STAYING CONNECTED WHILE STAYING APART:

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS & THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

generations united
Because we're stronger together®

Unprecedented Challenges

In early 2020, the start of the COVID-19 pandemic found people of all ages across the world facing lockdown orders, physical distancing requirements, the closure of gathering places and public spaces, and other precautions to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. People were making masks and practicing the proper way to wash hands. Since then, the global pandemic has taken millions of lives and left others with lingering conditions; strained health care systems and disrupted economies; focused public attention on longstanding racial, gender, and economic inequalities; and fueled the loneliness epidemic affecting both younger and older generations - the negative impacts of which are well documented.[1] Intergenerational spaces closed their doors, programs stopped in-person activities, and many older adults and younger people around the world lost meaningful intergenerational connections.

People of all ages self-isolated in their homes—when they could. Older adults were robbed of many social connections with friends, family members, and neighbors. Young people attended virtual schools, were deprived of most out-of-school activities, and were told to stay away from grandparents and other older adults. Too many people of all ages struggled to make ends meet and were forced to make the difficult decision to work outside of the home at personal risk to their own health and the health of their loved ones. Others had to stop working because of family caregiving responsibilities. Grandparents and other relatives raising children faced additional strain and challenges.[2] These difficulties compounded existing concerns many people face about access to food, safe and affordable housing, physical and mental health services, transportation, among many others.

As we look to recovery, we are inspired by the ways intergenerational programs around the world are adapting and responding to COVID-19 to continue connecting people of all ages. This is the time to renew and refresh. We hope that this resource will spark new ideas and motivation to ignite greater intergenerational work in your organizations and communities.

Unrivaled Responses

While the pandemic continues to present unprecedented challenges, the experience has also highlighted the importance of intergenerational connections within both families and communities. Despite the challenges, intergenerational practitioners and champions around the world responded with passion, enthusiasm, creativity, and perseverance to maintain and expand connections across generations and to meet emerging and evolving needs in their communities. For example:

- *Programs that already connected the generations remotely continued to do so.*

- *Programs that had to suspend in person activities deftly modified to virtual settings and remote interactions.*

- *Programs expanded their goals and objectives to meet the ever-changing needs of their participants and community.*

- *New programs were created for remote engagement, and even on occasion to meet in person adhering to strict safety protocols (e.g. health screenings, masks, physical distancing, disinfecting guidelines).*

Some programs used computers and virtual platforms to connect the generations while others engaged low-tech solutions like phone-calls, snail mail, grab and go boxes, at-home deliveries, and window visits.

Intergenerational programs have been addressing a wide range of individual, family and community needs amplified by the pandemic. Examples include:

- *New formal and informal initiatives emerged both helping students learning at home and older adults self-quarantining.*

- *Even more grandparents, other relatives, and close family friends stepped in to provide care and support for the children in their lives - including full-time caregiving, child care, tutoring, meal preparation, and fun activities.*

- *Online platforms successfully reached and supported more grandfamilies and more isolated older adults.*

- *Young people helped older adults with shopping, accessing technology, and most recently finding vaccines.*

- *Conversations occurred between younger and older people around social justice, race, and race equity with projects to address structural racism.*

- *Younger and older people had increased access to fresh and Indigenous foods through Intergenerational community gardens.*

About this Resource

This resource is designed to share what we have learned about intergenerational engagement during the pandemic. We share some of the research findings and present a detailed list of inspiring intergenerational initiatives focusing on creativity, art, and storytelling; helping each other; accessing vaccines; tutoring and mentoring; pen pals; and shared sites. We conclude with tips for addressing the digital divide; lessons learned; checklist for virtual intergenerational programs; and resources to help you get started or strengthen your intergenerational work.

Exploring the Research

Research on intergenerational programming during the pandemic is just starting to emerge. The editors of the **Journal of Intergenerational Relationships** stated in December 2020 that they "…have had more submissions discussing ways to address the digital divide, understanding the impact of digital connections on the generations, and suggestions on how the generations could be encouraged to remain socially engaged through digital means."[3]

While this interest is expanding, it is not new. The intergenerational field has promoted technology to build intergenerational connections for years. In 2013, Generations United and Penn State University conducted a survey of forty-six intergenerational programs with a major technology component. The findings were included in the report **Using Technology to Connect Generations** which provides information about ways technology can serve as a powerful medium for facilitating intergenerational engagement for both older and younger people.[4]

The following sections highlight research findings from a variety of intergenerational technology initiatives prior to the pandemic, as well as evaluation of virtual intergenerational programs conducted during the pandemic. Generations United's resources **Making the Case for Intergenerational Programs** and **Fact Sheet: Intergenerational Programs Benefit Everyone** are based on a comprehensive review of the current literature on intergenerational programs and highlight the evidence-based findings on how they benefit all ages.

Technology & Older Adults:

Several studies illustrate how intergenerational technology programs can facilitate older adults learning new skills; how the use of technology can increase self-esteem, happiness, and optimism and reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation among older adults; strengthen relationship-building and intergenerational supports when younger people assist older adults with usability and access;[5] and help older adults connect with family members of all ages, particularly grandchildren.[6]

Technology & Younger People:

For younger people, research has found that intergenerational technology programs can result in positive feelings and attitudes towards older adults; and improved leadership, communication, and digital skills.[7] The research also cautions that while intergenerational technology-learning programs can have a positive effect on youth perceptions of older adults' friendliness, it can also have a negative impact on perceptions of their competence and recommends that programs should include experiences that also highlight older adult proficiencies.[8] A scoping review of evidence-based intergenerational practices found a high prevalence of college age students in the research literature and suggests that additional research is needed in the experiences of younger intergenerational participants in all types of programs not just technology.[9]

Creativity & Technology:

Using technology in fun and engaging ways such as digital cameras with photovoice and playing video games together can also net positive outcomes such as building community and reducing stereotypes.[10] A study of the integration of iPads in an existing intergenerational art program with older adults and pre-school children found that the digital media in addition to non-digital activities was beneficial for both generations and promoted intergenerational relationships.[11]

Virtual Programs:

There is limited research on the effectiveness of virtual intergenerational programs prior to the pandemic. Notable is the study of a pilot program where older adults provided second-language coaching to young people over customized video conference platform in Ottawa, Canada. Research found that participants of all ages valued the program with youth reporting benefits from the language immersion. Older adults demonstrated high levels of motivation to participate regardless of any restrictions and the positive impacts were observed after only two to four sessions.[12] Another study found that combining "virtual" and "live" interactions in an intergenerational music therapy program fostered positive cross-age interactions and relationships between generations and suggested that technology could deliver structured music therapy interventions to build rapport between generations from a distance prior to an in-person meeting.[13]
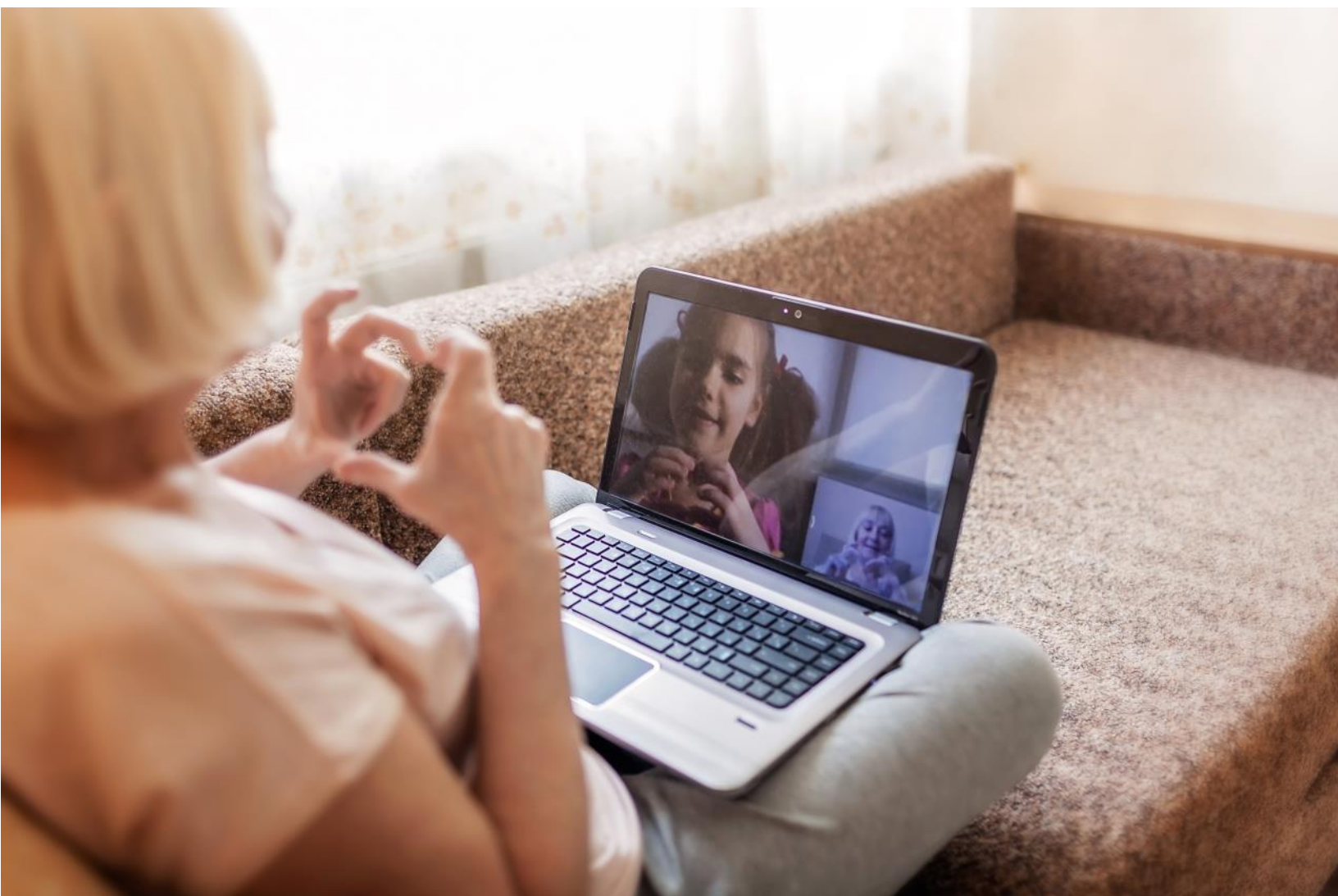
Evaluation During the Pandemic:

A handful of researchers and practitioners have published findings on intergenerational initiatives during the pandemic.

- *The Intergenerational Learning between Grandparents and Grandchildren project implemented in seven primary schools across six areas in China during 2020 found that the program strengthened relationships between the grandparents and grandchildren and improved both generations knowledge about health practices.[14]*

- *An intergenerational therapy program in Singapore moved their programs online and reported both benefits and limitations. They were able to engage more participants per session and by using the digital platform, they could engage participants from multiple parts of the facility without the fear of cross-infection. They were also able to engage children and youth from other locations such as schools and volunteer groups. The virtual programs did not replicate in-person sessions where physical touch enabled the engagement of older adults with cognitive, visual, or functional impairments.[15]*

- *A study of older adult volunteers from the Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring program in St. Louis, MO explored older adults' attitudes toward virtual volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic and found both benefits and challenges. Most participants were somewhat likely or very likely to participate if the program went online. Those less likely to tutor virtually had lower levels of education and higher levels of discomfort when using the Internet. The respondents saw benefits of not commuting to the school and inclement weather but were also concerned about establishing a personal connection with their students online.[16]*

- *A commentary on positive youth development during the COVID-19 pandemic discussed how almost all youth are experiencing greater levels of unstructured out of school time and youth can benefit from connections to adults such as grandparents and other extended family members; skill building activities; and leadership opportunities either in the community or within their own homes.[17]*

- *Programs where health care student volunteers phoned older adults at risk of social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic reported benefits for both students and older adults. In one study student volunteers felt the calls were impactful both for the students and for the older adults, and older adults expressed appreciation for receiving the calls.[18]*

- *A similar six-week program found that graduate students began thinking of their older adult partners as friends and 66 percent of students chose to continue their relationship with their partner. Additionally, students reported that regular conversations with their partners reduced their own loneliness and boredom and provided them with a sense of purpose during the stay-at-home orders.[19]*

> "Not only has the Coronavirus threatened our economy, institutions, and way of life, it's attacking the pathways created to connect young and old. We can learn from long-established intergenerational best practices to maintain important exchanges between generations that feed the souls of all ages without jeopardizing anyone's health."
>
> **Donna M. Butts, Executive Director, Generations United**

- A service-learning partnership between a community coalition organizing volunteer check-in calls to all older residents of Baltimore, MD and a school of nursing found that many nursing students reported that they were grateful to have the chance to participate in community responses to COVID-19 and several students asked to continue volunteering on their own time. Older adults appreciated the calls and some enrolled as volunteer callers. The initiative was grounded in authentic partnerships with power sharing, shared decision-making, and anti-oppressive frameworks.[20]

- A program that matched middle and high school students with Korean older adults observed that intergenerational interaction fostered community resilience through learning culture, language, and technology. The group was offered a safe place to meet in person while practicing social distancing for the older adults to feel confident in accessing the virtual meeting site and navigate their desired websites. The pairs then met virtually to build relationships and share their challenges in learning culture, language, and technology. The older adults enjoyed being a teacher of culture and language, while simultaneously being a student of technology and younger students gained greater understanding of Korean culture and language. Both generations came together to combat COVID-19 related mental health struggles and racism as members of a more unified community.[21]

- The Storytellers Project, piloted and evaluated between February and September 2020, in Empoli, Italy connects library staff, older adults, and young children and their families for remote reading sessions using the Storybell robot. The robot transmits the readers storytelling live, allowing children and readers to speak and interact like on a phone. All participants reported enthusiasm about the experience and interest in participating beyond the pilot. The children enjoyed the robot even though there were technical difficulties with poor connection and bad sound quality at times, and the adult readers felt valued and useful.[22]

Intergenerational Impact of the Digital Divide

Technology only works when people have access to it and know how to use it. While there have been advancements in recent years and additional gains are being accelerated by the pandemic, there are still significant disparities by age, race and ethnicity, income, and location. Prior to the pandemic, older adults' use of technology was growing, with more adults over 65 owning smartphones, tablets, and home broadband, but it still lagged behind younger adults.[23] Black and Hispanic adults were less likely than whites to own a computer or have high speed internet but were just as likely to have smartphones.[24] Those with higher levels of income had greater online access and lower-income people more dependent on accessing the internet via smartphones.[25] Those in rural communities generally were less likely than urban or suburban adults to have home broadband or own a smartphone.[26]

At the beginning of the pandemic, it was reported that nationwide, 16.9 million children did not have home internet access; 7.3 million children did not have a desktop, laptop, or tablet computer; and one in three Black, Latino, and American Indian/Alaska Native families did not have high-speed home internet.[27] While states, school districts, community organizations, and internet providers have made progress in connecting students with computers, tablets, and internet access, significant disparities continue with estimates of 7 to 12 million students still lacking at-home internet access.[28] A recent study released by OATS, in partnership with the Humana Foundation, estimates that 21.8 million older adults lack home broadband.[29]

Access to technology is an issue that disproportionately effects children, youth, and older adults and profoundly impacts the ability to conduct intergenerational programs online and who can participate. The solutions to this challenge are complex but included in this report are some tips for troubleshooting technology barriers on pages 22-23.

PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Creativity, Art, & Storytelling:

Creativity is a powerful connector between the generations. There have been a wide range of intergenerational activities using art and creativity via FaceTime, Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom, or the telephone. But also, window painting at residential care centers; chalk art in neighborhoods and at schools and hospitals, and impromptu concerts from windows and balconies. Many communities have seen this as an opportunity to capture the stories and experiences of people of all ages during the pandemic.

- **Koreatown Storytelling Program** in Los Angeles, CA is a six-month oral history workshop now in its second year, that teaches journalism, photography and storytelling to high school students and elders to investigate the racial, economic, and health inequities in their community during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the first program, students learned about the urgent needs of the elders and responded by supporting the delivery of hot meals and needed supplies.

- **Tele-Stories** is a program from TimeSlips in Milwaukee, WI that matches local artists with under-connected elders to facilitate creative conversations and activities with them by phone. All artists are trained in TimeSlips and go through additional training to learn how to facilitate creative engagement by phone. Calls are delivered for twelve weeks and lead to the creation of a culminating "Legacy Gift" made by each artist with words, ideas, and inspiration from the elders that they work with.

- **Per Terra Il Cielo** "The Sky on Earth" is an intergenerational theatre workshop project in Albino, Italy that typically works with schools and nursing homes, transitioned to bringing the theatre workshop under the windows of nursing homes, with children singing, dancing, flag-waving, and decorating windows and sidewalks. **Watch a short documentary on the project**.

- **The Stories of Atlantic City Intergenerational Project** engaged Stockton University students to interview Atlantic City, NJ community elders about their memories of the Civil Rights Movement, their feelings about the current Black Lives Matter protests, and their reflections on the history and future of racial (in)justice in Atlantic City and beyond.

- **Sages and Seekers** in Los Angeles, CA connects teens (14-22) and older adults (60+) in their online Quarantine Connections programs. These seven-week programs engage five students, five Sages, and a facilitator in weekly one-hour Zoom sessions. After chatting as a community for fifteen minutes, students have a "speed chatting" with each Sage and then choose a Sage to talk with one-on-one in a break-out room for forty minutes every week. **Read a story about one of the friendships formed during the pandemic.**

- **Writing Across Generations**, is a pilot project led by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Spokane County in Spokane, WA. This virtual writing program connects 8th–12th grade students with AmeriCorps Senior volunteers to share stories, forge connections, and promote the benefits of journaling and creative expression.

- **Music Institute of Chicago** expanded their Music As Service initiative in response to COVID-19 to share music with some of their community's most vulnerable and underserved populations. In addition to offering virtual recitals to senior living communities to show on their internal TV stations, they are piloting a program that connects older adults across the Chicagoland region in Illinois and beyond with student musicians for individual virtual performances as well as one-on-one conversation and connection.

- **Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute** recommends youth use this time to connect with family and culture and use art, language, and traditional foods as a way of healing.

- **Dancing Heart Live** is a program of Kairos Alive, using Zoom for a two-way interactive "TV Show" for all ages in Minneapolis, MN and beyond. These programs make connections and improve physical and mental health through dance, music, story, theatre, and the latest arts and health research. They promote trust, connection, joy, health, and intercultural celebration.

- **Silver Kite** in Seattle, WA offers live online intergenerational workshops on topics like drawing, painting, dance, improv theatre, storytelling, and memoir writing. They partnered with local public library systems to offer select online arts programs for library members.

- **Together With Music** is an intergenerational digital campaign in the United Kingdom created with Intergenerational Music Making and Care England to encourage and inspire community connections both now, in this new virtual world and in the future when all ages can be together in person.

- **Racism and the Art of Intergenerational Conversation** is a pilot program of Age2Age in Lancaster, PA that emerged from conversations about systemic racism during the Summer of 2020 after the murder of George Floyd. Moravian Manor Retirement Community partnered with Bright Side Baptist Church to launch intergenerational, cross-cultural conversations about racism. The four-session online pilot program facilitated discussions between older white adults and young adults of color. The intergenerational partners co-created artistic representations of their shared ideas through collage art.

- **The HomeBound Podcast: A Dialogue for the Ages** was recorded and edited over several months in summer of and early fall of 2020 in southeast, Michigan. Through a series of intergenerational conversations, the podcast captures a time of impossibility and possibility between younger adults and older adults as they navigate together this 'new normal' of extreme social isolation and political uncertainty and illuminates authentic intergenerational interaction in poetic and powerful ways. **Listen to the podcast.**

- **The Photography and Memory Project** is a project at the University of Denver with support from **LinkAGES Colorado** that creates community through intergenerational conversations around treasured photographs. The program pairs undergraduate photography students with older adults and moved to an online community during the pandemic. Students communicate with their partners via video conferences, texts, emails, and/or phone calls. **Watch a short documentary on the project.**

- **ReGen Storytelling Workshops** use the mediums of improvisation and storytelling to foster community, collaboration and interaction between and with older adults and younger adults (e.g. high school and college age) in Ypsilanti and Detroit, MI. Facilitated by Limelight LLC, the project consists of a series of four one-hour intergenerational workshops with 5-6 younger and 5-6 older adults over a period of one to two months. Each workshop begins with improvisational shared storytelling and end with a story product shaped by each participant in the workshop.

The ReGen Storytelling Workshop– Ypsilanti Senior Center

PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Helping Each Other:

The pandemic has elevated the care and compassion people of all ages have for each other. Many service programs found creative ways to remotely continue and expand their work. There are examples of younger people stepping up to do grocery shopping and run other errands for older adults. Older adults supporting children, youth, and young adults during the pandemic. Many programs are connecting with their participants of all ages via online chats, phone, email, or text.

- **Generations Connect Contra Costa** is a project of the Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse and the Family Justice Center in California. The project brings together youth with other generations to promote online safety, strengthen intergenerational relationships, and prevent interpersonal violence through building community connectedness.

- **TimeOut@UCLA** is a student-run respite program in Los Angeles, CA where older adults have the opportunity to mentor college students while giving their caregivers a much needed break. The program moved online and consists of 60-minute weekly video calls during which students and older adults have one-on-one conversations and engage in mentally stimulating activities.

- **Protect the Sacred** is a grassroots initiative to educate and empower Navajo youth and young people throughout Indian Country as the next generation of leaders in protecting their elders, their languages, their medicine ways, and their cultures as an emergency response to the crisis in the Navajo Nation from COVID-19.

- **Teen Internship Program** of DOROT in New York is one of the intergenerational initiatives that went virtual during the pandemic. This program includes approximately 100 high school students in ninth through twelfth grades to receive high-quality training and leadership development while volunteering in small groups. This unique opportunity for ongoing community service meaningfully connects teens with older adults one afternoon per week through friendly phone calls, intergenerational workshops, and creative arts programming. Contact **Judith Turner** for more information DOROT's guidelines for their on-line activities.

- **Health Nest Uganda** in Entebbe, Uganda was concerned about the challenges families were facing during COVID-19 in accessing enough food to eat and alarmed by the high risks of starvation. In response, leaders from older persons' groups came together to discuss the impact of COVID-19 and developed a design challenge: "How might older persons and youth work together to be able to develop sustainable food solutions for ourselves and our families?" As a result, they are implementing action plans for intergenerational training in backyard gardening of traditional nutritious foods and animal rearing in order to ensure food security and income generation.

- **Sweet Readers Connect** in New York City matches youth (ages 11 to 22) with older adults for 15- or 30-minute visits through FaceTime, Zoom, and WhatsApp. Together they share stories, favorite music, create collaborative poetry and more. All youth are trained and supported by Sweet Readers staff.

- **Concilio CDS Inc.** works in southern New Mexico to eliminate poverty through intergenerational civic engagement opportunities and to serve their community with passion and commitment. They have engaged volunteers of all ages to assist in reassurance calls, no-contact deliveries of essentials, and socially distanced/mail delivered artwork. They prioritized direct contact not reliant on technology to reach people in rural communities and communities of color that do not have abundant technological resources.

- **Big & Mini** was started by a group of students at University of Texas Austin who wanted to help people of all ages feel less alone. Big & Mini is a platform that connects older people (Bigs) and younger people (Minis) through video calls. To participate, users must create an account and read the training document. They are automatically matched with a Big or Mini who has similar interests for a video chat. Big & Mini has over 2,500 users in 50 states and over 27 countries.

- **Abuelas en Acción: A Podcast for Our Common Good** is a podcast started by two abuelas (grandmothers) who care about the future of the U.S. and are ready to seek out and share truths. Together they explore issues that affect Latino health—social and health inequities, climate change, immigration, and economic justice. They interview experts and activists of all ages who are making a difference in their communities.

- **Gravis** in Rajasthan, India has been forming Intergenerational Learning Groups (ILGs) in the Thar Desert of India. Women and girls of different ages join the group and are trained on community development aspects. These ILGs have been helping to identify older people to receive food and hygiene supplies. The ILG members are also spreading facts and messages on COVID-19.

- **Zoomers to Boomers**, an intergenerational grocery delivery service started by a 17-year-old in Santa Barbara, California, assembled teams of young people looking to help local communities and deliver groceries to neighbors who are elderly or immunocompromised. The program is currently in 38 cities.

- **Meals on Wings** is a program of the Center for Nutrition and Food Security at the University of North Florida that recovers food that would normally be wasted from local hospitals and repackages the food into healthy meals for older adults on the waitlist for Meals on Wheels. Meals on Wings uses student volunteers to recover food, prepare the meals, and deliver to older adults. Because of COVID-19, students were not allowed in the kitchen so staff at UNF filled that role to keep the program operational.

- **The Northland Foundation** in northern Minnesota sponsored eleven AGE to age community gardens in 2020 bringing together nearly 200 young people and older volunteers. People felt a little safer outdoors, and the gardens were large enough or in separated plots so people could be there at the same time and maintain a safe distance. The harvested produce benefited the volunteer gardeners and was shared with local assisted living and care facilities and food banks.

- **Food for Long Life** supports healthy food access for children, older adults and staff working with them in Virginia and Ohio. Even as centers closed, some permanently, Ohio State University Extension and Virginia Tech Extension staff forged and expanded partnerships in response to the growing need for healthy food and nutrition information for all ages.

- **Time to Care** is a government program in Italy that invested five million euros to involve 1,200 young people aged 18 to 35 for six months in activities to care for elders through home and/or remote help with small tasks (e.g. doing the shopping, going to the pharmacy, contacting the family doctor) and for dialogue. The initiative is especially aimed at isolated older adults and was implemented through existing charitable organizations.

- **New Jewish Home Geriatrics Career Development Program** (GCD) in New York City trains and supports youth from under-resourced schools in pursuit of careers in health care through an immersive experience in a long-term care setting. The pandemic required moving the GCD training program online. The program helped interns access needed technology and also provided holistic support during this difficult time. The program hired GCD participants so they could receive hands-on training and gain firsthand experience working on the front lines as health care heroes.

- **SAGEConnect**, a program of SAGE, connects LGBTQ older adults across the U.S. with weekly phone or video calls from a younger volunteer through a simple, one-step call line without ever sharing personal information. **SAGE Metro Detroit**, the Michigan affiliate of SAGE started their Friendly Caller Program in 2017 to match LGBTQ older adults with other members of the LGBTQ communities and allies to maintain connection. During the pandemic, the program expanded to also provide resources and information.

- The **WISE Project** in North Carolina was created by Gray Rogers, a student at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, to address ageism in the local LGBTQ community by creating more accessible intergenerational spaces and fostering intergenerational relationships. They launched the **Friendly LGBTQ Caller** program in 2020 and are expanding in 2021.

- **Vietnam's Intergenerational Self-Help Clubs (ISHC)** are a comprehensive and inclusive approach that promotes healthy longevity through a variety of interventions such as social and cultural activities like games, performances, and home visits; life long learning through monthly talks, social visits, and co-learning on a broad range of topics; and physical health by promoting active lifestyles, health screenings, health care, and home care. The clubs helped disseminate useful information about COVID-19 to older people. They also help raise funds and collect money, rice, and face masks to give away to older people in the club. Vietnam now has nearly 3,000 ISHCs nationwide with a total membership of around 160,000 people. **Read the story on ISHCs.**

- A virtual book discussion group, organized collaboratively by **County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services** and **San Diego County Library**, **Poway Branch**, tapped into One Book, One San Diego, a program that brings the community together through the shared experience of reading the same book. Older adults and college students discussed "They Called Us Enemy," George Takei's exploration of childhood experiences in Japanese American internment camps. For more information, contact **Pam Plimpton**, Intergenerational Coordinator.

- **HelpAge** in Tanzania has developed a variety of intergenerational initiatives in response to COVID-19, including campaigns that challenge and overcome ageism, specifically targeting discrimination and stigma surrounding older people amid the pandemic. They also engaged people of all ages in television and radio interviews to discuss the roles of intergenerational engagement during the pandemic. Intergenerational volunteers have distributed brochures to multigenerational families in local villages about how to stay healthy and create masks and hand sanitizer using available home resources.

Accessing Vaccines:

- At **St. Cajetan Catholic Church** in Denver, Melanie Valadez, a high-school junior, and her church's youth group played a key role calling hundreds of Latino elders in their community—in English and Spanish—to help them sign up for a vaccine clinic at the church. She organized a spreadsheet of elders to contact, had a document with all the questions, and a copy of the application on-hand to complete. Many of the people she contacted did not have a computer or internet and had no other way to sign up for the vaccine. **Read Miss Valadez's story**.

- **Encore.org Intergenerational Vaccine Corps** is mobilizing retired medical professionals—and volunteers of all ages who can work alongside them—to help vaccinate 300,000 people in the North and East San Francisco Bay Area in California who need it most. They are working with eight community health centers that serve a low-income and ethnically diverse population.

- Many communities are recruiting nursing students to help administer vaccines. In Randolph, MA, students in the **Blue Hills Regional Technical School Practical Nursing Program** are gaining hands-on experience helping the town's Public Health Department with its COVID-19 relief efforts. After finishing online training courses, the students received their certifications as COVID-19 caregivers and in COVID-19 contact tracing and were allowed to help the town's testing and vaccination site. **Read the story.**

PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Tutoring and Mentoring:

- **JCY-Westchester Community Partners (JCY-WCP) eTutoring Program** in Westchester, NY pairs students selected by their teachers and school administrators with members of their corps of volunteers. eTutors work with individual students one time per week for one hour over Zoom video using JCY-WCP Zoom lines. All calls are monitored by Program Coordinators for quality and security. Optimally, tutors and students both have internet access and a computer, but tablets or phones are also used.

- **AARP Foundation Experience Corps**, in 22 cities across the United States, pivoted from in-person tutoring to virtual for the 2020-2021 school year and piloting this approach during the 2020–2021 school year to determine the extent of its effectiveness. The virtual tutoring pilot connects older adults with students whether schools are fully remote, fully in-person, or some hybrid of the two on a staggered schedule.

- **Table Wisdom** connects older adults with foreign-born students looking for professional mentoring and the opportunity to gain confidence speaking English. The Co-video Partner Program, matches volunteers with someone from a different city who has been affected by social distancing.

- **Grandpas United** in White Plains, NY utilizes the talents, skills, and experiences of nearly 70 grandpas to improve their community by serving as male role models and mentors to our youth. The Grandpas have been connecting with youth and each other over Zoom.

- **Oasis** serves older adults across the country through lifelong learning, health and wellness, and volunteering. The Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring Program transitioned to offer remote tutoring and their National Network offers remote programs and services.

- **Link Generations** in Montgomery County, MD hosts a Storytelling Series through Zoom where youth and older adults connect to discuss various topics. The Teens Teach Technology program has weekly "office hours" through Zoom where teens answer technology questions older adults have about their smartphones, tablets, and computers.

- **Cirkel** aims to build connections between professionals of different ages through in-person events across the U.S. and their CIRKEL Up initiative that connects professionals across ages and career stages for mutual growth and two-way mentorship. All events and connections have gone virtual over the past year

- **Senior Adults for Greater Education** (S.A.G.E.™) custom-matches community members, aged 55+, with fulfilling volunteer opportunities within their local school districts throughout Bucks County, PA and transitioned to virtual volunteering this school year.

- **Eldera** pairs children with older adults from around the world for virtual story times, help with schoolwork, or just a friendly chat. Once younger and older people have been paired, Eldera brings them together over Zoom. Eldera facilitates matches based on interests and availability before scheduling the first virtual session.

PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Pen Pals:

Intergenerational programs have a long history of incorporating letter writing, drawing, and video in their activities. There has been a renewed interest in Pen Pal programs using mail and email as well as many groups making cards, drawing pictures, writing notes or creating videos where people of all ages are sharing greetings, words of encouragement, poems, or songs.

- **Empowering the Ages** in Montgomery County, MD, created the Sharing Smiles initiative as a response to increased social isolation during the pandemic. It allows older and younger generations to connect safely with each other through email. They work with hundreds of individuals and dozens of groups across the country.

- **Kind2Kupuna**, a project of Age-Friendly Honolulu in Hawaii is collecting hopeful messages and pictures from keiki (elementary, middle, and high school students) for kupuna (older adults). The messages and drawings have been made into collages and distributed to kupuna in several assisted living communities, senior centers, and kupuna meal providers.

- **DreamCatchers' Kindness & Compassion** a nationwide initiative, based in Scottsdale, AZ, is encouraging youth (and all volunteers) to continue thinking of older adults during this isolating time and sign up to be part of either of their Virtual Pen Pal Program or Video (or Physical) Greeting Card Program.

- **Cupid Crew** is an annual multigenerational project of Wish of a Lifetime from AARP. This year they teamed up with Girl Scouts of the USA, schools, and local partners to share heartfelt cards with tens of thousands of older adults for Valentine's Day.

- **Love For Our Elders** is a youth-led organization started in 2013 to send letters of love to older adults that now has over 50,000 volunteers in 70 countries. During the pandemic they expanded their work to include hopeful video messages and social media campaigns with corporate partners to raise awareness about isolation.

- Across the country, **Glamour Gals'** chapters and supporters are writing personal #MyDearFriend notes to the older adults they would visit pre-pandemic. The handwritten note from a friend mimics the intention behind a makeover and continues to build companionship.

PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Shared Sites:

Shared site programs connect children, youth, and older adults in services and/or programs at the same time and at the same place. These intergenerational programs were significantly impacted by the pandemic. Since many of these programs served the most vulnerable older adults, strict safety procedures were put in place. While a child care center may have remained open to serve employees and essential workers, most of the co-located adult day programs temporarily shut down. Co-located programs that were safely able to serve the generations separately—but not able to bring them—found creative ways to share letters, notes, videos, and parades between the friends. Many were able to celebrate birthdays, graduations, holidays, and other special occasions from a distance.

- **Providence Mount St. Vincent Intergenerational Learning Center** in Seattle, WA connected children in the child care center with the residents in the care community by broadcasting activities in their classrooms through the closed-circuit TV channel that the older residents watch from their rooms.

- The children in the **Jenks West Elementary** kindergarten and pre-K classrooms are spending the 2020-2021 school year back in a traditional school instead of nestled in the heart of Grace Living Center, a skilled nursing center. They were able to move their Book Buddies program—where children and elders read together—to a virtual platform complete with a reading nook and list of reminders.

Virtual Book Buddies – Jenks West Elementary

- **ONEgeneration,** in Van Nuys, CA was able to keep their childcare/preschool open but had to suspend in-person activities at the Senior Center and Adult Day Center. They have continued to offer intergenerational activities over video conferences connecting children with their friends from the Adult Day Center joining from home including intergenerational mindfulness, meditation and movement, BINGO and programs for Spanish-speaking elders. ONEgeneration's preschoolers and staff were able to see their senior daycare "neighbors" in person at a special "drive-thru" event with waves, singing and smiles.

- **Los Angeles LGBT Center** addresses the needs of LGBTQ homeless youth and older adults in Los Angeles, CA. In addition to providing housing and social services, the Center has created an innovative, intergenerational Culinary Arts training program for LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness and low-income older adults. During the pandemic, Culinary Arts trainees have been providing 450 meals per day to the Center's seniors and youth and helped to create a Pride Pantry which distributes boxes of fresh food and staples to locations throughout Los Angeles. The Center also opened Liberation Coffee House, a social enterprise on the Campus where youth and older adults receive workforce training experience.

- The **Macrosad Intergenerational Reference Center** in Albolote, Spain, along with the Macrosad Chair in Intergenerational Studies, has set up and piloted a whole system combining up to 5 types of intergenerational contact between older people at the adult day care and young children (ages 0-3) at the nursery. Adapting this shared site to the pandemic has helped them to explore new ways to approach intergenerational activities that they had not considered previously.

- **St Ann Center for Intergenerational Care** in Milwaukee, WI had to close the doors of their two intergenerational centers for a short period of time but were able to welcome back the children to the child day care and older adults and adults with disabilities to the adult day services while practicing strict safety protocols. They have been able to hold intergenerational concerts, performances, and activities in their large atriums and abundant outdoor spaces adhering to government guidelines on gathering size.

- **Plaza America** in Alicante, Spain is an intentional intergenerational housing building for older adults over 65 and younger adults under 35. The residents organized a series of practices to and window visits support older residents get needed supplies and contact (e.g. groceries, prescriptions, conversation) through the help of their younger neighbors. Prior to COVID-19, intentional relationships and mutual support among the different generations were the norm allowing them to quickly respond to the needs of the pandemic.

- When the pandemic hit, 6th grade students at **The Rashi School** were unable to visit their neighbors and friends at **Hebrew Senior Life's** multigenerational campus in Dedham, MA. Students chose to write letters to the residents to let them know that they were not alone—and some residents responded. **Read some of the letters in their blog post**.

Troubleshooting Technology:

Access to technology is a significant barrier for many people of all ages—connecting to the internet, having the appropriate electronic device, and knowing how to use it. Be sure to conduct a technology audit of all program participants. Know what devices they are using so you can assist with any challenges. Consider including funds for tablets, laptops, and internet access/hotspots in program budgets to support inclusion and incentivize participation.

Access to Internet:

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) has **compiled a list of offers** from internet service providers in the United States that will help low-income households acquire service at low or no cost. Most have eligibility limitations linked to income or program enrollment. The list also includes established, nationally available low-cost plans offered by nonprofit organizations.

NDIA also documents **state government** and **local government** digital inclusion initiatives to address access to the internet, personal computers and tablets, and tech assistance.

Access to Electronic Devices:

There are ways to get low-cost and sometimes free electronics. Manufacturers like Samsung, Apple, and Microsoft sell refurbished devices. **Mutual aid networks and groups** are another source for assistance or finding free or low-cost devices. Non-profits like **PCs for People** sell and donate refurbished computers and other electronics and **Freegeek.org** sells refurbished computers from their online store. **Senior Planet** has a list of recommended and low-cost devices.

Digital Literacy:

There are many resources to help people of all ages learn to safely use technology and access the internet. Many of the programs and resources listed in the previous sections provide classes and tutoring on using technology.

Here are just a few examples:

- **Generation Tech** is a non-profit, community service based organization started by high school students dedicated to bridging the generational divide through student-led volunteer programs that engage and educate older adults in the Denver-metro area with technology. **Watch a webinar** the students prepared for older adults on using tech from home.

- **Teeniors** was created as a startup business in 2015 with the goal of empowering older adults to understand technology while providing paid, meaningful jobs to youth. In 2017, they created a non-profit arm to support coaching for older adults who cannot afford to pay.

- **Cyber-Seniors** offers on-line tech sessions and a program for youth to become tech mentors.

- **Generations On Line** is a 20-year-old national non-profit, with a mission of narrowing the digital divide for older adults. They offer **a free, interactive tutorial** for Android, Apple, or Amazon tablets and smartphones.

- **Oasis** offers a wide range of tools and support for using technology.

- **Senior Planet** offers online trainings and assistance for adults 60+ on a wide range of technology topics available on their website or by calling (920) 666-1959.

Online Safety:

Online safety is an important consideration for intergenerational programs connecting via technology. Many of the providers listed above have classes and resources on staying safe while online.

- **ConnectSafely** is a nonprofit dedicated to educating users of connected technology about safety, privacy, and security. They have a wide range of materials directed to educators, parents, caregivers, and older adults regarding on-line safety, including quick guides to popular on-line programs like TikTok and Roblox as well as materials in Spanish. ·

- **MENTOR** has tips and resources for mentoring while being separated by COVID-19 including a virtual mentoring portal, tips for text-based communications, and e-mentoring guides.

Online Platforms to Connect with Kids:

There are a growing number of apps that facilitate connections between families and trusted friends.

- **Caribu** is an app that lets kids up to age 7 have engaging reading experiences with grandparents and trusted friends who can't be in the room with them. It also offers games, activities, and coloring sheets, in eight languages.
- **Uchi**, which means "inner circle" in Japanese, is a free app that helps people authentically connect with those who matter most to them. The app offers thought-provoking questions that encourage conversations across generations.
- **The Family Room** is an app that connects families when they can't be together to play, read, watch, and do homework together.

VolunteeriOpportunities:

Many organizations are supporting virtual volunteering from home. Check out the following groups for ideas and opportunities:

- **VolunteerMatch**
- **Engage** from the Points of Light Foundation
- **AARP's Create the Good**
- **Do Something** has ideas for youth-let volunteer campaigns
- **Youth Service America** has project ideas for youth
- **#DoGoodFromHome Challenge** is calling on kids and teens to do acts of good from their home
- **AmeriCorps** and **AmeriCorps Seniors** are national service programs for people 18 and older
- **Idealist** has volunteer, internship, and employment listings as well as other resources.

International Organizations & Resources:

- **Entr'Ages** (Belgium)
- **Ensemble Demain** (France)
- **Generations Working Together** (Scotland)–download their guides:
  - Directory of Intergenerational Ideas and Resources - Second Edition
  - Connecting Generations Online, Safely
- **Linking Generations Northern Ireland**–download their intergenerational activities pack
- **Macrosad-UGR Chair of Intergenerational Studies** (Spain)
- **Mehrgenerationenhäuser** (Germany)
- **United For All Ages** (Britain)

Virtual Programs—Lessons Learned During the Pandemic

People Care: A silver-lining of this challenging time is that people care. Innovative programs popped-up to support neighbors and strangers. Countless messages streamed into care communities. But this outpouring of support cannot stop once the pandemic is over. Creative solutions are needed to make sure intergenerational connections expand. Intentional intergenerational communities were ready—older residents stepped up to help working parents, younger people picked up groceries, prescriptions, and all generations kept an eye out for their neighbors.

Technology Works: As demonstrated by the examples in this report, technology can effectively connect the generations. Whether high tech like video conference, apps, and online tools or low tech like phones, letters, cards, drive-thrus, and windows, there are many ways younger and older and people can connect. Moving forward we need to address issues of access and support—both in homes and in group settings.

Participation: Virtual programs can expand the pool of participants and types of activities for many programs. Instead of just looking for partners in your neighborhood, you can connect with people of all ages in your town, state, country, or around the world. You can connect people by skills, hobbies, and interests.

Scheduling: Virtual programs allow for greater flexibility in when activities occur. There are always virtual rooms available and can accommodate different work, school, and other schedules.

Staffing: Depending on the program design and type of activities, virtual programs can take more or less staff time. You may need more staff to safely monitor one to one and small group on-line connections whereas one or two staff members can support the same number of participants during an in-person session. But the opposite could also be true. You may need to rely on parents and caregivers to support participation. You also can increase volunteer facilitators and educators since people are not travelling to a location or can support activities outside of typical school-day/work-day hours.

Training: Like with all intergenerational initiatives, staff and participants of all ages will need training and orientation to the program. Staff may need training on using technology or facilitating intergenerational connections. Participants need to be clear on expectations, guidelines, use of technology, and what to do when technical difficulties inevitably pop up. Be clear about what personal information can be shared (most online programs do not allow sharing of personal contact information including phone numbers, social media accounts, and home address).

On-Line Safety: Some organizations had to modify or establish new procedures for on-line engagement, while others already had these policies in place. Some programs only engaged existing older adult volunteers who had completed background checks.

Transportation: Virtual programs eliminate logistics and concerns about transportation such as distance, added travel time, lack of public transportation, inclement weather, traffic, cost of busses or vans.

Infection Control: Virtual programs allow for people to safely participate in intergenerational activities without fear of infection. Prior to the pandemic, programs had to prevent individual children or elders who were sick from participating in activities. People with compromised immune systems often did not feel safe especially during flu season. Including a virtual component could allow them to still participate safely.

Personal Touch & Sensory Connections: While virtual programs can build positive relationships between generations, they cannot replace the benefits of proximity and physical touch—particularly for babies, young children, and older adults, and people of all ages with hearing, visual and functional impairments. While virtual hugs are nice, they are not the same.

Outdoor Spaces & Activities: Many more people have experienced the value of accessible outdoor spaces and witnessed how parks and community gardens can support intergenerational connections even during the pandemic. Intergenerational outdoor spaces and activities could accommodate people safely by limiting group sizes, allowing for physical distancing, and scheduling times for access. Lean about Intergenerational Contact Zones.

Moving Forward

Intergenerational connections have been both hindered and helped by the pandemic. New pathways were created for engagement, while others were temporarily and, in some cases, permanently blocked. People became acutely aware of social isolation and hungry for ways to build connections for themselves and their loved ones. This heightened interest in the value and need for human connection can spark new opportunities for intergenerational relationships.

While vaccinations and a better understanding of how to protect ourselves from the virus ignites hope, we still face many challenges and uncertainty about when and how to come together for in-person intergenerational activities. As we begin to recover from the pandemic, greater intergenerational connections will be needed.[31] We know the positive impact of intergenerational programs, and we know that they not only benefit the younger and older participants but also the middle generations of parents and adult children, staff, organizations, and communities.[32]

The following are some things to keep in mind moving forward:

Cultivate Creativity: Creativity has always been a linchpin of intergenerational programs and now more than ever we need to think creatively on how to build intergenerational relationships and increase access to these opportunities. Take inspiration from some of the ideas presented in this resource and think about the many ways the generations can connect and how you can help.

Offer Options: Programs and activities need to address the interests and needs of participants including their access to technology and digital literacy. While many programs have shifted to virtual platforms, not all participants are able to access these opportunities or even want to connect online. And don't assume that all young people are tech savvy and all older adults struggle with technology. Try to meet people of all ages where they are and plan engagement activities that fit.

Start Small: While the need for intergenerational connections is great, it is fine to start small and focus on quality, not quantity. Connect with your most committed participants and champions of all ages. Find out what they would like to do. Test ideas and activities with small groups or start with neighbors or family members. Learn from these interactions, revise, and then expand thoughtfully. Online intergenerational programs seem to work best when they are conducted in smaller groups. This may mean that staff need to facilitate more sessions to accommodate interest.

Practice Patience: Remember that partnerships take time. Staff, caregivers, families, and older and younger people were busy even before the pandemic and now are likely to be worried, stressed, overwhelmed, and exhausted. You may not hear back immediately and may have to contact partners multiple times or explore multiple partnerships. Present how intergenerational activities can help them meet their goals. Offer support and encouragement to help them engage.

Together we can ensure that intergenerational practices are included in recovery efforts as we fortify our commitment to building a world that values and engages all generations.

Best Practices in Virtual Intergenerational Programs Checklist

The key elements of high-quality intergenerational programs still hold. To learn more about creating intergenerational programs, check out Connecting Generations in Senior Housing Toolkit. While focused on senior housing, the information is applicable to many intergenerational partnerships.

PLANNING

☐ Have you included older and younger participants in the planning process?

☐ Do you know your audience, and from their perspective is the program interesting and fun?

☐ Does your program leverage participants abilities and gifts? Check out the Head, Hands & Heart activity. Did you consider everyone's skills—youth, older adults, caregivers, staff, etc.? Are they willing to share their talents as part of the program? Consider pre-recorded (asynchronous) and live (synchronous) opportunities to share.

☐ Does your program support participant's health and well-being?

☐ Does your program help build community?

☐ Did you consider participant schedules when planning the programs? Can you offer the program at different times or record it for others to seek out later if they can't attend?

☐ Did you consider varying home environments? Some participants may not have a quiet space at home.

☐ Did you create a set of community standards for virtual engagement, including goals/objectives, safety protocols, and ground rules for engagement?

TECHNOLOGY

☐ What is the best method of delivery for your program? A one-time remote event; a multi-day virtual program; or a "grab and go" activity where participants pick up (or receive via mail or delivery) items and then tune in for further instruction/engagement. Don't let personal fatigue with technology influence programming decisions.

☐ What platform do you want to use? Popular platforms are Zoom, Google Hangouts, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, Social Media (e.g., Facebook Live, Instagram Live) and WhatsApp. You can also connect via phone, text, mail, and delivery.

☐ Can you accommodate different platforms for different people?

ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSIVITY

☐ Did you consider what access barriers younger and older people might face? Is the software, platform, or app free to use? Do participants have access to appropriate internet and devices? Can you assist with providing access?

☐ Is the content of the program simple, consistent, and predictable and is it designed so that it can be perceived by a wide range of users? Are you prepared to create pauses during and between activities to ensure all attendees are caught up?

☐ Do you know exactly what devices people are using and their connectivity? Just because someone has a computer does not mean that they have speakers, a webcam, a microphone, or stable internet for video chats. Don't assume that the participants are using a specific device, such as mouse. A user can navigate program using the keyboard alone or with the use of assistive technology in ways that are equally effective. Remember that on-line platforms look different on different devices.

☐ Did you ensure captioning is enabled for attendees who are deaf, hard of hearing, or with certain cognitive disabilities to provide equitable access to the program? Many video conferencing tools have built-in closed captioning technology.

☐ Did you distribute any pertinent materials to attendees in advance? Documents live streamed are not accessible to screen readers. If you plan to livestream documents to be read visually by the group, you may want to also add a link to the document in the chat box or share the document ahead of time.

☐ If you can't offer free supplies, did you consider planning activities that use common household items that participants likely have at home to make the activity more accessible: Consider providing free material packets that participants can pick up or can be delivered to them.

RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING

☐ Did you develop a plan to reach your targeted audience? Virtual programs often need a great deal of additional promotion to reach your audience.

☐ Does that plan include strategies and messages to reach the broadest audience? Are you looking for ways to engage underserved people?

☐ Did you use non-digital means of promotion and outreach (e.g. flyers, mailings, phone calls, newsletter/newspaper ads)?

☐ Did you use digital means of promotion and outreach (e.g., social media networks, message boards, community email groups, Nextdoor)?

RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING - continued

☐ Did you look for collaborative partners that could help with recruitment and provide access to potential participants (e.g., youth clubs, school media specialists/counselors, homeschool groups, out-of-school programs, student clubs, churches/synagogues/temples/mosques, community organizations, health care providers, barber shops, salons, coffee shops)?

☐ Were all pertinent details on the marketing materials? (e.g., goals of the program in fun and engaging language; how to access program; time commitment; day of week; start and end time; and contact information for questions).

☐ Did you consider offering incentives for participating or recruiting additional participants (e.g., gift cards; discount code to local take-out or delivery options)?

SAFETY

☐ Did you determine what permissions and safety requirements are necessary to protect the younger and older program participants? These will vary based on policies of community partners (e.g. parent/caregiver permission for children under 18; background checks for participants over 18).

☐ Do you have appropriate staffing and supervision for the number of participants and the type of engagement? Are you going to use breakout rooms for one-on-one or small group conversations? Do you need staff in those rooms?

☐ Have you shared general on-line safety practices with both younger and older participants? Do you have policies and procedures in place to address any infractions?

☐ Have you established ground rules for engagement regarding online respect and protecting personal information?

☐ Did you familiarize yourself with your platform's (e.g. Zoom) online security settings (e.g. setting a meeting password or waiting room to ensure only approved participants can join; making sure screen sharing privileges are set to only hosts or facilitators)?

☐ Are you closely monitoring on-line content for any inappropriate, disruptive, or abusive activity? Increase your awareness of commonly-used symbols, signs, euphemisms and phrasing; one helpful resource is the Anti-Defamation League's Hate Symbol Database.

IMPLEMENTATION

- ☐ Do you have clear plans and methods for tracking attendance and engagement numbers, as well as assessing and evaluating the program based on outcomes?

- ☐ Did you get to know your participants before you started to assess interest and expectations? Answers can help guide planning for impactful experiences.

- ☐ Did you incorporate icebreakers and pre-planned questions to encourage engagement and spark conversation? Many students are familiar with quiz or chat-based activities (e.g. Kahoot!, polleverywhere). Many icebreakers can be adapted to virtual platforms.

- ☐ Do you have fun and engaging activities? All ages like to have fun. Students do not want their activities outside of school to feel like a class. Remember to include popular practices if you are moving to virtual programs. If you start or close in-person program with a particular song or activity, do the same or similar virtually.

- ☐ Did you encourage attendees to turn on their video and remind them to mute themselves when not speaking? Many young people do not feel comfortable turning on their video. You may need to have conversations with participants about expectations for video participation and offer suggestions for increasing comfort. Consider having each participant upload a photo of their choice to their profile. The photo could change every session and used during the icebreaker or discussion (e.g. different ages & stages in life, family, friends, pets, dreams, hobbies, favorite movie, musician)

- ☐ Did you plan interactive activities to build community? You can make the program interactive by utilizing the platform's various chat features to create poll questions or have a Q&A or set up smaller groups in breakout rooms. Automatically assign participants to breakout rooms if you are planning to use them.

- ☐ Is the facilitator and/or host upbeat and enthusiastic?

- ☐ Did you ensure that attendees are prepared for the activities and understand the agenda and goals? Did you walk through any meeting tools that will be used during the program and demonstrate how to use them?

- ☐ Do you have a detailed agenda tied to your goals? Do you have back-up plans if there are technical difficulties?

- ☐ Did you contact participants a week before, the day before, and the day of the program?

- ☐ Did you do a test run prior to going live? Did you log in at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the program?

- ☐ Do you have support to contact any people you were expecting to attend by haven't logged in? Make sure you have a phone number so you can call or offer a call-in number for participants who might be having challenges.

- ☐ Do you have a co-facilitator to assist with running the program (e.g., monitoring the raising of hands, responding to participant chat, creating breakout rooms)? Former or experienced program participants can be great for this role.

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More Information:

The **Generations United website** contains additional information about intergenerational programs and public policies including toolkits to help you get started, examples from our Programs of Distinction, an on-line directory with information on a wide range of intergenerational programs, and much more.

About Generations United

The mission of Generations United is to improve the lives of children, youth and older adults through intergenerational collaboration, public policies and programs for the enduring benefit of all. For over three decades, Generations United has catalyzed cooperation and collaboration among generations, evoking the vibrancy, energy and sheer productivity that result when people of all ages come together. We believe that we can only be successful in the face of our complex future if age diversity is regarded as a national asset and fully leveraged. To learn more about Generations United, please visit **www.gu.org**

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