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## Intergenerational Project: Desktop Research

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## Introduction

The aim of this research paper is to provide background context on current intergenerational issues and connections; synthesise existing evidence of successful intergenerational projects – including international projects - and to understand the key success factors and the elements to avoid when setting up and delivering intergenerational sports projects.

The first section of this review outlines background context related to this issue for both younger and older people. The second section outlines the current context of intergenerational connections and considers the potential benefits. The third section outlines existing intergenerational projects. Finally, this review draws out the key principles of successful intergenerational projects from the existing evidence.

This paper will be used to inform the development of the Active Across Ages action research project including its structure, delivery and training content for young people and teachers. It will be shared with all the schools involved, the wider schools network, Youth Sport Trust (YST) and Youth Sport Trust International (YSTi) to shape projects here and internationally.

## Context

For the purpose of this review, older people are defined as those aged 65 or older and younger people are defined as those aged under 25 years old. Certain current issues are very relevant for both groups in society but can be experienced in different ways. This section explores five key areas: social wellbeing, physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, skills and perceptions and attitudes.

### Social wellbeing

#### Loneliness

Loneliness is one of the current most pressing public health issues<sup>1</sup>. It can be defined as ‘a subjective unwelcoming feeling of lack or loss of companionship which happens when we have a mismatch between the quality and quantity of social relationships that we have and those that we want’<sup>2</sup>.

The Community Lives survey is an annual survey in England conducted by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The latest Community Lives survey conducted in 2017-2018<sup>3</sup> explored respondents’ feelings of loneliness. This found that 6% of the general population (aged 16+) said that they often or always feel lonely. This was a slight increase on the previous year (an increase of 1%) but is not a statistically significant increase.

Loneliness is also a large cost to society. New Economics Foundation and the Co-op<sup>4</sup> estimate the cost of loneliness to UK employers is £2.5 billion per year. This includes costs associated with sickness absence, caring for someone else, reduced productivity and staff turnover. Researchers

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<sup>1</sup> HM Government (2018) A connected society. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/750909/6.4882\\_DCM\\_S\\_Loneliness\\_Strategy\\_web\\_Update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/750909/6.4882_DCM_S_Loneliness_Strategy_web_Update.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Campaign to End Loneliness (n.d) <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/about-loneliness/>

<sup>3</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2018) Community Life Survey 2017-18. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/734726/Community\\_Life\\_Survey\\_2017-18\\_statistical\\_bulletin.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734726/Community_Life_Survey_2017-18_statistical_bulletin.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> The Cost of Loneliness to UK Employers (2017) New Economics Foundation & Co-op.

from the London School of Economics<sup>5</sup> suggest that the cost of loneliness is £6,000 per person. They argue that every £1 spent on loneliness prevention could save £3 in long term health costs.

### Loneliness amongst older people (aged 65+)

Three percent of those aged 65 and above reported that they often or always feel lonely<sup>6</sup> (Community Lives, 2017/18). This is consistent with the previous year. However, this figure should be treated with caution; due to the associations between loneliness and early mortality, the Office for National Statistics suggest that this may mean that lonely adults are less represented amongst the older population. Equally there is an argument that quantitative survey testing of loneliness is likely to underestimate the true extent of the issue<sup>7</sup>. Evidence of this can be seen in estimations of loneliness from other organisations such as the British Red Cross, AGE UK and the Campaign to End Loneliness.

For example, research by the British Red Cross<sup>8</sup> suggests that over 9 million people in the UK are often or always lonely. Specifically, for the older population, Age UK report that there are 1.2 million chronically lonely older people within the UK, and a quarter of the population over 50 are lonely often or some of the time<sup>9</sup>.

Circumstances that increase the risk of loneliness are more common in the older age group. This means that the older age group are at higher risk of loneliness<sup>10</sup>. This includes factors such as living alone, lack of mobility and lower levels of contact with relatives. As the ageing population increases the number of lonely people will also increase.

### Loneliness for the younger population

Loneliness in the older population has received much media attention, however the Community Lives data suggests that currently younger age groups are more likely to feel lonely<sup>11</sup>. Eight percent of people aged 16-24 and 25-34 reported that they feel lonely often or always. Research by the British Red Cross and Co-op<sup>12</sup> found a higher prevalence of loneliness amongst those aged 16-24 years old (32%) compared to the general population (18%).

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<sup>5</sup> [The Loneliness Epidemic](#), London School of Economics/Campaign to End Loneliness, September 2017

<sup>6</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2018) Community Life Survey 2017-18. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/734726/Community\\_Life\\_Survey\\_2017-18\\_statistical\\_bulletin.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734726/Community_Life_Survey_2017-18_statistical_bulletin.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Age UK (2018) All the Lonely People: Loneliness in Later Life. Retrieved from <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/loneliness/loneliness-report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Kantar Public (2016) Trapped in a Bubble. Sponsored by Coop and The British Red Cross. Retrieved from [https://assets.ctfassets.net/5ywmq66472jr/5tKumBSIO0suKwiWO6KmaM/230366b0171541781a0cd98fa80fdc6e/Coop\\_Trapped\\_in\\_a\\_bubble\\_report.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/5ywmq66472jr/5tKumBSIO0suKwiWO6KmaM/230366b0171541781a0cd98fa80fdc6e/Coop_Trapped_in_a_bubble_report.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Age UK (n.d) No one should have no one to turn to <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved/no-one/>

<sup>10</sup> Campaign to End Loneliness (n.d) <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/about-loneliness/>

<sup>11</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2018) Community Life Survey 2017-18. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/734726/Community\\_Life\\_Survey\\_2017-18\\_statistical\\_bulletin.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734726/Community_Life_Survey_2017-18_statistical_bulletin.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Kantar Public (2016) Trapped in a Bubble. Sponsored by Coop and The British Red Cross. Retrieved from [https://assets.ctfassets.net/5ywmq66472jr/5tKumBSIO0suKwiWO6KmaM/230366b0171541781a0cd98fa80fdc6e/Coop\\_Trapped\\_in\\_a\\_bubble\\_report.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/5ywmq66472jr/5tKumBSIO0suKwiWO6KmaM/230366b0171541781a0cd98fa80fdc6e/Coop_Trapped_in_a_bubble_report.pdf)

Office for National Statistics report on childhood loneliness<sup>13</sup> reported that 11.3% of those children aged 10-15 years old reported often being lonely, this was more common amongst the younger children, with 14% of those aged 10-12 years old reporting they are often lonely.

### Demographic differences in loneliness

Certain groups of the population are more likely to experience loneliness. This is similar across all ages. These demographics were identified using the Community Lives survey data<sup>14</sup>.

- Those living with a long-term illness or disability
  - Those with a limiting long-term illness were more likely to say they feel lonely often or always (13%) compared to the general population (3%).
  - Those with a long-term illness are less likely to agree that they have someone when they need company (85% vs 94%)
- Those living in more deprived areas / young people eligible for free school meals
  - Those living in deprived areas were more likely to say they feel lonely always or often (8%) vs those from more affluent areas (4%)
- Those living in more urban areas
  - The Community Lives survey classifies populations as either urban or rural. The survey 2017-18 found that those living in urban areas were more likely to report feeling lonely always or often (6%) than rural areas (3%)
- Black or Asian minority background (BAME)
  - Those from a White British background were more likely to report that they never feel lonely (24%) compared to those from a Black (15%) or Asian (17%) background
- Females
  - Men were more likely to say that they never felt lonely (27%) compared to women (20%)

Also, evidence shows that those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans (LGBT) are more likely to feel lonely within both age categories<sup>15</sup>

Additional risk factors for loneliness across ages includes

- Being later in old age (over 80 years old)<sup>16</sup>
- Poor physical health<sup>17</sup>
- Poor mental health<sup>18</sup>
- Feelings of not belonging in the local area
- Live alone
  - Over half of people aged 75+ live alone<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Office for National Statistics (2018) Children's and young people's experiences of loneliness: 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/childrensandyoungpeoplesexperiencesofloneliness/2018>

<sup>14</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2018) Community Life Survey 2017-18. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/734726/Community\\_Life\\_Survey\\_2017-18\\_statistical\\_bulletin.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734726/Community_Life_Survey_2017-18_statistical_bulletin.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Kuyper and Fokkema, 2010; National Citizen Service (2017) Welcome to our world, life as a teen in 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsyes.co.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/NCS%20Youth%20Report.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Local Government Association (2016) Combating Loneliness. Retrieved from [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e\\_march\\_2018.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e_march_2018.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Local Government Association (2016) Combating Loneliness. Retrieved from [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e\\_march\\_2018.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e_march_2018.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Local Government Association (2016) Combating Loneliness. Retrieved from [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e\\_march\\_2018.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e_march_2018.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> General Lifestyle Survey 2010, table 3.3 (GB), ONS, 2012

- Live in residential care<sup>20</sup>

Although these risk factors outlined are for all ages, it is clear to see that older people are in a position where they are more likely to experience some of these risk factors. However, prevention is possible, with evidence showing that those who took part in more health and independence maintaining behaviours are less likely to feel socially isolated<sup>21</sup>.

### Long term implications of loneliness

Across the whole population, loneliness is associated with a range of negative life outcomes, both mentally and physically<sup>22 23</sup>.

Loneliness can be as harmful for an individual's health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It can increase the risk of premature death by 30%<sup>24 25</sup>. Feelings of loneliness can also lead to poor mental wellbeing<sup>26</sup> and lower levels of physical activity<sup>27</sup>. Together these can then lead to further detrimental impacts on an individual's health. It is important to note that this includes actual and perceived feelings of social isolation and loneliness<sup>28</sup>.

Interventions focusing on improving social and emotional development for young people can impact on academic performance, attitudes to learning and social relationships<sup>29</sup>.

### Mental wellbeing

Both the young and elderly face challenges to their mental wellbeing.

Evidence suggests that the level of overall wellbeing for young people continues to decline, with 2018 the lowest year recorded to date. Nearly half (48%) of young people are concerned about their mental health<sup>30</sup>.

Older people could be suggested to have a higher risk of poor mental wellbeing due to a variety of other factors that they are susceptible to. For example, older people may experience more significant life stressors including bereavement, chronic pain, comorbidity, reduced mobility and

<sup>20</sup> Relatives and Residents Association (2010) <https://www.relres.org/publications/together-but-alone/>

<sup>21</sup> Department for Work and Pensions (2011) Aspirations for later life. Retrieved from <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/3563/1/rrep737.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Gilmore, L. and Cuskelly, M. (2014), Vulnerability to Loneliness in People with Intellectual Disability: An Explanatory Model. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, **11**: 192–199. doi:10.1111/jppi.12089

<sup>23</sup> Mind (n.d) [https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/loneliness/#.W\\_wSQuj7S70](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/loneliness/#.W_wSQuj7S70)

<sup>24</sup> Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Baker M, et al. (2015) Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for mortality – a Meta Analytic review. *Perspectives on Psychology*.

<sup>25</sup> Marmot, M (2010) *Fair Society, Healthy Lives. The Marmot Review*.

<sup>26</sup> Mind (n.d) [https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/loneliness/#.W\\_wSQuj7S70](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/loneliness/#.W_wSQuj7S70)

<sup>27</sup> Shankar, A, et al (2011) Loneliness, social isolation and behavioural and biological health indicators in older adults. *Health Psychology*. 30,4 (377-385)

<sup>28</sup> Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Baker M, et al. (2015) Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for mortality – a Meta Analytic review. *Perspectives on Psychology*.

<sup>29</sup> Social and Emotional Learning <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/social-and-emotional-learning/>

<sup>30</sup> The Prince's Trust Macquarie (2018) Youth Index 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/news-views/macquarie-youth-index-2018-annual-report>

changes in life style such as retirement<sup>31</sup>. Older people have been found to have lower satisfaction with their health<sup>32</sup>.

## Physical wellbeing

The Chief Medical Officers (CMO) recommend that those aged 65 and over are active daily, for a total of at least 150 minutes a week<sup>33</sup>. The Active Lives Adult survey 2017/18 found that inactivity increases with age<sup>34</sup>. 29% of adults aged 65-74, 47% of adults aged 75-84 and 71% of adults aged 85+ were found to be inactive, doing less than 30 minutes of activity a week.

For children and young people (aged 5-18) the CMO recommend a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity a day<sup>35</sup>. The Active Lives Children and Young people survey (2018) found that 82.5% of children and young people are not meeting this recommendation<sup>36</sup>.

Being physically inactive is widely associated with mortality, the World Health Organisation propose that it accounts for 6% of deaths globally<sup>37</sup>. Evidence also suggests that physical activity can reduce the risk of several health conditions including, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers<sup>38</sup>.

Physical activity is especially important to support healthy aging<sup>39 40</sup>. Leading organisations and charities in the UK promote the importance of older people being physically active alongside regular strength and balance exercises<sup>41 42</sup>. Older people also have a higher risk of falls, with evidence suggesting that 1 in 3 adults over 65 have at least one fall a year<sup>43</sup>. Regular strength and balance exercises and physical activity can reduce the risk of falling<sup>44</sup>.

## Skills

Life skills are associated with better academic outcomes and employability, and include skills such as confidence, motivation, resilience and communication<sup>45</sup>. Globally, the media regularly consists of headlines highlighting young people's lack of life skills and the impact this will have on their

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<sup>31</sup> World Health Organisation (n.d) Mental Health of Older Adults. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-of-older-adults>

<sup>32</sup> Office for National Statistics (2018) Measures of National Well-being Dashboard. Retrieved from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/measuresofnationalwellbeingdashboard/2018-04-25>

<sup>33</sup> Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers (2011)

<sup>34</sup> Sport England (2018) Active Lives Adult Survey. Retrieved from <https://www.sportengland.org/media/13563/active-lives-adult-may-17-18-report.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers (2011)

<sup>36</sup> Sport England (2018) Active Lives Children and Young People Survey. Retrieved from

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/13698/active-lives-children-survey-academic-year-17-18.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> World Health Organisation (n.d) Physical Activity. <https://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/pa/en/>

<sup>38</sup> Lee, IM, et al., *Effect of physical inactivity on major non-communicable diseases worldwide: an analysis of burden of disease and life expectancy.* (2012) *The Lancet*, 380(9838), 219-229.

<sup>39</sup> Angevaren M, Aufdemkampe G, Verhaar HJJ, Aleman A, Vanhees L. Physical activity and enhanced fitness to improve cognitive function in older people without known cognitive impairment. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2008, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD005381. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD005381.pub3

<sup>40</sup> Taylor D. (2014) Physical Activity is medicine for older adults. *Postgrad Med J*;90:26–32.

<sup>41</sup> Age UK (n.d) Fitness <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/fitness/>

<sup>42</sup> NHS (n.d) Physical Activity guidelines for older adults <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-older-adults/>

<sup>43</sup> NHS (n.d) Falls <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls>

<sup>44</sup> NHS (n.d) Prevention Falls <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/prevention>

<sup>45</sup> Cullinane, C., and Montacute, R,. (2017) *Life Lessons, improving essential life skills for young people.* Sutton Trust.

employability<sup>46</sup>. The Prince's Trust Youth Index (2018) revealed that nearly over half of young people (59%) felt they needed to develop their skills to help them get a better job<sup>47</sup>. Young people also rate not having the appropriate skills as one of the biggest barriers to employment<sup>48</sup>. The annual CBI education and skills survey<sup>49</sup> found that nearly half (44%) of businesses were not satisfied with the work readiness of their applicants.

Evidence suggests that as we age many of our skills decline<sup>50</sup>. Age UK define this as 'normal cognitive aging'<sup>51</sup>. Many older people experience a decline in their short-term memory, reasoning and speed of processing. However, evidence suggests for many aspects, this change is due to environmental influences and therefore changes can be made to slow down this decline. Age UK recommends that keeping active, mentally and physically can be linked to better thinking skills at an older age.

### Perceptions and stereotypes

The definition of ageism is broad 'stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination against people on the basis of their age'<sup>52</sup>. Ageism is currently the most commonly experienced form of prejudice but does not receive the same attention as other forms such as racial prejudice. Research by the Royal Society of Public Health found that those aged 18-34 years old were most likely to have negative attitudes towards older people and aging compared to other age groups<sup>53</sup>. Negative attitudes towards aging is associated with negative impacts on health outcomes<sup>54</sup>.

Negative perceptions and stereotypes based on age are generally linked to the older generations. However, negative stereotypes against young people would also fall into this 'ageist' category. This form of ageism has historically received less attention than that towards the older generation. The term 'reverse ageism' is a relatively new phenomenon in the literature. Primarily, research and discussion has focussed on the treatment of young people in the workplace and negative stereotypes of young professionals<sup>55</sup>. However it could be argued that such negative stereotypes could be transferable, beyond the working environment into wider societal attitudes.

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<sup>46</sup> See for example, <https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2018/12/12/adulting-classes-millennials/>, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-37824641>

<sup>47</sup> The Prince's Trust Macquarie (2018) Youth Index 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/news-views/macquarie-youth-index-2018-annual-report>

<sup>48</sup> Youth Employment UK (2018) Youth Voice Census report. Retrieved from <https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/dev/wp-content/themes/yeuk/youth-voice-census-report-oct-2018.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> CBI/Pearson (2018) Educating for the modern world. Retrieved from <http://www.cbi.org.uk/cbi-prod/assets/File/CBI%20Education%20and%20Skills%20Annual%20Report%202018.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> Horton, S., Baker, J., Schorer, J., (2008) Expertise and aging: maintaining skills through the lifespan. *European Review of Aging and Physical Activity*, 5, 2 89-96

<sup>51</sup> Age UK (n.d) Your thinking skills change with age <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/mind-body/staying-sharp/thinking-skills-change-with-age/>

<sup>52</sup> World Health Organisation (n.d) Ageism <https://www.who.int/ageing/ageism/en/>

<sup>53</sup> RSPH (2018) That Age Old Question. Retrieved from <https://www.rsph.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/6251de6d-3147-44f5-b9ee3331b1a38bae.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> RSPH (2018) That Age Old Question. Retrieved from <https://www.rsph.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/6251de6d-3147-44f5-b9ee3331b1a38bae.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> For example, Raymer, M., Reed, M., Spiegel, M., & Purvanova, R. K. (2017). An examination of generational stereotypes as a path towards reverse ageism. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 20(3), 148-175. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/mgr0000057>

## Inter-Generation Connections

### Current levels of inter-generation connections

Evidence suggests that currently intergenerational friendships are relatively uncommon in the UK<sup>56</sup>. Traditional locations of intergenerational mixing are in decline, for example places of worship, community centres and pubs<sup>57</sup>. As a result, Great Britain has become more age segregated over the last 20 years to become one of the most age segregated countries in the world<sup>58</sup>.

The British Integration survey (2016)<sup>59</sup> included responses from 4,265 people across Great Britain. It concluded that there is an urgent need to improve integration in this country. The current population is two to three times more likely to mix with their own age group than would be expected of the age range in their local area. This especially seems to be an issue for the younger population who were found to generally only mix with different generations through their family. The Community Lives survey<sup>60</sup> (17/18) also found that nearly two thirds (64%) of respondents said that all or more than half of their friends are from the same age group. This figure was similar to previous years.

Over the last few years, the concept of intergenerational mixing has gained increasing interest from policy makers, local authorities, the media and charity sector<sup>61</sup> and there have been increased opportunities to participate in programmes and activities that promote intergenerational connections. However, these are often not well known, dependent on area and temporary depending on funding or local enthusiasm<sup>62</sup>. The British Intergration survey (2016)<sup>63</sup> found that those under 18 rarely participated in opportunities to mix across generations.

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<sup>56</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – An Evidence Review. Retrieved from [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> United for all Ages (2018) Mixing Matters. Retrieved from <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Mixing-Matters-how-shared-sites-can-bring-older-and-younger-people-together-and-unite-Brexit-Britain.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> United for all Ages (2018) Mixing Matters. Retrieved from <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Mixing-Matters-how-shared-sites-can-bring-older-and-younger-people-together-and-unite-Brexit-Britain.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> British Integration Survey (2016) retrieved from <https://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/TCN-British-Integration-Study.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2018) Community Life Survey 2017-18. Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/734726/Community\\_Life\\_Survey\\_2017-18\\_statistical\\_bulletin.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734726/Community_Life_Survey_2017-18_statistical_bulletin.pdf)

<sup>61</sup> United for all Ages (2018) Mixing Matters. Retrieved from <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Mixing-Matters-how-shared-sites-can-bring-older-and-younger-people-together-and-unite-Brexit-Britain.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> Implementing intergenerational activities in residential homes for older adults (2017) <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/thebirminghambrief/items/2017/08/implementing-intergenerational-activities.aspx>

<sup>63</sup> British Integration Survey (2016) retrieved from <https://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/TCN-British-Integration-Study.pdf>

## Benefits of intergeneration connections

The following section outlines some of the potential benefits of intergenerational connections. The table below summarises some of the benefits for each target audience, some benefits are across both.

Older people	Young people	Both
Enrich relationships / friendships	Reduce aging anxiety	Improve life satisfaction
Develop positive stereotypes towards the younger generation / counteract any negative stereotypes held	Increase confidence in communicating with others	Build community cohesion
Reduce social isolation	Develop empathy	Promote self-esteem
Improvements in physical wellbeing	Opportunities for developing skills and learning	
Develop skills and knowledge	Increase involvement with volunteering	

## Social Wellbeing

The Together Old and Young (TOY)<sup>64</sup> Consortium found that the most dominant goal of intergenerational practice has been to develop relationships between generations for two purposes: 1) to enrich relationships generally; and 2) to counteract negative stereotypes and isolation of older people<sup>65 66</sup>.

An evaluation funded by the Local Government Association in 2010 explored what works in five different intergenerational projects. These included a variety of activities from football to history in different settings. They concluded that intergenerational activities can increase friendships, communication skills, reduce isolation of older people and build community cohesion<sup>67</sup>.

## Mental Wellbeing

Martins et al conducted a review of 16 articles that evaluated intergenerational activities. They found that projects promoted the self-esteem and enriched the lives of both generations<sup>68</sup>. In particular, there was evidence among the older people of more productive use of time and reaffirmation of

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<sup>64</sup> The TOY Project Consortium (2013) Intergenerational Learning Involving Young Children and Older People, Leiden: The TOY Project.

<sup>65</sup> Hollywood, M. (2004). Generations as partners. Working with Older People, 8(1), 12-13

<sup>66</sup> Pinazo-Hernandis, S. (2011). Intergenerational Learning: A Way to Share Time, Experiences, and Knowledge. A Field to Develop. Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 9(1), 115-116. doi:10.1080/15350770.2011.544625

<sup>67</sup> Martin, K., Springate, I. and Atkinson, M. (2010). Intergenerational Practice: Outcomes and Effectiveness (LGA Research Report). Slough: NFER. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED511391.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> Martins, T, et al., (2019) Intergenerational Programs Review: Study Design and Characteristics of Intervention, Outcomes, and Effectiveness, Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 17:1, 93-109, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2018.1500333

value<sup>69</sup>. Overall improvements in life satisfaction were also often evident among people taking part in intergenerational activities<sup>70 71</sup>.

Evidence from research conducted by Santini et al<sup>72</sup> found that older people had a negative image of themselves prior to being involved in an intergenerational project; this was because they felt physically limited. The project helped the older people to build meaningful relationships with the younger generation, which in turn, reduced their sense of uselessness<sup>73</sup>. One specific example was cited in this research of “an older woman who was affected by depressive anxiety and used to walk incessantly around the room became calmer and stopped walking in order to participate in the workshops and games”<sup>74</sup>.

### **Attitudes and Perceptions**

Ageing anxiety is a fear of older people associated with anxiety about own’s own ageing. Research conducted by Drury et al, which pulled together peer-reviewed research on contact between people of different generations, found that young people who had good quality contact with older people were less anxious about their own ageing, which in turn reduced ageism. What is more, “young people who experienced higher quality contact with older adults reported feeling less awkward, nervous, self-conscious and more relaxed and happy about interacting with older adults. These lower feelings of anxiety were linked to more positive attitudes towards older adults”<sup>75</sup>. Age UK supported this by highlighting that this is an important benefit for younger people engaged in intergenerational programmes<sup>76</sup>.

One of the most frequent outcomes to emerge from intergenerational activity appears to be a positive shift in attitudes towards other generations. Santini et al undertook action research based on an intergenerational project carried out in a nursing home in Central Italy. The research found that prior to engaging in the project, older people had a negative perception of youth and did not think they could have a relationship with them. By the end of the project these views had shifted and the older people felt that there could be a friendship between the young and old. Similarly, prior to the project the young people described the relationship between young and elderly people essentially as a

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<sup>69</sup> Martins, T, et al., (2019) Intergenerational Programs Review: Study Design and Characteristics of Intervention, Outcomes, and Effectiveness, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 17:1, 93-109, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2018.1500333

<sup>70</sup> Martins, T, et al., (2019) Intergenerational Programs Review: Study Design and Characteristics of Intervention, Outcomes, and Effectiveness, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 17:1, 93-109, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2018.1500333

<sup>71</sup> Meshel, D. S., & McGlynn, R. P. (2004). Intergenerational contact, attitudes, and stereotypes of adolescents and older people. *Educational Gerontology*, 30(6), 457-479. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03601270490445078>

<sup>72</sup> Santini, S, et al., (2018) Intergenerational programs involving adolescents, institutionalised elderly and older volunteers. results from a pilot research action in Italy. *BioMed Research International*

<sup>73</sup> Santini, S, et al., (2018) Intergenerational programs involving adolescents, institutionalised elderly and older volunteers. results from a pilot research action in Italy. *BioMed Research International*

<sup>74</sup> Santini, S, et al., (2018) Intergenerational programs involving adolescents, institutionalised elderly and older volunteers. results from a pilot research action in Italy. *BioMed Research International*

<sup>75</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – an Evidence Review -

[https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – an Evidence Review -

[https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

“conflict of interests”. By the end of the project, they had also developed friendship, empathy and mutual understanding<sup>77</sup>.

Similarly, an evidence review of intergenerational activities conducted on behalf of Age UK found that young people who experience direct contact with older people “in general have more positive explicit, indirect and implicit attitudes towards older adults”. What is more, they are less likely to stereotype or patronise older adults<sup>78</sup>. Martins et al also found that intergenerational projects promoted greater awareness and understanding among younger and older generations<sup>79</sup>.

### **Physical Wellbeing**

Evidence from research conducted by Santini et al found that intergenerational activities can contribute to improvements in physical wellbeing; an example was cited whereby an older participant forgot their pains and reported feeling better during the activities<sup>80</sup>.

Existing evidence does tend to report positive impacts of intergenerational activities on physical wellbeing<sup>81</sup>. However, the existing evidence is limited. This may be a result of a lack of research focusing on this area and is discussed in further detail in the specific section below.

### **Skills and Knowledge**

Intergenerational activities can facilitate opportunities for learning. A review by the TOY Project Consortium, which is global movement that promotes intergenerational learning, highlighted that older people provide a vital link with heritage, history and culture, which can give young people a sense of identity and perspective. What is more, they note that the life skills and experience that older people have developed can support young people in today’s rapidly changing society by providing a more active learning opportunity<sup>82</sup>. This was supported by Generations Working Together, which supports intergenerational practice in Scotland; they highlighted that intergenerational activities can develop knowledge and understanding, which includes learning about history as a living, ongoing process<sup>83</sup>. Young people can also play a role in developing older people’s skills and knowledge by offering “a fresh, innovative and forward-looking perspective”<sup>84</sup>.

Building on this, Martins et al found that six of the projects had evidence of improved competencies such as reading, language, artistic skills among both the younger and older participants. In addition, the review found evidence that the young people involved in projects had increased motivation to

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<sup>77</sup> Santini, S, et al., (2018) Intergenerational programs involving adolescents, institutionalised elderly and older volunteers. results from a pilot research action in Italy. BioMed Research International.

<sup>78</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – an Evidence Review - [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

<sup>79</sup> Martins, T, et al., (2019) Intergenerational Programs Review: Study Design and Characteristics of Intervention, Outcomes, and Effectiveness, Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 17:1, 93-109, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2018.1500333.

<sup>80</sup> Santini et al (2018) Intergenerational programs involving adolescents, institutionalised elderly and older volunteers. results from a pilot research action in Italy.

<sup>81</sup> For example Jennifer McConnell & Patti-Jean Naylor (2016) Feasibility of an Intergenerational-Physical-Activity Leadership Intervention, Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 14:3, 220-241, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2016.1195247

<sup>82</sup> TOY Project Consortium (2013) Together Old and Young: A Review of the Literature on Intergenerational Learning Involving Young Children and Older People - [http://www.toyproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TOY-literature\\_review\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.toyproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TOY-literature_review_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>83</sup> Generations Working Together (n.d) Learning Through Intergenerational Practice - <http://generationsworkingtogether.org/downloads/5252d276ca45a-GWT%20brochure%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> Murphy, 2012 in TOY Project Consortium (2013) Together Old and Young: A Review of the Literature on Intergenerational Learning Involving Young Children and Older People - [http://www.toyproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TOY-literature\\_review\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.toyproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TOY-literature_review_FINAL.pdf)

learn and better academic performance and for the older people there was evidence of increased cognitive function<sup>85</sup>.

### **Social Action and Social Capital**

Age UK conducted an evidence review into intergenerational connections and found that young people experiencing greater contact with older people were more likely to volunteer and help others more generally<sup>86</sup>. They are also more likely to donate to older peoples' charities, help older people and spend more time with them<sup>878889</sup>. What is more, the more intergenerational contact young people experience, the more willing they are to continue this contact in the future<sup>90</sup>. Building on this, the TOY project consortium highlights that civil society groups can be a key way of developing and sustaining relationships between generations, which in turn can build social capital in communities<sup>91</sup>.

### **Role of sport and physical activity in intergenerational connections**

Despite the clear evidence of health benefits of physical activity for both young people and older people, there is a paucity of academic research literature regarding the inclusion of and impacts on physical activity as part of an intergenerational programme<sup>92 93</sup>. Intergenerational activities that include physical activity have the potential to help older people increase and maintain healthy levels of physical activity as well as improving younger people's attitudes towards aging and negative stereotypes<sup>94</sup>.

A more recent feasibility study in Canada<sup>95</sup> (2016) evaluated the impacts of a physical activity intergenerational intervention on both young people and older people. The intergenerational intervention included leadership training, playground games, walking tracking activity, chair aerobics and a health fair. Researchers measured physical activity levels at baseline, during the activity period and a month after. Physical activity levels did increase, especially during the activity period, but were not statistically significant. This study demonstrated that physical activity as part of an

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<sup>85</sup> Martins, T, et al., (2019) Intergenerational Programs Review: Study Design and Characteristics of Intervention, Outcomes, and Effectiveness, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 17:1, 93-109, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2018.1500333

<sup>86</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – an Evidence Review - [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> Bousfield, C., & Hutchison, P. (2010). Contact, anxiety, and young people's attitudes and behavioral intentions towards the elderly. *Educational Gerontology*, 36, 451-466. doi:10.1080/03601270903324362

<sup>88</sup> Kessler, E. M., & Staudinger, U. M. (2007). Intergenerational potential: effects of social interaction between older adults and adolescents. *Psychology and Aging*, 22, 690

<sup>89</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – an Evidence Review - [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

<sup>90</sup> Hutchison, P., Fox, E., Laas, A., Matharu, J., & Urzi, S. (2010). Anxiety, outcome expectancies, and young people's willingness to engage in contact with the elderly. *Educational Gerontology*, 36, 1008-1021. doi:10.1080/03601271003723586

<sup>91</sup> TOY Project Consortium (2013) Together Old and Young: A Review of the Literature on Intergenerational Learning Involving Young Children and Older People - [http://www.toyproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TOY-literature\\_review\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.toyproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/TOY-literature_review_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>92</sup> Jennifer McConnell & Patti-Jean Naylor (2016) Feasibility of an Intergenerational-Physical-Activity Leadership Intervention, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 14:3, 220-241, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2016.1195247

<sup>93</sup> Parminder K. Flora & Guy E. J. Faulkner MSc PhD (2007) Physical Activity, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 4:4, 63-74, DOI: 10.1300/J194v04n04\_05

<sup>94</sup> Parminder K. Flora & Guy E. J. Faulkner MSc PhD (2007) Physical Activity, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 4:4, 63-74, DOI: 10.1300/J194v04n04\_05

<sup>95</sup> Jennifer McConnell & Patti-Jean Naylor (2016) Feasibility of an Intergenerational-Physical-Activity Leadership Intervention, *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 14:3, 220-241, DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2016.1195247

intergenerational intervention has the potential to increase physical activity as well as intergenerational contact, but further study is needed.

### Evidence for older people

Evidence from range of sources demonstrates the positive impact that sport can have on social wellbeing<sup>96</sup>. For older people specifically, a systematic review<sup>97</sup> and meta-analysis of randomised control trials reviewing the effect of physical activity interventions on social wellbeing was conducted in 2018. Across 38 studies researchers found some evidence that physical activity interventions can influence social health, but not linked specifically to loneliness or social networks. They conclude that there is an indication of the benefit of physical activity interventions for social wellbeing, but that more evidence is needed.

The 'Mobile Me'<sup>98</sup> study found that a key motivation for being involved in a physical activity intervention was to have fun and be sociable. This ten-week intervention aimed to increase physical activity amongst residents in sheltered housing and care home sites in Norfolk. This study found that physical activity and participation in sport increased as a result of being part of the project.

A recent systematic review<sup>99</sup> considered intergenerational interventions and the impact on the physical health of older people. After reviewing seven studies they concluded that intergenerational activities can have a positive impact on physical health outcomes. However, more long-term research with formal evaluation is needed.

Research and evidence from practice identify ways that sport and physical activity can be adapted to be more accessible for older people. For example, adaptations such as walking basketball and walking football provide more accessible versions of the traditional games for older people. An evaluation of walking basketball in Australia found that participating in the game improved health outcomes for players as well as providing an opportunity to socialise<sup>100</sup>.

#### Case study – Table Tennis<sup>101</sup>

Welcome in community centre in Leeds is run by the OPAL (Old People's Action in the Locality) organisation. On Thursday mornings pupils from a local high school join the centre members to play table tennis. The aim is to provide an opportunity to reduce negative stereotypes and increase social contact between different age groups. Positive feedback has been received from both young people and older people but no formal evaluation has been conducted.

<sup>96</sup> See for example. Commission of the European Communities (2007) *White Paper on Sport*. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52007DC0391&from=EN>

<sup>97</sup> Shvedko, A, Whittaker, A., Thompson, J., Greig, C., (2018) Physical activity interventions for treatment of social isolation, loneliness or low social support in older adults: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised control trials. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 128-137(34)

<sup>98</sup> Burke, A., and Jones, A., (2018) *Mobile Me: Evaluation*.

<sup>99</sup> Park, A-La (2014) The impacts of intergenerational programmes on the physical health of older adults. *Journal of Aging Science*, 2 (3). pp. 1-5. ISSN 2329-8847

<sup>100</sup> Jenkin CR, Eime RM, & Hilland TA (2018). *Walking Basketball Program: Evaluation Report for Basketball Victoria*

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/social-care-network/2018/apr/04/table-tennis-united-generations-leeds>

## Inter-Generation Projects

### Types of intergenerational projects

Within this section, examples of intergenerational projects have been categorised into different areas

- Shared care, including the very young and older aged
- Shared/co-housing
- Examples from academic literature

### Examples of intergenerational projects

#### Shared care

This category has possibly received the most media attention over recent years. It includes examples of intergenerational projects working with very young children, usually nursery aged and the older generation.

##### *Apples and Honey Nightingale*

[\(https://www.applesandhoneynightingale.com/\)](https://www.applesandhoneynightingale.com/)

Apples and Honey was the UK's first intergenerational nursey. It began with termly visits by the nursery to the residential setting before being developed as a full-time nursery located on the same site as the residential setting. The programme has daily onsite activities with the nursery, weekly baby and toddler sessions with residents and monthly community wide events.

Elements that they found particularly successful was having a project team with a range of professionals with different backgrounds and areas of expertise. This enabled them to support each other to have the confidence when working with a different population and in a new environment.

Qualitative feedback from residents and parents highlights the success to date of the programme, with increased happiness and social skills amongst residents and increased interaction opportunities and learning for young children.

##### *Child Care at the Mount*

[\(http://iheartilc.org/\)](http://iheartilc.org/)

This is a child care setting in Washington, United States. It combines a children's program on a campus which is also home to older people. Children can attend from aged six weeks to 5 years old on a full time or part time basis. Children and the older people engage in daily planned activities including music, dance and art. Frequent interaction between the residents and children is an integral part of the program.

#### Shared Housing

##### *Intergenerational home shares Spain*

[\(https://www.comillas.edu/en/social-work-unit/services/intergenerational-program-convive-living-together\)](https://www.comillas.edu/en/social-work-unit/services/intergenerational-program-convive-living-together)

The idea of intergenerational housing between students and older people started in Spain in 1991. It aims to be a mutually beneficial experience, providing accommodation for the student and support for the elderly person. Many universities in Spain run such programmes.

Evaluation of home share programmes is not frequent. However, Sanchez et al (2011)<sup>102</sup> conducted an evaluation of the largest intergenerational home share programme in Spain. This considered over 300 elderly people and students participating in a home share programme. The research found that participation in the programme enabled elderly people to experience a higher degree of intergenerational contact than if they did not participate. Around half of elderly participants felt that the programme changed their vision of young people. Equally the students felt that they have more positive attitudes towards the elderly as a result. Students were seen as an important source of help for their elderly person.

#### *Intergenerational Housing USA*

(e.g. <https://www.homeseniors.org/>)

HOME enables low-income older people from Chicago to live in an intergenerational environment. It helps older people to maintain independence by providing intergenerational living. The programme has been running for 35 years and offers intergenerational housing, a shopping bus program, upkeep and repair program and moving assistance program. In 2017, the intergenerational housing program provided housing for 69 seniors, 11 children and 30 young adults.

A recent case study report was conducted by Garland (2017)<sup>103</sup>. Key findings suggest that the program has had a positive effect on the lives of those involved. Residents reported decreased levels of loneliness, independence and better health.

#### Examples from academic literature

Many intergenerational programmes are already established and do not necessarily provide formal evaluation evidence. Evidence from the academic literature tends to focus on pilot studies or evaluations of trials of intergenerational projects.

A recent systematic review (Martins et al, 2018) found that intergenerational interventions varied considerably, in terms of structure, activity, setting and how their outcomes were measured.

#### *Italy – Young People and Nursing Homes* <sup>104</sup>

A pilot programme in Italy aimed to promote intergenerational connections between young people (aged 14 years old) and older people in nursing home settings through shared activities. Focus groups and interviews were conducted and showed a positive impact of the programme on both populations. It helped to change attitudes and decrease negative stereotypes held by both populations about each other. It also supported young peoples' development of reflection and critical thinking skills. A recommendation from this study is that intergenerational activities should be incorporated into the daily routine of a nursing home.

<sup>102</sup> Sanchez, M, et al., (2011) Much more than accommodation in exchange for company: dimensions of solidarity in an intergenerational homeshare program in Spain. *Journal of Intergenerational relationships*.

<sup>103</sup> Garland, E., (2018) Learning from Intergenerational Housing projects in the USA. Retrieved from <https://www.wcmt.org.uk/sites/default/files/report-documents/Garland%20E%20Report%202017%20Final.pdf>

<sup>104</sup> Santini, S, et al., (2018) Intergenerational programs involving adolescents, institutionalised elderly and older volunteers: results from a pilot research-action in Italy. *BioMed Research Journal*

This paper considered the impact of a participants in a 'Israeli Multigenerational Connection Program', where children and older people complete computer room activities in primary school settings. Findings show that this program was successful at building intergenerational relationships and empowering both generations, increasing confidence and competence.

## Key Principles for Successful Intergeneration Projects

*'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 young and old have to offer each other and those around them.'*

(Definition of Intergenerational Practice: Beth Johnson Foundation, 2001)

This section gives a summary of the key principles, highlighted by research<sup>106 107 108 109 110 111</sup>and evaluation, to consider when designing and delivering intergenerational projects, including principles that contribute to successful projects, elements that hinder success and elements to consider.

Principles that contribute to success

- Mutually beneficial activities - bringing together different generations through activities that offer something positive and beneficial to different ages, recognising the assets everyone brings
- Equality of the generations – using activities that don't favour one age group over another
- Common goals /shared purpose – creating opportunities to co-operate together in working towards agreed shared goals
- A participatory approach – the different ages are all involved in creating and doing the activities
- Regular contact – helps to build relationships, confidence, understanding and familiarity between the ages, communicate expectations and accountability

<sup>105</sup> Gamliel, T & Gabay, N., (2014) Knowledge exchange, social interactions and empowerment in an intergenerational technology program at school. Educational Gerontology

<sup>106</sup> Local Government Association (2016) Combating Loneliness. Retrieved from

[https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e\\_march\\_2018.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/combating-loneliness-guid-24e_march_2018.pdf)

<sup>107</sup> United for all Ages (2018) Mixing Matters. Retrieved from

[https://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Mixing-Matters-how-shared-sites-can-bring-older-and-younger-people-together-and-unite-Brexit-Britain.pdf](https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Mixing-Matters-how-shared-sites-can-bring-older-and-younger-people-together-and-unite-Brexit-Britain.pdf)

<sup>108</sup> Age UK (2017) Making Intergenerational Connections – an Evidence Review. Retrieved from

[https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb\\_2017\\_making\\_intergenerational\\_connections.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_2017_making_intergenerational_connections.pdf)

<sup>109</sup> Age UK (2015) Promising Approaches to reducing loneliness and isolation in later life. Retrieved from

<https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/Promising-approaches-to-reducing-loneliness-and-isolation-in-later-life.pdf>

<sup>110</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2013) Working with your community to reduce loneliness. Retrieved from

[https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/JRF\\_Loneliness\\_Stakeholder.pdf](https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/JRF_Loneliness_Stakeholder.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> Department for Education (2010) Evaluation of the generations together programme – learning so far Retrieved from

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182280/DFE-RR082.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182280/DFE-RR082.pdf)

- Good planning – a well-planned approach that takes account of the above principles
- Engage the right stakeholders
- Be flexible in the delivery approach, adapt to suit participants and with ongoing learning
- Respond to the specific needs of the individual context, make sure there is full understanding of the local context from the outset
- Consider what structural supports are needed within each individual context, make use of existing connections within the community

Elements that hinder success:

- Inappropriate communication – different age groups use different language, so communication needs to avoid being patronising, inappropriate or confusing
- Inequality of the generations – in terms of power, status, size of groups, type of activities, the environment
- Stereotyping of either generation – different generations can have different perceptions of people of other ages, which can sometimes involve negative stereotyping, which is unhelpful

Elements to consider:

- Frequency of contact/ interaction – the research suggests that more frequent contact can help to build confidence and familiarity between generations
- Quality of contact – the research suggests that good quality contact/ interaction can help reduce the anxiety of interacting with unfamiliar age groups. Consider the mode of communication, sometimes face to face is better than electronic. Think about how to make the interaction work - so one to one interaction works best between an older person and a younger person works best where there are shared interests, such as gardening, literature, politics, etc
- Life stories/ sharing experiences – this can be a beneficial aspect of building a mutual understanding and relationship and helping individuals learn about each other; needs some careful thought re safeguarding, appropriateness of sharing personal information/ history
- Culturally grounded<sup>112</sup>/ suitable – obviously the context and attitudes of cultures differ, so the design of the project will need to consider this
- Awareness of the needs/ assets of participants – the design of the project will need to take account of the needs/ assets of the participants and so the intensity of the project delivery needs to be adapted accordingly
- Learning by doing – recognise and embrace the need to be flexible in project delivery and adapt to ongoing learning
- Act on the gaps – there is a shortage of evidence on the impact of intergenerational projects, especially within the context of sport and physical activity. It is important to formally integrate evaluation into delivery and evidence the impact of what we do to contribute to the literature base
- Staff capacity, experience and skills – ensure that staff are committed to intergenerational practice

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<sup>112</sup> Generations Working Together (date) Learning through intergenerational practice. Retrieved from <http://generationsworkingtogether.org/downloads/5252d276ca45a-GWT%20brochure%20FINAL.pdf>

- How the project is pitched to each audience – consider what the positives are that appeal to each audience to ensure engagement

### Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an essential element of any intergenerational project. Careful thought needs to be given to clear, effective principles need to underpin the design and delivery of any project, while practical guidelines will be needed to safeguard all participants. A separate piece of work has been commissioned focussed on safeguarding for intergenerational projects and will deliver safeguarding principles and guidelines.

## YST RESEARCH

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) is a national children's charity passionate about creating a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits that come from play and sport. YST Research offers research, analysis, insight and evaluation services to organisations with an interest in the wider children and young people's sector. Our research expertise is focussed on improving the wellbeing of children and young people through sport and physical activity.

Our specialisms include:

- Education, PE and school sport
- Community sport / clubs
- Early years settings
- Life skills and employability
- Activism and volunteering
- Health (physical, social and emotional)

By working with us, you are supporting us to achieve our mission to improve children's lives and their future.

### Contact us:

#### Youth Sport Trust

SportPark Loughborough  
University  
3 Oakwood Drive  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire LE11 3QF

T 01509 226600  
E RESEARCH@YOUTHSPORTTRUST.ORG  
W WWW.YOUTHSPORTTRUST.ORG  
@YOUTHSPORTTRUST  
YOUTHSPORTTRUST

Registered Charity Number 1086915  
Registered Company Number  
4180163