

BRINGING GENERATIONS TOGETHER

FIRST EDITION



care
inspectorate

SOME GREAT EXAMPLES

of intergenerational practice
from care services across Scotland
highlighting the benefits of bringing
people together from different
generations



Taking

intergenerational
practice to the next level

Friendship
through the ages

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Encouraging people to move more	3
Getting to know you	4
It's what being human is all about	6
Taking intergenerational practice to the next level	8
Intergenerational interactions bring smiles around	10
A different approach	12
Keeping up contact in the holidays	13
Friendship through the ages	14

"Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older have to offer each other and those around them."

(Beth Johnson Foundation, 2009)



INTRODUCTION

Intergenerational practice is not a new concept. People of different ages often speak of the enjoyment and the benefits of being together, getting to know one another, learning from each other and having fun. Age often doesn't mean a thing when they get together.

Spending time with other generations also has a wider impact. It helps us to strengthen and regenerate our communities by promoting inclusion and understanding. This, in turn, helps us to make our communities happier and more vibrant places to live and work.

This resource highlights some of the different ways people from across the generations have been brought together which you may wish to think about. It gives good practice stories of older and younger people from a variety of settings coming together to get to know one another, to learn from one another and develop caring, sustainable friendships.

We hope that these stories will encourage you to explore the potential opportunities you have around you to connect with people across generations and bring them together to develop your own intergenerational relationships.

Peter Macleod
Chief Executive

ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO MOVE MORE

CHRISTINA FEAKS, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INCLUSION OFFICER FROM ACTIVE STIRLING WORKS WITH HARD TO REACH GROUPS AND FOCUSES ON GETTING THE INACTIVE, ACTIVE.

Christina said: "We work a lot with elderly people in the community and thought it would be good to look at care home residents' levels of physical activity. After I attended a Care about Physical Activity Improvement Programme (CAPA) learning event and a Generations Working Together course I was inspired to develop an intergenerational project with two local secondary schools, Strathendrik Care Home, Balfour Lunch club, and some volunteers."

They developed a module which became part of the school's Health & Wellbeing and Sports Leadership programmes where pupils are supported to learn about the benefits of meaningful activities for older people and how to plan and deliver an activity with them.

Christina left the activity planning open to the students to get them thinking so that they could use their imaginations. She simply gave them some ideas around exercises, games and dances and left them in their groups to create their own activity sessions.

Christina continued: "Although we're still in the early stages, the benefits to the secondary students have been huge and they are already much more confident working with older people. They have a much better understanding of what it feels like to become older and what can be done to make every day meaningful.

"The students were able to move from a place of not knowing how to talk to older people to being able to sit down and have a good blether with them. The older people really enjoy the sessions and look forward to catching up with them and hearing their news. The relationships they continue to build during the project are really special".



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH BETWEEN STUDENTS FROM PERTH COLLEGE AND CARE HOMES IN PERTH AND KINROSS (P&K) HAS BUILT STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND ENCOURAGED OLDER PEOPLE TO INCREASE THEIR ACTIVITY LEVELS AND MOVE MORE.

After volunteering at a Go for Gold event in P&K, a group of Higher National Diploma (HND) Fitness, Health and Exercise students from Perth College were connected to residents in some local care homes to run a 12-week programme to promote their strength and balance.

The programme formed part of the student's HND course. As well as showing care home staff how to promote more movement every day, the students supported people experiencing care to take part in seated warm ups, strength and balance movements and a variety of games. As a result, many older people experiencing care involved moved some way towards the [Chief Medical Officers' guidelines](#) of 150 minutes of activity per week.

Lisa Dods, Sport and Fitness Lecturer, Perth College University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) who coordinated the programme said: "It was really interesting to see strong relationships form between the students, the care home staff and residents. There was a real shift in the students' attitudes and perceptions about working with older people. Since the programme, some students have gone on to set up classes in the community working with older adults including chair based classes and seniors lift resistance training classes. Others work for Live Active Leisure in Perth teaching older adults exercise classes. One student got a job as a physical activity



coordinator in a care home after being involved in the project and others have chosen to work with older adults as part of their degree. Some of these students said that they would not have thought about working with older people before."

The students gained invaluable experience teaching exercises and activity to residents many of whom had limitations due to their physical and/or mental health. The care home staff learned the exercises too which meant they could continue supporting the residents to maintain and achieve greater improvements after the programme ended. Staff told us that the students' presence brought the care home to life. The residents 'loved the students' and felt motivated to take part in the exercises saying that they couldn't wait for them to visit.

Generations Working Together (GWT) is the expert organisation leading on intergenerational work across Scotland.



To support, inspire and enhance best practice in organisations, GWT supports local intergenerational networks, provides a programme of training opportunities and hosts a library of materials/resources. Network meetings are supported by staff and volunteers covering all areas of Scotland from the Borders to the Highlands & Islands. This involves a rich mix of community and public service groups that currently use or want to learn how to use intergenerational approaches to address the challenges of our ageing society for the benefit of local communities and the people who live there. Membership is free.



Go for Gold was developed after the 2012 Olympic Games to promote older adults living in care establishments to participate in a range of annual physical challenges aimed at promoting their mental and physical wellbeing.

IT'S WHAT BEING HUMAN IS ALL ABOUT



Intergenerational work at Junior World Nursery, an out of school club and Whinnieknowe Care Home has proved that love, human contact and kindness matter.

They decided to join forces after attending a Generations Working Together workshop. To set the scene, they held group exercises with both the older and younger people using photographs and images depicting both generations to find out how they perceived each other. They then held meetings so that the staff in both services could discuss the project from the start and iron out any potential health and safety issues or risks.

The nursery and care home plan each of the sessions together so that everyone knows what is planned and how it will work. The sessions involve a variety of activities for everyone to take part in such as crafts, baking, singing and sometimes themed sessions around the seasons. Planning the sessions together ensures that everyone is on the same page and the teams understand what their responsibilities are when they supervise the sessions together.

The care home and nursery informally start each session with hugs and kisses. Personal contact is

important to both the younger and older person. Each session ends with a song with lots of actions and activity. Everyone gets involved and it lets everyone know that it marks the end of the session.

One of the unexpected outcomes involved the nursery children dealing with the death of one of the people experiencing care. After the funeral, the nephew of the lady who died wrote a lovely letter to one of the children saying how much the lady appreciated his friendship. She had talked about him all the time. He also gave the boy a book on Australia and said that if he ever visits Oz to get in touch!

Jayne MacIntosh, Family Centre Manager at Junior World said:

"It's all about love, human contact and kindness. Personal contact is important. It's what being human is all about. You worry less about risks the more you do it. Yes, there is a chance people can die, but that could happen anywhere to anyone."



TAKING INTERGENERATIONAL PRACTICE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

LAURA HAGGARTY, CARE ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (CAPA) IMPROVEMENT ADVISER TAKES US THROUGH HER AWARD WINNING INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT WHICH WON 'MOST INSPIRING OR INNOVATIVE PROJECT' AT THE 2018 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT SCOTLAND'S QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AWARDS.

Laura explains: "I developed this project because of my work on the CAPA Programme where I was looking for different opportunities for older people experiencing care to be more active and improve their quality of life. I knew there was some intergenerational work happening but felt there were opportunities to improve the sessions. Being on the Scottish Improvement Leader (ScIL) Programme was a great way to focus on a project with one care home and nursery to see if changes could be made which would make the sessions more beneficial for both the residents and the children.

"At the beginning, I got a group of care home residents, parents of the nursery children and staff together to discuss what we wanted to get out of the project and ideas about what changes we could make to sessions to benefit both generations. This was really important to make sure we were clear about the outcomes we wanted to achieve.

"To measure the impact each session had on the children, I used the Leuven Wellbeing and Involvement scales. These are two scales that are commonly used in early years and achieving high scores means children are content and engaged in activities, which is essential to effective learning. By tracking children's scores, I was able to work with early years staff to identify which sessions and activities provided the best opportunities for learning, explore where there were learning opportunities and try out new ideas. We did this through a [Plan, Do, Study, Act \(PDSA\)](#) approach where we planned what changes we would make to the session, for example, having a set theme for an arts and crafts activity

at a table with residents and predicting the outcome for both the children and the residents. We then tried it out and recorded the scores, getting feedback from everyone and studied the results together as a team. Bringing the team together regularly to discuss what was good and not so good about the change we had made allowed us to make further changes for improvement and try out the next idea, ensuring the impact on both generations was positive."

Here are some of the key changes which led to improvements for everyone.

- **Changing the environment and activity half way through the session – starting with arts and crafts around tables for example then moving to a more active activity such as balloon games and parachute games with everyone actively participating.**
- **Utilising residents' skills, experiences and preferences to lead an activity, for example, preparing and handing out the snacks and drinks, leading nursery rhymes or a sensory activity.**
- **Having a set theme for an activity around tables with an equal ratio of residents to children, for example, 'food' as a theme where residents help children complete a paper plate with their favourite foods from sticking on pictures from magazines, food packaging or drawings all stimulating discussion around likes, dislikes, colours, shapes and experiences.**
- **Residents visiting the nursery for a session every few weeks.**

Laura said: "By gradually making small changes over time, the results showed that 80% of the children were scoring high on both the scales and therefore effective learning was taking place.

Here are some examples of how children's language and perceptions changed over time.

Describe an older person?

'They are too old to walk'.

'Sometimes they die, they go to heaven'.

after five months

'They wear bunnets and smile and laugh'.

'They have sticks in case they need a bit of help'.

What do older people do?

'Nothing really'.

'They sit around'.

after five months

'They know all the nursery rhymes'.

'They help the boys and girls make things and play games'.



"The residents' and children's enjoyment of each session was recorded using a 1-5 smiley face chart to track the impact of the changes. The average experience rating was 4.6 which showed it was really positive.

"We saw positive relationships begin to form, perceptions of care homes and older people changed and intergenerational practice became embedded into the culture of the nursery and care home".

"The children walk one mile to the care home and back to the nursery and therefore are improving their physical activity levels and also experience of road

safety, discussions around this and all the things they see on the way. Over time, the walk has become quicker as the children adapt to the routine and increase their fitness.

"I measured the residents' activity levels each session using an activity tracker which showed me how long they were standing or moving around for or sitting not being active at all. Results showed an increase in physical activity over time which also impacted on their overall health and wellbeing. Residents' anxiety, happiness and confidence all improved along with their hand grip strength, which means their ability to carry out day to day activities was improved.

"Once we had enough information to show the changes we were making were positive for both generations, we held a networking session which brought together local care homes and nurseries to learn from our project, share their experiences and make their own improvement plans. This led to 14 care homes and nurseries across the partnership area participating in regular intergenerational practice which is ongoing."



INTERGENERATIONAL INTERACTIONS BRING SMILES ALL AROUND

DALMELLINGTON CARE CENTRE IN AYR

Dalmellington Care Centre in Ayr won a Care about Physical Activity (CAPA) Award for best intergenerational project which was presented at the improvement programme's conference held in September 2018.

It all started when Rona Rowan the recreational coordinator, asked to meet with the head teachers at Dalmellington Primary School and Doon Academy. She wanted to set up regular, planned interactions between older and younger people which would enhance and enrich the lives of everyone.

Primary one pupils visit the care home fortnightly. They come together to share activities such as animal therapy, parachutes, finders keepers, storytelling, nursery rhymes and singing.

Second year pupils from Doon Academy have also been involved with a range of activities in the care home including helping with the sweetie cart, flower arranging and board games. They also celebrated the Royal Wedding after lots of time spent preparing for the big day. The level of personal interactions have given pupils a much better understanding of what it is like to get older and how dementia can affect everyone differently.

Rona said: "It is difficult to capture all of the emotion on the days that the children visit the home, and although we have photographs these don't quite capture the love and empathy in the room. Although the children are there for about 90 minutes it feels like 90 seconds. We see a boost in mood in the older people when the children visit the home which lasts a long time after they have left our home. The increase in their sense of wellbeing makes us see how positive the visits are.

"We can see huge benefits. Both schools mutually benefit from purposeful intergenerational work and there is definitely a much better understanding and respect between the generations. It is smiles all around by all."







A DIFFERENT APPROACH

A GROUP OF 10 CHILDMINDERS FROM PORTHLETHEN, ABERDEENSHIRE MEET UP EACH MONTH IN CARE HOMES AND SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEXES TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE FROM THE NORMAL DAY TO DAY CHILDMINDER ROUTINE.

Linda Keir, Childminder explained:
“The format of the session is really simple. The children and their childminders all come along to the home at the specified time and we have a chat with the people experiencing care in the lounge. This helps the children to reconnect with the older adult they have met the month before and reinforce their relationship. We all like singing songs and are careful to select songs that everyone can join in.

Sometimes we recite nursery rhymes together. The older people really seem to enjoy this as they know the rhymes from long ago and try some of the movements and actions which go along with them”.

The children’s families have now started to come along to see what is happening at the sessions as the children are going home and talking about their new friends at the care home.

For one young girl, coming to the care home has really developed her communication skills and her confidence.

Linda explains: “At first she was very shy and wouldn’t let go of my leg but slowly over time she has become more confident and is now comfortable going up to the older people and starting a conversation with them. Some really close relationships have developed over the past six months. It really is lovely to see.”

To continue their journey together, the care home would like the children to support them to develop an outside space. This space will be accessible and available for everyone to use including visitors who may have younger children.





Amanda Sutherland, Activities Coordinator at Lethen Park said: *"This is really an exciting opportunity for us as we can help develop the area to ensure it is suitable for younger people as well as the older adults and encourage everyone to spend more time together outside".*

KEEPING UP CONTACT IN THE HOLIDAYS

During the school holidays, the childminders in Portlethen continue to make their monthly visits to the care home and sheltered housing complex.

More children go during that time as those who usually attend school go to the childminder during the holidays.

Amanda Sutherland, Activities Coordinator at Lethen Park said:

"It's really important that both the younger and the older children have a better understanding of what it is like to be an older person. Older people can broaden their circle of friends and reconnect with the children they may not have seen for a couple of months which has a big impact on their health and wellbeing."

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FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE AGES



Greg was initially reluctant and lacked confidence when he began to visit Springhill Care Home in East Ayrshire as part of an intergenerational project between nurseries and care homes in the area. This was until resident May started speaking with Greg and got involved in an activity with him. Ever since, Greg always looks for May and spends the sessions with her and they have struck up an amazing relationship.

Residents attended the nursery's graduation celebration last summer and May said: "I am so proud of Greg, he did a great job up on the stage and it was lovely to meet his mum and get a photo together."

Greg's mum has been overwhelmed with the impact on her son and sent this testimonial to the early years practitioner.

"Words cannot describe how I felt when my son, Greg, spoke to me about how he had a new 'best friend' called May at Springhill Nursing Home. When he spoke about her, it was clear that my five year old son didn't see the age difference between him and his new friend. He just saw her as his 'best friend'. When Greg spoke about May, his face lit up like he had made a real connection with this lovely lady at the care home. He told me that she walked with a frame and that he helped her and that they played games together with balloons. He also told me he liked to have conversations with May as she was such a lovely lady.

"The depth of their friendship and mutual respect for each other became abundantly clear when I attended Greg's graduation ceremony from Gargieston Early Learning Centre.

"I saw several people from Springhill Nursing Home arrive at the school and knew immediately that this was Greg's friend, May. He had described her perfectly. I could see May and watched her reaction when Greg was on stage. When he spoke to the audience, she was smiling and watching him intensely. It was clear then, that there was an amazing connection between them both.

"I introduced myself to May and she became so animated when she was speaking about my little boy. It was so obvious there was a strong bond between them when Greg asked to get his photograph taken with her at this proud moment.

"My heart burst with pride at how my son loved and respected this lovely lady. I can't thank Gargieston Early Learning Centre and Springhill Nursing Home enough for introducing my son to May.

"We have agreed that we will visit May during school holidays to keep their special friendship alive."

'Words cannot describe how I felt when my son, Greg, spoke to me about how he had a new 'best friend' called May at Springhill Nursing Home.'



DEVELOP YOUR OWN PROJECT

<https://www.brighterfuturestogether.co.uk/brighter-futures-together-toolkit/create-intergenerational-projects-in-your-community/>

<http://www.generationsworkingtogether.org/>

<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/case-studies/physical-activity-project-in-care-homes>

<http://www.generationsworkingtogether.org/networks/case-studies/strive-wellbeing-intergenerational-project>

Evaluation of early years services

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/575657/hgioelc020316revised.pdf>

Chief Medical Officer guidelines

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-physical-activity-guidelines>

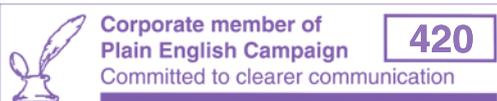


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This publication is available in other formats on request.



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