

Tried and True: A Guide to Successful Intergenerational Activities at Shared Site Programs

Intergenerational Activity Objectives

Several objectives and benefits associated with intergenerational activities at shared sites involving frail elders and preschoolers are described below. These objectives are divided into four main categories: social, psychological/emotional, physical, and intellectual/cognitive.

Social

Interact/Communicate (verbal/non-verbal)	Participant (older adult or child) communicates with another participant (verbal, eye contact, overt body language such as hugging, hand holding, stroking).
Work as a team/cooperate	Participant works alongside an intergenerational participant to engage in the task, share materials in the opportunity; give aid or receive aid to/from another participant; demonstrate concern for another individual by asking if they need help or act in a manner to demonstrate concern such as push another participant closer to table, clean them off, move materials closer to them lift them up, etc.; compliment another individual or receives compliment as overheard by facilitator or observers.

Psychological/Emotional

Be generative/Nurturing/Helping/Caring	Participant demonstrates concern for intergenerational partner, either self-motivated or with prompting by a facilitator, by taking time to carefully meet the other's needs. Participant cares for the intergenerational partner's feelings, physical well-being, or takes extra care to include the other person. Overt demonstration of empathy and desire to serve and include.
Have personal choice/Make Decisions	Participant makes a choice about his/her own involvement in the activity when asked... "Do you want this one or that one?" . . . whether to join, what task desired to fulfill, whether to sit or stand, where to sit or stand, what materials to use, whether to stay longer or leave early, which area to work at; exhibits autonomy.
Reminiscence/Reflect	Participant engages in storytelling about his/her past, answers questions about his/her past, brings up object/event from past; incorporates memories associated with personal life history and life experience.
Take initiative	Participant engages in activity willfully and without prompting; demonstrates a desire to participate through overt action or verbal request, takes it upon him/her self to engage in a certain task or work with a certain individual without prompting.

This chart is from [Tried and True: A Guide to Successful Intergenerational Activities at Shared Site Programs](#) from Generations United and the Neighbors Growing Together program at Virginia Tech.

Psychological/Emotional (continued)

Be creative	Participant is able to individualize his/her own intergenerational opportunity by making individual or partnered decisions about what, where, and how an opportunity is implemented or completed; participant takes their own approach to the outcome of the project by making it unique from others.
Enhance self-esteem/pride in accomplishment	Participant demonstrates considerable pride in his/her work/finished product/relationship with the intergenerational partner by showing it to others, demonstrating concern about fate of finished product, verbally stating to another that finished product looks good, expressing desire to take it home to give as a gift or show off to others; makes comment (s) about making a meaningful contribution to the life of another ("That older adult likes me", or "I made him/her feel good", or "It is our role to act as teachers/mentors to these children").

Physical

Exercise motor skills	Gross motor -Use of shoulder, entire arm movements (scooping, lifting, carrying), grip with entire hand, use of leg muscles (walking, standing for extensive periods, dancing, exercising, ring toss, bowling) Fine motor/dexterity-Use of finger movement (pinching, sowing seeds, deadheading flowers, tearing paper, sewing, beading, etc.)
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Intellectual/Cognitive

Stay on task/Complete an activity	Ability to stay engaged in activity at hand in order to engage meaningfully in task; able to forget other concerns (going home or outside play time) to enjoy the moment and time with intergenerational neighbors.
Learn new terms/skills	Ability to learn the name of a participant/material/facilitator, learn a new skill; demonstrate learning by retaining information over a period of time or from session to session. Participant may demonstrate new learning by using name or showing the skill at the beginning of the session and utilizing that name/skill by the end of the session or even the following week.

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