



Shared Steps. Common Ground.

COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES



The Intergenerational Center
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

Intergenerational Community Building: *Resource Guide*

September 2012



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For additional information on *Communities for All Ages*, please visit our website at **www.communitiesforallages.org**



The Intergenerational Center
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

The Intergenerational Center at Temple University (www.templeigc.org), created in 1979, brings generations together to address critical community concerns and promotes lifelong civic engagement. Through model program development, research, and training/technical assistance efforts, Center staff have helped thousands of individuals, organizations and institutions infuse intergenerational strategies into their work.

For additional information on training and consulting services offered by The Intergenerational Center, please visit **www.TempleIGC.org** or contact Corita Brown, corita@templecil.org

We would like to acknowledge all of the sites in the Communities for All Ages national network, the collaborative agents that helped convene and facilitate local teams and the staff liaisons with the national office. Much of what is in this resource guide has been developed through our partnerships with each of you, and the extraordinary work you are doing in your communities. For more information on the local communities go to: www.communitiesforallages/network/local-initiatives

Local sites and collaborative agents

Arizona:

Ajo: International Sonoran Desert Alliance
Canyon Corridor (Phoenix): Rhehoboth CDC
Central City South (Phoenix): Phoenix Revitalization Corporation
Concho: Concho CAN
Flagstaff: Civic Service Institute at Northern Arizona University and Murdoch Community Center
Golden Gate: Golden Gate Community Center
Pima County: PRO Neighborhoods
Sedona: Sedona Community Center
Surprise: Benevilla

California:

Los Mares and Las Palmas neighborhoods (San Clemente): Orange County Human Relations

Florida:

Palms of Hallandale Beach : Palms Community Action Council

Maryland:

Highlandtown neighborhood (Baltimore): Highlandtown CDC, Creative Alliance and Banner Neighborhoods

Minnesota:

Moose Lake: Moose Lake Public Schools
Proctor: Proctor Public Schools

Michigan

Northside neighborhood, (Kalamazoo): MSU Extension

Mississippi:

East Jerusalem: Pinebelt Association for Children and Families
Itta Bena: Mississippi Valley State University

New York:

New Rochelle: New Rochelle Public Library
Peekskill: Hudson River Healthcare
Port Chester: Counsel of Community Services
Yonkers: Family Service Society of Yonkers

A special thanks to the local liaisons with the national office for their dedication, effort and innovative thinking:

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Written by

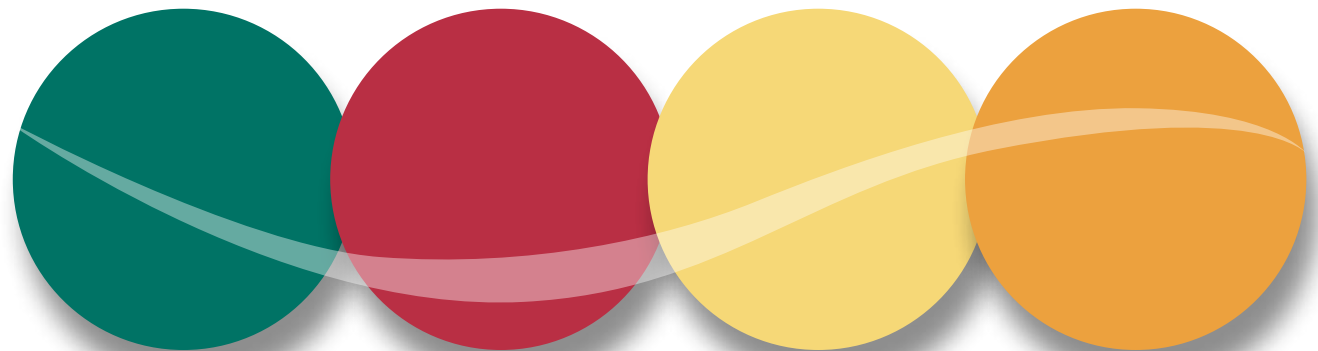
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About this guide

This guide is designed for community leaders, organizations, funders and intermediaries who are interested in using an intergenerational approach to community building efforts. It is based on the experiences of 23 sites that participated in *Communities for All Ages* (CFAA), a national initiative coordinated by The Intergenerational Center at Temple University and funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in collaboration with 8 local funders. The goal of *Communities for All Ages* is to improve the lives of children, youth, adults and elders by building the capacity of communities to address critical issues from a multi-generational, cross-sector perspective. A cross-site evaluation of the *Communities for All Ages* National Network from 2008-2012 documents how CFAA strategies have contributed to well-being outcomes for multiple age groups related to education, health, safety and increased connection across age, race, and class. The approach has also resulted in expanded social networks, increased civic engagement and leadership among multiple generations, new alliances among organizations/institutions, and increased representation of people of color, youth and older adults in local efforts.

The *Communities for All Ages* framework, outlined in this Resource Guide, will provide tangible strategies that can help your community:

- **Leverage limited resources;**
- **Build inclusive constituencies for neighborhood and community change;**
- **Build new alliances around convergent policy interests, such as access to care and social supports, lifelong quality education, and a physical infrastructure that is responsive to changing needs across the life course;**
- **Design programs and policies that embrace age-group defined priorities, while moving forward the entire community; and**
- **Improve well-being and quality of life for children, youth, families and older adults.**

About this guide

The tips and ideas in this guide will provide you with a solid foundation for incorporating an intergenerational approach into community building efforts. The guide focuses on five different phases of work:

- 1. Initiating the process**
- 2. Developing and strengthening cross-sector collaboration**
- 3. Building intergenerational resident leadership**
- 4. Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens**
- 5. Using intergenerational approaches for strategic planning and action**

While the phases are written in a linear fashion, we recognize that community building is not a linear process. Many of the strategies listed in each phase can be employed at many different stages of the work. Please refer to the *Communities for All Ages Lessons Learned* report (<http://communitiesforallages.org/node/735>) that offers additional strategy ideas, highlights outcomes, and shares major lessons learned.

About this guide

This Resource Guide is designed to be accompanied by technical assistance and training support from the *Communities for All Ages* National Office which is housed at The Intergenerational Center. Staff from The Intergenerational Center can provide:

- practical materials and tailored technical assistance to help you foster cross-sector partnerships, build inclusive participation of residents of all ages, and increase trust and engagement across generational and other divides;
- opportunities for peer learning and knowledge generation through the *Communities for All Ages* National Network;
- help in articulating appropriate outcomes for intergenerational community building, and possible approaches to evaluation; and
- experiential training and/or train the trainer workshops in the following areas:
 - *Intergenerational Community Building*
 - *Intergenerational Resident Leadership*
 - *Developing a Community for All Ages*
 - *Developing Successful Intergenerational Programs*
 - *Promoting 50 + Civic Engagement*
 - *Intergenerational Mentoring*
 - *Engaging the Skills and Experiences of Immigrant Elders in Ethnic Based Community Organizations*
 - *Understanding Generations in the Nonprofit Workplace*

Communities for All Ages is creating an inspiring new story about community change...about what happens in rural, urban and suburban communities when organizations and residents come together to improve their communities. Read on for detailed information about how your community can be a part of this story.

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I. Why Build *Communities for All Ages*?

The promise of the *Communities for All Ages* approach lies in the intersection of four important current trends:

- A growing older population that is seeking opportunities for contribution and connection;
- A “racial generation gap” in which the majority of older adults are white and an increasing percentage of youth are African-American, Latino, Asian-American and Native American;
- The need to re-engage people in the social compact in order to better meet our mutual obligations to each other; and
- Growing recognition that new, more comprehensive approaches are required to meet the needs of all age groups.



I. Why Build *Communities for All Ages*?

Demographic shifts in America are having a profound effect on communities and the nature of age relations. The “graying of America” is narrowing the gap between the percentage of older adults and children/youth in the total U.S. population. By 2030 these groups will be roughly the same in size; each will comprise about 22% of the population. In addition, racial and ethnic diversity is continuing to increase. The percentage of African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American and Asian American youth will constitute the majority of young people by 2030 while over 70% of the older adult population will be white. Many of us are uncertain how to take advantage of the opportunities being offered by this more robustly multi-generational and multi-cultural society.

How can we use these major demographic changes as an opportunity to think and act differently... for the common good? How can we strengthen the social compact that reflects our commitment to each other? While there are many

opportunities, there are also challenges. Age-segregated institutions, funding streams, and service delivery systems create silos that limit our ability to work together and encourage competition for scarce resources. Age-segregated systems also provide little opportunity to counter stereotypes or fears that different generations have of each other, or the possibility to identify shared values. Additionally, perceptions of older adults and/or youth as *problems* prevent us from mobilizing these groups as valuable *resources* who can support each other and contribute to their communities. And stress on families is increasing as members of different ages try to support each other in these tough economic times. Around the country, *Communities for All Ages* is addressing these challenges by developing new policies and practices that intentionally foster a sense of generational interdependence, promote lifelong contribution, and bring resources together to improve the quality of life for community members of ALL ages.

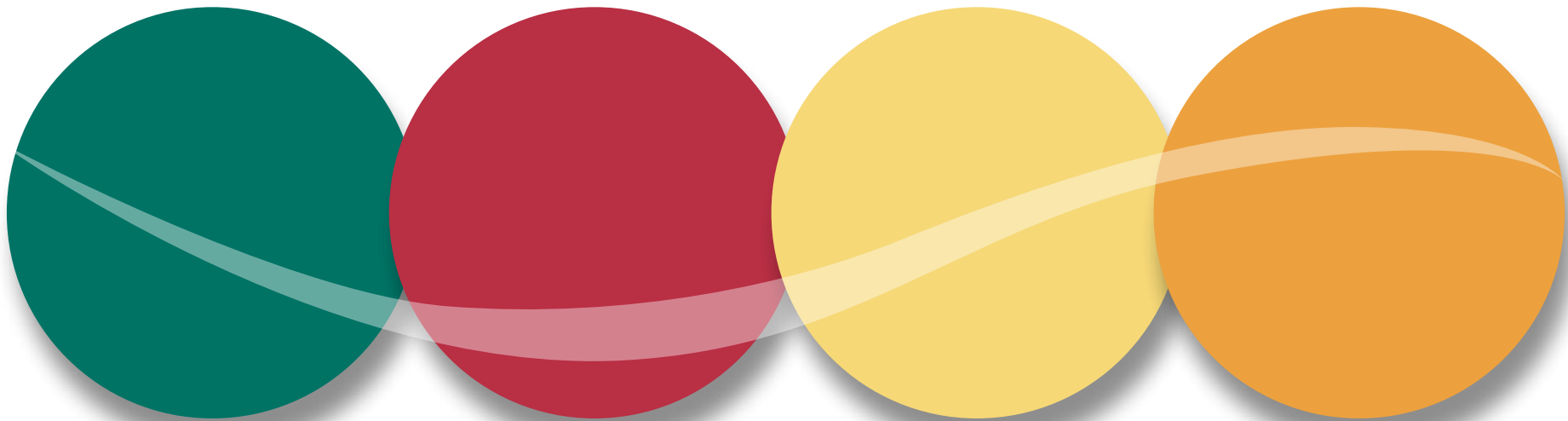
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II. What is *Communities for All Ages*?



COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES is

a VISION, a LENS and an APPROACH
for creating places that are good for
growing up and growing older.



II. What is *Communities for All Ages*?

THE VISION: A community in which...

- People of ALL ages are supported, empowered and engaged in community life;
- Diverse organizations and residents work together for the common good; and
- Strong social networks foster interdependence across age, race, ethnicity, class and other historical divides.

Features of a *Community for All Ages* might include:

- Policies, facilities and public spaces that foster interaction across generations;
- Opportunities for lifelong civic engagement and learning;
- Diverse and affordable housing and transportation options that address changing needs;
- A physical environment that promotes healthy living and the wise use of natural resources; and
- An integrated system of accessible health and social services that supports individuals and families across the life course.

II. What is *Communities for All Ages*?

THE LENS: *Communities for All Ages* is a way of thinking that encourages alliances rather than competition for resources and draws upon the assets of all generations. This lens can add value to existing community building efforts by intentionally focusing on:

- **active engagement of residents of multiple generations in the planning and implementation of strategies to address community concerns;**
- **outcomes for multiple age groups rather than just one target population;**
- **relationship building across age, race, ethnicity, class and other divides; and**
- **economies of scope—using one intervention to address multiple problems.**



II. What is *Communities for All Ages*?

***Communities for All Ages* is guided by the following shared values:**

Interdependence: People feel a sense of shared fate with one another. The age-old social compact is strong as generations rely on each other for care, support, and nurturing. Elders are viewed as resources to families and communities. Young people feel valued as resources for elders and gain a sense of self-efficacy.

Reciprocity: People of all ages have opportunities to give and receive support; to teach and learn. Age groups rely on each other for support.

Individual worth: Each individual, regardless of age, race/ethnicity, gender, or other differences, deserves respect and care, is entitled to equal access to the community's resources, and has opportunities to contribute to the community.

Diversity/Inclusion: Efforts are made to foster understanding across diverse groups, which promotes recognition of shared priorities and untapped resources. Policies and programs are designed for all members of the community, with the understanding that improvements to overall community quality of life will benefit most members of the community.

Equity: Fairness is reflected in all policies and services. Advocates for the young and the old are not pitted against each other for limited resources, but work together as allies toward the development of mutually beneficial policies and service.

Social connectedness: Social relationships build and deepen the social networks that provide support for all age groups. Formal and informal networks create opportunities for fostering connection across age, race, ethnicity and class, thus building a shared sense of community.

II. What is *Communities for All Ages*?

THE APPROACH

The *Communities for All Ages* approach differs from models of “age-friendly,” “child/youth friendly”, and “family friendly” communities which focus primarily on the needs and interests of a targeted age group with the assumption that communities that are good for one population will also improve life for other populations. While we do not disagree with this assumption, the *Communities for All Ages* approach addresses common themes that emerge *across* all of these models, including civic engagement, education/learning, quality health and social services social/family support, and public safety and how these issues impact community residents at ALL stages of life. We have found that when critical community issues are addressed across age groups, there is increased investment from all generations and opportunities to match complementary needs and skills begin to emerge (i.e. older adults providing mentoring and tutoring to youth both supports educational outcomes for kids and promotes healthy aging by providing opportunities to contribute and give back.) Furthermore, intentionally mobilizing different age groups to serve as resources for each other and their communities can help counteract the

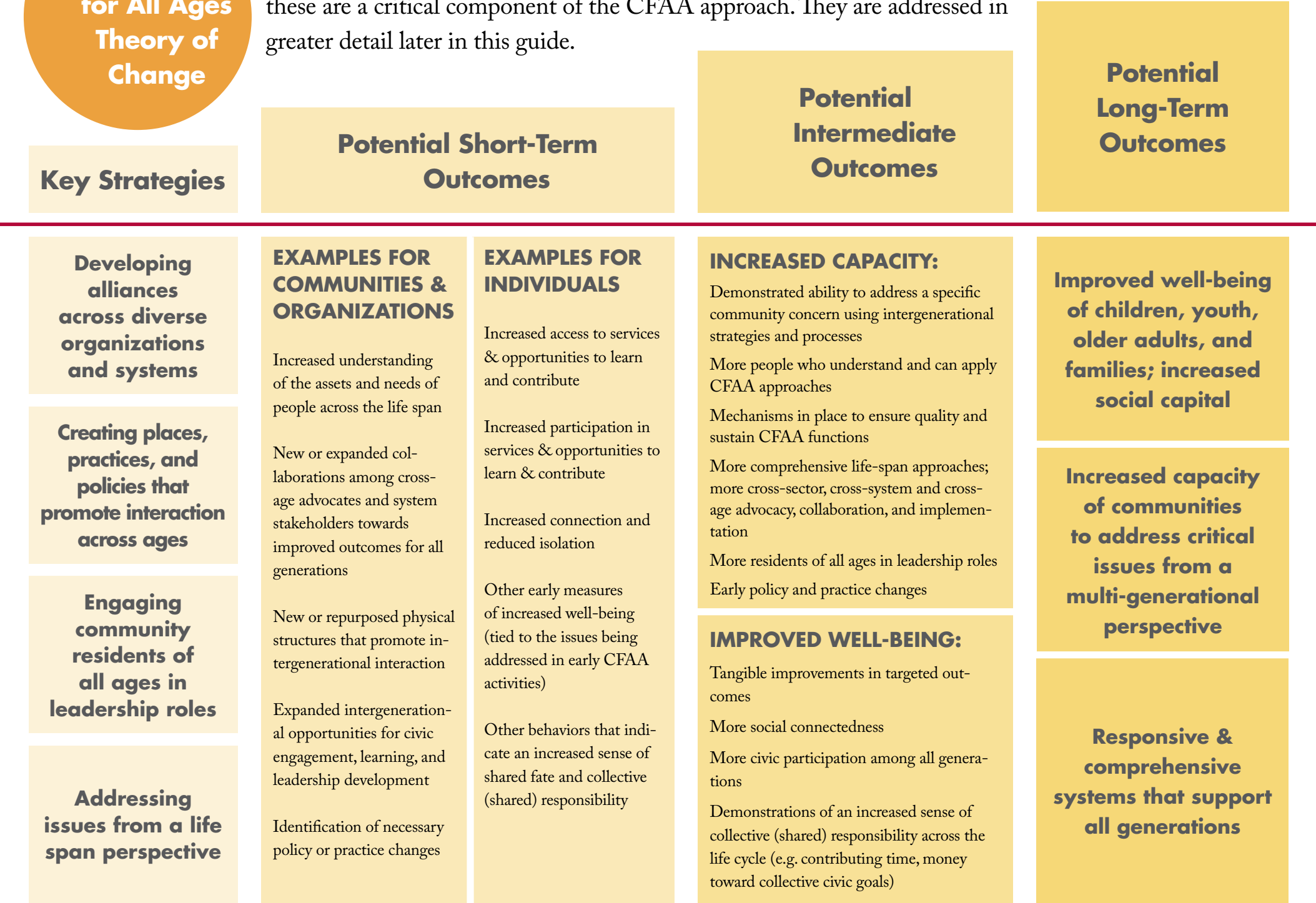
negative effects of age segregation and begin to bridge racial generational divides through building social capital.

The *Communities for All Ages* approach reflects many core components of “collective impact,” an idea that has sparked a lot of interest among practitioners and funders. “Collective Impact” is defined by Kania and Kramer as “long term commitments by a group of important actors from different sectors to support a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities and on-going communication and are staffed by an independent backbone organization.” *Communities for All Ages*, though created long before this article on Collective Impact, illustrates concrete strategies and examples for how this approach could play out on the ground. We recommend reading this article (http://www.ssireview.org/pdf/2011_WI_Feature_Kania.pdf) as background material for implementing the *Communities for All Ages* approach.

2. Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 9(1).

**Communities
for All Ages
Theory of
Change**

The following diagram describes both the desired outcomes of this community building process and the four key strategies used to achieve them. Be sure to look closely at the **FOUR KEY STRATEGIES**, as these are a critical component of the CFAA approach. They are addressed in greater detail later in this guide.



III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

The following section is separated into 5 phases:

Phase 1: Initiating the work

Phase 2: Strengthening cross-sector collaboration

Phase 3: Building resident leadership

Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

Phase 5: Planning and moving into action

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 1: Initiating the work

A. Considerations

The *Communities for All Ages* process can be initiated by a group within the community or it can be stimulated from outside the community via a funding partnership. The current *Communities for All Ages* sites were identified by and received funding from local community/ family foundations and United Ways. Six of the community foundations received matching grants from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support their sites. Regardless of how the process is initiated, the catalyst group can consider the following when initiating the process:

Forming a community group to engage in CFAA efforts

For community groups: this process likely involves building and strengthening cross-sector collaboration (discussed in the following section), assessing opportunities and seeking the funding support necessary.

For funders: some funders of local CFAA sites used a competitive RFP process that required communities to form cross-sector teams as part of the initial application. Other funders selected sites they felt had the capacity to successfully engage in this initiative. Template RFP's are available from The Intergenerational Center.

Identifying strong organizations to serve as the “collaborative agent”

We use the term *collaborative agent* rather than “lead agency” to emphasize the key role of an organization that functions as a *convener* and *facilitator*, rather than the “leader” of the initiative. This concept was borrowed from the Discovery Initiative of the William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund. See additional information on the collaborative agent in section C.

Identifying technical assistance needs

The local team may benefit from a range of technical assistance supports (e.g. building intergenerational teams, engaging all age groups, expanding cross sector partnerships, assessing community assets and challenges, evaluating efforts) Staff from The Intergenerational Center worked with local sites, intermediaries and funders to provide technical assistance.

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 1: Initiating the work

B. Clarifying the geographic scope of the work

In this guide, we think about *Communities for All Ages* as a place-based effort that is intended to support change within a particular geographic area. Thus, defining the geographic scope of the work is an important issue to address before building a CFAA team. Some communities began with a city-wide team and then added additional members after they selected specific geographic areas where they could pilot their efforts. Other communities began by identifying key neighborhoods or small towns in which they would work.

The following are some questions that may be helpful in clarifying the geographic boundaries:

- **What are some different ways that the boundaries of the “community” could be defined for this initiative?**
- **What are the benefits to the different definitions?**
- **What are the challenges?**
- **What are the criteria by which you will define the geographic boundaries? Criteria adopted by other groups include demographics (age, race, ethnicity and/or income), previously demonstrated success with collaboration efforts, and/or capacity of the collaborative agent.**

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 1: Initiating the work

C. Designating the collaborative agent

The organization serving as the *collaborative agent* provides many of the functions of the “*independent back bone organization*” described in the collective impact article by Kania and Kramer (2011), which includes: *staff [that] plan, manage, and support the initiative through ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details needed for the initiative to function smoothly.*

The collaborative agent should possess the administrative capacity and the facilitative capacity necessary for supporting cross-sector collaboration and public participation of residents of all ages. Facilitative capacity is demonstrated by the ability to convene and provide a welcoming environment for many different groups, organize within and across different constituencies, and negotiate different priorities, needs or constraints. As aptly stated by Kania and Kramer:

In the best of circumstances, [this organization embodies] the principles of adaptive leadership: the ability to focus people’s attention and create a sense of urgency, the skill to apply pressure to stakeholders without overwhelming them, the competence to frame issues in a way that presents opportunities as well as difficulties, and the strength to mediate conflict among stakeholders.

The collaborative agent in the *Communities for All Ages* approach differs from the backbone organization concept in that it often is an organization within the community, and a member of the collaborative team, rather than an outside entity or intermediary.

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

A key element of *Communities for All Ages* is the identification of common concerns and shared values across organizational sectors and inclusive practices that support participation of community residents of all ages. In the *Communities for All Ages* approach, this is developed by establishing a cross-sector team of organizations and residents that are involved as key decision makers and leaders in the planning and implementation of community change efforts.

A. Responsibilities of the team

Once a collaborative agent has been identified and the geographic scope of the work has been defined, you can begin developing or strengthening a collaborative decision making team. While the structure of your team is determined at a local level, the team as a whole generally assumes the following key responsibilities:

- **Self-governance (facilitation, decision making process, structure)**
- **Clarifying shared goals/vision and scope of the work**
- **Assessing community resources/needs**
- **Planning the initiative based on assessment**
- **Implementing intergenerational strategies to address key community concerns**
- **Communicating with the broader community about community change efforts**
- **Reflecting on efforts and modifying as necessary**
- **Documenting and evaluating efforts through shared measurement systems**
- **Planning for ways to keep good work going — sustaining or institutionalizing important functions and effective strategies over time**

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

B. Building an Inclusive Team

Below are some strategies and tips for building an inclusive team:

Engage a diverse group of stakeholders

It is important to engage a diverse group of residents and organizations early on so they feel a sense of ownership of the process. Keep in mind, however, that the composition of this group may need to change over time as the focus of the work changes from broad assessment to planning around a specific issue, and then to implementation and sustainability.

Groups that are racially, ethnically and language diverse are more likely to draw in people who might otherwise wonder if they are welcome or if their voices will be heard. Make sure team members reflect the make-up of your community as a whole with regards to age, race/ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status. Consider whether some important groups should be over-represented so they will have enough presence in the group to feel included (e.g. some community change groups are intentional about creating working groups that are at least 51% people of color, and/or 51% youth).

TIP:

Very often you do not have to start building collaborative partnerships from scratch! In many communities, local organizations have already invested a lot of time and energy building partnerships and may feel resentful if you come in to develop an entirely new collaborative process. Check to see if there are opportunities for building upon the work of an existing interagency group by adding new organizations and residents of different generations.

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

B. Building an Inclusive Team

The following check list will help you identify a range of potential partnerships and key people who should be represented on your team. Additional planning materials for building inclusive teams are available.

- Possible team members
- Neighborhood residents: youth
- Neighborhood residents: young parents
- Neighborhood residents: older adults
- Neighborhood associations
- Community based organizations
- Local schools
- Local colleges / universities
- Businesses
- Faith based institutions
- Youth groups
- Aging network
- Libraries
- Policy makers/ government officials
- Media
- Potential funders
- Other

TIP:

Building collaborations take time. You may benefit from checking in periodically with organizations and residents who were initially unwilling to join the team. We have found that building trust and engagement with the CFAA work may take varying amounts of time for different people and groups depending on history, current community issues or tensions, and lived experiences. By adopting fully inclusive practices including an analysis that acknowledges historical and current realities, teams can engage with people who initially took a “wait and see” attitude to joining the work.

For additional information on creating a welcoming environment for all ages, see page 37.

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

B. Building an Inclusive Team

Identify core competencies needed for the team

In addition to building a partnership with a range of sectors and constituencies, we have found that the most effective groups have also paid attention to building partnerships that can leverage a range of competencies. Below are some core competencies for collaborative efforts that are important building blocks for developing *Communities for All Ages*. Additional planning materials on leveraging core competencies are available from The Intergenerational Center.

Competencies

- Facilitation and convening skills
 - Community organizing skills
 - Planning/data analysis experience
 - Detail-orientation
 - Ability to see the big picture
 - Ability to put things in writing
 - Enthusiasm/energy
 - Strong personal connections with local residents
 - Comfort with finances/keeping track of money
 - Ability to get things done
 - Personal connections with local government/policy makers
 - Experience working with youth
 - Experience working with older adults
 - Other (please list here)
-

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

C. Recruitment of Team Members

For each of the different individuals you are trying to recruit, it's important to *understand and communicate* how they as individuals or their organizations could benefit by being part of an intergenerational, cross-sector partnership. Demonstrating early wins will help as well. Keep in mind that turnover is a natural part of community change efforts, so plan for that from the beginning.

Recruiting organizational representatives

Link your message to the mission, vision and strategic plan of the organization you are recruiting.

Identify incentives for an organization to engage in an intergenerational collaborative initiative.

Encourage a new way of thinking.

The CFAA approach requires organizations to move beyond their silos and away from focusing on **ONLY** their own constituency. For those people who do not immediately buy-in to the value of this approach, you will need some evidence or experience to convince them that bringing generations together to address an issue benefits everyone and can lead to better outcomes. Some organizations may find opportunities for shared solutions (e.g. need for after school programs, need to provide civic engagement opportunities for older residents) and/or single solutions that benefit multiple generations (e.g. organizing a range of sectors and residents of different generations to urge county planning commissions to fund well-placed sidewalks in order to promote better health for all ages).

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

C. Recruitment of Team Members

Recruiting residents of all ages (adapted from *Coming of Age* Learning Lab)

Recruiting volunteers of any age is about three things: understanding what motivates the people you are trying to recruit (target audience), having the right message (one size does not fit all), and developing relationships with potential volunteers before you make the ask (cultivation).

Target Audience

When recruiting volunteers it is very helpful to think about the values they hold dear, which can be influenced by such things as their social, cultural and political experiences growing up or current conditions in their neighborhoods and communities. These values translate into motivators, which is the reason people volunteer. A strong targeted recruitment message focuses on the individual's motivators and also describes the benefits of the volunteer experience.

Motivators include such things as lifelong learning, leaving a legacy, being part of a team and having a shared sense of purpose, being valued for their experience and making a difference in their community.

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

C. Recruitment of Team Members

The chart below provides some examples.

Motivator	Benefit
Connect with people	Meet other volunteers
Leave a legacy	Share what you know
Having a sense of shared purpose	Address a community need as part of a team
Develop new skills	Receive training
Build a resume or college application	Demonstrate a connection to and impact on a community
Someone tutored/mentored you	Giving back

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

C. Recruitment of Team Members

By understanding your target audience, you can create a recruitment message that resonates with the specific people you are trying to recruit. Remember: If your message targets no one in particular, don't be surprised when no one in particular shows up.

The Right Message

You don't need a marketing department to create strong targeted messages. Work with your colleagues and people who are representative of the groups you are trying to recruit to come up with some good messages. Remember "one size doesn't fit all" which means a message you develop to recruit a 65 year old mentor will be different from the message you create to recruit a 20 year old.

When creating messages, ask yourself these questions:

- **Would the headline grab the attention of someone of the age I am targeting?**
- **Would people of the age I am targeting identify with the image (photo or illustration)?**
- **Does the copy make the most important points? (What do you want people to do? Are there clear benefits)?**
- **Is the call to action clear? Do people know what they should do if they want to volunteer (e.g. who to call, what website to look at)?**

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

C. Recruitment of Team Members

You can use your message on your website, Facebook page, blog, fliers, brochures, and posters.

Recruiting Tips

There are two approaches to recruitment—*broadcasting*, the traditional approach, and *cultivation*, an approach now made easier and cost-efficient by the internet and social media. Both approaches are needed but with today’s volunteers, cultivation may be more called for than broadcasting. Think of **broadcasting** as sowing seeds in the wind and hoping that some take root. Think of **cultivation** as carefully planting and tending to those seeds as little plants emerge.

Broadcasting	Cultivation
One time ask	Repeated contacts
Impersonal	Personal
Aimed at strangers (no prior affiliation with the your organization or team)	Aimed at acquaintances (have some degree of knowledge or affiliation)
Emphasizes old media	Emphasizes new media

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C. Recruitment of Team Members

Cultivation makes sense for many different age groups because of its focus on personal connection. Many generations are now using social media and are likely to move in and out of involvement, which means you can engage them repeatedly but at different times. The following is a list of potential prospects, people already associated with your work who may be more likely to volunteer:

- **Community event participants**
- **People who are connected to any of the organizations on the CFAA team and their friends/ family**
- **Current and former volunteers**
- **Current and former donors**
- **Visitors to your website, blog or Facebook page**

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Phase 2: Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration

C. Recruitment of Team Members

No matter who you are recruiting, it is always important to build a relationship.

- **Listen:** Relationships always start with listening. Ask people's opinions and really listen to what they have to say.
- **Inform:** Make a case for why someone should volunteer with your community efforts by sharing stories that put a human face on what you do.
- **Involve:** Invite prospects to tour your space and attend special events or activities.
- **Inspire:** Ask current volunteers to share their stories about how their lives have been enhanced through involvement with your community efforts.
- **Ask:** After you have done some of the above ask prospects to help in some capacity. You may want to start with something small and cultivate them to higher levels of commitment.

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C. Recruitment of Team Members

The right recruitment messenger

Both marketing and community organizing experts stress the importance of identifying messengers who already have the trust and respect of the organizations or individuals you are recruiting.

Tip:

In order to ensure participation on your team from residents of all ages, recruit a few key youth and older adult advisors who can help you think strategically about:

- **Where youth/older adults can be recruited from?**
- **What are the best times for youth/older adults to participate?**
- **Where should meetings be held?**
- **What are effective incentives for youth/older adult participation?**
- **Who would be key people to do the recruitment and have the trust and respect of the residents they are targeting. These people may be peers, family members, people who work closely with the age group (e.g. teachers, youth workers, volunteers at a local senior center).**

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D. Structure of the Team

In our experience, simply inviting people of multiple generations to a meeting is rarely sufficient for intergenerational groups to be successful, especially if there is also a broad range of racial, ethnic and or class differences among participants. The most successful groups in the national network have been very intentional about developing a structure that maximizes participation among all participants. Here are some key questions and tips to consider when developing a structure for your group.

Explore options for bringing diverse groups together

Some groups created a very large and inclusive team with many stakeholders and used smaller subcommittees to work on key tasks. Others created a small core group that communicated regularly with broader networks. Still others have a range of team member roles that include different levels of engagement and participation.

Challenges that some communities faced include: 1) organizational staff who were unaccustomed to partnering with residents, particularly youth; and 2) youth and adults who initially felt insecure about sharing their ideas and opinions with organizational staff. In order to address these challenges, several communities used a *caucus* format early on. Separate spaces were created to help build the confidence of youth and/or residents to share their knowledge with organizational representatives and build the capacity of organizations to work more effectively as partners with residents and youth. Other communities addressed this by bringing all groups together and engaging everyone in extensive team building activities designed to build trust and engagement. Many groups found that engaging all team members in the *Leadership for All Ages* training, developed by The Intergenerational Center, was very helpful.

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D. Structure of the Team

For more information on the Leadership for All Ages training, go to page 47.

For sample team building activities, go to Appendix A.

Select appropriate meeting times and location

The selection of your meeting location can affect who turns out. The best places are generally “neutral,” accessible for all abilities, and comfortable for all participants. Spaces used by different groups include churches, community centers, libraries. Some communities have rotated meeting sites so as not to affiliate with one particular place. Select times to meet when students, working parents, and older adults can attend. Weekends or late afternoons/early evenings often work best. Many groups report that they found it useful to schedule regular meetings (at least monthly) at the beginning of the assessment phase until they decided on a structure for the group.

Create a range of roles for team members

We have found that groups are most effective when the roles of its members are clear and well-defined. What follows are some key *roles* that have proven to be important for high functioning *Communities for All Ages* teams:

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D. Structure of the Team

Champion

Highly visible champions, such as public officials, can give added legitimacy to the use of an intergenerational lens, though they may not always meet regularly with your group. Mayors, City Council members, and newspaper editors that you want to cultivate as champions may be invited to key discussions and activities. It is important to keep them informed about where you are going. This can help them gain connections to constituents of all generations.

Facilitator

The group's facilitator should have the skills to work respectfully across diverse groups, manage conflicts as they arise, and keep the group connected to the long term shared vision while working on short term action items. The collaborative agent often begins in this role, but may pass it to another group member or rotate the responsibility over time

Recruiter

Group members who have the trust and respect of potential group members should function as recruiters for your group. It will be

important to regularly recruit new members as a way to maintain new ideas, fresh energy and prepare for the inevitable turnover that will take place in all groups. Often this is an important first leadership role for someone with less formal leadership experience.

Team builder

In addition to the facilitator, some groups find it helpful to have one or more members focus on strengthening participation from all age groups and building a harmonious environment in the group. For example, one group had an intergenerational “fun committee” who planned fun and food activities so the meetings would stay engaging for all ages.

Data Analyst

It is important to build on existing data and research about “what works.” In order to develop effective strategies, one or more people on the team will need to read and interpret existing data for the group during both the assessment and planning phases. This is a potential opportunity to provide mentoring to those interested in learning about research and data. For example, one community had an intergenerational

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D. Structure of the Team

“data team” that looked at existing surveys from the community during their assessment phase. In addition to helping the group link their strategies to existing data and research, this group also provided an intergenerational mentoring opportunity — where those with expertise in reading and interpreting surveys and reports (youth, adults or older adults) intentionally partnered with people from other age groups.

Evaluation roles

Ideally, the team will have support to develop their evaluation tools. This may be someone on the team or an outside consultant. Even if there is no one directly on the team with evaluation expertise, there should be at least several people who can work with an evaluator to develop tools for tracking and measuring results, documenting successes and challenges, and communicating to the rest of the team about the evaluation process. Additionally, action plans and hoped for results (in logic models or other forms) should be regularly reviewed by the team to identify if work is on course or if the strategies need to be modified in any way.

Fiscal roles

Even though the collaborative agent generally functions as the fiscal agent for grants, it is important to discuss financial matters openly and honestly and make clear what financial decisions the group versus the fiscal agent makes. When possible, share financial as well as human resources. This can go a long way towards building authentic partnerships.

TIP:

Include room for growth, especially among those who have less experience assuming leadership roles. Even though you might establish roles at the beginning, many groups have benefited from intentionally creating opportunities for members of all ages to take more responsibility over time.

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E. Creating a Welcoming Environment for All Ages

Building trust and engagement among participants is important in most collaborative partnership settings, but perhaps even more important when working in cross-sector and intergenerational groups that generally include people with very different levels of education, experience, background, and skills.

Below are some tips and strategies for **team building** among intergenerational groups based on the lessons learned from the *Communities for All Ages* network.

Provide joint training with the whole team on intergenerational partnerships and relationship building

Take extra time to build trust by intentionally fostering relationships across ages at all meetings. Some strategies for this include:

- **Icebreakers**
- **Small group and partner work**
- **Social time**
- **Buddy system**
- **Monitoring the team building process and recognizing success as well as challenges along the way**

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E. Creating a Welcoming Environment for All Ages

Structure opportunities for reflection through writing and discussion.

(A key factor in team building is the ability to learn from experiences and apply them).

Celebrate accomplishments!

Share credit through:

- **Recognition ceremonies**
- **Awards**
- **Group appreciations**

For sample team building activities for intergenerational groups, go to Appendix A. For sample team meeting agendas for team building go to Appendix B

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E. Creating a Welcoming Environment for All Ages

Tips for sustaining youth involvement:

Avoid Tokenism!

Try to always have more than one (and hopefully at least three) youth at your meetings. At larger community meetings this number should increase. Having other youth present often increases the likelihood that youth will feel comfortable enough to participate.

Have more fun and food at meetings!

Meetings don't have to be grown up and boring. You can still get work done but also include games, icebreakers, collaborative work sessions and reflection as well as good snacks. Adults will also thank you for this!

Involve youth or older teens who have been involved in CFAA in training roles.

Create intentional opportunities for youth voices to be heard.

Youth may be tentative to speak out, especially in mixed age groups. Some opportunities that have been successful include:

- Initial youth-only caucus speak-outs, activities, and discussions
- Round robins
- Small group work
- Just asking
- Group guidelines about sharing the floor

Recruit adults and older adults on the team that support youth engagement and leadership.

and/or provide training for adults as to how to support youth leadership

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F. Group Process Issues

Our experience and other research indicate that in order to involve and sustain the involvement of residents of all ages and cross-sector participation, it is important to develop a group process that authentically engages all participants. An additional “condition of success” we would add to the collective impact model is “*facilitative capacity*,” demonstrated by the ability to provide a welcoming environment to different groups, organize within and across different constituencies, negotiate different priorities, and ameliorate conflicts.

Building facilitative capacity:

Power sharing

In order to build a partnership between residents and organizations, it may be helpful to address issues of power sharing and leadership across age, race, gender and class. There are a range of ways this may happen including building “cross-cultural competency” for all members and creating a dialogue about sensitive issues in your community’s history.

Language

If there are diverse languages in the community, make sure you have translators and materials in other languages. Also, be mindful of jargon or other types of language that might be alienating to people not “inside” the particular group from which the jargon flows.

Decision-making

Establish a clear decision making process (e.g. voting, consensus, modified consensus) that both youth and older adults

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F. Group Process Issues

have input in creating and that is transparent about who has the power to make decisions over what issues in the group (including financial).

Shared Goals

If shared goals are established early on they can help anchor difficult conversations and maintain an “eyes on the prize” connection to a larger vision.

Early Wins

If your team only works on process, there are many who may feel like the group is “all talk and no action.” In order to engage participants who are focused on both product and process, make sure that you work on a few concrete activities during these early phases of group development. Once initial victories are realized, benefits of working together become more evident and it is easier to get people and organizations to stay involved.

Managing Turnover:

It is natural that there will be turn over in your group. A *Communities for All Ages* approach, in fact, encourages turn over by allowing people to engage more or less intensively depending on their time constraints and responsibilities at different points in their lives. Some strategies that have been effective include: creating shared leadership roles, establishing an orientation process for new members, and holding regular recruitment drives. For example, one community had all of the youth in the group who were high school seniors commit to recruiting one sophomore before they graduated.

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G. Addressing Problems as they Arise

Many experts in group dynamics suggest that group conflicts are necessary for healthy group development. *How* your group chooses to address conflicts, however, may impact its ability to be effective and sustainable. Below are some conflicts that typically emerge within intergenerational groups and some suggested strategies for addressing these challenges.

Turf issues:

Sharing resources can be viewed as “losing ground” or losing resources of the people one represents. Advocates compete for power, resources and turf.

Possible strategies for addressing:

- **Develop clear mechanisms to recognize the contributions of all team members publicly.**
- **Rotate meeting locations so that they are not affiliated with only one organization.**
- **Facilitate team discussions about how the collective work of the team can benefit all participants.**
- **Rotate roles including facilitation on the team.**

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G. Addressing Problems as they Arise

Lack of knowledge:

Organizations serving different age groups are often unaware of one another's strengths, interests, resources, needs and constraints.

Possible strategies for addressing:

- **Spend time in early team meetings sharing information to build understanding among partner organizations.**
- **Avoid acronyms that relate to specific fields or populations.**
- **Rotate meeting locations in order to help build awareness of a range of organizations and their resources**

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G. Addressing Problems as they Arise

Division of labor:

Often there is an unequal distribution of effort based on one's interest in the initiative and/or limited flexibility.

Possible strategies for addressing:

- **Rotate roles and responsibilities.**
- **Create opportunities for new members to join regularly**
- **Design ways for team members to take on more or less responsibility, depending on their availability.**

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G. Addressing Problems as they Arise

Accountability:

It is often challenging to hold other team members accountable in a voluntary effort or where people are accountable to different organizations or constituents.

Possible strategies for addressing:

- **Clearly designate roles and responsibilities.**
- **Decide on a process for managing conflict before conflicts emerge.**
- **Use team meetings to review progress on the action plan and make suggestions for modifications as needed.**
- **Include term limits from the beginning, or other graceful ways to change leadership, membership or specific responsibilities as the need arises**
- **Take the time to agree on how decisions will be made and use that process consistently.**

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G. Addressing Problems as they Arise

Attitudinal barriers:

Ageist, racist, and sexist attitudes can inhibit team building efforts and impede progress toward collective action.

Possible strategies for addressing:

- **Engage all team members in intergenerational leadership training and/or team building activities that build empathy skills.**
- **Design “easy win” early activities that allow people the opportunity to see the benefits and resources of an intergenerational approach first hand.**
- **As a group, investigate community trainings or supports that have been effective at bridging historical and current divides, and bring those into your CFAA work as follow-up and expansion of the *Leadership for All Ages* training.**

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Phase 3: Building Resident Leadership

A key *Communities for All Ages* strategy is to build the capacity of residents of all ages to assume a range of leadership roles that help build trust and connection across generations. Additionally, in order to have an authentic collaborative team that includes both residents and organizational staff, it is important that residents feel confident about sharing their wisdom and expertise with the group.

The Intergenerational Center has developed a “*Leadership for All Ages*” training program that emphasizes a collective leadership approach for intergenerational groups. The curriculum is experiential and designed for all age groups. In total it is a 30 hour curriculum, but has a series of stand-alone modules on intergenerational community building and visioning, problem solving and decision making, active listening and community outreach, building social networks, managing conflict, and public speaking that can be modified to the interests and availability of the group.

Eight communities in the network initially engaged team members in the training (including residents and organizational

representatives) and then broadened participation to the wider community. Offering the leadership training early in the process resulted in strong participation of youth and older adults on the decision making team and long term engagement with community efforts. The leadership training can also function as a tangible “early win” during the process that helps increase visibility of your efforts and increase public participation.

Many residents report that the leadership training helped them:

- **build the confidence necessary to share their opinions and knowledge with others;**
- **build more trust and connection with people across age, race, ethnicity and other differences;**
- **enhance their perceptions of self-efficacy; and**
- **increase their level of civic participation in their community.**

Our experience suggests that this inclusive leadership training model helps spur collective impact by increasing social capital and supporting cross-sector advocacy efforts.

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Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

The following section includes questions and tools that will help you examine:

- **Generational assets**
- **Social interaction and feelings of connectedness across age, race, ethnicity, class and other differences**
- **Distinct challenges faced by different age groups and areas of common concern,**
- **Cross- sector collaboration**
- **Current use of intergenerational approaches**
- **Resident engagement across the lifespan**

This assessment can be performed alone or as a supplement to other assessment tools (e.g. assets-based community development, social capital surveys, liveability surveys). This process will help your team select an initial issue to work on that is important to all generations, as well as increase participation and awareness within the community about your efforts.

If your team does not have an issue identified at the outset, start with a *broad assessment* to find out what issues are important to various stakeholders (residents of multiple generations, organizations, policy makers) and then move deeper to understand the assets and challenges related to a specific issue (e.g. health and wellness, safety, education and lifelong learning, housing, or economic development).

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

Overview of the assessment process

- Step 1:** Define the scope of assessment
- Step 2:** Determine the type of data to collect
- Step 3:** Collect data
- Step 4:** Analyze data
- Step 5:** Gather community feedback
- Step 6:** Select a key issue to focus on
- Step 7:** Identify assets and greatest needs related to your issue

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Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

Step 1: Define the scope of assessment

To define the scope of your assessment, consider these questions:

- What type of information is important for your team to gather and what is realistic given your capacity, timeframe, funding requirements and financial resources?
- Are you collecting data related to a specific issue your team already plans to work on or will you be gathering more general information and selecting a key issue?
- What types of assessments have already been completed in your community that you can draw on?
- Are there any other assessments that you plan to use to accompany the CFAA assessment? If so, how will you combine these so that residents and organizations do not experience “assessment fatigue”?
- Depending on the type of assessment you are conducting, will you need to bring in any consultants to support the assessment the process (e.g. community planners, architects, zoning experts)?

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Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

Step 2: Determine the type of data you want to collect

The following is an overview of some of the information you may want to gather for your community assessment.

A. Demographics

What does your community look like?

Gathering information about age, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status will give you a broader picture of your community, help you determine whether your decision making team is “representative” of the community, and identify to whom you need to speak in order to gather information that is representative of the community as a whole. For example, if your community is 50% African-American but 80% of the people on your team are white, your team likely will need to develop more inclusive strategies for building membership. If 30% of the people in the community are under 18, but you haven’t gathered feedback from anyone in that age group, this signals that you need to modify your outreach and data gathering/listening strategies.

Questions you might explore

- How many people are in your community?
- What are the age, race, and socio-economic status of the residents?
- What other demographic data would be important for you to gather (e.g. home ownership)?
- Are there certain trends (increases or decreases in certain groups) that could influence the planning of a CFAA initiative?

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Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

B. Issues affecting different generations

What are the major issues facing different generations in your community and the areas of common concern?

Communities for All Ages emphasizes public participation and leadership among residents of all ages in community change efforts. Getting feedback and ideas from residents of different ages is critical for this to be successful. Just because an issue is important to local organizational staff or funders does not mean it is important to residents of all ages. In order to develop authentic participation, you will need to find out from people closest to the issues what they care about and will invest their time in.

Questions you might explore

- What do residents of different ages see as the greatest assets in the community?
- What are residents interested in — what ignites their passion and what do they make time to work on now?
- What major challenges or unmet needs exist for different age groups (e.g. health and wellness, safety, education/lifelong learning, economic development, immigrant integration, environment)?
- What gaps in services or programs exist for different age groups?
- What are the areas of common concern and the major differences among age groups?
- What needs to be changed in order to make the community stronger, healthier and more vibrant for all ages?

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C. Civic Infrastructure

To what extent does your community intentionally promote cross-age connectedness and engage all ages in civic roles?

Civic infrastructure is broadly defined as the social connections, decision-making processes, and formal and informal networks that allow residents to solve problems, work together, and build a thriving community. Research has shown that communities with a strong foundation of trust between and among different individuals and groups are healthier, thrive economically and educationally and are more likely to take action to improve their community.

Questions you might explore

- Are residents from different age groups involved in community planning and decision making?
- Do residents of different age groups feel like they have influence in their community?
- Do opportunities exist for residents of all ages to develop leadership skills?
- Are people of different generations engaged in meaningful volunteer/civic roles?
- Is there a coordinated system for recruiting, training, placing and supporting volunteers of all ages?
- Do people of different ages in your community feel connected to each other?
- Do people of different ages in your community trust each other?
- Do people in your community trust their local government institutions?

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D. Organizational Infrastructure

To what extent do organizations work together to address the needs of individuals and families across the lifespan?

Organizational infrastructure can be broadly defined as the organizations and mechanisms that ensure education, health care, community development, income distribution, employment and social welfare. You can examine the level of organizational collaboration, service coordination, and use of an intergenerational lens in their work. This way, you will have a baseline to measure how, if at all, the structure and programming of local organizations changes as a result of your efforts.

Questions you might explore:

- Are there gaps in services for specific age groups in your community?
- Do organizations in the aging network and organizations serving children, youth and families work together on community issues?
- Do existing community collaborations involve both residents of all ages and organizations from diverse sectors?
- Is there an integrated set of support services (e.g. respite care, in-home services) that is accessible to caregiving families throughout the life course?
- Do organizations use intergenerational strategies to address challenges/needs?
- Do organizations serving different age groups engage in joint advocacy efforts?
- Do organizations intentionally foster relationship building across ages and cultures?

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E. Physical Infrastructure

To what extent does the physical infrastructure in your community promote healthy living across the lifespan and interaction across generational or other divides?

Physical infrastructure is a term used to describe the built environment which encompasses places and spaces created or modified by people including housing, parks, and transportation systems. In recent years, public health research has expanded the definition of “built environment” to include access to healthy food, community gardens, “walkability”, and “bikeability.”

Questions you might explore:

- Are there shared sites that deliver services to multiple generations (e.g. adult and child day care, senior centers in schools, multi-generational community centers)?
- Do gathering places(parks, libraries, cultural venues) within the community offer activities that intentionally promote cross-age interaction?
- Are there open spaces that are attractive and accessible to all ages?
- Do housing options exist that address changing needs across the life course (e.g. range of supported or assisted living options for people of all ages)?
- Does the physical environment promote healthy living for ALL age groups (e.g. sidewalks, open spaces, street lighting)?
- Do transportation options address the needs of all ages and abilities?

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Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

F. Opportunities to Build Upon

One of the criteria for selecting an issue to work on is that there are some resources available to support your work. Therefore, it is helpful during the assessment phase to identify what kinds of potential funding opportunities, existing programs, physical spaces and/or initiatives currently exist that your team could build upon with an intergenerational lens. For example, one group applied for a structural improvement grant to help build and support a multi-generational community center.

Questions you might explore:

- Are there current community initiatives that could be enhanced through the use of an intergenerational lens?
- Are there efforts that might be competitors for resources or attention? If so, are there ways to ally with those efforts rather than compete with them?
- Are there sources of funding that could assist in the planning effort?
- What are the most influential sources of money to support change efforts in your community (e.g. private donors, government, foundations, corporations)?

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

G. Assets related to selected issue:

Once your team has decided broadly on the issue area you will focus on (your team may begin its work with an established issue or use the assessment process to identify an issue), you will want to complete a **SECOND LEVEL ASSESSMENT** that examines assets and opportunities *related to that issue*.

Some questions to explore:

- Who is already working on this issue, and if they are not a part of the team, should we invite them?
- How is this issue being addressed across the lifespan? Are there common areas of concern among different generations?
- Are any organizations or groups already using intergenerational approaches to address this issue?
- How have residents of different generations been involved in making changes around this issue already?
- Who will we need to influence in order to make changes in this issue area?
- Who might be good allies to involve?
- What are the most important needs within this issue area that could be addressed by your team?

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Phase 4: Assessing your community using an intergenerational lens

Step 3: Collect Data

Ideally your team will employ a range of data collection strategies that provide you with qualitative and quantitative data and help build community awareness and participation. The following chart outlines the recommended tools and resources for each different part of the assessment information. It is followed by a more detailed explanation of the tools and resources.

Assessment Information	Recommended Tools/Resources
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Census Reports• Community planning documents
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing reports focused on different age groups or issues• Community Checklist• Focus group questions for different age groups• One on ones• Community dialogues• Kitchen conversations• Key informant interviews (community and organizational leaders)• Community surveys

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Civic infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key informant interviews (community and organizational leaders, volunteer agencies)• Sense of Community Survey with residents• Focus Group Questions
Organizational infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CFAA Organizational Assessment• Interviews with organizational leaders
Physical Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Mapping• Photo project• Focus Group Questions• Key informant interviews (community and organizational leaders)
Issue focused assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assets Map• Key informant interviews (community and organizational leaders)

TIP:

No matter what combination of data gathering strategies you use for this, this process can also be leveraged as an opportunity to *identify potential community leaders*. Take notice of who calls their neighbor over to take the survey you are collecting? Who comes early to a focus group and helps you set up the chairs? Who offers to invite friends over to their house for a focus group? Who stays afterwards to clean up? These individuals are demonstrating leadership even if they have never taken on formal leadership roles.

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Below are a range of strategies your team can use. In addition to gathering data, many of these methods also have the potential to help foster understanding across age groups and build social capital throughout the process.

Review existing data

Before you begin your data collection process, it is important to research what type of data already exists so you don't have to "reinvent the wheel." Often there is a rich body of data you can build upon to ensure that you have information from different age, race, and ethnic groups. For example, many communities have some existing data about the physical environment (e.g. walkability survey, community planning documents). By reviewing this data, you can see if there are informational gaps with regards to how the physical environment impacts all generations. United Way directories can also be helpful to understand what organizations are focused on what populations, and where there are gaps in services.

Frequently data are collected in an age-segregated way. As

a result, your team may find that there is ample data about one generational segment in the community but not others (e.g.. older adults, parents, or youth) If this is the case, you can focus your assessment efforts on collecting data about generations for whom there is less information.

When you review data, remember that just because the data comes from a reliable source, it may still fail to describe the situation as you see it in your community. Some publicly available data under-reports information from people who do not have landlines or permanent addresses because of the way the data is collected. Some data are not reliable because people face serious consequences if they report certain facts, and they do not trust that their information will not be used against them or their community. And some data become out of date very quickly, so what they show may have already changed by the time the data are available. This means it is always a good idea to use several different kinds of information to understand what is going on in your community.

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Conduct Surveys

Surveys can help you gather information from a broad and representative group of residents and/or organizations. There are a range of different surveys you can utilize depending on the information you want to gather. Although some are designed for a specific population, they can be adapted and used with a broader population. Below are some surveys you can utilize:

Identification of Issues

Community Checklist from Viable Futures Toolkit (www.viablecommunitiestoolkit.org)

Civic infrastructure:

***Sense of Community Index* designed by Community Science (www.senseofcommunity.com)**

The Sense of Community Index (SCI) is the most frequently used quantitative measure of sense of community in the social sciences. It has been used in numerous studies covering different cultures in North and South America, Asia, Middle East, as well as many contexts (e.g. urban, suburban, rural, tribal, workplaces, schools, universities, recreational clubs, internet communities, etc.). The SCI is based on a theory of sense of community presented by McMillan and Chavis (1986) that stated that “a sense of community was a perception with four elements: membership, influence, meeting needs, and a shared emotional connection.”¹

1 Chavis, D. M. M., Hogge, J. H., McMillan, D. W., & Wandersman, A. (1986). Sense of community through Brunswick's lens: A first look. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14, 24-40.

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Organizational infrastructure

Organizational assessment survey (from Viable Communities Toolkit)

The organizational assessment will help you identify the extent to which local organizations utilize intergenerational approaches in their work. This will provide you with a good baseline to measure whether involvement in CFAA efforts helps to increase utilization of intergenerational approaches.

- **What organizations should complete the assessment?**

Each organization represented on the team should complete a *Communities for All Ages* organizational assessment (modified from the Viable Futures Toolkit). Additionally, your team should identify other key organizations or institutions in the community who are not currently on the team (e.g. schools, universities, non-profits, local government, senior services, churches, early childhood education) but are important in the community and contribute to your *Communities for All Ages* work.

- **Who from the organization should complete the assessment?**

The assessment should be completed by someone who is familiar with a broad overview of the organization including the work of its programs, board of directors, and administration.

- **What do we do after completing the survey?**

Ideally, you have already identified someone on your team with the capacity to gather and tally results from the survey. All surveys should be collected by that team member. This assessment can be part of your evaluation protocol and re-administered later to assess the impact of your work on organizational usage of intergenerational strategies.

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Physical Infrastructure

The following web sites contain a variety of tools that can help you examine aspects of your community's infrastructure:

- www.walklive.org
- www.sustainablecommunities.org
- www.aarp.org/livable

Conduct Focus Groups

Focus groups are more of an art than a science; just as surveys are more of a science than an art. Check to see if anyone on your team has experience facilitating focus groups or has access to experienced focus group leaders. Local colleges or a United Way might be some good places to contact.

Here are some additional tips to keep in mind for facilitating focus groups for an intergenerational community building effort:

Conduct separate focus groups for different ages during the initial assessment process.

Some topics are easier for people to talk about in groups of people like them. By meeting in same age groups, you can gather clear themes about what issues are important to different generations.

Conduct mixed age focus groups or community dialogues once you have decided on the issue you want to address.

Hearing other people's perspectives and responding to them is part of what makes focus groups so informative. For

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example, hearing child advocates and elder advocates talk about their common and different challenges, or having people of different ages describe their gifts, could spark some great ideas and learnings.

Ask for advice from insiders.

Ask people from within the age group or culture you are planning to invite to the focus group about what mix of ages, cultures, and backgrounds they think would work well. What mix will make it difficult for people to talk candidly? What cultural values do you need to be aware of (e.g. gender roles, respect for elders)?

Organize informal gatherings to engage people who are not organizationally affiliated.

One strategy that has worked well is to organize “kitchen conversations” where residents host a group in their home and invite in a facilitator for the discussion.

Tip For Choosing A Facilitator

Sometimes it is helpful to “match” the demographic characteristics of the facilitator with the group — particularly if the topics are sensitive. At the same time, a very good facilitator will use whatever his or her characteristics are to get information. For example, a young person can ask a group of elders to explain something she or he hasn't yet experienced. A Native

American facilitator can ask a group of non-Native Americans to share examples or stories to say more about a point the group is making. Sample focus group questions for intergenerational and same age cohort groups are available from The Intergenerational Center.

For more general information on facilitating focus groups check out www.evaluationtoolsforracialequity.org.

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Conduct one on one interviews

The one on one interview is a useful tool for an assessment process. It can:

Increase comfort level.

Some residents may be uncomfortable expressing an opinion in a group or may not choose to go to group meetings. A one on one is sometimes a better way to capture information from people who are not “joiners.” It can be very helpful for the CFAA team members to talk to as many different types of people as possible at the beginning and throughout the CFAA initiative.

Broaden outreach.

In order to have a broad base of support and participation and determine people’s real concerns, it is important to make contact with a representative sample of the community. If a group or sector in the community is not connected with you early on, it is highly likely that they will not have ownership of the issue you choose and your team will not be aware of their concerns. Some groups that are commonly overlooked include: kinship caregivers, frail elders, people with disabilities, limited English speaking residents, youth who are non-students, and teen parents.

Deepen knowledge.

You can also deepen your understanding of key issues by interviewing organizational leaders in the community with in-depth knowledge about specific data (e.g. city planner, housing or transportation specialist).

Build trust.

One on one’s with informal community leaders can help you build trust and engagement with an important constituency

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and signal that you take their feedback very seriously. If these leaders are on board with your work, you may be much more likely to get increased participation from a broader range of residents. In every community there are people who seem to know everybody and are viewed as trusted leaders. They might not have a specific title, but they hold a lot of influence in the community. Additional information about intergenerational one on ones and sample questions to ask are available from The Intergenerational Center.

For additional information about one on ones check out: www.buildingpowerfulcommunityorganizations.com

Additional creative data gathering methods

Photo mapping

Often the best people to give feedback about the built environment are not “experts” but the people who live in the environment every day. This could be an opportunity to engage community residents in “out of the box” assessment strategies. For example, you could have people of multiple generations go around the neighborhood and photograph aspects of the physical environment that are supportive or challenging for people of their generation or places people their age like to gather.

Community Histories

Another creative way to gather information about the community is to engage multiple generations in developing a community history. This could be done in a range of ways (e.g. through video and photographs, theatre, storytelling, generational “speak outs” about life in the community during different historical periods) or by creating a community history timeline together.

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Step 4: Analyze the Data

After your team has collected all the data, you will need several members to review and analyze it. Depending on the resources and capacity of the team, you may want to bring in someone with expertise in evaluating data. This is also a mentoring opportunity for those interested in learning about data analysis to shadow or work with someone more experienced. The data analysis process should pull together key themes that emerge and how the responses compare across age and other variables such as race, ethnicity, gender and class.

Step 5: Gather Community Feedback

Once you have collected your data, your team can develop a plan for sharing the information with the broader community. Sharing information you have gathered with your community fulfills several functions. It can help residents of different generations and local organizations:

- **Have fun and get to know people of all ages in the community**
- **Understand the information that has been gathered and give their feedback about whether it “resonates” with their experience**
- **Give feedback about what issue to begin working on and get involved with the initiative.**

Sample agendas of community feedback meetings are available from The Intergenerational Center.

What follows are some key tips for developing your feedback process.

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Be intentional about involving people of all different ages in developing the feedback event.

For example, the event could be jointly hosted by a youth group /young parents group/school and an older adult group/senior center. This inclusive process will help your team recruit a group of residents for the meeting that reflect the current demographic make-up of the community.

Questions to consider:

- What is the best format to engage all ages (e.g. small groups, community forum, block party)?
- What activities would bring out people from different ages and provide opportunities for them to interact and get to know one another?
- How can the event be designed to be fun and enjoyable for different ages?
- Which local organizations and youth / older adult leaders would be able to help organize and recruit for this event?
- When and where should it be held to ensure participation by all ages?

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Decide what information you share and how decisions will be made.

Questions to consider:

- How will your team use the feedback gathered from community members?
- Will the community vote or come to consensus on an issue or will residents be providing input that will later be decided on by the core team?
- What criteria will you use to decide which key issue you want to begin working on?

Sharing this during the community feedback session can be very helpful even if you are not deciding the issue at that meeting. Acknowledge that there are a lot of possibilities, but that you need to focus in order to make real change. Acknowledging the possibilities can help people feel they are being heard. Sharing the criteria for narrowing your choices lets people know you do not have a hidden agenda and demonstrates respect for the information they have shared with you. *For more information on deciding a criteria, see step 6.*

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Decide HOW you will present the information.

How you present the information may impact your ability to capture the attention of different age groups (e.g. written report, discussion, presentation, photos).

Questions to consider:

- How can your team involve residents of all ages at every step of this process? For example, an intergenerational team of residents in one community took photographs illustrating the major themes raised by the community.
- What can your team do to create a safe environment for people of different ages, races, socio-economic backgrounds to provide honest feedback? (e.g some people might feel more comfortable speaking in smaller groups with individuals they trust rather than a large group setting).

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Step 6. Select an issue as a “doorway” into the work

After the community feedback meeting, the team will need to review the assessment information as well as the feedback from the community and select a broad issue area to work on. Depending on the size, scope and capacity of your efforts, you may decide to choose more than one issue. Many groups, however, have found that selecting one issue area has helped them focus their efforts in important ways.

In order to make this decision, your team should decide on a selection *criteria*. Making sure that the ideas fit all or most of your criteria will be one way to help narrow down your possibilities. It is often helpful to have this meeting facilitated by an experienced facilitator as there may be many different and sometimes heated opinions about how to move forward.

Criteria should include, but is not limited to:

- **The issue is important and will be relevant to many community residents of different generations.**
- **There are some opportunities to build on (e.g. there are other funders who could be attracted to the work and/or it builds on other local opportunities).**
- **It's something that can be changed over time with serious work — the issue isn't so entrenched or difficult that it would be very hard to tackle (like eliminating poverty) or so small or specific that your work won't matter to people even if it's very successful (like closing down one drug house on one block).**

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Step 7: Conduct an issue-focused assessment

Team modification

Once you decide on an issue you are going to address, some team members who were involved in the assessment process may choose to become less involved with the next phase of work, depending on how invested they are in working on this issue. This is normal! The team will likely also need to recruit others who:

- are affected by this issue and have an interest in making change
- have knowledge about the issue
- have influence and may be able to do something about a problem
- are already involved in addressing this issue

Assets Mapping

Once your team has selected the issue your team will be working on, you can then identify assets and resources in the community that can be drawn upon. Assets mapping resources are available from The Intergenerational Center

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Some questions to consider:

Organizational and institutional assets

- What organizations are already working on this issue (for different generations) and if they are not a part of the team, should we invite them?
- Are any organizations or groups already using intergenerational approaches to address this issue?
- What decision makers will we need to influence in order to make changes in this issue area?
- Who might be good allies to involve?
- Are there groups that might be competitors for resources or attention? Are there ways to ally with those efforts rather than compete with them?
- Are there sources of funding that could assist in the planning effort?

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Some questions to consider, continued:

Civic Assets

- How have residents of different generations been involved in making changes around this issue already?
- What are the common concerns around this issue for multiple generations?
- Who will we need to influence in order to make changes in this issue area?
- Who might be good allies to involve?

Environmental Assets

- What resources and assets in the physical and natural environment can help all generations work on this issue?
- What in the physical and natural environment needs to be changed in order to make change around this issue for all generations?

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Developing a shared vision

A. Review Where You Are

To make this process easier, you may want to identify several people to condense your assessment data into 4 major sections:

- **Who we are: What is the demographic make- up of our community (race, age, gender, socio-economic status, other categories)?**
- **Our community's top strengths and assets related to the major issue we decided to address.**
- **Key challenges facing all generations with relationship to the issue we decided to address.**
- **Existing or potential opportunities and resources we could draw on to address this issue.**

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B. Brainstorm the Big Picture

After you identify where your community is now, it is helpful for the team to brainstorm a “big picture vision” about what you want to see changed in relation to your issue. Think about how your work can impact:

- Degree of social connectedness across generations
- Policies and practices that can improve outcomes for all generations
- Organizational strategies and activities for working on this issue
- Community leadership

Once your team has brainstormed a big picture, some team members can start crafting a concise, meaningful vision statement that captures the ideas of the group. Ideally, it is best for this workgroup to be intergenerational so that the statement reflects the sensibilities and language of multiple generations. Since the group will need to agree on this statement, it can be helpful to have someone with strong facilitation skills mediate this process.

Here is an example from a fictional community working on hunger:

Our vision: No person of any age or background goes hungry in our community. Community residents of all ages are actively involved in making decisions about access to affordable healthy food and our community organizations use intergenerational strategies in their work to address hunger.

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Defining your “contribution”

Your vision is meant to be inspiring and long term. Your “contribution” is your piece of the pie — what you hope your work will achieve that will contribute in some way to the big vision. It is unlikely that your group is the first to address the issue you selected. In order to increase your group’s chance of success, it is important to examine effective practices that have been shown to contribute to positive outcomes. For example, if the issue is hunger, what does research suggest are key practices that have successfully contributed to reducing hunger? Developing strategies based on existing research and experience will also help to more successfully build your case for funders and some community partners. After you have created the big vision and researched best practices, you can identify something meaningful and achievable that will help your community move toward the bigger vision.

In the example of the fictional community mentioned in the previous section, part of their vision is *no person of any age or background goes hungry in our community*. The *Communities for All Ages* work alone cannot solve hunger for everyone. So the group needs to choose what part of that vision they want to hold themselves accountable for achieving. That’s what we mean by “contribution.”

A sample contribution for this fictional community might be:

Increasing access to affordable, healthy food for a substantial number of people of all ages by creating a farmers market that is coordinated by and benefits multiple generations.

Notice that the contribution does three things: 1) it says exactly what you want your work to accomplish — “increasing access to affordable health food for people of all ages”; 2) it describes how you will do that. — “by creating a farmers market...”, and 3) it doesn’t overpromise what you can accomplish — it says you will increase access for a “substantial number of people.” not everyone who needs access to better food.

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In order to define your contribution, your group will need to select some criteria on which to base your decision. The **criteria** should include, but is not limited to:

- **Our contribution matters to and is widely felt by people of all ages in the community**
- **Community residents of different generations can be involved as both leaders and participants in the planning and implementation of the work**
- **Organizations can work collaboratively on the contribution**
- **Our contribution can realistically be achieved in our timeframe**
- **Our contribution is based on a combination of research, evidence and experience**
- **Our contribution fills a gap in the community**
- **Our contribution can help build trust and engagement across differences such as age, race, ethnicity and class**

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Identifying Outcomes (well-being and capacity)

After you have established your contribution, it is important (possibly with the support of an evaluator) to develop desired long, intermediate and short term outcomes for your contribution. *Outcomes* are the benefits or results you hope to see from your strategies over time — what you hope will change for the people and places you care about. The *Communities for All Ages* approach focuses on two main groups of outcomes:

- **improvements in well-being (e.g. health, education, income, and/or safety,) and social connectedness for ALL AGE GROUPS; and**
- **increased community capacities to use intergenerational strategies to address critical issues of concern (e.g. increased involvement of resident leaders of different age groups in community change efforts, use of intergenerational strategies by a broader range of organizations in the community).**

Your team will need to customize these outcomes to fit your work (and add any others that you want to track). Below are a list of generic outcomes that were developed for the *Communities for All Ages* cross-site evaluation with support from the Center for Assessment and Policy Development (www.CAPD.org).

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The following are generic types of **well-being** outcomes that your team might work towards in the short term. Tailor these to the issue you are addressing. Consider outcomes for the broad community, people who participate in CFAA activities, and those who are part of your CFAA team.

- **Some people of all ages in our community, particularly vulnerable children, youth, families, adults and older adults, are better off on the particular issue we are working on.**
- **Some people of all ages in our community are more connected to each other across generational, racial, ethnic and other differences.**
- **People who participate in CFAA activities report they are better off in ways that are not directly related to the issue they are working on (e.g. people report feeling safer, though your well-being outcomes are focused on issues of education and lifelong learning).**
- **People who work on CFAA report other ways they are better off as a result of working on CFAA (e.g. CFAA Team members report knowing more about how to engage in positive ways with people of different races, ethnicities, or incomes than they did before working on CFAA).**

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The following are general types of **community capacity** outcomes that your team might work towards in the short term.

- **increased representation of all ages on our *Community for All Ages* team;**
- **increased civic engagement and leadership (formal and informal) among residents of all ages;**
- **increased organizational collaboration to address issues across the life span;**
- **increased knowledge about how to apply intergenerational approaches to community issues;**
- **increased application of intergenerational approaches to community issues;**
- **increased interest among funders in supporting intergenerational approaches;**
- **increased use of CFAA lens by elected and appointed officials, heads of programs, leaders or residents; and**
- **application of CFAA ideas to additional community issues or to other geographic areas.**

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Developing Intergenerational Strategies

Once your group has identified its contribution, you can begin to develop intergenerational strategies that will help successfully achieve this contribution. Within the *Communities for All Ages* National Network, there are a wide range of geographically, racially and ethnically diverse communities that are working on different issues. All of these communities, however, broadly employ four key intergenerational strategies. Your community can tailor these 4 strategies in ways that will be effective in your local context:

Developing alliances across diverse organizations and systems

Engaging community residents of all ages in leadership roles

Creating places, practices and policies that promote interaction across the lifespan

Addressing issues from a lifespan perspective

The cross-site evaluation of *Communities for All Ages* has demonstrated that these strategies have successfully contributed to improved well-being for multiple generations, increased collaboration among organizations, and increased civic engagement and leadership among multiple generations. You can read more about these outcomes in the 2012 Lessons Learned Report.

The following section outlines in more detail a range of tips, ideas, questions and examples designed to help you think about how to best use intergenerational approaches to help work towards your contribution.

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Developing alliances across diverse organizations and systems

Faith-based institutions

Faith-based institutions can be great resources for your initiative as they have members of all ages. However, often interaction between youth and older adult groups in religious institutions is limited. Helping congregations develop programs/projects that are age-integrated and intentional about fostering cross-age understanding is a good way to start promoting the CFAA concept among residents. In addition, bringing congregations together to collectively address a specific community issue is an effective strategy, though it can be challenging in communities in which institutions maintain separation across race, language and socio-economic class.

TIPS:

Reach out to all religious groups, not just the ones that usually participate in community events.

Identify the person on your team who has a strong connection with religious leaders and could assist with outreach.

Work with a ministerial alliance (if one exists) that might coordinate volunteer, recruitment, outreach and/or organizing efforts.

In Port Chester, NY, six churches representing diverse populations participated in a number of CFAA activities designed to foster immigrant integration, including a community history project, a community garden, and God's Green Market (food distribution).

Universities and Colleges

In some communities, long-standing town-gown tensions can impede efforts to build relationships between residents of all ages and institutions of higher education. Many of the CFAA teams have put in place community history, service learning, arts, genealogy and other activities, often with a cross-race or cross-cultural

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lens. Although these may not be sufficient to bridge deep divisions across race, ethnicity and class, it does appear that asking people to come together across ages can be a promising way to begin building trust.

While there may be conflicts between residents and local institutions of higher education, these partnerships when leveraged well can help your initiative by:

- assisting in resident leadership training;
- engaging students in community service projects through service learning courses, internships, and campus volunteer organizations;
- mobilizing retired or older adult alumni to support local efforts as volunteers and/or mentors;
- providing access to college facilities for local residents ; and
- providing necessary research, resources and information to bolster advocacy and other efforts.

Organizations in the aging network

Organizations in the aging network (e.g. senior centers, area agencies on aging, councils on the aging, senior housing, independent living facilities, AARP chapters, retiree groups) are not always engaged in broad community building efforts. Often there is a perception of older people as recipients of services rather than community leaders and resources for the community. In addition to recruiting older adult residents to the team, reach out to local organizations and institutions that work closely with older adults to develop partnerships.

TIPS:

Provide a wide range of opportunities for university students, staff , faculty, and residents of all ages to get involved in short term (one time community events/ workshops), medium term (service learning projects, workshop series), and long term (advisory council or committees) activities.

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Law Enforcement

In order to improve public safety, it is important to develop relationships between residents of all ages and law enforcement. Some CFAA sites have had success partnering not only with law enforcement but with PAL (Police Athletic League) as a way to connect with both youth and youth mentors.

Public Officials

Public officials can act as important champions for the work and link your team to potential resources. In New Rochelle, NY a City Council member who was engaged in the intergenerational leadership training program is now advocating for the development of an intergenerational resident advisory board for City Council.

Advocacy Organizations

Research suggests that work around an issue is most effective when it includes enhanced services *as well as* advocacy/ organizing for policy changes.² If your team members are focused mostly on providing services, are there other partners who might be able to approach the issue from an advocacy and organizing perspective? For example, a team working on providing access to healthy foods for the community through a local community garden and farmers market might increase their effectiveness by partnering with groups that have experience advocating the removal of junk-food vending machines from schools and public buildings.

TIPS:

Collaboration can be fostered by sharing resources. Building trust and involvement often involves understanding the self-interest of others. Many of the successful CFAA teams have developed relationships of trust and commitment with team members through resident stipends, provision of in-kind resources, and sharing of grant funds, staff and meeting space.

² Crutchfield, Leslie and Mcleod Grant, Heather *Forces for Good*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2008.

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Engaging community residents of all ages in leadership roles

Prepare age groups separately, when necessary, prior to engaging in leadership training.

In order to have residents of all participate in leadership roles, it is sometimes helpful to provide some initial training to each age group separately. This can be an opportunity to discuss perceptions of different ages and anticipated concerns or challenges. Following this orientation, bring the groups together to help them learn skills for becoming intergenerational network builders, connectors and organizers.

Develop a continuum of leadership roles and volunteer opportunities for residents of different ages , particularly older adults and youth.

One effective way that many sites have found to build engagement among people of all ages is to create a wide range of opportunities that are aligned with the residents' interests, values and availability. Leadership opportunities may include: organizing, mentoring, service learning, advocating, outreach and recruitment of other residents, training, group facilitation, event planning, and/or sharing of a skill such as gardening or the arts.

Develop clear pathways for deepening engagement in the CFAA initiative.

How can you develop intentional pathways to deepening levels of engagement in your CFAA efforts? For example, a resident may begin with very low-levels of affiliation (e.g., participating in a block party). However, each activity can potentially create doors to other opportunities for engagement.

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Support peer sharing models

Rather than always bringing in “experts” as teachers and helpers to work on your selected issue, are there possibilities to train residents of different ages as peer helpers and liaisons? For example, in Itta Bena, Mississippi the CFAA team partnered with a health organization to train lay members of different ages within congregations to provide health and resource information to other members of the congregations.

Outreach to culturally diverse populations

Build partnerships with ethnic community-based organizations in order to engage residents who may be limited English speaking and/or feel uncomfortable participating in a leadership training program. This can help you foster an appreciation of cultural identities as well as build an inclusive corps of trained leaders.

Tell stories

Telling stories is a powerful way to build trust and connection across generations. Some of the CFAA communities have had success with teaching storytelling as a tool for community change and advocacy. Others have trained residents to tell their story as a tool for recruitment and fundraising. Still others are engaged in community history programs designed to help diverse groups understand each other’s backgrounds, contributions, and needs.

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Creating places, practices and policies that promote intergenerational interaction

Places:

Identify physical spaces that could foster cross-age interaction.

It is important to understand where and why people of different ages, races and cultures feel welcome or uncomfortable in your community. The library, for example, is often selected as a potential site for cross-age activities like community histories or safety workshops. Do you have a community or arts center that is attractive to multiple age groups? Are there outdoor spaces that could be used for cross-age activities?

Be intentional about using physical spaces to promote social connectedness.

Creating vibrant intergenerational spaces requires more than just a physical place. Although in many communities there are recreational centers that offer activities to different age groups, few are intentional about promoting interaction ACROSS age groups. This often requires helping staff understand generational and cultural differences so they can design activities that are inclusive and intentional about fostering meaningful relationships. For example, older adults can volunteer in after school programs, young people can interview elders about their lives, or intergenerational teams can assess neighborhood conditions (e.g. lighting, vacant lots) and advocate for corrective actions.

Encourage intergenerational participatory design

If your team is interested in making safer, accessible outdoor spaces (e.g. public parks, pocket parks, community gardens, safe routes to school), do you intentionally involve people of all ages in the design process? This could enhance a sense of ownership by all ages and increase the possibility that the space will encourage cross-age interaction. Some CFAA communities are developing public parks that place exercise equipment for adults/ older adults and benches close to the

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playground, facilitating more interaction.

Promote cross-age learning opportunities

Intergenerational spaces can promote learning as well as socialization. Community gardens and farmers markets hold real potential as sites for intergenerational educational experiences. They can be meeting places, social sites, and places for teaching about nutrition and physical exercise. In East Jerusalem, MS, the farmers market involves social and physical activity opportunities for residents at all phases of life, with some activities being intentionally designed to bring different generations together.

Leverage under-utilized spaces

Are there underutilized physical spaces in the community that can function during off hours as intergenerational community learning spaces (e.g. schools during after school hours, local churches, sports venues) . In the Canyon Corridor neighborhood of Phoenix, AZ, the *Communities for All Ages* team created a “community life center” that uses an underutilized space in a local church to offer a range of classes, workshops, events and gathering for residents of all ages. The success of this initiative has led to an offer of additional space from a local market place that has the capacity for a performance space and large community gatherings.

Expand generational use of a space

Are there existing spaces used only by one age group that can be opened up to include participation by a greater range of age groups. Senior housing developments may have community rooms that can be used for activities that foster connection.

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Promote shared sites

In a growing number of communities, organizations are intentionally coming together to share spaces, resources and services that benefit multiple age groups. Examples include adult and child day care facilities, senior centers within schools, and day care centers within retirement communities. Cross-training of staff and challenges related to regulations that are targeted to specific age groups must be addressed when planning shared sites.

Practices:

In our experience, the following practices have helped build opportunities for successful intergenerational interaction:

Provide advance training/orientation for different age groups.

Intergenerational groups often function better when there has been some training about ageism, stereotypes and/or fears about different age groups as well as effective communication strategies.

Increase staff understanding of generational differences and how they can impact communication, problem-solving approaches, and forms of community contribution.

Create roles and activities that are appealing and appropriate for people with varying skills and abilities.

Adults/older adults who are not interested or physically able to participate in physical activities may be interested in roles as coaches for sports and other activities. For example, in Itta Bena, MS., CFAA sponsored a “fishing rodeo” in which elders worked with the fishing and wildlife department to teach children fishing skills. Sports related activities may also provide good opportunities to get men involved (who are traditionally less involved with volunteer activities).

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Draw on family connections.

When recruiting for events, encourage youth to bring caregivers or older adults to an event and adults to bring their children or grandchildren. Some communities organize family dinners to get family members to sit down and eat together. These activities could be enhanced by inviting older adults and creating intentional opportunities for intergenerational interaction at the “dinner table.” It is also important to engage kinship caregivers. Many parent support and advocacy groups do not intentionally reach out to grandparents raising grandchildren. Identifying the number of grandparents raising grandchildren in the schools, as well as their resources, assets and challenges could help older adults enrich existing parent support resources and access needed support.

Develop a range of mentoring opportunities for all ages.

Mentoring is an activity that can take place at many ages and stages of life. In the CFAA teams, we have seen examples of youth mentoring older adults in technology skills, older adults mentoring young parents or college students, middle school students mentoring elementary students, and college students mentoring middle school students to name a few. The combinations are very extensive and provide a range of opportunities for many different generations to both give and receive knowledge, support and guidance.

Create structures that are flexible and responsive to the preferences of different ages.

Many people at all stages of life are seeking opportunities to socialize as well as contribute to their community. Developing intergenerational teams to work on a range of activities such as community gardening, health education, and neighborhood watches is an effective structure that builds on individual strengths and fosters connection.

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Utilize the arts as an entry point to bridging historical divides across age, race, and culture.

Bringing generations together to participate in music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and/or crafts can help people find common ground and build connections across differences. In Ajo, AZ, the CFAA initiative engaged Mexican and Native American artists of different generations to help promote cross-cultural understanding among community residents.

Tip: Use the *back pocket* approach

A “back pocket question” is one that you “keep in your back pocket” and always ask yourself when planning all activities. Three important back pocket questions used by many communities are:

- **Are all ages involved in the decision making and planning of this activity/event?**
- **How can this activity help build trust and connection across generations and other differences?**
- **Are you thinking about outcomes for people of all ages?**

Policies:

Bringing generations together to work on policy changes that benefit all generations is a powerful aspect of *Communities for All Ages* and one that has yielded impressive results. For example, in a CFAA site in California, intergenerational advocacy efforts succeeded in securing a million dollar grant to support infrastructure changes around a local elementary

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school. Because of the intergenerational approach, the elementary school park is being re-designed with accessibility for all generations in mind.

Generations United (GU.org) is an important organization that promotes an intergenerational approach to framing public policies that impact children, youth and older adult issues. Check out their website (www.gu.org) to find out more about intergenerational advocacy efforts related to policies on social security, shared sites, multigenerational civic engagement, Serve America Act, Older Americans Act, nutrition, healthcare and Grandfamilies.

Joint advocacy efforts can address a range of issue areas, including:

Crime and Safety

- Community policing protocol that focuses on connecting residents of all ages with necessary resources
- Explicit incorporation of intergenerational language in funding for intervention/prevention programs for youth

Health and Wellness

- Use of senior nutrition awards and EBT cards at Farmers' Markets
- Utilization of farmers market produce for school lunches
- Creation of safe public spaces for recreation
- Improvement of sidewalks, street lighting, traffic signals, etc.

Education and Lifelong learning

- Increased educational opportunities for youth. A great example of this is the seniors4kids initiative which

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mobilizes grandparents to advocate for increased access to quality Pre-K education.

- Passage of the Elementary and Secondary School Act
- Use of schools as nutrition and civic engagement sites for older adults

Immigration Reform

- The Dream Act
- Immigrant integration/language access in the schools
- Family reunification

Addressing issues from a lifespan perspective

How can you expand support services and create opportunities for involvement at all phases of life? In order to address your key issue from a lifespan perspective, consider the following:

Develop “economies of scope”

Economies of scope are single solutions that address multiple problems. For example: Developing tutoring and mentoring programs that link youth with older adults have been shown to benefit youth academically and socially while also contributing to healthy aging and decreased isolation for older adults.

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Identify outcomes for all age groups

For example, if you are working to create a healthy community for all ages, consider the following questions:

- **What kinds of mechanisms are in place for all generations to work together on increasing public safety? How might a Safe Routes to School initiative be enhanced by considering the need for safety at all stages of life?**
- **When public spaces and parks are designed—how can all age groups take part in the design and planning process?**
- **How can physical activity opportunities be developed for all ages instead of just children? For example, what types of physical activity initiatives can bring together older adults and children in early childhood?**
- **What different types of active roles can adults of all ages play in supporting youth activity? For example, some communities have had success tapping retirees as coaches for youth sports teams.**
- **What types of roles can youth and young adults play in supporting active aging for older community members and family members?**

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Expand involvement of other generations in age- segregated initiatives.

Initiatives like parent leadership programs can be expanded to provide resources, support and capacity building to all groups who provide some kind of key caregiving role for children including: teen parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, older siblings, and child care workers.

Connect the dots between different initiatives that are working on the same issue. Key steps include:

- **Identifying which organizations and community groups are**
- **Addressing an issue but targeting different age groups**
- **Identifying opportunities for shared resources**
- **Building relationships among the different groups**
- **Identifying shared values across generations**
- **Developing a joint plan of action**

Additional tools for developing strategies are available from The Intergenerational Center

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Developing an Action Plan

Once you have developed your strategies, you can begin creating an action plan. An action plan should tell a story of what your team will accomplish over the next year and clarify what your team will hold itself accountable for.

For each action step you included in your strategies worksheet, the action plan should answer:

- **What are the steps needed to successfully implement the strategy?**
- **Who needs to be involved ?**
- **What resources are needed?**
- **Who will be responsible for moving the work forward?**
- **How will we know if we are on the right track? (markers of progress)**

Some questions to consider:

- **Which of these action steps can the team put in place?**
- **Which actions are and are not in your control?**
- **What needs to happen to influence what is not in your control?**

Sample action plans are available from The Intergenerational Center

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Phase 5: Planning and moving into action

Evaluating your *Communities for All Ages* work

Many of you will be required to evaluate your *Communities for All Ages* work as a condition of funding. Even if you are not required to do a formal evaluation, there are many benefits to taking the time to figure out how you will track your progress and document your successes and challenges. The information you gather will help you make the case for the importance of your work, keep you focused on results, and give your team clear ways of talking about what you want to do, what it takes, what you need to do next, and why others should become engaged.

There are a number of resources to help groups design and carry-out evaluations. If you are receiving funding from a foundation or government entity, they are very likely to

have particular evaluation requirements, plus tools, forms, technical assistance or other resources to help you get that evaluation accomplished. For example, CAPD and The Intergenerational Center developed a cross-site evaluation of *Communities for All Ages* that includes a number of tools, including a survey for organizations to gather information about the extent to which they are infusing the CFAA lens and approach into their own organization's work; a "logic model" and "logic model reporting form" to help communities describe their goals and progress towards those goals (more below) and a team composition form to show the age ranges represented by the people and organizations on CFAA teams at various points in time.

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As you plan and carry-out the evaluation for your *Communities for All Ages* work, please consider the following tips and opportunities:

TIP: Evaluations generally include the following steps – deciding what to measure, creating forms or tools to gather information, collecting the information, making meaning of the information and sharing the information that is gathered in ways that tell your story clearly. You can and should include people of all ages in each of these steps. Doing that will make sure that the perspectives of people of all ages are included in the information you get, and will provide yet another opportunity for cross-age relationship and skill building.

TIP: Most communities that use *Communities for All Ages* to work on community change find that they get several types of results simultaneously, as a consequence of the intergenerational nature of the work and its collaborative approach. People are more connected to other people and less isolated, and they are better off on the issues they have chosen to work on (e.g. health, education, safety). These types of results can be called “well-being outcomes.” At the same time, the community as a whole gains more active citizens, new leaders and advocates of all ages, who know how to work across age on outcomes that are important to people of all ages. These types of results can be called “capacity outcomes.”

TIP: Examples of these kinds of outcomes are listed on pages 81 and 82. One of the benefits of using *Communities for All Ages* is that it creates such a full range of benefits. Make sure you set up your evaluation to capture all of the ones you might see in your community as a result of your CFAA work.

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One way to make sure you do capture the fullest possible range of outcomes is to use a logic model and logic model reporting form.

A logic model is a chart that describes ways of measuring your progress toward your goals. It describes your big vision, and what you hope your team will contribute toward that vision (the piece of the pie you are holding your CFAA accountable to achieving). It also lists specific outcomes you hope your work will create in the short, medium and long term. You come up with those outcomes based on what you expect your strategies to accomplish separately (in the short term) and cumulatively (in the medium and long-term).

Once your team agrees on which outcomes you will track, you can develop specific ways of measuring them (called indicators and markers of progress) and methods to measure them (surveys, review of school, health or safety data in your community, focus groups, etc.). Your team will develop indicators and markers of progress for your outcomes that are meaningful for your work and reasonably possible to gather information for, given the resources and capacity of your initiative.

III. How to Build *Communities for All Ages*

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Why does *Community for All Ages* use the logic model approach?

It is useful to think about the big picture during your strategic planning and implementation. Having a big vision that you care about helps your group keep its “eyes on the prize” as you plan and implement your actions. Over time, you can use the logic model as part of a reflection process, almost like a “road map”—checking in to see if you are on the right path toward achieving your contribution, and making any mid-course corrections that might be necessary.

Evaluation tools such as logic models, reporting forms, team composition forms, and outcome and indicator worksheets are available from The Intergenerational Center. In addition, there are many free on-line resources available, including www.evaluationtoolsforracialequity.org which lists steps in evaluation and includes resources to carry out those steps and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation website, including its evaluation handbook: <http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2010/W-K-Kellogg-Foundation-Evaluation-Handbook.aspx>. Many communities also have access to evaluators through a local college or university. Many non-profit or social justice organizations also have evaluation expertise or know of local resources. You should always ask your organizational partners about evaluation resources — particularly if this is one of the in-kind contributions they might be able to offer to your work

Most people find it challenging to develop logic models for evaluation, even though they find them to be helpful tools once they are in place. This is true for people of all ages, and for people with a lot of evaluation experience and those with less evaluation experience. We expect this, and we hope you will get in touch with The Intergenerational Center for support with evaluation planning.

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Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

Ice breakers for relationship building

The following activities are sample exercises that may help the group work on the topics listed above during the team building stage.

Ice breakers for building relationships across ages:

Ageline

1. Ask participants to line up from youngest to oldest without talking. They should put themselves in line where they think they should be.
2. Then ask them to introduce themselves by name and age. As they do, they should rearrange themselves so they are in the correct place in line.
3. Ask a series of questions such as: what is the best/most challenging thing about being your age? What age would you like to be if you could? Why?
4. Variations: Ask the youngest and the oldest to switch places—do they have any questions for each other? Any advice? Ask groups if they were surprised by the answers of other groups. Discuss stereotypes and myths we hold about different ages. Ask youngest person move up the line to oldest and have them give each other some advice or words of wisdom.

Guess Who

1. Ask each participant to describe 5 significant things about him/herself on a 3x5 card. Instruct them not to include their names.
2. Shuffle the cards and give them to the participants. Make sure that no one has his or her own card.
3. Tell the participants to find the author of their card. To do this they have to look around and guess who the author may

Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

be—then ask an open-ended question. For example—they cannot ask—did you write that you love cats? Rather, they ask: describe some things you really love.

4. When the person finds the author of their card, s/he should hold onto the author's right arm. Then the author must take that person along to find out whose card the author has. When s/he finds the right person, s/he holds onto their arm. Eventually, everyone's arm is connected.
5. Next, ask group members how they decided whom to approach. Did some cards suggest that it was written by a person of a specific age—male or female? How did it feel to latch onto someone—to be latched on to?

Concentric circles:

1. Arrange the chairs in two concentric circles. The inner circle should face the outer one. Ask the older adults to sit in the inner circle and the young people facing them—everyone should have a partner.
2. Ask a question for each pair to discuss. After 2-3 minutes, have the young people move one chair to the right. Older adults do not move, and now everyone has a new partner. Continue for at least four rounds.

Questions might include:

- What is the best/worst thing about being your age?
- What is the most important thing an older adult has taught you?
- What is the most important thing a young person has taught you?
- What makes your community a good place for people your age?
- What would make your community an even better place for people your age?

Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

Visioning exercises

The broad vision statement for *Communities for All Ages* is “creating good places for growing up and growing older”. What does this specifically mean for your community? It can be helpful to visualize the change you want to make in your community. This process keeps an “eyes on the prize” approach to all of the work that your team does. It provides the “big picture” for your work and helps your team communicate changes you want to create in your community over the long run.

Visioning brainstorm and development:

Questions might include:

- What does Communities for All Ages mean to you?
- What are important characteristics of a Community for all ages? (characteristics of a good place for growing up and growing older)
- If the *Community for All Ages* team was wildly successful over the next 10 years, what changes could you envision in the community (for example think of changes in resident leadership, housing, transportation, education, healthcare, neighborhood life, green spaces)?
- What would the headlines in a local newspaper ten years from now read about the impact *Community for All Ages* has had in your community?

Possible approaches to brainstorming include:

- Ask each person to write down what they believe about *Communities for All Ages*, then ask team members to pair up and share their thoughts and develop a joint list. Participants should clarify each other’s ideas and discuss any conflicting

Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

information. Then the pair can join another pair and repeat the process until the team is back together

- Ask each participant to write down their ideas, then in round robin form go around the room positing all ideas on a flip chart. After all ideas are up, the group discusses and organizes ideas.
- Distribute sticky notes and have participants write down each idea on each sticky note and stick their ideas to a wall. A small group or facilitator moves the ideas around until common ideas are grouped together. List and discuss.

Follow up:

A small group can compile the results and draft a statement about the group's common vision. The draft statements can be presented back to the group for minor revisions. Once everyone is satisfied, the vision can be written up and kept alive—possibly through a poster that is posted during meetings or another process.

Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

Exploring skills and roles of team members

My partner's gifts:

Adapted from: Building community: a tool kit for youth and adults in charting assets and creating community change by the innovation center and the 4-H council

Participants are paired with a person they don't know (preferably of a different generation) and are asked to interview each other:

Ask:

- What are you good at and what can you offer the team?
- What would you like to learn?
- Have the partner take notes and give feedback about how those skills might be useful to the team. Create a master list of team skills

Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

Skills and interests inventory

(Adapted from Community Partnerships for Youth, Youth in Governance, 1994)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Remember that a skill is something that you can do, something in which you are proficient or have expertise.

“I am good at _____” *(Circle the appropriate words and add more of your own.)*

Writing	Defining	Researching
Analyzing	Organizing	Evaluating
Creating new things	Planning	Directing
Starting new things	Coordinating	Delegating
Developing	Implementing	Leading
Recruiting	Persuading	Administering
Counseling	Training	Educating
Reconciling	Encouraging	Negotiating
Bookkeeping	Promoting	Budgeting
Reporting	Motivating	Giving your opinion
Fundraising	Communicating	Public speaking

Appendix A

Team building activities for intergenerational groups

What resources do you or the organization you represent have to offer the team?

Examples:

- I have lived on this block for 30 years and I have important relationships with many people in the community who trust me.
- I know how to use Facebook and could set up a page for the team.
- My organization has space we could use for meetings.
- My organization has a volunteer pool we could have access to.

After team members have completed a self-assessment, you can ask them to select 5 interests or resources that they want to share with this team. Ask that they write each interest, skill or resource on a separate sticky note with their name on it and place it on the wall. Group the notes by related skills.

Possible process questions:

- Looking at the wall, what stands out?
- How did it feel to do this activity?
- Does anything surprise you?
- What do you see that is exciting?
- Where do you see gaps?
- What does this mean for our team?
- What do YOU need from this team?

At the end of the session ask each person to write down what they currently see their role as being (keeping in mind that roles will most likely change and evolve over time.) This will be collected and written up by a volunteer.

Appendix B

Sample agendas for CFAA team building meetings

Meeting agenda #1

- Explanation of CFAA
- Screening of Arizona CFAA video clip from Viable Futures Toolkit or the New Rochelle CFAA video
- Icebreakers for relationship building
- Visioning exercises
- Overview of basic stages of the initiative

Meeting agenda #2

- Icebreakers for relationship building
- Deciding on group ground rules
- Brainstorming community assets and issues

Meeting agenda #3

- Ice breakers for relationships building
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities,
- Establishing decision making process,
- Discussion of turf, time, and turnover.