

# Penn State **EXTENSION**

AGRICULTURE | COMMUNITY & FAMILY | ENVIRONMENT

## Ideas for Intergenerational Living

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### From the Editor

The first article in this issue highlights some good news for Pennsylvania. We are the latest site for the growing Seniors4Kids program. This initiative of Generations United, and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, enlists older adult *Captains4Kids* to serve as advocates for high quality pre-K education. The next article, written by Ryan Wilcox, an undergraduate student at UC-Berkeley, addresses one of the largest barriers to intergenerational engagement, i.e., the *time poverty* that is seeping into our families and communities. Also, included in this newsletter are two "Golden Opportunity—Today's Grandparents" articles and various announcements of new resources and opportunities in the intergenerational field of practice.

Cheers,  
Matt

Matt Kaplan, Associate Professor  
Intergenerational Programs and Aging  
Department of Agricultural and  
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Intergenerational Bonds

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Group Photo: Reports, program descriptions, and other images from the Germany IG Study Tour are now online. Go to: <http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu/GERMANY/index.html>

## Seniors4Kids Expands Into Pennsylvania

By Lindsay Moore, Communications and Membership Manager and Anne Tria Wise, Intergenerational Engagement Manager, Generations United

Generations United's Seniors4Kids

([www.seniors4kids.org](http://www.seniors4kids.org))

is a civic engagement initiative that highlights the role older adults play in support of issues that directly benefit children and youth. Currently, we help adults age 50+ to create state-wide networks of volunteers that work to increase access to, and improve the quality of, pre-kindergarten. Joining with the Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, we are thrilled to expand into Pennsylvania and hope that you will consider joining us as a Captain4Kids or spreading the word about our efforts to your friends and colleagues. The hours and commitment are flexible -- it only takes a little of your time!



From the Seniors4Kids initiative in New York (Photo by Paul Arfin)

There are many ways that you can get involved:

- Join us as a Captain4Kids
- Write letters to the editor or opinion editorials
- Communicate with state policymakers
- Participate in advisory meetings
- Attend events
- Endorse our initiative through your organization
- Add our link to your Web site
- Sign up for our monthly eNewsletter

Captains4Kid Donna Bailey said it best, "I am never going to have a street or a building named after me, but by trying to improve the education of the children in this state, this can be a lasting legacy for me and all of us." For more information about Seniors4Kids or to sign up as a Captain4Kids, please contact Anne Wise at (202) 289-3979 or [awise@gu.org](mailto:awise@gu.org).

(The following article was posted on the "Aging-Friendly Communities Resource Network" newsletter in October, 2008 and is reproduced here with the permission of the author. For more information about how to join the Network or become a member of the "Creating Aging Friendly Communities CoP" (Community of Practice), which offers online technical assistance for communities working to become more aging-friendly, go to: <http://www.icohere.com/agingfriendly>. The author, Ryan Wilcox, can be reached at: [ryphonez@berkeley.edu](mailto:ryphonez@berkeley.edu).)

## Time Poverty and Its Inhibiting Effect for Reaching Across Generations

By Ryan Wilcox, Undergraduate Intern  
Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services  
School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley

While searching for inspiration for the "Aging-Friendly Communities Resource Network" newsletter, I stumbled upon an online article entitled, "Understanding the Elderly" by therapist Beverly Block. In the article, Dr. Block describes a small group that she attended in which several teenagers and convalescent home residents came together to discuss common concerns and compose a mutual "want list." Here is one of the goals they came up with:

"We want attention from those that we love and respect. There is nothing more painful than being ignored. Small children often seek negative attention rather than be ignored. Sometimes we do the same thing."

As a 21 year-old who recently lost his grandmother, this statement resonated with me, as did others stressing the need for "recognition of our contributions and for our yet untapped potential," "someone to listen (to us)," and "real friends." As I read on, I realized that all of these goals have to do with time. The care needed to create more aging-friendly communities (and teenager-friendly communities, for that matter) requires that all of us give more of our time, but do we have any time to spare?

"Time poverty," a term coined by Berkeley professor Americ Azevedo, is a very real problem facing all of us in the 21st century. We work long hours and pile activities to the tipping point. What's more, we can't seem to get away from the world of compounding obligations to which we are constantly connected by technology.

What are the implications of time poverty for our rapidly aging population? Do caregivers and community members even have enough time and energy to create aging-friendly communities? How can we make more time in our busy schedules to connect with the elderly? Finally, how can we help older adults transition from the time-crunched working world to retirement?

You can view Dr. Beverly Block's article at <http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/counselingarchive-understanding-the-elderly.asp>, and you can read and listen to more about Americ Azevedo's ideas on time and time poverty at <http://philosopher-at-large.blogspot.com/search/label/time>.

## The Golden Opportunity Today's Grandparents

Andrea Bressler, M.S., CFCS  
Extension Educator, Clearfield County

### Americans Living Longer, Enjoying Greater Health and Prosperity

*Older Americans 2008: Key Indicators of Well-Being* provides an updated listing of indicators, gathered from the most reliable official statistics about the well-being of Americans age 65 and older.

**Population:** The demographics of aging in the United States continue to change dramatically, as the baby boomers increase in the numbers of older people. In 2006, an estimated 37 million people in the U. S., 12% of the population, were 65 and older. Projections forecast that by 2030, approximately 71.5 million people will be 65 and older, nearly 20% of total U. S. population. In 2007, 76% of older adults were high school graduates, up from 24% in 1965.

**Economics:** Older people enjoy a greater increase in prosperity than any previous generation, with an increase in higher incomes and a decrease in the percentage of older people with low incomes and in poverty. Median net worth for households headed by whites age 65 and older was six times that of older black households. Older people, especially women, continued to work past age 55.

**Health Status:** American's longevity continues to increase, although life expectancy at age 65 in the U. S. is lower than that of other industrialized countries. In the early 1980's, U. S. women aged 65 and older had one of the highest average life expectancies in the world; but over the next two decades, the life expectancy of older women in many countries surpassed that of U. S. women.

The prevalence of certain conditions differs by sex and by race and ethnicity. Women reported higher levels of arthritis than men did, while men reported higher levels of heart disease and cancer. Non-Hispanic blacks reported higher levels of hypertension and diabetes than did non-Hispanic whites. Hispanics reported higher levels of diabetes than did non-Hispanic whites.

**Health Risks and Behaviors:** There was no significant change in the percentage of older people engaged in physical activity between 1997 and 2006. Of people age 65 and older, 31% are obese.

**Health Care:** Health care costs, particularly for prescription drugs, have risen dramatically for older Americans. Between 1992 and 2004, average inflation-adjusted health care costs for older Americans increased from \$8,644 to \$13,052. The Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit program will alleviate some of this cost.

(Reference: [www.agingstats.gov](http://www.agingstats.gov))

## Seven Rules Grandparents Love to Break

One of the perks of being a grandparent is that you don't always have to play by the parents' rules. Grandparents responding to an on-line survey listed the rules that cry out to be broken:

### 1. Lights out at 8:00 pm

Grandparents report extending the bedtime ritual with relaxing bath times, reading stories, snuggling together and talking until falling asleep, instead of insisting on an established bedtime.

### 2. Act your age

Grandparents often permit their grandchildren to regress a little. They permit actions, such as using a sippy cup, when parents are focused on the child acting her age at all times.

### 3. No TV at dinnertime

Grandparents often ignore rules regarding television time. In addition to setting up TV trays for dinner, grandparents often permit more hours of TV viewing than parents permit.

### 4. Clean up after yourself

Some grandparents don't enforce "pick up" rules. Many tend to be lenient during stays and ignore the state of their grandchild's bedroom. Other grandparents enjoy cooking/baking with their grandchildren and the mess that goes along with this activity.

### 5. Feed the baby strictly as ordered

Grandparents report paying attention to their grandbaby's actions and reactions, instead of a parent-established amount of milk and food.

### 6. Healthy snacks only

Grandparents report being very strict and health-conscious with their own kids, but being more lenient and providing forbidden treats to their grandchildren.

### 7. No means no

Grandparents enjoy the 'grayer side' of grandparenting and find there are very few absolutes. Compromise is used creatively when attempting to follow the parent's rules, the grandchild's wishes and what the grandparent feels comfortable with.

If you found your actions in the above 'broken rules,' rest assured that you are in good company. Many of today's parents are quite focused on being the best parent. They read books, Web sites, and gather a wealth of information to perfect their role as parent. While information is good, grandparents often prefer to follow their hearts, and focus on enjoying the time with their grandchildren.

(Reference: Charlotte Latvala, [www.grandparents.com](http://www.grandparents.com))

## INTERGENERATIONAL NEWS AND RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS

### Promoting Intergenerational Understanding through *Community Philosophy*

A new report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation  
By Sue Porter and Chris Seeley

This report looks at how *Community Philosophy* can open community conversations within and between generations about 'nuisance' behaviors and the fear of crime. Community Philosophy is a way of mutual learning which emphasizes the importance of questioning and enquiry in the development of understanding. This study explores Community Philosophy in an intergenerational and residential environment, rather than the more usual context of schools and young people only.

For a summary:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/2256.asp>

Full report can be downloaded:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2251-community-people-communication.pdf>

### United National International Day of Older Persons 2008: Global Perspectives on Family Caregiving

From the AARP Office of International Affairs

On Oct. 1, 2008, family caregiving advocates from different regions of the world shared challenges and progress at UN Headquarters in New York. The event was hosted by AARP, the National Alliance for Caregiving, and the United Nations Programme on Ageing in celebration of the UN International Day of Older Persons.

Across nearly every culture, family caregiving is a universal, time-honored, and frequently cherished obligation. Yet, the demands of caregiving often take a toll on caregivers' financial security, job security, and health. Today's family caregivers face an array of new challenges, including smaller, more geographically dispersed families, competing childrearing duties, and longer life expectancy.

While some countries are implementing formal strategies to support caregivers, others are still in the early stages of defining the challenges. Progress

and solutions are heavily influenced by resources and cultural traditions. For country-specific profiles, see the full report at: [http://www.aarpinternational.org/resourcelibrary/resourcelibrary\\_show.htm?doc\\_id=728810](http://www.aarpinternational.org/resourcelibrary/resourcelibrary_show.htm?doc_id=728810)

Virtually every human being will be a caregiver and a care receiver at some juncture in life. For policy approaches to succeed, they must take into account the rights and image of both groups, stressed Dr. Alexandre Sidorenko, head of the UN Programme on Ageing, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

NGOs remain the primary drivers of caregiving movements, with the UN playing an important role gathering best practices and designing policy options. The challenge is to translate these ideas into action—a goal for which all stakeholders must be held accountable.

For More Information:

AARP Office of International Affairs

E-mail: [intlaffairs@aarp.org](mailto:intlaffairs@aarp.org)

Web site: [www.aarpinternational.org](http://www.aarpinternational.org)

### Intergenerational Unity Forums: A Collaborative Community Approach to Developing and Intergenerational Agenda

Report by Matt Kaplan and Alan Hatton-Yeo, published by  
Beth Johnson Foundation

Available online at:

<http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu/Docs/IGUnityForums.pdf>

In 2008, Beth Johnson Foundation and Penn State University collaborated to conduct a pilot study of Intergenerational Unity Forums in four diverse communities across England and Wales. This report highlights a strategy for bringing diverse community organizations and individuals together to establish a common intergenerational agenda. Instead of focusing on single issues and coming up with a series of disconnected program ideas for addressing them, emphasis is placed on identifying the connections between issues and figuring out collaborative efforts to plan an interconnected series of programs that can meet the needs of the broader community.

## A Guide to Mentoring Across Generations

The Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice has published this guide, by Alan Hatton-Yeo and Scott Telfer, which focuses on one area of intergenerational work, namely mentoring. This guide provides a clear understanding of the role and purpose of mentoring and includes a number of case studies.

[http://www.scotcip.org.uk/pdfs/guidetomentoring\\_web.pdf](http://www.scotcip.org.uk/pdfs/guidetomentoring_web.pdf).

## Grandma's on the Computer Screen

Link to article by Amy Harmon, published in The New York Times on the Web on Thursday, November 27, 2008: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/27/us/27minicam.html?th&emc=th>. This article explores the Web cam adventures of the nursery school set and their grandparents and offers a glimpse at what can be gained - and what may be lost - by almost-being there.

## In the News From *Generations*

(Generations United's weekly publication: November 7, 2008, Vol. 2. Issue 94)

- Grandparent Caregivers Cut Kids' Injury Risk in Half— <http://health.usnews.com/articles/health/healthday/2008/11/03/grandparent-caregivers-cut-kids-injury-risk-in-half.html>
- Multigenerational Housing Makes Big Comeback—<http://www.fredericknewspost.com/sections/business/display.htm?StoryID=82431>

## Strategy for Older People in Wales: A Strategy for Intergenerational Practice in Wales

October 2008

Cymru Centre for Inter-Generational Practice launched the Intergenerational Strategy for Wales. See: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/strategy/strategies/intergenerational/english.doc?lang=en>.

The strategy was launched by First Minister Rhodri Morgan and Deputy Social Services Minister Gwenda Thomas at Pontypridd High School, an event organised by Rhondda Cynon Taff Council. The strategy was developed in partnership with the Beth Johnson Foundation and contains a number of examples of good practice in Wales and is a source of further advice on how intergenerational approaches are an effective way of addressing a number of key government priorities.

## Resources From Grandparents.com

By Amy Goyer, Senior Vice President, Outreach Grandparents.com

Grandparents.com has some great free resources you are welcome to share with the grandparents you work with – or family members! In this economy, so many grandparents (and parents) are happy with our “100 Free Things To Do With Your Grandchildren Guide” <http://www.grandparents.com/gp/flpg/dnld/index.html>. I'd love to have your thoughts about this resource. Also, feel free to post the link on your Web sites if it will be helpful. We also have fun activities, recipes, and local guides that cover the best things to do in 50 US cities.

Our new 2008 Ultimate Holiday Guide is available as a PDF at: <http://www.grandparents.com/gp/download/2008-ultimate-holiday-guide/index.html>. Feel free to pass it on as a PDF, or you can also read it from this link on our site at: [http://www.grandparents.com/gp/download/main/index.html?utm\\_source=holidayguide&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_content=pdfomain&utm\\_campaign=pdf2](http://www.grandparents.com/gp/download/main/index.html?utm_source=holidayguide&utm_medium=link&utm_content=pdfomain&utm_campaign=pdf2). You don't need to ask permission to link – but I'd love to know if you do post it!

## Valuing the Invaluable: The Economic Value of Family Caregiving, Update, November 2008

In today's tumultuous economic situation, family caregivers, together with friends and neighbors, remain the backbone of the US long-term care system (LTC). Their unpaid contributions include not only personal care and help with everyday tasks but also health-related interventions, such as administering complex medications. This report provides estimates of the economic value of family caregivers' contributions at both the national and the state level. Moreover, it summarizes key findings about the costs of caregiving to caregivers themselves, as well as how informal caregiving helps to improve the quality of health and LTC of recipients.

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## Intergenerational Practice: A Review of the Literature

By Iain Springate, Mary Atkins, and Kerry Martin

This report focuses on the findings from a literature review of what is known about the effectiveness of intergenerational practice conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) for the Local Government Agency (LGA) in the UK. Visit: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/summaries/intergenerational-practice-literature-review.cfm>.

## New Paper and Upcoming Conference Intensive on Intergenerational Work in Cooperative Extension

A working group of Extension faculty has written a “white paper” document entitled, *Rationale and Recommendations for Strengthening the Intergenerational Agenda within Cooperative Extension*. View or download at <http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu/Docs/WhitePaper.pdf>.

The paper aims to lay out some strategic directions and recommendations for building Extension’s capacity for employing intergenerational strategies in ways that enrich people’s lives and help address vital social and community issues.

It is also intended to generate interest and lay the groundwork for a pre-conference intensive that focuses on intergenerational (IG) work within Extension. The intensive will be convened Wednesday, July 29, 2009 during Generations United’s International IG conference in Washington, DC.

If you are interested in presenting or would like to recommend a speaker on Extension work in the IG area for the intensive, please contact Matt Kaplan at [msk15@psu.edu](mailto:msk15@psu.edu), or 814 863-7871.

Please share the paper and this request with your networks.

## REGISTER FOR THE GU JULY 2009 CONFERENCE!

As you plan for 2009, remember to attend the GU Conference July 27-31, 2009. A conference schedule and fees are now available at: [http://www.gu.org/GU\\_Co7281494.asp](http://www.gu.org/GU_Co7281494.asp).

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