



Ideas for *Intergenerational Living*

Penn State Intergenerational Initiatives Advisory Group

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From the Editor:

In Pennsylvania as well as in other states, interest in intergenerational programming continues to grow. As new professionals step forward to learn more about how intergenerational approaches can enhance their work in fields as diverse as early childhood education, geriatrics, and community development, they need “access” to the experiences and insights of seasoned intergenerational practitioners. This newsletter aims to generate dialogue about various intergenerational models work, including how they work, and how they could work better.

The articles appearing in this issue of the *Ideas for Intergenerational Living Newsletter*, most of which were written by Penn State Cooperative Extension educators, describe various intergenerational programs, activities, events, and themes. Several of the articles highlight the importance of acknowledging the efforts of senior adult volunteers and communicating a sense of appreciation.

As always, we welcome your reactions to the articles printed below, and invite you to share your own intergenerational programming experiences in future editions of this newsletter.

Matt Kaplan, Associate Professor
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Announcements:

Sunday, October 6, 2002 is “Intergeneration Day”

Intergeneration Foundation, founded in 1997, is a nonprofit 501(c)3 public charity based in Colorado Springs, CO. The Foundation sponsors Intergeneration Day (October 6, 2002) and Intergeneration Activities Week (September 30-October 6, 2002), a national campaign designed to:

1. Create a national time focusing on intergeneration experiences and issues.
2. Educate and inform individuals, families and organizations about the overall benefits of connecting generations through intergenerational programs and the importance to society as a whole.
3. Bring attention to intergenerational success stories.
4. Encourage and inspire intergenerational programs and relationships.

Organizations which sponsor activities for Intergeneration Day/Activities Week use their own expertise to plan the events. Some suggestions are:

1. Volunteer or staff recognition events, inviting families and the community.
2. Fundraising events involving people of different ages.
3. Community-wide events, such as carnivals, musical events, lectures, seminars, craft fairs, art shows, etc.
4. An open house inviting clients, friends, family, neighbors to showcase programs and successes.

Intergeneration Foundation supports the efforts of participating agencies by providing media packets, listing the events on their Web site, distributing brochures about Intergeneration Day/Activities Week, and linking the activities with the national event. If your organization plans an Intergeneration Day event, please register your event with Intergeneration Foundation. They will include it in their list and offer promotion assistance through their national campaign.

Check out their Website:

<http://www.intergenerationday.org>

“Buzz Who?” — An Intergenerational Lunchtime Activity

By Mary Miller

Youth Development/4-H Extension Educator

Penn State Cooperative Extension in Montgomery County

On January 11, 2002, 200 teens from Pottstown, PA took part in a summit conference on leadership sponsored by the Tri-County Health Partnership of Pottstown (members include Penn State Cooperative Extension, Police Athletic League, two local school districts, Pottstown Memorial Medical Center, and an array of social service agencies). With the overall goal of promoting greater tolerance and acceptance in the community, it was decided to run this as an intergenerational event. Accordingly, we invited RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) volunteers and professionals from local social service agencies like Victim Services to take part. In total, 80 adults took part in the day’s festivities. “Buzz Who?” is the name of a lunchtime activity we developed to encourage the teens and the adults to talk and feel relaxed with one another.

The “Buzz Who?” activity consists of the following steps:

- 1) **Create intergenerational groups:** “Sprinkle” senior adults and younger adults into clustgers of teenagers throughout the lunchroom. (We ended up with 40 groups, each with about two adults and five teens.)
- 2) **Distribute a list words and phrases that have generation-specific relevance:** For example, a teenager today is likely to be familiar with “CD Burners,” whereas an older adult might prefer talking about the “Honeymooners.” We came up with a list of 20 items which we call the “Buzz Who?” list, but you are encouraged to develop your own list of items. Just make sure to include items that are likely to “stump” young and older participants.
- 3) **Have the groups review and try to identify each word or phrase:** Emphasize that they need to work as a team to answer all the questions — Since no one individual is likely to know all the terms, they need to discuss, share, and relate to one another to get through the list. This could be done in about 10-20 minutes — before, during, or after lunch.
- 4) **Reconvene the larger group and ask if everybody now can identify each of the words/phrases on the list:** Ask about the items that were: hardest to identify, funniest, most bizarre, which led to the most insight gained regarding how people of other generations live, etc.

The “Buzz Who?” List of Items:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Who is Buzz Lightyear? | 10. What is PACMAN? |
| 2. What are some names given to 3/4 length pants worn by women and girls? | 11. Describe a transistor radio? |
| 3. Who is Jimmy Cricket? | 12. What is a CD Burner? What does it do? |
| 4. What does the word “unplugged” mean in the music world? | 13. Who was Jack Ruby? |
| 5. What does the word “graveyard shift” mean? | 14. Name a Pokemon character? |
| 6. What was the “Honeymooners? Who were they? | 15. What’s a 45? (related to music) |
| 7. Name a song Bobby Darin wrote? | 16. What are these? DA, Beehive, Pompador |
| 8. Name a song performed by the U2 band? | 17. What is a DeSota? |
| 9. What is an X box? | 18. Who is Lil’ Bow Wow? |
| | 19. An Olley, a 360 Kick split, a Dark Side Grunt, a Blunt Side are terms for what sport? |
| | 20. Who and what is Fonzie? |

This activity was one of the highlights of our leadership summit event. Everybody got into it. The teens had fun defining an “olley” and a “dark side grunt.” The older, more mature audience had some fun with “What was the Honeymooners? What’s a “DA,” “Beehive,” and “Pompador?” And together, they all learned that people of each generation have much to learn from, as well as to teach, people of other generations.

Show Them You Care: Expressing Appreciation to Senior Volunteers

By Dana Davis, Program Coordinator

Penn State Early Childhood Education Intergenerational Program

Senior adult volunteers participating in intergenerational programs often make a huge difference in young people's lives. They contribute to their healthy development, learning, and fun in innumerable ways. It is therefore so important to pay attention to the senior volunteers and work together to figure out ways to keep them motivated, enthusiastic, and proud of their contributions. Part of this involves figuring out ways to recognize and express appreciation for the the senior volunteers' efforts. Here are some ideas from the Penn State Early Childhood Education Intergenerational Program, a partnership between Penn State Cooperative Extension and Penn State HDFS Children's Programs.

Formal Recognition

Recognition, when done as a group celebration, is a formal way to honor volunteers. Planning for these events should include staff, children and parent groups.

- *Certificates, awards and pins:* Special certificates, awards, and pins, which can be presented by children during special events, could be used to acknowledge time donated, additional responsibilities taken, and unique contributions. Decorative plaques engraved with volunteer names show ongoing support and create additional awareness of the intergenerational program.
- *Intergenerational tea:* A nice way to say thank you and show how much you appreciate your volunteers is to host a brunch or tea. This special event provides the time for volunteers to get to know one another and develop fellowship. Send out invitations and encourage volunteers to bring along a friend. Children can help to greet the guests as they arrive and escort them to the party room. Also, have the children decorate placemats, bake treats, and work on simple projects with the seniors.

- *Newsletter/Newspaper feature articles:* Another way of providing formal recognition of the contributions made by volunteers is to feature them in newsletter or newspaper stories. Make sure to personalize the article by including some personal history. Newsletters also remind family members of the value of the intergenerational program and, hopefully, encourages them to reconsider their own stereotypical ideas about older adults.

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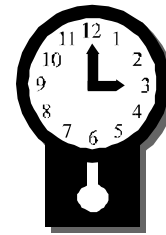
Senior volunteers have become an integral part of the daily routine at the Bennett Family Center site of the Penn State Early Childhood Education Intergenerational Program.

(Photos by Dana Davis)

Time with Grandparents

Created by: Jane A. Landis, CFLE, M.Ed.

Extension Agent, Dauphin County



Staying Connected



That's what most grandparents want to do – stay connected to their grandchildren. In today's busy world it is easier to stay connected if you have a computer. Of course, letters and phone calls are always great ways to stay in touch. But today, with instant messages and the ability to send images across thousands of miles, computers are often the quickest way to communicate with family members.

Whether there is an illness in the family, a birth, a death, or any type of news, the Internet can help you get the news to everyone. Check with your local school district, college campus, or community center for basic computer lessons. Naturally, your grandchildren can probably give you some pointers as well.

In the August, 2002 Family Fun magazine survey on computer use, the following was highlighted:

45% of grandparents use e-mail to stay in touch with all their grandkids.

39% felt Internet is easier than phone calls.

24% maintain a family Web site.

Creating Health: Focusing on Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis, a disease of fragile bones, is a costly illness. While it doesn't usually kill people outright, it is a contributing cause of malnutrition, pneumonia, and loss of independence due to broken bones and the inability to move about. Most people think of it as a disease affecting only older citizens, but the truth of the matter is it can affect men and women of all ages, even children.

Bones are living, changing tissue. Throughout life, bone is being removed and rebuilt. That is why getting adequate calcium is so important each and every day!

For additional information on osteoporosis, contact your local extension office and ask for materials in the Creating Health series.

The following are some easy, calcium-rich, healthy recipes you and your grandchildren can enjoy together:

Yogurt Popsicles

Mix:

- ★ A package of your favorite flavored jello powder with a 2-pound container of yogurt OR
- ★ A 12-ounce can of frozen concentrated grape or orange juice with 2 pounds of yogurt. (There's no need to dilute the concentrate.)
- ★ 2 teaspoons vanilla



Pour the mixture into popsicle molds, paper cups, or ice cube trays. Place the molds in the freezer. When the mixture begins to harden slightly, put a popsicle stick into each mold.

Simple Yogurt Drink

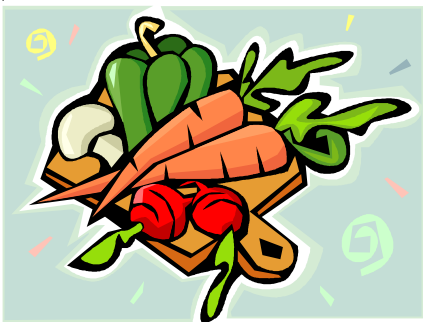
Put 1 cup of yogurt, 2 cups of orange juice, and a ripe banana into an electric blender. Blend for a minute.

Summer Vegetable Dip

Mix:

- ★ 1/2 cup Ricotta cheese
- ★ 1/2 cup Cottage cheese
- ★ 2 Tablespoons fresh parsley or 1 Tablespoon dried parsley
- ★ 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- ★ 1-2 teaspoons chili powder (optional)
- ★ Other herbs and seasonings can be added to taste.

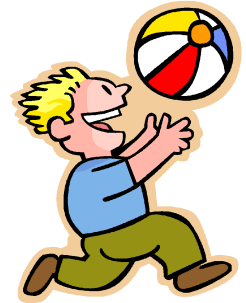
Select any of your favorite vegetables, arrange on a tray and enjoy this light, healthy and refreshing dip.



Doing It Together

Staying healthy means eating healthy and being physically active.

Games that include tossing and catching can be great fun and help maintain muscle.



Basketball fun: No professional hoop? Cut out the bottom of an old laundry basket and attach to a pole or wall, at a low height if you have toddlers. The opening should be large enough to let any child be successful “making baskets.”

Beanbag toss: Using sidewalk chalk, draw shapes on a sidewalk or driveway. Children can toss beanbags into the various shapes and help improve their “aim.”

If you don't have a ball or beanbags, wad-up newspaper for an instant ball.

Learning to catch is just as important as learning to toss. Make your own “catchers mitt” from a milk jug: Cut the bottom off of a plastic milk jug with sharp scissors. Tape the edges as an additional precaution. Use old tennis balls to practice catching. Make a set and two children can pitch and catch for hours. When done, use it as scoops for the sand box or as a gutter cleaner.

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Informal Recognition

Informal recognition can be done during all volunteer visits. Take the time to share a few words to acknowledge your volunteers' contributions and let them know what a difference they make. These casual acknowledgements are the building blocks of dedicated volunteers. Volunteers also benefit by knowing what types of things are most helpful to the classroom.

- Statements that place value on specific contributions:
 - > “The children loved the story you shared and talked about it all week.”
 - > “Thanks for coming today, we needed an extra set of hands.”
- Statements that make note of an absence, illness, or vacation:
 - > “The children could hardly wait for your visit today!”
 - > “We missed you when you weren't with us on Wednesday.”
- Statements that acknowledge special skills and interests:
 - > We are working on a baking project next week. I remembered you said you have a great fudge recipe.”
 - > “Could you share some interesting facts with the class about your trip to Alaska?”

Sending notes or cards lets volunteers know they are thought of and remembered. Adding a short message can serve as a reminder of activities for the upcoming week. Keep in mind: birthdays, holidays, and opportunities to send “thank you,” “missing you,” and “get well soon” cards.

Including Children's Voices

Perhaps the best way to acknowledge senior volunteers is to have the children do this directly. Here are some ideas for encouraging children to express their appreciation.

- Craft Projects—When making arts and crafts projects with your class make extras for the volunteer. These can be group or individual projects. Any of these craft projects could be used as gifts for the volunteers.

- Group Necklace—Children can help make the volunteer a necklace by working together. Have each child make a bead out of clay. Save the last bead for the volunteer to make and take turns stringing the necklace together.
- Singing—Teach the class a few new songs. Sing songs about friendship or learn some songs from long ago. Let the volunteer know the children have been learning these songs especially for their visit. Ask the volunteer to share favorite songs from their childhood.
- Flowers—Surprise your volunteer with some wild flowers picked by the kids on your nature walk or have the children make a bouquet of flowers from tissue paper or coffee filters.
- Frame—Have the children make and paint picture frames, add photos of the children with your volunteer.
- Quotes—Ask each child what they like about having the volunteer come to visit or what is special about the volunteer. Write their answers on a poster with the name of the child next to their message. Give the volunteer the poster after it has been displayed in class.

The ways for thanking and involving intergenerational volunteers are endless. From simple thank you's to formal recognition ceremonies, letting volunteers know how much you appreciate them will likely strengthen their commitment and lead to an even more successful intergenerational program.



Acknowledging Volunteers

By Linda Hendricks

4-H/Youth Development Program Educator

Penn State Cooperative Extension in Columbia County

To receive appreciation for something we've done is a wonderful feeling. As we age we lose contact with many of our friends and family members. Less of those people who truly love us are around to give us compliments. So, it is an extra special feeling when

we receive recognition from those "sometimes" people in our lives.



For the past six years the Columbia County 4-H program has collaborated with the Berwick Senior

Citizen Center, the Area Agency on Aging and the Berwick Area School District on several intergenerational programs. The students were bused to the senior center one day a month during the school year. While at the Center, the students and seniors participate in all sorts of activities.

As the end of the school year approached this year I felt there was something missing about the program. We were recognizing the students with participation certificates that they received back at the schools as part of the year-end awards programs – but the seniors were just getting a simple "thank you." I set a date with the center director for a short appreciation program. I made mini *sticky buns*, purchased *pretzel nuggets*, and created special participation *certificates* for the seniors. Each senior citizen who participated in the program during the past school year, was called up to the front of the room, given a certificate, and a handshake. After the presentations the goodies were served and everyone participated in friendly conversation. It felt good to recognize the seniors for all their efforts, time and wisdom and I know they enjoyed the acknowledgement.

Next year I am sure more people will participate so that they too can hear their name read in front of the group and receive special recognition.



4-H Cloverbud Camp Goes Intergenerational

By Mary Jo Kraft

4-H/Youth Development Program Educator

Penn State Cooperative Extension in York County

Our newest members in 4-H are called Cloverbuds — they are 5, 6, or 7 years old. On June 15th, 2002, we had a special day camp just for them and called it "Butterflies, Pumpkins & Cloverbuds." This year, we decided to invite the children to bring their grandparents (or any other significant older person in their lives) to share in the fun and activities.

It was a great success. We had 16 kids & 14 adults — grandparents, aunts, and some parents — all spending time with these adorable little Cloverbuds! For the three visitors who turned out to be 4-H alumni (they are now all in college as Education majors), we enlisted them as activity planners and organizers. And, as we suspected due to their 4-H stock, they did a great job.



"Shake, shake, shake"--dancing and exercising at the "Butterflies, Pumpkins & Cloverbuds" summer camp on June 15, 2002.

(Photo by Mary Jo Kraft)

The day was packed with exciting activities. Together, the children and their adult friends and relatives planted pumpkin seeds, read books, went on a treasure hunt to find their mid-morning snacks, did a crafts project designed to teach them about the life cycle of a butterfly, and exercised to some very kid-friendly and lively music. The young and older participants also interacted in many spontaneous ways throughout the camp experience, with hugs and tender moments abound. This camp was a huge success — the children and the adults all loved it and requested a repeat next year.

Another 4-H Program in York County that has added an intergenerational component to some of its activities is the 4-H Rabbit Club.

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Training on Intergenerational Programming in Child Care Settings Conducted in Franklin County, PA

By Mary Ann K. Oyler

Family & Consumer Science Educator

Penn State Cooperative Extension in Franklin County



A picture of an intergenerational arts activity taking place at Messiah Village.

(Photo by Marianne Walsh)

Child care providers in Franklin County recently attended a Cooperative Extension organized child care training for providers interested in or already involved in intergenerational programming in the child care setting. Twenty three providers representing five different centers participated in the 2 ½ hour training with guest presenter, Marianne Walsh, past Intergenerational Coordinator at Messiah Village Children’s Family Center in Mechanicsburg. The training was hosted at Meno Haven-Meno Village, a retirement center in Chambersburg which partners and conducts intergenerational programming with Meno Haven Child Care.

Marianne Walsh presented an outstanding overview of the interaction children and the elderly can have in the child care setting. Relating many stories on how to involve

the two groups, she emphasized that children need the seniors and the seniors need the children. A successful program has the right people in the right place and starts at the very beginning with the hiring process. Another sign of a successful program is the friendships that develop between young and old. The children gain a natural, healthy understanding of the elderly, disability and death. Many stereotypes need to be dispelled in this society so that children have a positive view of the elderly and the seniors are able to see the children positively rather than as “noisy, spoiled children.”

Flexibility with the program activities as well as with the participants is of utmost importance when developing an intergenerational program. Together, the generations share life’s stages of development – accepting new challenges, adapting to change, exploring different ways of life. At the conclusion of the Saturday morning training, 100 % (N=23) of the participants could list two things that they learned as a result of attending the workshop. Many of those attending indicated they planned to implement many of the ideas presented at the training session. We hope to see more “generations together” initiatives in child care settings in Franklin County!

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York county 4-H Rabbit Club members bring their bunnies on visit to Colonial Manor Nursing Home.

The Rabbit Club is one of the many 4-H clubs for young people of ages 8-18. In May, 2000, Rabbit Club members visited the Colonial Manor Nursing home. To add to the excitement — and help get the conversation going — the children decided to bring their rabbits. To everybody’s delight, we hit a home run – the nursing home residents loved the rabbits as much as the children. And, based on this shared interest, plans have been laid down for follow-up visits to this nursing home (and others) in the county.



Playtime at the Penn State Early Childhood Education Intergenerational Program.

(Photo by Dana Davis)

**For more information on the Penn State Intergenerational Program, please check our Web site:
<http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu>**

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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