

# Penn State **EXTENSION**

AGRICULTURE | COMMUNITY & FAMILY | ENVIRONMENT

## Ideas for Intergenerational Living

### On the Inside:

- **Intergenerational Gardening—A Personal Perspective** (page 2)  
By Allison Justice, Penn State University
- **The Golden Opportunity—Today's Grandparents** (page 3-4)  
By Andrea Bressler, M.S., CFCS,  
Extension Educator, Clearfield County
- **Intergenerational Study Tour in Hawaii 2009**
- **University of Pittsburgh Offers Online Course on Intergenerational Programs** (pages 4)
- **Out of the Past, Into the Future** (page 5)  
By Sharon Ford, Big Pit Museum,  
Blaenavon, Wales
- **Intergenerational News and Resources** (pages 6)



An intergenerational land use mapping activity. From the Long Island City—2000 Program (NYC) (Kaplan, 1989)

### From the Editor

The benefits of intergenerational programming extend beyond changing how participants think about age and view one another. As highlighted in the first two articles in this issue, intergenerational practices can lead to improvements in our physical environment. Also included in this newsletter are two “Golden Opportunity—Today’s Grandparents” articles, information on new intergenerational study tours planned for Hawaii and Japan, an announcement for the latest online course offered by Generations Together at the University of Pittsburgh, and various notices of intergenerational reports and resources.

Best Regards,  
Matt

Matt Kaplan, Associate Professor  
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**grow**  
Intergenerational Bonds

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### INTERGENERATIONAL STUDY TOUR IN JAPAN

Hold the Dates: October 5-9, 2009

Stay tuned for more information, or check the Web site:

<http://www.travellearnstudy.com/signupjapan.asp>.

## Intergenerational Gardening—A Personal Perspective

By Allison Justice, Penn State University, M.S. Graduate Student in Agricultural Extension Education Program

At one point in time, farming was the leading industry in the United States. The majority of the population can trace their families back to some level of farming, whether this was in a small garden for their family's use or working farm. I can remember my mother many times telling me about how one of her earlier and fondest memories was picking cotton with her mother. Ever since I can remember, my mother, sister and I would grow a summer vegetable garden. For us, it was a time to talk, bond, get outside, and for mom to teach us about the environment. Gardening can be much more than digging around in the dirt!

Gardening is an activity for people of all ages, genders, and origins. Gardening benefits youth by providing exercise, time outdoors, education about the environment and their food source. Adults also enjoy many of the same benefits. Studies show that sedentary lifestyles can lead to health problems. Getting outside, whether it be walking or gardening, has proven to be a tangible way for adults to improve their health and sense of well being.

Gardening is also an ideal family bonding activity. It is a time to socialize with family members, and it can be a wonderful way to reinforce an awareness and appreciation of the roots that they all have in common.

A return to family gardening practices can also hold the key to helping many families cope with difficult economic circumstances. For example, during World War II, many families had what were called "Victory Gardens" to help survive financial hardship. Families would grow just enough food to feed their own families and take off pressure of public food supply. The same idea can help resource-strapped families to produce their own food today.

There are some successful intergenerational gardening programs such as Garden Mosaics of

Cornell University. In this program, children ages 11-18 are placed with elder gardeners in a multitude of settings to learn about gardening and the environment. The Roots and Shoots School Garden program, in Lexington, Virginia, serves elementary school students and adult volunteers. This program teaches students how to grow and harvest food, while at the same time learning life lessons from their elders. The program has served over 300 students. For more information about these programs, see the Web sites listed below.

If you want to start your own intergenerational garden, here are a few tips on getting one started with your family:

1. Talk with your family about how they feel about starting a garden together.
2. Read up on the benefits others have seen in gardening together and discuss with your family.
3. Find a nice gardening plot.
4. Get a hoe, gloves, seeds, and start growing!
5. While gardening together, try to have a topic you think would be good for discussion: Share stories (for me, gardening was always the time I learned about my mother's childhood), discuss what is going on in each other's lives, talk about the environment, etc.
6. Keep in mind that not only are you growing fresh food together, but you are growing as a family!



As my mother used to always say, "we are not just sprouting plants, we are sprouting memories."

### Resources:

Garden Mosaics, <http://www.gardenmosaics.cornell.edu/>

The Roots and Shoots School Garden program, <http://www.rootsnshoots.info/>

## The Golden Opportunity Today's Grandparents

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

### Too Busy to be Bored This Winter

Personally, I can't imagine being bored, there are too many good books on my "to be read" list! But your grandchildren may want to do other things than read. So, how do you keep your grandchildren amused without spending a lot of money? With a little imagination, you can have a blast.

**Have a scavenger hunt.** Look around your home for objects in different categories, such as something squishy or something green, etc. Or hide peanuts-in-the-shell for a treasure hunt.

**Have a day spa at home with your granddaughters.** Bring out all your nail polishes and give one another manicures and pedicures. I can still remember my father-in-law sitting patiently as my daughters painted his fingernails! Now there's an unforgettable memory!

### Cook happy-face pancakes together.

Have the grandkids use blueberries or raisins for eyes and mouth.



**Make a time capsule.** Use a plastic container with a lid. Put in a copy of today's front page of the local newspaper, photos, notes, and drawings from your grandkids. It would be quite difficult to bury this capsule in a Pennsylvania winter; but if you are able to bury the capsule, great. Otherwise, place the capsule in a cupboard or little-used drawer. 'Dig up' the capsule for their next birthday or school graduation.

**Decorate pickle jars.** Make designs out of scraps of colored tissue paper. Paint on your creations with white glue to finish off this keepsake. This was a favorite of my oldest daughter. She decorated picture frames, wooden boxes, and address book covers with tissue paper decoupage.

**Hold a talent show.** All the grandkids can show off their skills, whether it's doing a cartwheel, telling a joke, or singing a song. Remember to participate yourself, and share a talent of yours with the kids.

**Create in the kitchen together.** If you don't mind the mess, cooking with your grandkids can be such fun. Whether it's cookies, bread, fruit salad, or sandwiches; time spent together in the kitchen creates such yummy memories!

Reference: 19 Ways to Beat Boredom, Mercedes Cardona,  
[www.grandparents.com](http://www.grandparents.com).

## A Serious Issue: Body Image

As if all the ads in magazines and on television aren't doing enough to erode girls' self-esteem, there's more. Recently, there have been several reports on the widespread availability of plastic surgery and the influence that reality shows focused on surgical makeovers may be having on the self-esteem of young people, especially girls.

According to the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, the number of cosmetic surgeries performed on people 18 and younger rose from 59,890 in 1997 to 205,119 in 2007. The most common procedure was rhinoplasty (a *nose job*), but there were also 9,295 liposuctions procedures in this young age group in 2007; and 7,882 breast augmentations.

Are you finding this hard to understand? What parent permits and pays for this type of elective surgery? What do you say to your grandchild if he/she's wishing for such a surgery?

Encouraging, well-timed words from a grandparent can give a grandchild more confidence than plastic surgery. Here are some tips in helping with this serious issue. To be an effective influence, you must be informed about your grandchildren's lives, the challenges they face, and the influences on them. Your teenage years were very different; there were no TV shows like MTV's *Want a Famous Face*, which follows 12 young people seeking plastic surgery to look more like their celebrity idols.

Most of this boils down to low self-esteem and poor body image. So begin by devoting more time and attention to your grandchildren. Let them know that you realize that growing up in today's world can be tough, and you want to be someone they can talk to.

If your grandchild confides in you that he/she is considering radical cosmetic surgery, discuss with them how this is not a decision they should make lightly. Encourage your grandchild to sit down and really think things through. You can play a major role in helping them make an informed choice.

When a grandchild feels insecure about looks, athletic ability, or school performance, you don't need to talk about it directly. Work to create an ongoing, positive relationship in which your grandchildren can feel good about themselves. Young adults become self-confident when they're given a task and responsibility. Show your grandchild appreciation. Give them the opportunity to try something, do it well, and be acknowledged for it.

The book, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (Touchstone, 2005), encourages exercise and eating a healthy diet, which should help your granddaughter to feel better about herself. Take her shopping for a new outfit, or take her to a salon for a new hairstyle. These relatively minor improvements to her appearance can have a great impact on her self-esteem.



*Reference:* Having "The Talk": Body Image, Paula Silverman, [www.grandparents.com](http://www.grandparents.com).

## Intergenerational Perspectives From Hawaii 2009

A Two Island Tour - Oahu and Maui  
May 17-23 and October 18-24, 2009  
Cost: \$1,750 (6-10 participants required)

This study tour is offered to professionals, educators, and students of any age. See how you can incorporate intergenerational approaches into your organization or practice.

Tours provide opportunities to meet practitioners involved in the implementation of intergenerational programs. Hawaii's programs offer an opportunity to explore approaches that meet the diverse needs of Hawaii's multi-ethnic society. Create your own programs and receive a certificate of completion and 4.5 CEUs (continuing education units) from Penn State University.

Fee includes: double occupancy lodging in two hotels, all breakfasts, four lunches and four dinners, roundtrip flight to Maui, all ground transportation, entry fees, materials, and certificate of completion from Penn State.

For details about the study tour itinerary and registration, go to:  
<http://www.travellearnstudy.com/signuphi.asp>.

For further information, contact:

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## Introduction to Intergenerational Programs Starting March 2, 2009



An online course presented through the Generations Together Intergenerational Studies Institute and the School of Social Work Continuing Education Program

### Overview

This course is an online, interactive experience based on the 13-year success of Generations Together Intergenerational Training Institute at the University of Pittsburgh. The course is designed to help you develop skills needed for success in the intergenerational field. Students read course materials, do online assignments, discuss the content with fellow students and instructors, and follow step-by-step procedures to complete the individual units.

### Who is this course for?

This course is for professionals, practitioners, administrators, teachers and faculty, program developers, policy makers, and researchers who are concerned with how cross generational dynamics contribute to mutual understanding and the development of positive and meaningful roles of all generations in society.

### Participants are eligible for:

- Certificate of Completion for the Intergenerational Studies Online course
- Continuing Education: 30 hours (Social Work). School of Social Work will issue a Certificate.

### For application / registration:

**Tracy Soska or Darlene Davis**  
Continuing Education School of Social Work,  
University of Pittsburgh  
412-624-3711 or [tsssw@pitt.edu](mailto:tsssw@pitt.edu)

**Registration:** 412-624-6902; [drn8@pitt.edu](mailto:drn8@pitt.edu)  
[www.socialwork.pitt.edu](http://www.socialwork.pitt.edu).

### For course information:

**Sally Newman**  
Emerita Professor / Course Coordinator  
412-648-7155 or [newmans@pitt.edu](mailto:newmans@pitt.edu)  
[www.gt.pitt.edu](http://www.gt.pitt.edu).

Toll Free Number: 1-866-216-1223

For more information, see:  
<http://www.gt.pitt.edu/IGCertificate.html>.

## Out of the Past, Into the Future

By Sharon Ford, Learning Officer, Big Pit Museum, Blaenavon, Wales

*Out of the Past, Into the Future*, is an intergenerational partnership project in Wales organized by Big Pit National Coal Museum & Torfaen Arts Development, involving pupils from the two Blaenavon primary schools and older residents of the town. The resulting exhibition is a mix of digital stories, creative writing, and visual artwork – facilitated by Sarah Campbell, Digital Media Coordinator; Sharon Ford, Learning Officer at Big Pit; working alongside Welsh artist, Keith Bayliss; and writer, Peter Read.

Blaenavon and the surrounding landscape was designated as a World Heritage Site in 2001, giving it equal status with world famous landmarks like the Taj Mahal in India and the Great Wall of China. This small former mining community attracts visitors from all over the world who come to see the best preserved example of an industrial town anywhere in the world.

Young and old worked with each other to reflect on the history and past memories of the town, to think about what World Heritage Status means in 2008, and also to imagine what the future holds for the community.



Small groups of children and adults looked at historic buildings and photographs to build up a picture of Blaenavon 'then and now' and thought

about how things have changed – for better or worse. They used digital images to recreate local scenes from old photographs to highlight some of the changes, and created short digital stories from their reflections.

Working with Peter Read, some children were inspired to create a poetic response, with poems about the technology and changes, which

they think may impact on their community in the future. Children and adults also worked on two collaborative poems which encapsulate their feelings about Blaenavon and its people. The literary element of the whole project was kindly funded by Academi, with Louise Richards, the South Wales Valleys Literature Development Officer, coming along to provide support for the writing workshops.



Two pupils from Hillside School, the self-christened 'Hillside Maniacs,' worked with Ashley McAvoy from National Museum Wales to compose

a piece of music to accompany the exhibition. 'Community Music' was created using 'Garageband,' which the children are now extremely skilled in using, despite never having encountered the program before.

Keith Bayliss and pupils from both schools designed and printed three giant banners on the themes 'Past, Present and Future,' which will adorn the new community learning space at Big Pit, which is due to open fully in February 2009.

Sharon Ford said, "It has been tremendous to see adults and children working together to think about their history and heritage, and it's rewarding to see the new skills and knowledge that so many of them have obviously acquired. It was initially difficult recruiting adults, because they were slightly reticent about working with a large number of children, but all of the participants, without exception, have asked if they could be considered for similar projects in the future."

The exhibition opened at Big Pit on January 14, 2009, and will eventually be displayed at the Blaenavon World Heritage Centre and other local venues.

(Reprinted, with permission, from the Wales Center for Intergenerational Practice, December 2008 newsletter.)

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## INTERGENERATIONAL REPORTS AND RESOURCES

The Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning has released their new report, "Community Treasures: Recognizing the Contributions of Older Immigrants and Refugees," funded by MetLife Foundation. For more information about the report, and for a link to the report itself, go to: <http://www.projectshine.org/materials/cea>.

### AARP Databases on Aging

*AgeSource Worldwide* identifies several hundred clearinghouses, libraries, databases, training modules, major reports, Web metasites, and other informational resources in some 25 countries. *AgeStats Worldwide* provides access to comparative statistical data that compare the situation of older adults across countries or regions around a variety of issues areas. These databases were produced and are maintained by AARP. *AgeSource* and *AgeStats Worldwide* databases are now available at: <http://www.aarpinternational.org/database/>.

### Kinship Care in New York—A Five-Year Framework for Action (2008)

Gerard Wallace, Esq., Editor  
Director, NYS Kinship Navigator, Kincare Support Project

In recognition of kincare needs in New York, where there are more than 400,000 New York children being raised by grandparents and other relatives, the New York State Kincare Coalition held its second statewide summit, "Kinship Care in New York: A Five-Year Framework for Action," in November 2007. The Summit brought together experts from New York State and across the country. The recommendations in this 2008 Report are based upon the Summit participants' suggestions, the speakers' presentations, and upon an emerging consensus - shared by both policy makers and advocates - that kincare is an effective informal complement to the child welfare system. This 2008 Report makes 19 recommendations focused on supporting the strengths of kinship families. The recommendations are coded to indicate type of action and a suggested time frame.

This report is available online at: <http://www.nysnavigator.org/sf/documents/2008reportwithchanges.pdf>.

### Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice

The Scottish government recently approved the establishment of the Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice, to support intergenerational working throughout the country. The new Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice aims to show how young and old working together can benefit society. Web site launched at [www.scotcip.org.uk](http://www.scotcip.org.uk).

#### We're on the Web!

<http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu>

#### Price List & Order Form:

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

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