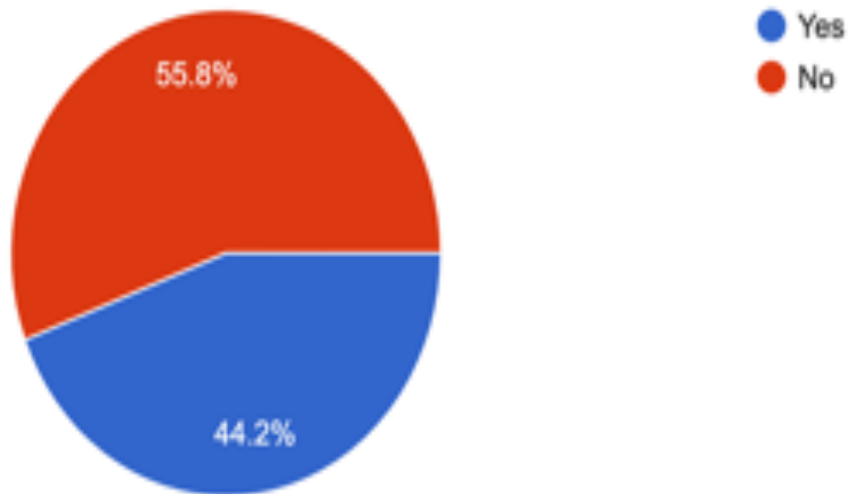# Intergenerational Programming: A transformative approach to building vibrant, cohesive communities

Who is on the call?

Within the past 3 years, have you implemented any intergenerational programs or activities?
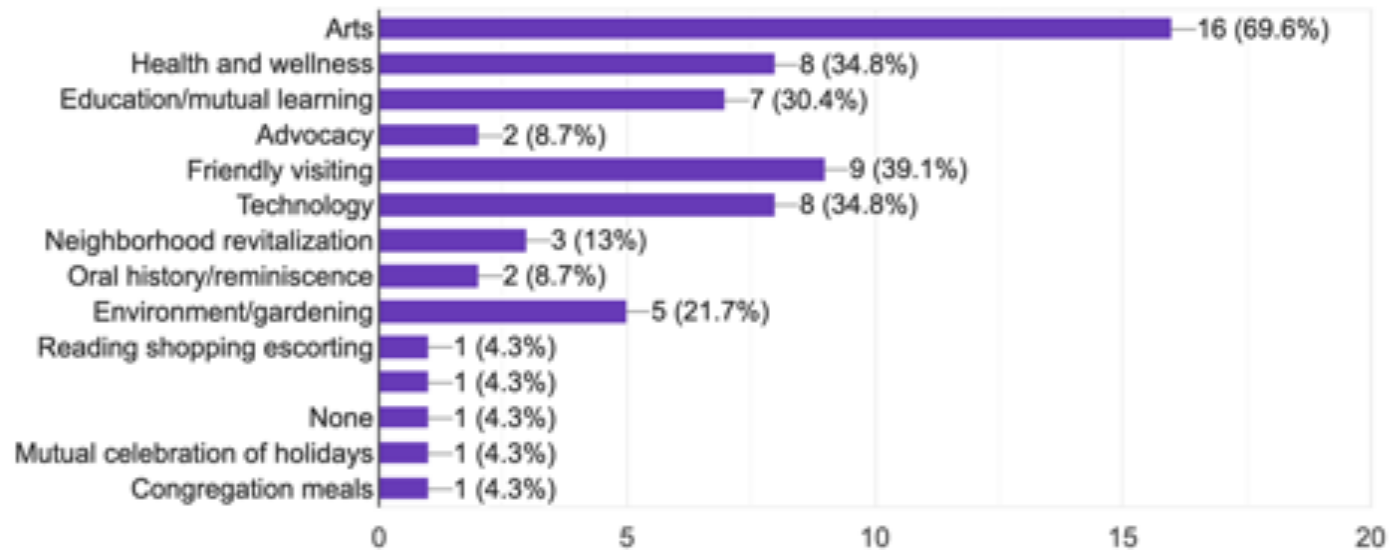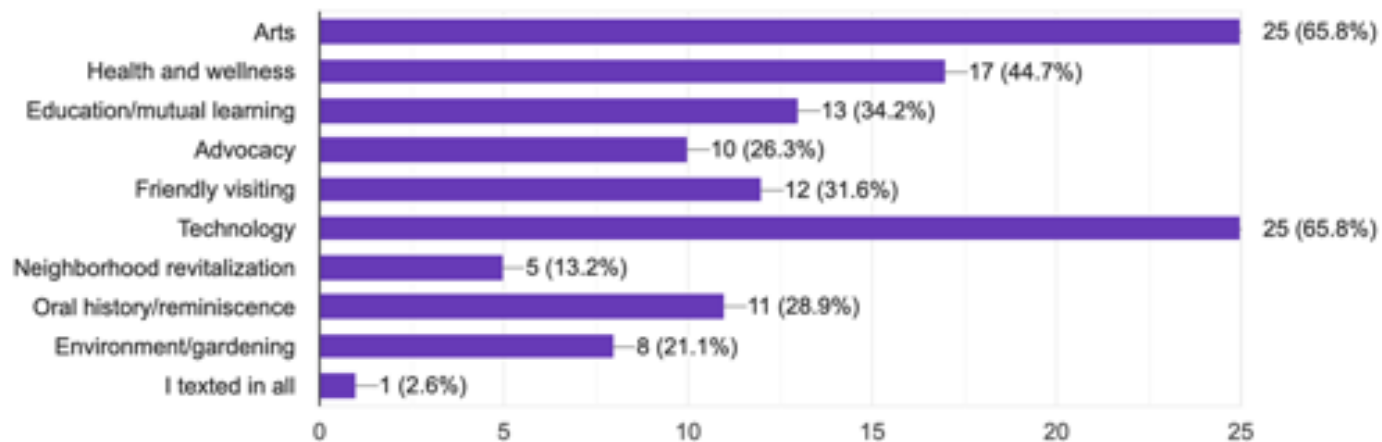
43 responses

- Yes
- No

55.8%

44.2%

Program focus

2. What has been the focus of your intergenerational programming? (Check all that apply)

23 responses

Arts	16 (69.6%)
Health and wellness	8 (34.8%)
Education/mutual learning	7 (30.4%)
Advocacy	2 (8.7%)
Friendly visiting	9 (39.1%)
Technology	8 (34.8%)
Neighborhood revitalization	3 (13%)
Oral history/reminiscence	2 (8.7%)
Environment/gardening	5 (21.7%)
Reading shopping escorting	1 (4.3%)
	1 (4.3%)
None	1 (4.3%)
Mutual celebration of holidays	1 (4.3%)
Congregation meals	1 (4.3%)

5. What kind of programming would you be interested in developing?

38 responses

Challenges

3. What challenges have you faced?

21 responses

Challenge	Count (Percentage)
Engaging older adults	11 (52.4%)
Engaging children/youth	4 (19%)
	3 (14.3%)
Lack of funding	7 (33.3%)
Liability/safety/health concerns	9 (42.9%)
Lack of staff time	7 (33.3%)
lack of interest or participation from…	1 (4.8%)
	1 (4.8%)
Conflicting schedules of availability	1 (4.8%)
	1 (4.8%)

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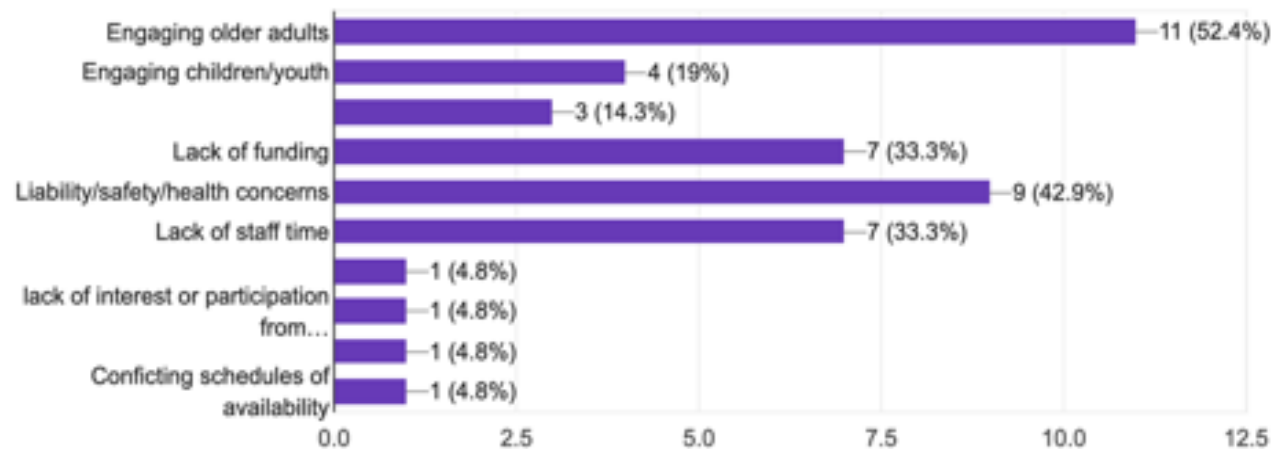
4. What do you perceive as the greatest barriers to starting an intergenerational program?

34 responses

Barrier	Responses
Engaging older adults	18 (52.9%)
Engaging children/youth	13 (38.2%)
Forming partnerships with youth organiz…	9 (26.5%)
Lack of funding	14 (41.2%)
Liability/safety/health concerns	12 (35.3%)
Lack of staff time	14 (41.2%)
Lack of administrative support	5 (14.7%)
Having the staff and volunteers to coor…	1 (2.9%)
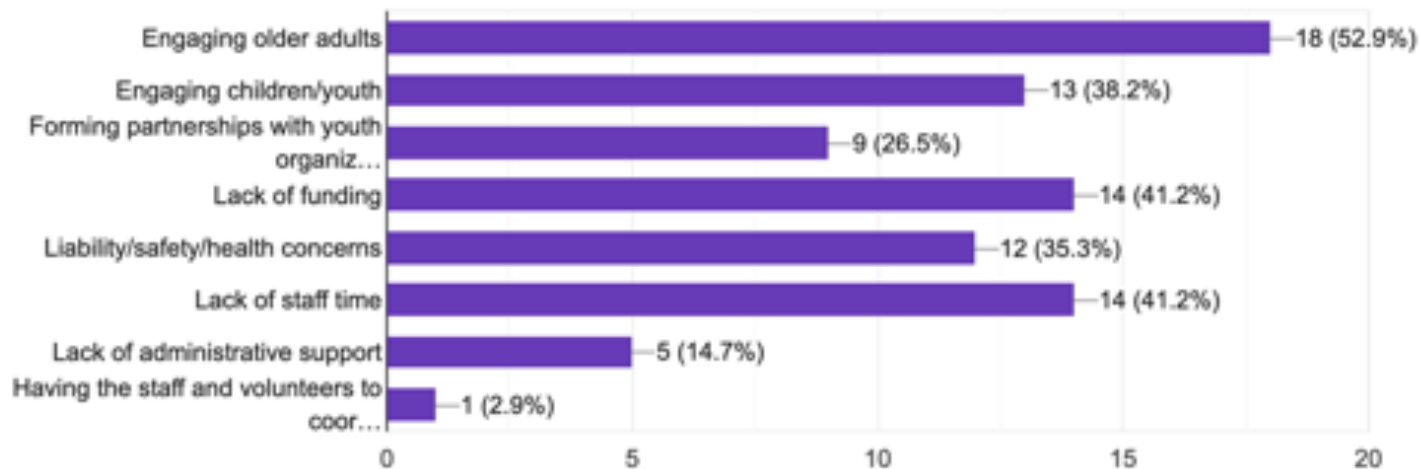
Video

What makes this program effective?

What benefits do you see for older adults and young people?

Why Connect Generations?

Getting Started

▶ Organizational Assessment

▶ Readiness survey

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Organizational Assessment

_____ We have at least one ongoing partnership with an educational institution or organization serving youth.

_____ Top administrators at our partner agencies are supportive of intergenerational programming and understand their roles and responsibilities.

_____ We meet regularly with a designated staff person at our partner agencies to plan meaningful short- and long-term activities and programs.

_____ We engage our partner organizations in training activities that raise awareness about the needs of youth and older adults and share effective strategies for fostering cross-age interaction.

_____ We developed materials to help us market our programs to potential partners.

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Potential partners

- ► Elementary and secondary schools
- ► Colleges and universities
- ► Recreation Centers/Y's
- ► Youth organizations
- ► Teen parenting programs
- ► Programs for" out of school" youth

- ► Job training programs
- ► Art and music schools
- ► Residential homes for children
- ► 4-H
- ► Faith-based youth groups
- ► Home schooling associations
- ► Libraries
- ► Special education

Building Partnerships

How do you select a partner?

- ▶ Interest and commitment
- ▶ Organizational capacity
- ▶ Staff flexibility
- ▶ Common vision
- ▶ Potential areas of conflict

Strategies for Building Effective Partnerships

▶ Garner support from top administrators.

▶ Designate a person who can initiate and maintain partnerships.

▶ Identify how partner organizations can benefit from collaborating with you.

▶ Engage partners in short and long-term planning.

▶ Plan meaningful programs and activities.

Challenges

► **What successes and challenges have you experienced in building partnerships with organizations that serve children and youth?**

► **(Type in chat)**

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Planning a Program

KEY ELEMENTS

Outcomes

Questions to Ask as You Plan Programs and Activities

What impact do you want to have on your older residents?

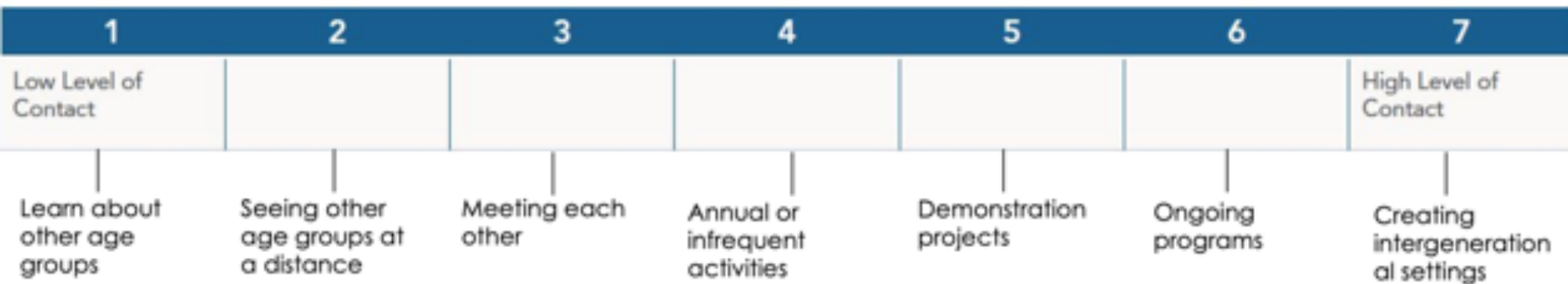What impact do you want to have on children and young people?

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Outcomes for older adults

► Life satisfaction and well-being.

► Self-esteem.

► Loneliness.

► Generativity.

► Sense of connectedness to others and/or the community.

► Attitudes toward youth.

► Empathy.

► Physical health, including enhanced energy, stamina, or strength.

Outcomes for youth

► Sense of social responsibility.

► School behavior.

► Attitudes toward older people.

► Self-esteem.

► Life skills, including problem-solving, decision-making, and communication.

► Academic achievement.

► Reading skills.

Depth of Engagement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Low Level of Contact						High Level of Contact
Learn about other age groups	Seeing other age groups at a distance	Meeting each other	Annual or infrequent activities	Demonstration projects	Ongoing programs	Creating intergeneration al settings

Planning a Program

Selecting a Program or Activity

When determining a focus for your programming, consider the following:

- ▶ Age/ability/culturally appropriate
- ▶ Related to the mission of partners
- ▶ Sufficient staff and financial resources
- ▶ When to offer the activity
- ▶ Space
- ▶ Transportation

Cultural Sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity considerations, regardless of program focus

▶ Ways older adults and youth in certain cultures are expected to interact

▶ How verbal and non-verbal communication patterns differ across cultures

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Promising practices

- Build upon the interests and strengths of participants
- Co-plan programs with staff from partner agencies
- Clarify objectives of each activity
- Engage participants in planning and coordinating activities
- Focus on *fostering intergenerational relationships and building empathy*
- Build in time for reflection

Program ideas

Technology

Program ideas

Health and Wellness

Program ideas

Arts

Program ideas

Tutoring and Mentoring

Oral Histories

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Program ideas

Entrepreneurship   Language and culture

Endless Possibilities

- ▶ Arts (visual, theater, music)
- ▶ Health and wellness (e.g. food access, physical activity, health literacy)
- ▶ Language and literacy
- ▶ Environment/Gardening
- ▶ Academic achievement/tutoring
- ▶ Job readiness/entrepreneurship
- ▶ Mentoring/youth development

- ▶ Friendly visiting
- ▶ Technology
- ▶ Early childhood development
- ▶ Neighborhood revitalization/safety/ advocacy
- ▶ Transmission of cultural traditions/ knowledge
- ▶ Oral history/reminiscence interviewing
- ▶ Support for vulnerable and underserved populations

Virtual programming

Recording books
Virtual tutoring/mentoring
Pen Pals
IG conversations
Language
Oral history/storytelling
Friendly phone or zoom visits
Art projects

Questions and 5 minute break

Engaging older adults

Promising practices:

- Assess the skills, experiences, and interests of older adults to help guide your programming.

- Use older adults as intergenerational ambassadors and leaders.

- Develop a continuum of "intergenerational opportunities" that allows older adults to engage with different age groups, in different ways, and for varying lengths of time.

- Focus on how older people can benefit from and contribute to intergenerational activities, rather than just the activity itself.

- Provide orientation, training, and ongoing support to all participants.

Preparing older adults

► Draw on the experiences of older adults.

► Be sensitive to the literacy levels and cultural differences of participants.

► Stress the importance of confidentiality.

► Encourage tolerance and respect regarding difference in values.

► Highlight the strengths of young people and what they can offer residents.

► Model good listening skills.

► Provide opportunities for feedback.

► HAVE FUN!

Preparing youth

► Emphasize the diversity of the older adult population and explore age-related stereotypes..

► Help youth appreciate both the positive and negative aspects of aging.

► Tell students about the backgrounds of the older adults in the program.

► Review effective techniques for communicating with older adults.

► Provide time for youth to express concerns about interacting with older people and be prepared to address issues of loss and grief.

Measuring Your Impact

Process evaluation:

What happens during the development and implementation of a program?

Outcome evaluation:

What impact did the program have on participants?

Resources

▶ **Generations United:**

www.gu.org/resources

➤ **Programming Toolkit**

https://www.gu.org/resources/connecting-generations-in-senior-housing-a-program-implementation-toolkit/

➤ **Evaluation toolkit**

https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2019/10/Intergenerational-Evaluation-Toolkit.pdf