairment enter a facility, their individuality may not be appreciated by busy staff. In this activity, students interview residents and their families and review memorabilia in order to create biographies of the residents' life stories that will be framed and posted outside the residents' rooms. These biographies indirectly serve to enhance care, as staff and visitors are regularly reminded that each resident is a person with a life story.

Goals for Residents

- To be stimulated through conversation and review of memorabilia
- To enjoy the energy and attention of young people
- To involve family members in reminiscences about the resident prior to his or her impairment (which may influence the content and/or frequency of family visits)
- To increase the staff's understanding of the residents' life stories prior to their impairment

Goals for Youth

- To bond with residents who have limited abilities by learning their life stories
- To increase their understanding that people with cognitive impairments are unique individuals with their own life stories
- To feel the satisfaction of constructing a life story from multiple information sources
- To help staff and family better appreciate residents' unique life stories

Number of Visits: Five or more

Specific Activities:

1. Long-term care staff must obtain written permission for this project from each resident's guardian or family member.
2. Prior to the first meeting between the students and the residents, long-term care staff should train the students in how to communicate with residents with advanced cognitive impairment. The student orientation should also include a discussion of the link between the posted biographies and staff and visitors' interactions with the residents, and how these interactions can be enhanced by knowing an individual's life story.
3. The long-term care staff should introduce the students to the residents. Each student will work with one resident. Have students visit a while with the residents to get a sense of their partners' capacity to contribute information to the oral history.
4. Students should contact family members who have agreed to participate to either set up interviews at the facility or to schedule times for telephone interviews. Ideally, the interviews will be on-site with the resident present. More than one family member or friend may be involved at a time.
5. Students can collect biographical information about their residents from family members, friends, and documents. The biographical process may include reviewing archives of local newspapers and reading documents made available by the family.

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6. Throughout this process, the student should regularly visit the resident. Depending on the residents' abilities, students may find that information they learn about their residents can stimulate the residents' own reminiscences. For example, the statement "Here is a photo of you when you spent summers on the lake with your family" might generate a response. Or, a student learns that the resident always loved peaches. The student can, with nursing supervision and approval, bring the resident a peach and assist the resident in eating it, saying, "Your daughter told me you love peaches."
7. Students and family members can discuss the possible content for the posted biography, with a family member selecting what will and will not be included. If photos are included, they should be handled carefully or copied. Since the Who's Who biography will be in large type in a narrow, oblong frame, the biography should contain no more than two or three brief paragraphs. Students can write the text, and family members may want to review the final draft.
8. Have students work with long-term care staff on the final design of the Who's Who biographies. Check with the facility's staff about the best places to hang these.
9. Students can invite participating family members to the facility to see the Who's Who biographies when they are done.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Notebooks, photographs, colored paper, collage materials, scissors, tape, heavy poster board cut to size, oblong frames

Submitted by Bob Paeglow, Saunders House, and Jeanette Bressler, Center for Intergenerational Learning

L'Dor v'Dor

(FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION)

Ages of Youth: High school students

Recommended Resident Population: Most of the activities are geared to higher-functioning residents; a musical workshop/sing-along can be led by the teens for cognitively impaired residents.

Goals for Residents

- To learn how teens view topics of mutual interest, and to learn with the teens
- To enjoy a stimulating special event with a group of teens
- To meet young people who will be part of the next generation of leadership of their particular ethnic/religious communities and of the American community

Goals for Youth

- To gain a better understanding of older people as individuals
- To understand the values of their religious/ethnic heritage from the perspective of older adults
- To participate in adult discussions with one another and with older adults

Number of Visits: One weekend

Specific activities:

1. Organize a Sabbath service with a small group of teens, residents, and rabbis.
2. Have residents and students participate in the Sabbath service.
3. Set up an interactive performance by a theater or music group, and invite program participants to attend.
4. Throughout the weekend, hold small-group discussions or hands-on workshops. Discussions could include such topics as immigrant experiences, evolution/creationism in the schools, self-image, respect between the generations, Jewish music, and interpretations of the Torah through art projects. Have people select topics in advance so that you can keep attendance at the workshops even.
5. Plan for residents and students to enjoy meals and snacks together.
6. At the closing session, have everyone come together to recount his or her experience.

Resources/Supplies Needed: This project involved a lot of planning, with leadership coming from the clergy based in the long-term care facility. A committee of residents recruited participants from more than half the residents. Materials needed include prayerbooks for religious services, workshop supplies (such as musical instruments or craft supplies), lunch, printed programs/maps, and signs to help people find their way around.

This unique activity was held at a Jewish continuing care retirement community, but it can be adapted by any retirement community that has a religious or ethnic orientation. A weekend convention of a regional group of synagogue youth incorporated an intergenerational theme with a jointly organized Sabbath service. The convention included a performance of an original play about aging, presented by a group of residents (who lived through most of the twentieth century), and a session of hands-on workshops/discussion groups led by rabbis and educators. It was attended by 150 teens and 100 residents.

Submitted by Marian Levine, Martins Run Retirement Community

Teen Parenting Skills Training

Ages of Youth: Fifteen to eighteen years old

Recommended Resident Population: No cognitive impairment

Goals for Residents

- To experience the satisfaction of a caring relationship with a teen and her baby
- To identify teen parents' needs and assist in modeling nurturing behaviors
- To feel enhanced self-esteem through a mentoring relationship
- To have fun and enjoyment with a teen and baby
- To have an opportunity to hold and nurture a baby

Goals for Youth

- To experience a meaningful relationship with a nurturing adult
- To be educated in parenting practices by nurturing older adults

Number of Visits: Twice monthly over nine months

Specific Activities

1. Recruit youth from high school teen pregnancy programs, family planning clinics, or social service agencies. An adult partner who is working with these teens is essential.
2. Recruit older adults: Identify possible candidates and approach them individually. Resident preparation must include training on being nonjudgmental about teen pregnancy and sexual practices.
3. Start with icebreakers, and let students choose their resident mentors at the first visit.
4. Teens and their resident mentors can do mini-projects during subsequent visits to facilitate socialization. For example, crafts, such as crocheting, knitting, or origami. The activities can also be purely social, such as a tea party.
5. As the project progresses, the contact between teens and residents should become more individualized and will not require as many group activities. Instead, participants will engage in more one-on-one interaction.
6. Residents can plan and hold a group baby shower following the due date of the majority of teens, with the babies attending. Give residents a choice of presents to give their partners at the shower and let them make painted picture frames to give as additional gifts.
7. Encourage teens to maintain contact with residents following the end of the program and to bring babies for occasional visits.
8. Give residents assistance in providing support to teens in the event of a problem with the pregnancy.

Resources/Supplies Needed: Craft and party supplies as needed.

Pregnant and parenting teens and residents establish relationships in order to model nurturing between generations.

Submitted by James Lambert, Elmira Jeffries Memorial Home

Resources

These additional resources provide further information on topics of interest to people planning intergenerational programs between long-term care facilities and school and youth organizations.

Consultation and Training

The Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University provides individualized consultation and group training for a fee to organizations that want to develop or enhance their intergenerational programs. For more information, contact us at 215-204-6970, or visit our web site, www.TempleCIL.org.

Videos

Open Doors, Open Hearts: Bringing Long-Term Care Residents and Young People Together, the companion video to this manual, captures the magic between young and old. A youth steps up to an old woman; he takes her hands, and they dance. Two girls charge under a striped parachute, pushing a giggling woman in a wheelchair before them. A teenager turns to a 79-year-old man and says, "We have a lot in common." This lively video offers a glimpse of the powerful connections that flourish in intergenerational programs. Only 14 minutes long, *Open Doors, Open Hearts* makes an excellent introduction to intergenerational programs. Use the video to recruit and inspire your co-workers, youth, long-term care residents, and community partners. To order, contact the Center for Intergenerational Learning, 215-204-6790 or www.TempleCIL.org.

The Phoenix, Arizona-based *Community: An Intergenerational Friendship Program* developed by Yvonne Mersereau and Mary Glover of the Desert Moon Foundation has produced these informative videos to assist with program planning and implementation:

- *Orientation for Youth: Aging and Nursing Homes.* VHS/40 min. Provides lessons for young children who will be visiting nursing home residents and can be used as a training tool for teachers or group leaders.
- *Building Community: Tips for Teachers and Activity Directors.* VHS/30 min./1994. Administrators and practitioners who currently direct an intergenerational program review what they have learned in planning and implementing these programs.

To order, contact Bi-Folkal Productions, Inc., 809 Williamson St., Madison, WI 53703.

Curricular Materials on Aging

The National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA), based out of the University of North Texas, offers free lesson plans on its web site, www.unt.edu/natla/. On the Resources section of the home page, click on "Lesson Plans for Elementary Grades" to see a list of lesson plans on a variety of areas, including "elders as resources," social studies, and language arts. Although the list is titled "for Elementary Grades," many of the lesson plans, such as "Writing Fiction: Using Older Characters," "Japan and the U.S.: A Comparison of Laws for Older Citizens," and "Town Budget Meeting: Meeting Needs of Young and Old," are suitable for middle school and high school students. NATLA also produced more in-depth curricular materials and provides a list of children's books about aging, all of which are available on its Web site.

Positively Aging: Choices and Changes is an aging awareness/health promotion curriculum designed for middle and high school students and developed by the Aging Research and Education Center at the University of Texas Health Science Center. With many lesson plans to choose from, the curriculum emphasizes exploring students' perceptions about older people and health topics, particularly health promotion. For free curricular materials, go to the Positively Aging web site: http://positivelyaging.uthscsa.edu/.

Arts and Humanities

Generating Community: Intergenerational Partnerships Through the Expressive Arts (1994) by Susan Perlstein and Jeff Bliss provides detailed descriptions of and instructions for a variety of intergenerational arts projects. For ordering information, visit the Elders Share the Arts web site, www.elderssharethearts.org, or write to Elders Share the Arts, 138 S. Oxford Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

My History Is America's History, a free publication of the National Endowment for the Humanities, is a guide to collecting and compiling oral history and family history information. Full of stories and photographs of American families, the guide can be downloaded for free or ordered from the project's web site, www.myhistory.org, or ordered by phone, 877-NEH-HISTORY.

Reflection and Service Learning

The National Service-Learning Clearing House (NSLC), www.servicelearning.org./, lists many service-learning resources that can be ordered or downloaded.

The Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning (1996) by Janet Eyler, Dwight E. Giles, Jr. and Angela Schmiede, suggests many specific reflection activities. This 170-page monograph is available through the NSLC web site, www.servicelearning.org or by calling 866-245-7378.

The Service Learning and Standards Toolkit was created by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) and the Compact for Learning and Citizenship. This detailed toolkit, filled with service-learning projects and ideas, can be ordered from ECS by phone (303-299-3692) or through the ECS web site (www.ecs.org/cls).

Evaluation and Assessment

Intergenerational Programs: Understanding What We Have Created (1999), edited by Valerie S. Kuehne, provides an overview of techniques used to evaluate intergenerational programs. This book is available from Amazon.com.

Assessing Older Persons: Measures, Meaning, and Practical Applications, 2000, edited by Robert L. Kane and Rosalie A. Kane and published by Oxford University Press is a guide to research scales, which provides thorough information about surveying older adults on a variety of topics. This book is also available on Amazon.com.