

engAGED

The National Resource Center
for Engaging Older Adults



Connecting You to Community Services

generations
United

Because we're stronger together®

Connecting Generations

Finding Intergenerational Activities Within Your Community



Intergenerational connections bring people of different generations together—typically children or youth and older adults, but these connections can bring adults of all ages together with older adults, too. Whatever the mix of ages, there is much to be gained by all who take part in intergenerational activities. And, to do so, you don't need to look too far. Opportunities abound in your community!

Intergenerational Activities Are a Win-Win!

Intergenerational connections are good for everyone who engages in them and they are good for the community, too! Connecting with people of different generations helps foster respect and understanding across generations. And combining the experiences, wisdom and perspectives of people of all ages can improve lives and strengthen communities. In fact, older adults who participate in intergenerational activities often describe feeling increased life satisfaction, decreased social isolation, a stronger sense of community and improved quality of life. For younger people, engaging in intergenerational activities can lead to an improved sense of self, purpose and self-confidence.¹

Intergenerational activities result in personal growth opportunities. Participating in intergenerational activities can give older adults new ways to build relationships, stay engaged in the community and share their talents, wisdom and life experiences with others. These interactions can help shape younger adults' knowledge and understanding of the world—and yours.

Finding Intergenerational Engagement Opportunities Near You

Local organizations such as Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs can help you find intergenerational engagement opportunities in communities across the country. Contact the Eldercare Locator, a federally funded public service for older adults, caregivers and others, to get connected to AAAs, tribal aging programs or other organizations that offer intergenerational programs in your community. Reach the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm ET or online at eldercare.acl.gov.



¹ Generations United, Making the Case for Intergenerational Programs, <https://www.gu.org/resources/making-the-case-for-intergenerational-programs>.

Types of Intergenerational Engagement Activities

If you're interested in building connections with people of other ages, read on to learn about the most popular types of intergenerational activities and how you can find them in your community!

Lend a Helping Hand

Interested in volunteering? Volunteering can help you develop intergenerational connections and share your skills and knowledge with children, teenagers and young adults in your community. This may include participating in AmeriCorps Seniors programs like the Foster Grandparent Program, providing tutoring or mentoring at schools, volunteering at a local children's hospital or participating in civic engagement opportunities such as helping younger adults register to vote.

ACTION STEP: Contact local schools and childcare centers to learn about any available volunteer opportunities.

Learn New Skills and Share What You Know

On a quest to learn new things or share your knowledge? Participating in intergenerational lifelong learning opportunities can offer you a chance to learn new skills and share your knowledge with other generations. This may include taking a technology training class taught by younger adults, participating in local community service projects, sharing your experiences through oral history, teaching young people how to cook or passing along your favorite family recipes.

ACTION STEP: Contact local mentoring/youth service organizations about volunteer opportunities.

Express Your Creative Side

Do you want to explore your artistic talents? Engaging in arts and other creative activities alongside children and young adults helps create meaningful connections. Because they welcome people of all ages, many community groups, such as choirs, orchestras or theatre groups, have participants from many generations. You can also explore your creative side by joining a dance class or participating in local arts and crafts classes such as painting, drawing, knitting, quilting, jewelry making or pottery.

ACTION STEP: Contact your local community center for arts activities that are open to all ages.

Build Healthy Habits

Food always brings people together! Connecting with younger generations through food is another way to form mutually beneficial relationships and connections. Activities may include volunteering during lunchtime at a local school, joining cultural cooking classes or helping maintain a community garden. You can also join group fitness activities such as intergenerational walking groups, mindfulness sessions or dance groups to connect with people from different generations.

ACTION STEP: Share your skills such as cooking, art and gardening with children at youth clubs or at a community center.

Getting Started

There are a number of places and spaces in your community that may offer opportunities to connect with others across generations.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)

provide a range of options that allow older adults to age in place in their homes and communities. AAAs may offer Grandparents Raising Grandchildren programs, technology-training programs, friendly visiting and other intergenerational programs and activities. Contact the Eldercare Locator at eldercare.acl.gov or (800) 677-1116 to find your local AAA.

YMCAs provide programs for all generations that foster a healthy spirit, mind and body. YMCAs may offer health and wellness classes or field trips and events to engage with others. Visit www.ymca.org/find-your-y to find your local YMCA.

Park and recreation agencies provide services and recreation opportunities for older adults in nearly every town, city and county across the United States. Many park and recreation agencies offer intergenerational activities such as arts and crafts or cooking classes. If you need help finding a park and recreation center near you, contact your county or municipal government.

Educational spaces including elementary, middle and high schools, community colleges, colleges, universities, trade schools and childcare centers may offer tutoring, mentoring or literacy programs that can help you develop intergenerational connections with younger adults. Use the National Center for Education Statistics' search for public schools' tool (nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch) or college navigator tool (nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator) to find educational spaces near you.

Youth organizations such as Scouts, 4-H and Boys & Girls Clubs may provide opportunities for you to mentor or engage with younger people. You can find local youth organizations through the following tools:

- BSA troops: www.scouting.org/about/local-council-locator
- Girl Scout troops: mygs.girlscouts.org
- 4-H: www.4-h.org/find
- Boys & Girls Clubs: www.bgca.org/get-involved/find-a-club

Grandfamily and Kinship Caregivers

Are you an older adult raising your grandchildren or children whose parents are unable to do so? Then you are considered a kinship/grandfamily caregiver! There are many programs and activities available specifically for grandfamily and kinship caregivers including events, education, support groups and respite services. The Eldercare Locator can connect you to local programs, which is another way to engage with others.

Libraries provide a space in the community for people of all ages. Libraries deliver an array of programming for multiple age groups including book clubs, games, storytelling, courses and special events. Visit www.usa.gov/libraries to locate your local library.

Faith communities are another avenue that help older adults build intergenerational connections. By volunteering during religious education classes or other religious activities, you can share your knowledge and wisdom with children and youth. Reach out to your local places of worship for more information.



Resources

Finding Resources and Support

Interested in connecting to intergenerational engagement activities in your community? Get started by contacting the **Eldercare Locator**! The Eldercare Locator can help you find your AAA and other community organizations that may offer intergenerational activities to help you connect with people of all ages. Visit the Eldercare Locator website eldercare.acl.gov or call/text (800) 677-1116.

The **Generations United Intergenerational Program Database** lists information on more than 800 intergenerational programs throughout the country. Visit www.gu.org/ig-program-database and search by your state to find local programs near you.

Interested in volunteer opportunities? Consider becoming an **AmeriCorps Seniors** volunteer and participating in the Foster Grandparent Program, RSVP or Senior Companion Program. Service opportunities may include tutoring, mentoring or providing social-emotional support to children in your community. Learn more at americorps.gov/serve/ameri-corps-seniors. Another way to find volunteer opportunities is by visiting **Volunteer Match** at volunteermatch.org where you will find a range of local volunteer opportunities.

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Eldercare Locator **(800) 677-1116 (Monday–Friday, 8:00 am–9:00 pm ET)** eldercare.acl.gov

Launched in 1992, the Eldercare Locator is the only national information and referral resource to provide support to consumers across the spectrum of issues affecting older adults. The Locator is funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is administered by USAging.



Connecting You to Community Services

USAging usaging.org

USAging is the national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Our members help older adults and people with disabilities throughout the United States live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities.

USAging

Leaders in Aging Well at Home

With Contributions From

Generations United www.gu.org

Generations United is a nonprofit that strengthens practices and policies to benefit all generations. For more than three decades, we have been the catalyst for policies and practices stimulating cooperation and collaboration among generations, evoking the vibrancy, energy and sheer productivity that result when people of all ages come together.

**generations
united**

Because we're stronger together*

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