

# **Intergenerational Practice**



**A toolkit for Community Associations**

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## What is Intergenerational Practice?

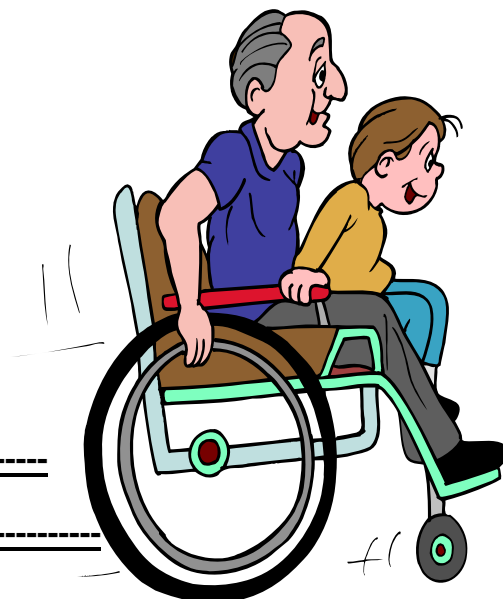
Intergenerational practice can mean different things to different people and there are such a wide variety of project ideas that could be classed as intergenerational. The general consensus is that Intergenerational practice is older people (Over 50) and younger people (Under 25) participating in activities together. However Intergenerational practice can be so much more than this.

The Centre for Intergenerational Practice describes this work in the following terms:

“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.”

Therefore, in line with this definition your projects should acknowledge the importance of bringing the younger and older generations together whilst concentrating on realising a variety of generations exist within your communities and reflecting on what this means for your organisation.

There are a number of definitions, toolkits and manuals around as Intergenerational practice pushes it's way to the top of the agenda, however throughout this process it is important to remember to listen to your communities and run your projects in line with their wants and needs.



## **Core Principles of Intergenerational Practice:**

Whilst Intergenerational Practice can/ should be used as a tool for Community Development and as such Community Development Practice Principles should be considered throughout the project (For further information, please go to <http://www.cdx.org.uk/values-and-practice-principles> or speak to your main Hampshire County Council support officer contact). Intergenerational Practice also has a set of 8 core principles that should be taken into account when adopting an intergenerational approach.

- **Mutual and Reciprocal Benefit**

Intergenerational Practice (IP) is based on the principle of all participating generations gaining benefit. By working together, both groups also ensure that important traditional skills are maintained for future generations.

- **Participatory**

Successful IP is based on the aspirations of the generations participating. (*What do those participating want to and expect to get out of it, are you managing their expectations and are you aiming to achieve what they want to achieve?*) As for all successful work that engages with groups of people the participants are fully involved in shaping the programme and feeling a sense of ownership and power in shaping it and taking it forward. Good IP is dynamic and connects across the generations and within the generations.

- **Asset Based**

Traditionally, the approach to social policy and practice is most often used to identify something as a problem and then to try to remove these circumstances or behaviours. It is based on a model, if addressing deficits. IP is assets based. It works with the generations to help them to discover their strengths and then builds on these assets to build success, understanding and mutual respect.

*(What this is trying to say is that rather than identifying Problems within a community then trying to improve the situation by removing the problem, you should work with communities and individuals based on their strengths and improvement should come naturally.)*

- **Well Planned**

IP is not intended to replace natural connections, but instead, reflects a conscious attempt to create positive changes that are in addition to naturally occurring processes. It is based on structured programmes or projects, and the evidence is that the principles of good programme design are just as essential to successful IP as any other project.

- **Culturally Grounded**

The rich cultural diversity that exists across Europe means that there cannot be common programmes that will work in all settings. Whilst the principles behind the approach may be the same, the needs, context and attitudes of people may differ widely.

- **Strengthens Community Bonds and promotes active citizenship**

IP promotes the engagement of people from across the generations with each other and those around them. Its emphasis on positive connection, recognising and building on people's strengths, is a highly effective way of building stronger, better connected communities with increased social capital and citizens who are more engaged in local democracy and social concerns.

- **Challenges Ageism**

The young and old are the victims of ageist attitudes to varying degrees across Europe. IP provides a mechanism for the generations to meet each other, to work and explore together and from this rediscover the reality of who they really are and what they have to gain from being more involved with the other generations.

- **Cross-disciplinary**

In recent years increasing professionalisation has led to an increasing specialisation in training and development. IP provides a vehicle and an opportunity to broaden the experience of professionals to working in a more inclusive way and to become involved in cross-training with other groups to enable them to think much more broadly about how they undertake their work



Taken from "GUIDE OF IDEAS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT – Together yesterday, today and tomorrow" MATES, Teresa Almeida Pinto et al, 2009

## Types of Intergenerational Working:

Although intergenerational projects will take on different shapes and sizes, you will generally find that projects will fit into one or more of the following types of work.

- Skills Swapping/ sharing  
This is where one generation is working with the other to teach the other generation a new skill or information.  
E.g. Young people helping older people learn IT skills.
- Mentoring and/or Befriending



"Befriending is a process whereby two or more people come together with the aim of establishing and developing an informal and social relationship... Ideally the relationship is non-judgemental, mutual, purposeful and there is commitment over time."  
(Home Office)

"Mentoring is a one-to-one, non-judgemental relationship in which an individual voluntarily gives time to support and encourage another. This is typically developed at a time of transition in the mentee's life, and lasts for a significant and sustained period of time."  
(Active Community Unit, Home Office)

"support, assistance, advocacy or guidance given by one person to another in order to achieve an objective or several objectives over a period of time"  
(SOVA)

E.g. a young person visiting an isolated older person or an older person supporting a younger person through applying for jobs.



- Joint learning  
Generations come together to learn a new skill or subject that they are both interested in. E.g. a community allotment where all involved are learning about how to grow vegetables

- Improving health and wellbeing

Parties are working together to improve their health and general well-being such as hair and beauty students using older people as models.

- Improving the Community

Generations working together to improve the community in which they live. E.g. Generations working together to improve a local green space or play area.

- Continued learning/ social interaction

You may find that after a joint learning project, or perhaps another project altogether that projects arise out of unexpected outcomes and that the work continues regardless. A general social interest occurs and projects don't necessarily fit anywhere they just happen and people enjoy them. This is the ultimate goal no agenda, just generations working together naturally because they enjoy it and want to.

This list is by no means exhaustive and should not be seen as such. You may well have projects in mind that you do not feel meet any of these definitions, however that does not mean that it can not/ will not be an intergenerational project. If in doubt...ASK.

### **Key Success Factors:**

There is no exact science that states if you do X your project will be a success, however it is widely believed that there are certain things you can do to put you on the right path, however it is the responsibility of the individual Community Associations to ensure that their project is planned, experimented with and evaluated in order to learn from the experience and ensure future projects are therefore improved.

- Take a long-term approach

Do not think you can do a one off event and relationships within your community will be improved. Take a long-term approach to your project to enable relationships to be nurtured and grow and for participants to gain as much as possible from the experience.

- Train and Skill up your staff

Obviously this is not always possible immediately; however if you have staff working on a project, if you are taking a long-term approach, try to include your staff within this attitude. You may find that initially staff may be skilled in working with older or younger people, however the ultimate aim is to ensure they are skilled in working with older AND younger people.

- Pre-prepare your participants.

Again this is not always possible, but depending on your project, you should aim to give your participants as much information and preparation beforehand as possible.

- Focus your project on developing the relationship between the generations.

Plan how you can help to break down any real/ imagined barriers that there may be between the generations in your community.

- Activities are shaped by participants

Ensure you have input from your participants before during and following on from your project.

- Participants mutually benefit from activities.

- Plan

Plan, Plan and plan some more, this should include your monitoring and evaluation, how are you going to do this throughout the project?

- Partnership

Who can you work with? Who has the skills and resources that you don't have and what can you offer in return?



### **Benefits of Intergenerational Practice:**

The benefits of adopting an intergenerational approach are numerous and when planning projects it's important to bear this in mind.

Benefits include but are not limited to:

Helping to break down the barriers between the generations and groups within communities

Building an active community

Promoting citizenship

Promoting mutual understanding within communities

Regenerating neighbourhoods

Active participation in lifelong learning for all

Increase in the well-being of individuals and communities

Addressing inequality within communities

Reducing feelings of isolation

Increase in Social Capital

Reducing fear of crime and risky behaviour

Improved self esteem and confidence

Better cultural understanding

### **Aims and Objectives:**

**Aim:** To enable Community Associations to increase the participation of older and younger people within their communities through positive activities.

#### **Objectives:**

By the end of the project Community Associations will have:

- A better understanding of the issues affecting different generations
- Increased their confidence in interacting with people from other groups and the wider community.
- Identified an intergenerational project to take forward
- Completed a project plan for their intergenerational Project
- Advertised and engaged participants for their project
- Pre-prepared these participants for the project
- Undertaken any necessary training
- Provided an intergenerational Project
- Monitored and Evaluated their project

## Key Considerations:

### **CRB Checks and ISA Registration:**

With the new Vetting and Barring Scheme administered by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) being introduced soon, one of the key considerations of an intergenerational project is will your participants need to be registered with the ISA and will you need to do a CRB check?

Currently, if people are undertaking regulated or controlled activity with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, then they must be registered with the ISA.

Regulated Activity is defined as:

“Any activity which involves contact with children or vulnerable adults. This could be paid or voluntary work. Such activities include:

- Any activity of a **specified nature** which involves contact with children or vulnerable adults within certain periods, or overnight.
- Any activity allowing contact with children or vulnerable adults that is **in a specified place** frequently or intensively.
- **Fostering and childcare.**
- Any activity that involves people in **certain defined positions** of responsibility”

Activities of a specified nature include:

- Children’s sports coaches
- Childcare workers
- Private tutors
- Care workers
- People advising ‘ChildLine’ callers
- Youth workers
- Volunteers in the sector
- Teachers

Controlled Activity is defined as

“Ancillary support workers in **NHS and FE settings** (e.g. cleaners, caretakers, catering staff, receptionists)

Those working for **specified organisations** (e.g. Local Authority, Health Authority or their designated agents) with frequent access to sensitive records about children or vulnerable adults”

Frequent or intensive Activity is defined as once a month or 3 days within a 30day period. Overnight between 2 and 6am.

However, New guidance, published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in December 2009, updated it's exemptions to the scheme. This included:

- any individual who does certain work with children less frequently than once a week each month, or on fewer than four days in one month
- any individual who goes into different schools or similar settings to work with different groups of children – providing they don't meet any of these children more than once a week as above
- 16- to 18-year-olds who do regulated activity as part of their education
- visitors working in England and Wales for up to three months with groups of children they bring from elsewhere to e.g. international Scout camps or the Olympics
- parents hosting a child for exchange visits under 28 days, where the parents of the child accept responsibility for selection of the host parents.

In addition:

[1] An elderly person being kept company by a teenager from a local school. The elderly person is not doing work (paid or unpaid) with the teenager. The elderly person is in receipt of the volunteering by the teenager, so the Scheme doesn't apply to the elderly person.

[2] A teenager keeping an elderly person company for a couple of hours a week. The teenager is not caring for, or supervising, the elderly person, so the Scheme doesn't apply to the teenager.

Also, please do not forget that an ISA registration does not mean that an individual may not have other relevant criminal convictions that you will need to know about. For example, you may not want to be working with an individual who has a conviction for fraud if you are working on an intergenerational project that relates to finance, or you may not want to be working with individuals who have driving offences if you are working on an intergenerational project relating to motoring.

If you are unsure, talk to your main Hampshire County Council Assistant Community Officer Contact or project lead Officer.

### **Risk Assessment:**

Risk Assessment is a very important part of any project. However, people tend to run the other way as soon as they hear the term.

Risk Assessment is nothing to be afraid of. It is just a way for you to identify hazards, that is, anything that could cause harm or a problem (Namely, what could go wrong) and then think about the risk, that is, the possibility of the hazard causing harm or the problem occurring. (What's the likelihood it will go wrong)

A hazard can be classified as slight, serious or major and a risk can be classified as high medium or low. You may wish to assign numbers or use different terminology to define the level of hazard and risk. Make sure that this is clear and that everyone on the committee is in agreement and understands what these figures mean.

Below on page 18 is a template you may find will help with your Risk Assessments

## Case Study

### **Age Concern Portsmouth Intergenerational Project**

**Key words:** attitudes, community, crime, reminiscence, schools

#### **Aim of the Projects**

To encourage respect, communication and better understanding between the generations, thus preventing stereotyping and reduce the fear of crime.

#### **Why Did We Do It**

Older people wanted more contact with younger generations so they could share their problems and learn to trust and respect each other.

#### **What Did We Want To Achieve**

To break down the barriers between generations.

To build trust and respect.

To learn and share experiences together.

To make new friends.

To give additional support to some young people as older people have time to give in one to one situations with support and understanding, which is not always available in the home surroundings.

#### **Why Was It Intergenerational**

When older people were asked about their fear of crime they asked to be more involved with children and have more contact with them. By getting to know and understand them better it was hoped that this would challenge their fears and make them feel safer as they realised that many of their concerns were not based on fact.

#### **Project Description**

The social services prevention team in Portsmouth ran an intergenerational trial project for a year with a part time manager that was successful and needed further development. Its success raised the profile of intergenerational work in the city and also helped people to see the potential of intergenerational work to address a number of issues. As a result plans were drawn up to develop a better resourced, more coherent intergenerational programme for the city.

A bid was drafted to the single regeneration board to fund a project for 3 years, including appointing a full time intergenerational manager. The funding covered deprived parts of Portsmouth where there is a high proportion of single parent families. The bid was supported by the Social Services Prevention Team, Lifelong Learning & Age Concern Portsmouth.

The initial project was highly successful and funding was extended for a further 2 years finishing in March 2005.

### **What Worked and was achieved**

- We were involved with 13 schools in the area
- We recruited older people 50+ to go into schools encouraging & listening to children read
- We ran computer classes for 6 older people working alongside 6 school students supported by the IT lead and assistant staff members funded by the project
- We recruited 3 Asian 'Aunties' who taught sewing to smaller children in primary schools
- With home economy students (loaned from Social Services) and with part-time sessional workers we promoted healthy eating in schools (promoting 5 fruit a day & making healthy snacks) Recipes were given, followed by a food promotion quiz, which everyone enjoyed.
- The project was very successful and well respected within the City.
- Partnership working with agencies i.e. community libraries, local museums DDay museum, historic dockyards and the Mary Rose warship. This involved learning and sharing together about the warship using books, internet, photographs and artefacts to stimulate intergenerational learning. Older and younger people worked together to produce a PowerPoint presentation. We were awarded £400 from RAISE ([www.renewal.net](http://www.renewal.net)) and the project was advertised on their website.
- As part of celebrating Adult Learners Week in 2003 organised by HAIRNET, NIACE and City & Guilds, one of our older people was nominated as 'Silver Surfer of the year 2003' as a result of learning IT through our computer classes.

### **What Didn't Work**

- Communication with schools was very difficult. The lack of response from teachers i.e. letters, fax's & emails made communication very time consuming.
- Collecting supporting evidence for returns for the Single Regeneration Budget fund was a nightmare and very stressful.
- Older people have health and family problems and although committed to the project some were only able to work in schools for a short period as a consequence.
- Getting numbers and statistics from volunteers was time consuming and difficult.
- At times we were let down by schools planning events (cancelled due to lack of communication)
- Computer clubs working with under 12's (keen just to play games/internet) but we were more successful with secondary schools.

### **What Has Changed As a Result Of Project**

- Many of the volunteers are still in contact with the children they worked with whilst at school by email, Christmas cards, following their careers.
- Local older people if placed in a nearby school know the local children. This has improved respect and understanding.
- Children were proud to introduce volunteers to their parent / guardian.
- More community involvement e.g. children growing vegetables and fruit on allotments and bringing to older members in day care.

- Age Concern elderly invited to Christmas concerts, harvest festivals & shows etc.
- To encourage reminiscence, students at secondary school prepared war time teas and served them at different venues, allowing us to collect over 100 wartime stories.
- Students designing t-shirts for staff doing 'The Great South Run'.
- Although funding finished in March 2005 we still keep our intergenerational contacts and the project has left a real imprint in the city.
- We were awarded £18,100 from Home Front Recall (one of biggest bids in South East) in 2005 to develop our reminiscence work project, Hang Out Your Stories, and funded an intergenerational trip to the Imperial War Museum, London with Priory School. We met with 50 year 9 history students who asked about their wartime experiences, regarding their families. This was a very moving experience, which the school hopes to repeat.
- We collected 100 wartime stories are presently being published for local libraries, schools & museums for lifelong family learning.
- Older volunteers have made 4 story sacks (1 for visually impaired). These sacks contain a wartime story about what it was like to be a child in Portsmouth during WW2 & are accompanied by puppets/dolls, back drops & artefacts to make stories come 'alive'.
- We organised a three day professional storyteller interactive event inviting parents, grandparents and great grandparent's to listen to our stories. This was highly successful and loved by the schools.
- Our 4 completed story sacks have been presented to two community libraries and two to D-Day Museum/City Museum for future family learning.
- Our project 'Hang out Your Stories' was nominated for National Lottery award out of 200,000 projects and we made it to the top 4 projects in South East England.
- We were presented with a 'Blue Plaque' by one of the Directors from the National Lottery in January 2006 for running a highly successful community project.
- Many volunteers working with us have gone on to full-time employment.
- A number of our volunteers have been made school governors.

### **How Do You Know**

- The success of the project is supported by the press accepting and publishing our articles.
- Involvement by Meridian TV, BBC, and Channel 4.
- Schools asking to be involved in the project
- Older people being recognised and appreciated in schools and the community as worthwhile individuals.
- Being approached by other organisations for partnerships (i.e. libraries, museums, local press etc).
- Being involved/working alongside other organisations (i.e. family learning & other charities).

### **What Did You Learn**

- If you have a committed head teacher for a project they will support you and the project will be successful, if not, it will probably not get off the ground.
- Give yourself a set time for a response and let the school know that if they don't respond within this time you will go elsewhere.
- Sharing should be two way.
- How can you help the school?
- Take photographs & learn how to do press releases.
- When doing bids build in a training budget and prepare for unseen circumstances i.e. maternity leave.
- Don't be frightened to broadcast your success & invite local dignitaries.
- Protect your volunteers if media are interested in their story, they can be overpowering.
- Use your contacts.
- Never underestimate the latent skills you possess.
- Network, network, network.

### **What Would You Do Differently**

- Know your own capacity and when to turn opportunities down to avoid stress on you and your volunteers.
- If you can, build administration support into your budget bid. Otherwise train a volunteer as administration is very time consuming.
- Gain as secure funding as possible as it can be very difficult to lose skilled and trained colleagues because of uncertainty.

### **Resources**

A CD/film of our work was produced and further information is available on the website: [www.ageconcernportsmouth.org.uk](http://www.ageconcernportsmouth.org.uk)

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Taken from Intergenerational Programmes, An Introduction and Examples of Practice. Editor Alan Hatton-Yeo. © Beth Johnson Foundation – March 2006

What are the hazards/ potential problems?	Who might be harmed and how?	What is the likelihood of this occurring?	What measures are already in place?	What further action is necessary?	Action by Who?	Action by When?	Action Completed

### A Step By Step Approach

Plan your project one step at a time. By following this step by step guide, it will help you to ensure that you have covered all bases and will help you stay on track. No matter what, keep it simple and realistic, but most importantly enjoy yourself.

<u>Timescale</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Resources</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
	Establish a Delivery team/ Sub group	Bring together people who will be responsible for the project and will take the Project Forward, this could be staff, trustees or other volunteers.	Time	
	Establish the need for an intergenerational project	Consult with your Community (This may have already been done) – if not, talk to people, use questionnaires, use games etc to find out what people want and establish the need for your project. You may also want to think about how does this fit in with the wider needs of the community, such as local and national government initiatives. E.g. Your Local Area Agreement Priorities. This could help to secure additional funding.	Questionnaires, Paper Pens Suggestion Box Time Volunteers	

	Identify Your Project	Your project should be based on the findings of your consultation. The group that has been established to take the project forward should meet and brainstorm ideas that they feel would fit the bill. Remember to take these ideas to your committee for a final decision.	Volunteers Time	
	Research your Project	Once you have decided on your project idea, you will need to do some research. Is anything similar happening in your area, has this been done before in other areas and if so could they help. What is this project realistically going to involve?		
	Set Aims and Objective	After deciding on what you would like to do and researching if anything similar is happening, you will need to set your overall aims and objectives for the project. What do you want to achieve with the project? Ensure your objectives are SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound)		

	Set your Budget	How much is your project going to cost? What can you afford for it to cost? You should actually be including budget figures for the project within your project plan to help you stay on track.	Funding	
	Plan your Project	Complete a project plan for your project. Remember to think about days, times, locations, insurance implications, is any training required, are CRB checks required? How will you monitor the project in line with your aims and objectives, are you going to need additional funding, if so where will you be applying? If you have additional funding how will you ensure you are meeting your funder requirements, will there be security issues? Again, this list is not exhaustive and you will need to prepare yourselves for any eventuality.	Time Funding	
	Complete any Action points	It's no good completing a project plan if you don't use it. Make sure you follow it through and complete any necessary action points identified.		

	Risk Assessment	Complete a risk assessment for your project. See your main contact if further information, templates or training is required.		
	Pre-prepare your participants	Ensure that if this is a project that people have signed up for (Not open access) that they have received all the necessary information before the event and are well prepared.		
	Create a checklist for the day	Create a checklist for everything that needs doing on the days of your project and ensure everyone is aware of who is responsible for what aspect. Remember this will include things like photo consents if you are going to be taking photos, refreshments if they are being provided and general meeting and greeting.		
	Run Your project	Enjoy Yourself.		

## **Reference Documents and Additional Resources**

### **Reference Documents:**

“GUIDE OF IDEAS FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT – Together yesterday, today and tomorrow” MATES, Teresa Almeida Pinto et al, 2009

Generations Together – Departments for children, schools and families, work and pensions, health, communities and local government and the office of the third sector, 2009

Full of life – Department for Work and Pensions 2008

### **Additional Resources:**

Beth Johnson Foundation – Centre for Intergenerational Practice

[www.centreforip.org.uk](http://www.centreforip.org.uk)

A really useful website with lots of additional resources, case studies, best practice advice etc from the forerunners of intergenerational practice.

Age Concern England

[www.ageconcern.org.uk/intergenerational](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/intergenerational)

Lots of useful tools and publications on age concerns intergenerational approach.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

[www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)

Useful Further reading and research on Intergenerational approaches and general community development.

Toolkit designed and information sourced by Gillian Blackmore, Assistant Community Officer, Hampshire County Council.