



ALL IN TOGETHER

CREATING PLACES WHERE YOUNG AND OLD THRIVE



Executive Summary

Within the walls of a rather nondescript former community center in a high-poverty neighborhood of Columbus, Ohio, some magic happens every day when young children and older adults at Champion Intergenerational Enrichment and Education Center get together, often in the multipurpose room that bridges the childcare and older adult areas of the building. Students from The Ohio State University also play a role. At Champion, the young, old and those in-between make genuine connections.



Champion is an intergenerational shared site, an often misunderstood concept that pairs younger generations with older adults in the same physical location, with periodic activities or programs that bring them together.

While far from a household name, shared sites may well be a concept whose time is now. There's a convergence of opportunity at hand, brought about by a variety of factors including the demand for quality children and youth services, the need for creative older adult programs and limited local, state and national resources for construction and rehabilitation of facilities. The use of space by multiple generations makes common sense.

Demographics are also fueling innovation. Americans are living longer and healthier lives. The growing asset of older adults needs to be engaged and shared sites are a smart and innovative way to do that. Additionally a growing body of new research illustrates just how damaging isolation and loneliness can be. The signs point to shared sites as an approach primed to remedy this concern. Greater awareness of the potential of shared sites can create new environments to confront ageism, break down the barriers of age-segregation and forge long-lasting and life-changing intergenerational bonds. Intergenerational programs bring purpose to the lives of young and old.

A new Harris Poll commissioned for Generations United and The Eisner Foundation and conducted online between Feb. 27 and March 1, 2018 illustrates the lack of general public knowledge regarding shared sites. Just about a quarter (26 percent) of Americans “are aware of places in their community that care for children/youth and older adults together.” The survey analysis noted that “unfortunately, finding these types of care settings and opportunities for intergenerational interactions may not be easy.”

However, the survey did find plenty of support for programs that bring diverse age groups together to fend off loneliness. Ninety-two percent of Americans believe intergenerational activities can help reduce loneliness across all ages.

A strong majority of Americans (94 percent) agree that older people have skills or talents that can help

address a child’s/youth’s needs and 89 percent believe the same about children and youth addressing the needs of elders. More than four in five Americans also say if they (85 percent) or a loved one (86 percent) needed care services, they would prefer a care setting with opportunities for intergenerational contact rather than one with a single age group. Americans were also clear that age segregation is harmful, finding that almost three quarters (74 percent) agree that “programs and facilities that separately serve different age groups prevent children/youth and older adults from benefitting from each other’s skills and talents.” And the public has an opinion about where these programs should be located. Nearly two-thirds of Americans think that senior centers (64 percent) and schools/universities (62 percent) should be creating opportunities for children/youth and older adults to interact.



Americans were also clear that the government should allocate tax dollars to help programs that bring together older adults and youth.

89% believe serving both children/youth and older adults at the same location is a good use of resources.

82% would support their tax dollars going towards the creation of a facility that serves both children/youth and older adults in their community.

79% believe the government should invest in programs that bring those groups together.

73% believe the government should appoint a person/group of people specifically responsible for creating opportunities (e.g., facilities, programs) for children/youth and older adults to come together.

Executive Summary

A new study coordinated by Generations United and The Ohio State University (GU/OSU) and supported by The Eisner Foundation, established a new baseline of 105 shared site programs in the United States. In the GU/OSU survey, more than two-thirds of the respondents said their program's purpose is to promote positive intergenerational relationships, improve attitudes toward elders and youth and support the health and development of participants. Additionally, 51 percent said their programs improved attitudes towards another group besides young/old (disabled persons, immigrants, LGBTQ individuals, for example); 43 percent said their programs achieved greater financial stability; and 39 percent said their programs reduced caregiver/parent stress.

Among the barriers cited in the GU/OSU survey are demonstrating the impact of their services, funding intergenerational programming and finding other such programs to share ideas and strategies. Still, intergenerational shared sites have succeeded across the country and a growing body of research has shown impressive results as well. Older participants experience better physical and mental health, less isolation and loneliness and participate in more activities. Children and youth experience enhanced learning, social development and perceptions of older adults.

Successful intergenerational shared sites are a result of the people who spark the magic. It takes visionary, inspirational and tenacious leaders; innovative and creative frontline staff; and families, caregivers, older adults and younger people who are willing to participate. Everyone is committed to building intergenerational community.

So with innovative models and growing research on the benefits of these programs, why haven't intergenerational shared sites proliferated? One site director said it bluntly, "Why aren't these in every community?"

We need to unite and act at the local, state and federal levels to make these shared site models not a rarity but the norm. As a country, we need to continue to involve our growing asset of older adults. Shared sites in every community should not be a dream but rather a real-world, everyday option that will create greater understanding between generations as the U.S. population grows more diversified in age, race and ethnicity.

Here are some recommendations to further that goal:

- Challenge local leaders to be champions and prioritize intergenerational use of built and outdoor space.
- Urge collaboration between unlikely partners.
- Work with accrediting bodies and develop new intergenerational friendly standards.
- Review and recommend policy and other changes that can clear the way to establishing more shared sites.
- Initiate a local, state and/or national intergenerational shared site learning collaborative.
- Create a vision and plan for the nation.

Join us in making this vision a reality in every community in the country. Together, we can create places where younger and older people thrive.

Introduction

Within the walls of this 18,001-sq. ft. rather nondescript red brick former community center in a high-poverty neighborhood of Columbus, Ohio, magic happens every day.



It's not the abracadabra-kind-of-enchantment but rather something extraordinary that occurs daily—sometimes several times a day. That's when the young children and older adults at Champion Intergenerational Enrichment and Education Center¹ get together, often in the welcomingly bright multipurpose room that does double-duty as a lunchroom and is the bridge between the childcare and older adult areas of the building. Students from The Ohio State University also play a role. At Champion, where young, old and those in-between refer to each other as "Neighbor," the connections are genuine and the effect long-lasting.

"She always acknowledges me when I come in there. I sort of gravitate toward her," Lee Brown, 67, said of Lei Cao, a graduate student from OSU who's become a familiar face at Champion over the past year. "I went to China twice. I was a jazz musician and gospel musician and minister. She and I talked about my music. She listened to one of my CDs. It made me feel real good. It made me feel like I had something in common with her."²

Cao, 25, completed her graduate program in social work in May 2018. This last semester at Champion, she's been evaluating intergenerational activities as part of her studies.³

"I was interested in intergenerational issues because I was raised by my grandparents," said Cao, who is from Xunwu, Jiangxi province in China. "Many older adults can learn from the kids and the kids can learn from them."

Champion is an intergenerational program at a shared site, an often-misunderstood concept that pairs younger generations with elders in the same physical location, with periodic activities or programs that bring them together. A shared site must include an intergenerational program, but all intergenerational programs are not in shared sites. Sometimes shared sites are a partnership between two or more groups; sometimes the same organization serves young and old at the same location. In Champion's case, university students are a bonus.⁴

While far from a household name, shared sites may well be a concept whose time is now. There's a convergence of opportunity at hand, brought about by a variety of factors. The demand for quality children and youth services compounded with the increasing need for creative older adult programs creates an environment ripe for innovative age-integrated care. Additionally, many communities face limited local, state and national resources for construction and rehabilitation of facilities. The use of space by multiple generations makes common sense.

Definitions:

Shared Site Programs involve one or more organizations delivering services to unrelated younger people, usually 24 and under and older adults, typically over 50, at the same location, such as a building, campus, or neighboring buildings.

Intergenerational Programs provide opportunities for unrelated younger and older people to interact with each other typically at a location serving either youth or older adults.

Demographics are also fueling this opportunity. Americans are living longer and healthier lives. By 2043, one in five U.S. residents will be age 65 or older. Additionally, the generation of millennials (typically born 1981-96) – 75.5 million – exceeded the 74.1 million baby boomers (born 1946-64) in 2016.⁵ Millennials will comprise more than one of three adult Americans by 2020 and 75% of the workforce by 2025.⁶ At the same time, the United States is more racially and ethnically diverse. By 2042, more than half of the nation will be people of color. There is also a growing racial generation gap. Today, more than half of Americans under the age of five are people of color compared to less than one in five Americans over 65.⁷ Intergenerational advocates believe that we can only be successful in the face of our complex future if generational diversity is regarded as a national asset and fully leveraged. The growing asset of older adults needs to be engaged and shared sites are a smart and innovative way to do that. Building millennial interest in shared sites would be a step in the right direction as the movement needs more young and vocal advocates for greater intergenerational contact to bridge potential divides.



Besides these demographics, a growing body of new research illustrates just how damaging isolation and loneliness can be.⁸ The signs point to shared sites as an approach primed to remedy this concern. Greater awareness of the potential of shared sites can create new environments to confront ageism, break down the barriers of age-segregation and forge long-lasting and life-changing intergenerational bonds. Intergenerational programs bring purpose to the lives of young and old. It's time to attack loneliness. It's time for focused attention on shared sites and awareness of their benefits. It's time to act and support moves that bring generations together. Everyone is aging.



Shared Sites: A Smart Solution to Loneliness and Its Ill Effects

A new Harris Poll, commissioned for Generations United and The Eisner Foundation and conducted online between Feb. 27-March 1, 2018 illustrates the lack of general public knowledge regarding shared sites.⁹ Just about a quarter (26 percent) of Americans “are aware of places in their community that care for children/youth and older adults together.” The survey analysis noted that “unfortunately, finding these types of care settings and opportunities for intergenerational interactions may not be easy.”



However, the survey of 2,041 Americans ages 18 and older did find plenty of support for programs that bring diverse age groups together to fend off loneliness. Ninety-two percent of Americans believe intergenerational activities can help reduce loneliness across all ages.¹⁰

Loneliness has long been thought of as a condition largely afflicting older people, who may be homebound and isolated. But recent research on loneliness and its accompanying alienation has found the impact more far-reaching and potentially more harmful. A British study released in April found that about one in 20 people “always or often” felt lonely. The highest proportion in that category were people between 16 and 24 (10 percent).¹¹ A study by Cigna, released in May, reported that adults are reaching “epidemic levels” of loneliness. Of those surveyed, 46 percent reported “sometimes” or “always” feeling lonely and younger generations reported feeling much lonelier than older ones.¹²



Other research offers a more ominous warning, with health dangers associated with loneliness. A study published in March found socially isolated people are more likely to have a heart attack or stroke, compared to people with strong personal networks.¹³ Other research presented last year likened the effects of loneliness to obesity as a public health hazard and another study found that social isolation and loneliness are linked to premature death.¹⁴ But the research is not all grim. The Cigna study found that the people who are less lonely have regular in-person interactions while another study found that people with greater social connections had a 50 percent reduced risk of dying early.¹⁵



Champion Intergenerational Enrichment and Education Center

There's always something tasty – and healthy – on Fridays at Champion Intergenerational Enrichment and Education Center in Columbus, Ohio. It might be salsa or smoothies or whatever else the young and old join together to create on the day each week that's devoted to making good food choices.

On other days – twice a week – an art therapist is on hand, as pairs of seniors and children work on quilt squares together. A music therapist – also twice weekly – is teaching sign language in song to small circles of kids and elders. And there are weekly tai-chi lessons as well, mixed in with chair volleyball and yoga and other activities designed to provide participants with access to better nutrition and healthier lifestyles, including physical activity.¹⁶

"I like the center. It's a positive thing in my life," Lee Brown, 67, said.¹⁷

There's never a dull moment at this bustling university/community collaborative in an former community center on the city's east side, where an adult day program and childcare have shared space since November 2015. The nonprofits – Columbus Early Learning Centers and National Church Residences Center for Senior Health – and The Ohio State University (OSU), whose students are on-site daily, complete this trio of partners.¹⁸

"We're very intentionally tenants in the same building," said Elizabeth Speidel, the university's Intergenerational Program Manager whose office is at the Center and ensures all runs smoothly.¹⁹

The collaboration didn't happen overnight. From the time discussions began to doors opening, it was about seven years, Speidel said.²⁰ The cornerstone of the project was the commitment of the university and community partners to move into a former community center with the intention of building a unique collaboration through shared programs and services.

"OSU has a very robust geriatric program and was very much interested in intergenerational activities and the benefit of intergenerational programming," said Michael Finelli, of

National Church Residences, which develops and manages affordable housing and day service for seniors and other at-risk populations in 27 states and Puerto Rico.²¹

Sandy Waller, site manager for the older adult program, said the 50-60 participants each day are of differing abilities; some have special medical needs, while others – who might otherwise be homebound and isolated – benefit from the social contact the shared site provides.²²

While the adults are from across the city and are of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, the 45 children (28 are preschoolers and the rest infants and toddlers) are from the largely African American neighborhood; 85% are low-income said Ashley Wilcox, director of the early learning center.²³

"We have kids who come from trauma and different walks of life," she said. "If they're stressed or are exhibiting challenging behaviors, they can regroup on the senior side. Sometimes teachers take them on a walk and go visit some of the seniors. Jumping into a new environment, they have a re-set."

Claire Bodart, 24, of Lexington, Ky., a graduate student working on a doctorate in occupational therapy, spent half-days three times a week last summer at Champion. Bodart said she requested the placement because of her specialization in aging and an interest in the "intergenerational dynamic."²⁴

"The children viewed them (the adults) more as just another person and not as if they had a disease, such as Parkinsons or dementia," she said. "They didn't see them as those labels but just as another person they were excited to play with."

Wilcox, whose focus is on the youngsters, said she can see how interaction with the children helps the older adults "feel more connected and a part of the community."

"You see them come to life like they have a purpose again," she said. "It's almost as if they have their own little family here."²⁵

"I like the center. It's a positive thing in my life,"

- Lee Brown, 67

Intergenerational Relationships are Life-Altering

This increased buzz about loneliness illustrates just how critical the situation is, but it's been an issue at the forefront of Oklahoma businessman Don Greiner's mind for decades.²⁶ His company, Grace Living Centers, operates 31 care facilities across the state and is well aware of problems that affect older people.

"The idea was to look for things that attack loneliness and boredom," he said. "We do a good job with clinical skilled care, but we were still lagging back then on the social and emotional side and battling depression."

Twenty years ago, he took a bold step when he bought two independently owned long-term care facilities separated by a parking lot, intending to connect them. A child day care center next door managed by Jenks Public Schools sparked Greiner to innovate. By the following year—1999—his company had constructed two public school classrooms in the center of a skilled nursing center, as well as a playground and atrium, thus creating a shared site.²⁷ It's also created some special connections, with the youngsters calling the residents "Grandmas and Grandpas" and the older adults naming the kids "Littles."

The intergenerational program is offered only through Jenks West Elementary School, where Site Principal Suzanne Lair said enrollment offers the Grace option—a two-year requirement with limited space—for one kindergarten class of 24 and a pre-K class of 22.

"Students walk in and start the day with the Grandmas and Grandpas there to give them hugs and high fives," Lair said. "There's a glass door and glass windows, so it's very visible for the Grandmas and Grandpas to see what's going on all the time. They can hear noise and chatter from the classroom."²⁸

Adele Burnett, the Jenks School Liaison employed by Grace Living Center, knows firsthand the value of these intergenerational bonds. She can't forget the comments from a late resident of the skilled nursing facility who "didn't want to be there."

"The first three months, she did not come out of her room. She was so depressed and thought her family had abandoned her," Burnett said. "I'd go to her every day and finally she started to coming to Book Buddies (a daily opportunity for children to read aloud to the older adults) and she got more involved with the children. Later, she pulled me aside and said, 'Miss Adele, I want to thank you. You brought my soul back to life. These kids give me a purpose to get out of bed.' It turned her whole life around."²⁹

For 92-year-old retired aerospace engineer Eli Botkin, his experiences helping middle schoolers learn math and higher math concepts at the private Rashi School³⁰ on the same campus where he lives at NewBridge on the Charles,³¹ is what he calls "a major part of my retirement."³²

The residential community for older adults in Dedham, Massachusetts, a Boston suburb, is operated by Hebrew SeniorLife. The private school for grades K-8 re-located in 2010 to the 162-acre adult community. The two groups developed a shared site program that includes intergenerational activities of varying degree at all grade levels. And, about 10 older adults, including Botkin, regularly assist in classrooms.

The Harris Poll/GU survey reflects this belief that intergenerational opportunities are a plus and should be encouraged. A strong majority of Americans (94%) agree that older people have skills or talents that can help address a child's/youth's needs and 89% believe the same about children and youth addressing the needs of elders.

More than four in five Americans also say if they (85 percent) or a loved one (86 percent) needed care services, they would prefer a care setting with opportunities for intergenerational contact rather than one with a single age group. Americans were also clear that age segregation is harmful, finding that almost three quarters (74 percent) agree that “programs and facilities that separately serve different age groups prevent children/youth and older adults from benefitting from each other’s skills and talents.”³³



Such benefits are reflected in a 2016 study published in the *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, which compiled data from staff within a nursing home planning to implement a shared site intergenerational program. Of the staff, three-quarters supported opening the childcare.³⁴ Research suggests that participation in intergenerational programs and meaningful cross-age relationships may decrease social isolation and increase older adults’ sense of belonging, self-esteem and well-being,³⁵ while also improving social and emotional skills of children and youth participants.³⁶

Or as Dawn Meyerski, executive director at Mount Kisco Child Care, a shared day care site, said about

the children and older adults, “They each rise to meet the expectations of the other.”³⁷ In other words, regardless of their abilities or moods, when they met each other they focused and performed at a higher level.

The idea is catching on, though advocates say it’s been slow to gain wide acceptance. A litany of obstacles (including an assortment of multitudinous local, state and federal regulations) have discouraged people and made broad U.S. implementation somewhat difficult. But this concept of shared sites for young and old isn’t just in the United States; it’s worldwide and expanding at various locales in Canada and the UK, as well as in Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Australia and in Singapore, where a government initiative for its fast-growing aging population includes encouraging intergenerational bonding by co-locating elder and child centers.³⁸

A report by the British think tank United for All Ages saw “significant progress” in the “increasing interest in co-location and increasing recognition of the social and economic benefits.” That report, *Mixing Matters: How shared sites can bring older and younger people together and unite Brexit Britain*, offers a glimpse into what’s possible. The report, which acknowledges many more examples of shared sites in other countries, said the aim is to develop 500 shared sites in the United Kingdom by 2022.³⁹



NewBridge on the Charles and the Rashi School

Eli Botkin may be 92-years-old, but he hasn't stopped honing his math skills. After all, he's got middle schoolers expecting his mathematical insight at the Rashi School, a private school just steps from his home at NewBridge on the Charles, a residential community for older adults in Dedham, a Boston suburb.

Rashi, a Jewish day school that's been open since 1986, relocated in 2010 to the 162-acre campus where NewBridge on the Charles, a Hebrew SeniorLife community, had opened a year earlier.

A retired aerospace engineer, Botkin and his wife Evelyn moved to the community in 2014 to be closer to family. He goes to the gym three times a week to exercise and twice a week to swim.⁴⁰ Botkin's school routine includes an hour every Thursday in Cindy Carter's seventh grade math class and every Tuesday explaining mathematical principles to her eighth graders. Occasionally, he helps out with sixth grade math.⁴¹

"I guess what's keeping me going is the exercise of the body and the mind," he said.⁴²

"It's an hour each of those two days, but I spend a lot of time at the computer preparing lectures and powerpoints for the classes," Botkin said. "It's a major part of my retirement."

Just how the school and the care community came to become a shared site is a story of how "the stars aligned," said Lynda Bussgang, director of the multigenerational program at Hebrew SeniorLife, a nonprofit organization that's the parent company for NewBridge on the Charles. She said the residential community was under construction and an additional parcel of land was available. At the same time, the school was seeking a permanent building.⁴³

What's resulted is more than shared space; it's shared life.

"We try to create a real continuum of experience for kids in kindergarten through eighth grade," Bussgang said, explaining the intergenerational activities at each grade level to foster connections between students and residents.

Various programs are offered multiple times a week. And there are monthly events, including lunch with assisted living residents and student government leaders; an annual, seven-week program for middle school students with residents in the memory support unit; as well as a themed monthly café with table discussions for middle schoolers and residents of both the independent and assisted living communities.⁴⁴

Because they're located on the same campus, intergenerational encounters are transportation-free. Most of the time, students visit the senior community, walking past a beautiful intergenerational sculpture, because it's easier for the kids than the older adults to walk across the street to the school, Bussgang said. But about 10 seniors, including Botkin, visit the school regularly to provide support in kindergarten through second grade classrooms and to help in middle school math and science classes.

Even the school's athletics fields are visible to most in the assisted living and long-term care communities, allowing them to watch kids playing and hear them laughing, Bussgang said.

"We go to NewBridge a lot," said 13-year old Emma Goldstone, an eighth grader who started at the school in sixth grade. "Every grade meets with residents and we get to know residents. I looked forward to meeting with my resident every week and I had a great time talking with her. I enjoyed learning about her and the things we had in common. It felt good because it was nice to know that even though I wasn't a big part of her life, I still was important to her."⁴⁵

Rashi's enrollment is approximately 300 students in grades K-8. Annual tuition is \$25,000-\$35,000; more than half receive financial assistance.⁴⁶

The shared site is primarily funded by long-term gifts and renewals to Hebrew SeniorLife. Bussgang said the school's contribution to the partnership is in staff time and programming that helps "their school mission of enabling students to live the values that they teach."

Eighth grader Kate Cutler, 14, said Botkin's math lesson gives students "a different perspective on math that we wouldn't learn."⁴⁷

"Many times, I just help out when the kids are doing problems and walk around the room helping the kids who have problems," Botkin said. "Other days, the teacher will say 'It's time for a presentation.' I come up with ideas on things to teach related to what they're learning."

Teddy Sunshine, 14, said he was inspired to study astrophysics and will be attending a three-week summer program in New York through Johns Hopkins University as a result of Botkin's presentations about black holes and time warps in space.⁴⁸

And, as for Botkin, the aerospace engineer-turned-sometime-math teacher, "It's been delightful," he said. "I love it."

Shared Sites: Innovative Models with Impact

Around the U.S., there are numerous examples of how innovative approaches have produced models for success. Perhaps the U.S. original is Messiah Lifeways, a residential community for older adults in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, that opened 40 years ago with a child care/preschool on its campus and continues to operate as a shared site.⁴⁹

ONEgeneration⁵⁰ in Van Nuys, California also opened 40 years ago, but it was a center for older adults only until 1994, when the addition of a childcare changed the nonprofit's course. It's now a model intergenerational shared site and one that serves a multicultural population where preschoolers learn Mandarin and Spanish, teachers speak 12 languages and the adults enrolled in the day program hail from 24 countries.⁵¹



What's clear about shared intergenerational sites is that it's an inclusive principle that bridges many of the typical divides. While most shared sites have paired housing and services for older adults with child care for infants through preschool, the potential of programs is only limited by the different services offered. And the public has an opinion about where these should be located. According to the Harris Poll/GU survey, nearly two-thirds of Americans think that senior centers (64 percent) and schools/universities (62 percent) should be creating opportunities for children/youth and older adults to interact.⁵²

While the examples highlighted throughout this report illustrate the range of possibilities that shared sites offer, it's been 20 years since the last attempt at a comprehensive review of shared site programs. A new survey this spring, coordinated by Generations

United and The Ohio State University (GU/OSU) and supported by The Eisner Foundation, creates a new baseline with 193 responses of which 105 were shared sites. It also sparked interest in the model with 30 additional respondents requesting more information about the concept of serving different age groups in the same location.⁵³

This work builds upon a survey conducted by AARP in the mid-1990s that was, until now, considered the definitive report on intergenerational shared sites.⁵⁴ Although many of the players have changed over time, core issues surrounding shared sites remain, with some 1998 findings still true. Funding continues to be the most significant challenge. And, the most common arrangement for a shared site is a nursing home co-located with a childcare center.⁵⁵

With so much variation in programs, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for creating and maintaining an intergenerational shared site. That one perfect model that others can replicate is a challenge not yet realized. Some organizations, such as at St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee, Wisconsin⁵⁶ or Grace Living Center in Oklahoma, have successfully reproduced their programs in multiple locations. The vagaries of state and local regulations, coupled with federal mandates all related to funding, health and licensing continue to make shared sites less widespread than they could be under the right formula.

The GU/OSU survey also found that licensing and regulation were a common challenge particularly related to young children and school-age kids.⁵⁷ Licensing standards can have a major impact on facilities, staffing levels, marketing and staff qualifications/training. Unfortunately, sometimes regulations for children's programs and those for older adult programs conflict with one another.

Intentionally launching a shared site today may seem a bit daunting, with lots of complex details, such as funding, location, programming, staff and other considerations. But in some cases, such as in San Jose, California, where the nonprofit Respite and Research for Alzheimer's Disease⁵⁸ oversees two programs for different ages, the transformation into a shared site grew organically out of staff childcare needs.

"It started as a cooperative preschool for our staff," said Rosa Barneond, who was there from the beginning—hired in 1992 and is now director of the childcare program for 24 kids. "It was just utilitarian. They started a cooperative preschool and saw the positive effect on our seniors as well as kids, so they decided to continue the preschool as a licensed preschool."⁵⁹



Although Maria Nicolacoudis, the nonprofit's executive director, wasn't around then, her predecessor told her that the older adults in the Alzheimer's Activity Center program became more social and more verbal when the children on-site at Rosa Elena Childcare Center were around.⁶⁰ "It's why I was attracted to this job."⁶¹

Nicolacoudis has also seen that reaction among the 150 individuals age 53 to 104 enrolled in the Alzheimer's program.

"If they come at 9 a.m., by 1 p.m., they're ready to go home," she said. "But if they know they have an intergenerational activity to look forward to, they'll stay here and happily look forward to that activity."

The older adults and children rotate in and out of pre-planned activities, which change daily and include dance parties, baking projects, a bird show and a performance by a hula dance group, as examples, Nicolacoudis said.

"Sometimes its art or a physical activity or about the planets. If they're learning about the life cycle of seeds, they'll go outside with seniors and they might plant seeds," she said. "Every intergenerational activity relates back to the preschool curriculum."⁶²

But more than that, Nicolacoudis shares that all of their activities are purposeful and meaningful, not just hanging out. The staff are cross trained on how to do an intergenerational activity and there is always at least one child and one adult care staff present during activities.⁶³

And the benefits are there for the children too, as Nicolacoudis described "One parent said to me 'my daughter went to your preschool and she is very empathetic, way beyond her years.'"⁶⁴

This was echoed by Keith Liederman, CEO of Kingsley House in New Orleans, Louisiana, a shared adult day care, Head Start and Early Head Start site. "I get calls from teachers after our kids graduate and go on to grade school. They say our kids are the most compassionate, empathetic and accepting children who don't think twice about being friends with kids with disabilities."⁶⁵

"It's why I was attracted to this job."

- Maria Nicolacoudis, Executive Director, Respite and Research for Alzheimer's Disease

ONEgeneration

It seems so easy at ONEgeneration⁶⁶ in Van Nuys, California, where the intergenerational encounters built into each day at this shared site are so familiar and so much a part of the experience that it's just natural. And highly anticipated.

Older adults, including Eugenia, look forward to the children's arrival for scheduled activities. When the little ones walk in for an interactive geography lesson, she isn't the only one who lights up. "I always look forward to seeing them," Eugenia said as her young friends scrambled to join her at her table.

"Every day, we have six different activities where children and adults get together in some capacity – some in smaller groups and some in larger groups," Eva Goetz, chief executive officer of ONEgeneration, said of the day care for kids as well as the day services for adults.⁶⁷

"I was raised by my grandparents," she said. "I come to this arena very naturally. The staff and volunteers have a similar type of background and this personal connection helps lead to higher staff satisfaction and retention."

Goetz also said, there's a "strong multicultural component." Preschoolers learn Mandarin and Spanish. In the adult program, 24 birth countries have been identified among the participants.⁶⁸

"Our teachers alone speak 12 languages"

- Eva Goetz, Chief Executive Officer of ONEgeneration

Behind the scenes – with teachers and facilitators meeting monthly to prepare for the next month – Kristine Vardanyan, director of ONEgeneration's childcare, said the intergenerational activities are "very intentional and carefully planned."⁶⁹

"It has to be not only fun and interesting for both populations, but you have to be very safe when you put these two groups together," she said. "There's a safety factor and we have to make sure activities are stimulating and engaging for both populations."

Childcare and preschool enrollment is about 160 and 95 adults are in the day program. Only about half of the enrolled adults attend on an average day, said Anna Swift, the adult program director.⁷⁰

On a typical day, small groups of elders and children gather for various activities: toddlers and older adults will do watercolor art; 4-and-5 year-olds and elders will make maracas (musical instruments); 2-year-olds and some older adults will play Sound Bingo (listening to sounds and identifying the sound source on a bingo card). In the infant classroom, some seniors hold babies and feed them bottles while others may play peek-a-boo or blow bubbles to entertain them. In the toddler classroom, older adults are lunch helpers.⁷¹

Larger groups of older adults and children gather every Thursday, when a music teacher comes in weekly to lead programs.⁷²

"We're both a medical and social model," Goetz said, noting that there are two full-time staff nurses, as well as part-time consultants who are occupational, physical and speech therapists. The participant-to-staff ratio at ONEgeneration is 8-1, which offers more personal attention than the 16-1 state licensing requires, she said.⁷³

This leads to great partnership opportunities and provides much needed unrestricted income for numerous underfunded social service programs ONEgeneration provides.

The nonprofit – whose annual budget is \$6 million – receives state and federal funds for some of the adult day services. Childcare, which is a National Association for the Education of Young Children accredited program, always has a waiting list, Goetz said. It is a fee-for-service program that can help offset costs from their other programs.⁷⁴

ONEgeneration began in 1978 as a senior center and served just one age group until 1994, when the addition of childcare changed the nonprofit's course and turned it into a model intergenerational shared site.⁷⁵

"The consistency and ability to have that ongoing daily contact is an incredible benefit," Swift said, because it "allows for regular, consistent interactions between the generations, resulting in the development of these wonderful bonds and relationships between the two groups."

Shared Site Benefits Are Emotional and Economic

These shared site programs are successful, both for the participants who reap the benefits and for those who produce the programming. In the 1998 AARP report, the most often cited participant benefits were enhanced quality of life and improved attitudes of the different age groups towards each other. It's still true today, as Alex Schoonover, 22, observed during her weekly visits last summer at the Champion shared site in Columbus. An RN working on her master's degree in nursing, Schoonover said it's clear the benefits are "mostly about the relationships that are forming."⁷⁶

Beyond the stories, a growing body of research has shown impressive results as well. Older participants experience better physical and mental health, less isolation and loneliness and participate in more activities. Children and youth experience enhanced learning, social development and perceptions of older adults.⁷⁷

In the GU/OSU survey, more than two-thirds of the respondents said their program's purpose is to promote positive intergenerational relationships, improve attitudes toward elders and youth and support the health and development of participants. Additionally, 51 percent said their programs improved attitudes towards another group besides young/old (disabled persons, immigrants, LGBTQ individuals, for example); 43 percent said their programs achieved greater financial stability; and 39 percent said their programs reduce caregiver/parent stress.⁷⁸

"That's a big emphasis at Champion is that they're a family," she said. "Being with the kids really brightens the older adults and really gets them engaged. For the kids, it's like having a grandparent around."

A recent study of senior housing providers by LeadingAge and Generations United found that one of the primary goals for intergenerational programs was dispelling fears and ageist beliefs. The report found that many housing providers "...initially implemented intergenerational programs out of a desire to dispel fears of aging and older adults among young people. Several providers, who had observed the tendency for differing age groups to avoid each other, also saw intergenerational programming as a way for older adults to gain a greater understanding of the children and young adults in their communities."⁷⁹

In the same study, several housing providers reported that their intergenerational programs are a vehicle to expose youth and young adults to careers in aging as one way to address mounting concerns that there will not be an adequate workforce in the aging services sector. Some providers have forged strategic partnerships with local high schools, colleges and universities to develop programs where students learn skills and gain practical and clinical experience.⁸⁰

The New Jewish Home in New York City supports at-risk youth interested in careers in healthcare with their Geriatric Career Development Program by fully immersing youth participants into the long-term-care setting where they are trained in many facets of healthcare. The results of this program are impressive. Since the program started in 2009, 97 percent of students graduated from high school and 90 percent of alumni are enrolled in education programs, have completed post-secondary education/training programs or are working.⁸¹

The economic benefits from shared costs and expenses are frequently cited by shared site providers. A 2008 analysis comparing operational costs at intergenerational shared sites focused more specifically on the numbers. The report, *Intergenerational Shared Sites: Saving Dollars While Making Sense*, found that these programs demonstrate cost savings by sharing staff and space. Personnel costs were significantly less in intergenerational shared sites. The study also found that the sites often experienced cost savings in rent.

They were able to meet the square footage requirements for licensure with fewer feet which meant less money going towards rent.⁸²

But all is not rosy for these programs. There are challenges. Among the barriers cited in the GU/OSU survey are demonstrating the impact of their services, funding intergenerational programming and finding other such programs to share ideas and strategies.

Shannon Jarrott, a gerontologist who has studied programs involving youth and elders for decades, said after analyzing the new GU/OSU survey data, she was struck by “how highly people identified the challenge of documenting the impact of their program.”⁸³

“People feel like they know it’s working and they see it on the faces of their participants, but they’ve got to find way to convey it. To attract clients, partners and funding, they have to convey the impact of what they’re doing,” she said.

At Bridge Meadows,⁸⁴ an intentional intergenerational community in Portland, Oregon that opened in 2011 to support foster youth, adoptive parents and elders, interviews with residents about their well-being and a review of the children’s grades in school has provided some of the qualitative research critical in demonstrating the program’s impact, according to Derenda Schubert, executive director.⁸⁵

“All generations have experienced housing stability,” Schubert said. “Parents report feeling more resilient. Children are experiencing better outcomes at school—attending regularly and their academic performance is on par or at their potential. Mental health conditions are stabilizing. Elders are reporting their health is stabilizing or is better than it was when they came. Doctors told them that. They’re living with meaning and purpose.”⁸⁶

“I often say this model is at the intersection of child welfare, housing, aging and health,” Schubert said. “Our goal was to create a three-generation community—children, parents and elderly—with the social purpose of helping children from foster care find forever families.”

Despite those positives, Schubert said “the biggest challenge is that funding for services is siloed.”

Schubert’s observation about siloed funding was among the challenges cited in the GU/OSU survey. One way that the Harris Poll/GU Survey found to address some of the funding difficulties was through government support. In that survey, Americans were clear that the government should allocate tax dollars to help programs that bring together older adults and youth.

- **89%** believe serving both children/youth and older adults at the same location is a good use of resources.
- **82%** would support their tax dollars going towards the creation of a facility that serves both children/youth and older adults in their community.
- **79%** believe the government should invest in programs that bring those groups together.
- **73%** believe the government should appoint a person/group of people specifically responsible for creating opportunities (e.g., facilities, programs) for children/youth and older adults to come together.⁸⁷

But even without this government boost, some new and creative shared sites are underway across the country. A number of older adult residential communities are opening their doors to nearby students. Judson Manor⁸⁸ and Judson Park⁸⁹, two retirement communities about a mile apart in Cleveland, Ohio, both offer a limited number of apartments for university and college students attending nearby campuses, such as Case Western Reserve University or the Cleveland Institute of Music. Collington, a continuing care retirement community outside of Washington, DC is now home to two graduate students from the University of Maryland School of Music who serve as artists-in-residence in exchange for free room and board.

In Los Angeles, a shared site with housing and services for homeless and LGBTQ youth and affordable housing for LGBT older adults will open in early 2019. The Los Angeles LGBT Center’s Anita May

Rosenstein Campus⁹⁰ will be the nation's newest shared site. By encompassing an existing cultural arts complex across the street, as well as studio units for young adults now under construction, the area will become a hub of activities, officials say.⁹¹



Intergenerational Shared Site Program by type: **Community Models**

► **Bridge Meadows** is an intergenerational community in Portland, Oregon whose roots began in 2004 to support foster youth, adoptive parents and elders. Modeled after an exemplary program called Hope Meadows in rural Illinois, it opened in 2011 and a second location in Beaverton with the same approach opened last year. Another site, New Meadows, for youth aging out of the foster care system, is located across the street from their Portland location.

(<https://www.bridgemeadows.org/>)

► **Minneapolis American Indian Center** is a community center in the heart of the American Indian community of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Center provides educational and social services to more than 10,000 members of the community annually including a year-round after school program serving American Indian youth and lunchtime meals for older adults. The Center preserves and supports American Indian cultural traditions through the arts, youth and intergenerational programs.

(<http://www.maicnet.org/>)

► The town of Swampscott, Massachusetts solved their problem of an overcrowded high school and inaccessible senior center by building the **Swampscott High School and Senior Center**. The two facilities are housed in one building, with shared and separate spaces. Among other activities, the students teach older adults how to use technology and the seniors volunteer in the school library.

(<http://www.smma.com/work/inter-generational-learning>)

► Opened in 2006, the **North Tempe Multi-Generational Center** in Tempe, Arizona, is a facility built on a unique mix of partnerships with public, private and community-based organizations serving people of all ages. The center houses a senior service area, a teen center, a youth center, a Head Start preschool program, the Boys & Girls Club, community classrooms, a fitness center, gymnasium and a library resource center.

(<http://www.tempe.gov/city-hall/community-services/community-recreation-centers/north-tempe-multi-generational-center>)

Los Angeles LGBT Center

The vision is getting closer to a reality as a shared site with housing and services for LGBTQ youth and older adults is taking shape as part of an innovative and mindfully intergenerational new headquarters for the Los Angeles LGBT Center.



The early 2019 opening of the Anita May Rosenstein Campus aims to better serve an estimated 6,000 homeless youth, ages 18-24, living on the streets of Los Angeles County—of which 40 percent identify as LGBTQ—as well as an estimated 65,000 LGBT individuals, age 65 and older, in LA County. Of those, 68 percent live alone. The \$128.5 million, two-acre “front porch community” includes various types of housing as well as the organization’s first senior services center, a youth center, a commercial kitchen to feed homeless youth and seniors, elevated outdoor space and small gardens and ground floor retail. Homeless youth housing includes a 40-bed emergency shelter, 60 transitional living beds as well as 24 studio units of affordable housing. The older adult housing—99 affordable housing apartments in a five-story building—effectively doubles the amount of current affordable elder housing the Center can offer.

“There’s nothing like this anywhere else in the United States,” Lorri L. Jean, the organization’s CEO, said.

It’s an idea that’s been years in the making. The Los Angeles LGBT Center’s roots go back to 1969 when a group of social workers opened several “Liberation Houses” to help LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness. The first affordable housing for LGBT seniors opened in 2007. While offering an intergenerational photography class since 1998 and mentoring programs for many years, the Center’s leadership believed more could be done to connect young and old.

The campus lends itself to thinking creatively about ways the shared site can be mutually beneficial.

“There’s a really interesting synergy between youth and seniors. By the time they come to us for help, many (youth)

have run away or been kicked out of their homes. Many have been refugees from the foster care system and never learned basic skills. They never learned to do laundry. They don’t know how to cook or shop for a balanced meal on a budget,” Jean said. “Our seniors, on the other hand, know how to cook. They have their favorite recipes which they can share with the youth. In return, the youth can teach our seniors on how to become computer and cell phone literate. So, there are a lot of obvious ways these two populations are going to be able to help each other.”

As an example, Jean said the best use of the campus retail space is one possibility that would serve both populations well.

“Typically, the seniors and youth we’re serving are low and moderate income,” she said, noting that about 65% “are clients of color, but it’s higher in the youth population.”

“For the young, they need more than a job but a career path to have a decent life. With seniors, they’re not looking for career path but a way to make a little extra money to make ends meet,” Jean said.

She said the commercial kitchen on the property “could be designed in a way to provide all the food we need on campus for our residents and also have a coffee shop and a grab-and-go café and train young people in the culinary arts.”

“Right now, there’s a crisis in the chef world and we can’t find enough people to do that work and that will lead to a decent, much better than minimum wage job. Both could be working,” she said.

“It’s not as easy to be as intentional when people were spread out all over the place,” Jean said. “But when we’re on one campus, it gives us so many more options. While we will continue what we’ve been doing, we’ll have everybody together.”



Shared Site Success Relies on Staff

Successful intergenerational shared sites are a result of the people who spark the magic. It takes visionary, inspirational and tenacious leaders; innovative and creative frontline staff; and families, caregivers, older adults and younger people who are willing to participate. Everyone is committed to building intergenerational community. And there are benefits. Shared sites often report staff retention numbers higher than industry standards. Monte Coffman, executive director of Windsor Place in Coffeyville, Kansas reported the staff turnover rate at his skilled nursing home, which houses a kindergarten classroom, has averaged 26 percent compared to the industry average of 65 to 85 percent.⁹²

Findings from the GU/OSU survey also reflect an awareness that the Oklahoma partnership discovered. The survey found that the role of intergenerational coordinator seems to be on the rise, with 26 percent of shared sites reporting that an intergenerational coordinator is responsible for programming.⁹³

“Early on when we opened – the first year or so – we were having intergenerational experiences by accident, not by plan,” Greiner said. “It was about a year before we realized we needed a full-time employee to be a liaison. We didn’t know we needed one in place.”⁹⁴

Staffing is a crucial component at shared sites. Casey Rozanski, vice president of fund development and marketing at St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, shared that St. Ann Center has a strong commitment to staffing and strengthening the communities where they serve. When opening their second campus in an underserved area of Milwaukee, the organization set the goal of hiring the majority of staff from the surrounding community.⁹⁵

Staff is often the glue holding the programs together and illustrate just why intergenerational shared sites continue to succeed in spite of the challenges. At shared sites across the country, vital elements are staff communication and collaboration, said Lair of Oklahoma. She should know. She’s been involved with the Grace Living Center program since it began in 1999.⁹⁶

“They have to really have a love for both populations. The biggest challenge is to make sure we have the right fit with staff,” Lair said. “And when we do, it’s just magical.”

Intergenerational Shared Site Program by type:

Adult Day Care and Child Care

► ***My Second Home and Mount Kisco Child Care Center*** are nonprofits, co-located in an 18,000 square-foot building constructed in 2002 in Mount Kisco, New York. Although the child care center was established in 1971, *My Second Home* for adult day services started in 1998, when the intergenerational effort launched. The facility was built by senior housing developers in honor of their mother. Its success prompted a second location, this time in White Plains, which opened in 2015, as the *Lanza Family Center for All Ages*, including children, teens and seniors.

(<http://www.fsw.org/our-programs/my-second-home> and <https://mkccc.org/jewel/>)

► ***Neighbors Growing Together*** is a university-driven model at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, with daily intergenerational programs between an on-campus adult day services and child development laboratory school in an academic building at the school’s Department of Human Development and Family Sciences. University students and faculty enhance this program with ongoing learning and research about intergenerational programs.

(<http://www.intergenerational.clahs.vt.edu/neighbors/>)

► ***St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee, Wisconsin*** opened in 1999 offering an array of child and adult day services on the city’s south side. In 2015, they replicated the model for intergenerational care at the Bucyrus Campus on the city’s north side community, intentionally built in one of the most underserved neighborhoods in the city. Based on the feedback of neighborhood groups and residents, the first floor reflects an African theme including a central intergenerational park, which was designed and decorated to resemble an African village and marketplace. (<https://stanncenter.org/>)

Recommendations to Boost the Number of High-Quality Intergenerational Shared Sites:

An Action Plan for Young and Old to Thrive Together

According to the new survey conducted for Generations United and The Eisner Foundation, most Americans like and support the idea of shared site programs that serve and engage young and old; yet few respondents knew where to find such places or even if they exist in their community.

All sites contacted or visited for this report extolled the value and benefit they see every day, whether in children's empathy and improved reading scores or older adults who exhibit a renewed sense of purpose and a demonstrated increase in their physical and cognitive functioning.

So why haven't intergenerational shared sites proliferated? One site director said it bluntly, "Why aren't these in every community?"

We need to unite and act at the local, state and federal levels to make these shared site models not a rarity but the norm. As a country, we need to continue to involve our growing asset of older adults. To increase the quality of life for all ages, shared sites should not be the rare gem that can be experienced only if you happen to live in the right community. Shared sites in every community should not be a dream but rather a real-world, every day option that will create greater understanding between generations as the U.S. population grows more diversified in age, race and ethnicity.

Here are some ideas to further that goal.

Challenge local leaders to be champions and prioritize intergenerational use of built and outdoor space.

Use this report to educate and challenge local leaders to adopt an intergenerational planning framework for new construction or retrofitting current facilities and outdoor spaces. Nearly two-thirds of the Harris Poll/GU Survey respondents identified schools and senior centers as the prime locations for development of intergenerational shared sites. Creative use of these resources can maximize intergenerational contact, save dollars and strengthen community ties across all ages.

Urge collaboration between unlikely partners.

Innovation and creativity are key to success in broadening the landscape of intergenerational shared sites. Organizations that serve only one age group should seek to align with another that serves a different age group. With the right team-building approach and out-of-the-box thinking, the possibilities can become the realities that will connect generations – in the same place and at the same time. Foundations and philanthropists can encourage these partnerships and learn from The Eisner Foundation that has encouraged the adoption of intergenerational solutions through their grantmaking in Los Angeles County.

Work with accrediting bodies and develop new intergenerational friendly standards.

By their nature, shared sites – which serve multiple populations – require multiple accreditations and reviews by age-specific bodies. These accreditations can be helpful to establish the credibility of the program but are cumbersome because they seldom align and are costly. A review and tweaking of criteria that accrediting bodies use can lead to a more seamless meshing of requirements, which will in turn, encourage more shared sites.

Review and recommend policy and other changes that can clear the way to establishing more shared sites.

A comprehensive review of local, state and federal policies, zoning restrictions and standards and recommendations for changes will go a long way in furthering the movement. With so many rules and regulations at different levels of government and because of the diverse interests of each governmental entity, such an in-depth analysis could produce a wealth of information. Determining the modifications that would encourage intergenerational shared site creation will streamline the process of shared site development across the country. A review of funding mixes already in use at successful programs and sharing those formulas would also help avoid obstacles that often hinder development of intergenerational shared sites.

Initiate a local, state and/or national intergenerational shared site learning collaborative.

During interviews and site visits, those working in these programs and the developers who created them expressed the

desire to connect with others working in similar programs. The value of sharing lessons learned, successes, innovations and research findings would inspire their current work and spark others to consider establishing intergenerational shared sites. An organized approach would help intergenerational shared sites gather the data needed to analyze their effectiveness, demonstrate their impact and compare with cost savings research. Most sites express frustration (as shown in the GU/OSU survey) at the inability to effectively communicate their results that would benefit the field and encourage replication.

Create a vision and plan for the nation.

A national goal-and-action plan, building upon lessons learned and successes, will lay out a strategy for the future. Starting with a national symposium that convenes a diverse group of stakeholders, such efforts would include identifying barriers, enablers and potential policy solutions to advance intergenerational shared sites. Just as the UK's stated objective is creating 500 new shared sites by 2022, the U.S. should also take stock and develop its own goals. Now is the time to revisit the successes and shortcomings of intergenerational shared sites and develop recommendations to encourage their expansion.



Intergenerational Shared Site Program by type: Long-Term Care and Child Care/School

- ▶ **The Intergenerational Learning Center** is a child care program located within Providence Mount St. Vincent, a long-term care community for adults in West Seattle, Washington. Weekly planned and spontaneous activities and programs connect the 120 children with over 400 elder residents living in the building.

(<https://washington.providence.org/senior-care/mount-st-vincent/services/child-care/>)

- ▶ **Kendal at Oberlin** is a continuing care retirement community in Oberlin, Ohio with daily opportunities for intergenerational activities. Resident life is enriched by the presence of young children from the Kendal Early Learning Center. Friendships grow with high school-age staff that work in the dining rooms. Students from nearby colleges and universities are frequent volunteers. Recently, Kendal began a program where Oberlin College student volunteers can reside in a house owned by Kendal at Oberlin and work at the community in exchange for room and board fees.

(<https://kao.kendal.org/life-style/intergenerational/>)

- ▶ Since 2006, the **Geriatric Career Development Program of The New Jewish Home** has supported at-risk New York City youth in pursuit of careers in healthcare. Youth participants are fully immersed into the long-term care setting and provide more than 8,000 hours of companionship, activities and clinical care to elders each year. The comprehensive and contextualized curriculum trains young people to appreciate and nurture the holistic elder including the needs of the mind, body and spirit at all stages of life. The capstone experience of this college and career readiness program is certification in an allied health pathway.

(<https://jewishhome.org/innovation/gcd/>)

- ▶ **Lasell Village** is a continuing care retirement community on the campus of Lasell College in Newton, Massachusetts. On this Age-Friendly University (AFU) campus, College students and Village residents benefit from interacting through shared courses, class modules, research projects, internships and mentoring—as well as in the community itself, where students often serve as wait staff, lifeguards and volunteers. The RoseMary B. Fuss Center for Research on Aging and Intergenerational Studies provides intergenerational connections through its Talk of Ages program (<http://lasellvillage.com/>)

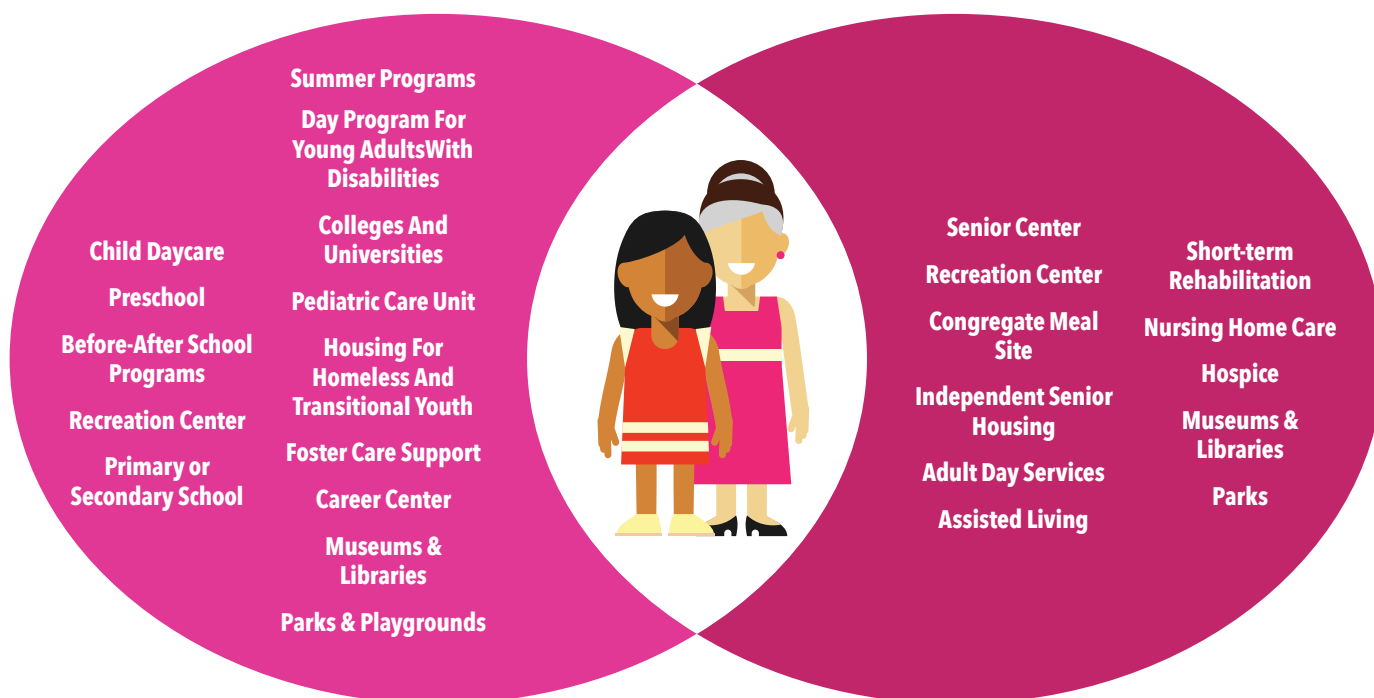
CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN SHARED SITES IMPROVE LEARNING, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS AND PERCEPTIONS OF OLDER ADULTS ⁹⁷

- Elementary school age children who had attended an intergenerational care program one to three years earlier demonstrated greater levels of empathy, social acceptance and ability to self-regulate than peers who had not attended an intergenerational program.
- Preschool children involved in intergenerational programs had higher personal/social developmental scores (by 11 months) than preschool children involved in non-intergenerational programs.
- Children who participated in activities led by adult day services participants improved motor and cognitive skills.
- Children who regularly participate with older adults in a shared site program have enhanced perceptions of older adults, persons with disabilities and nursing homes in general.
- Youth participants in intergenerational programs with people with dementia experienced social and emotional growth, including a deepened understanding of aging, older adults and dementia.
- Children working with adults with dementia developed social and emotional competencies, such as empathy, patience and problem-solving.
- The vast majority of parents believe that the intergenerational program is beneficial for their children.

Children/Youth Programs

+

Older Adult Programs

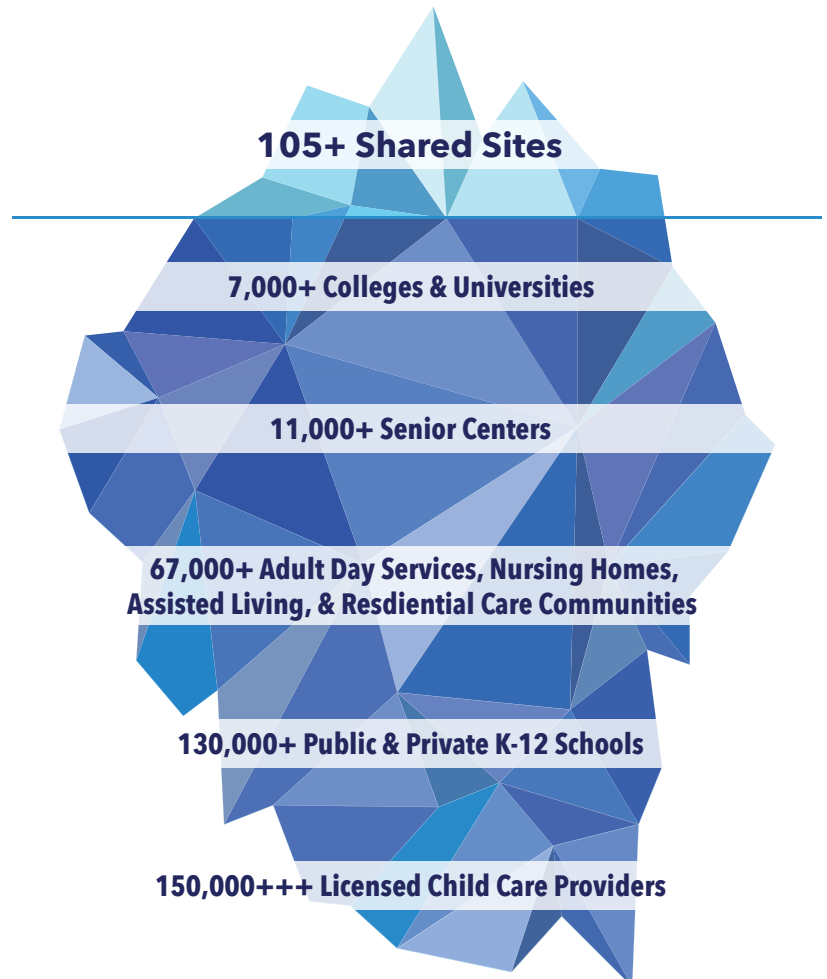


= Intergenerational Shared Sites

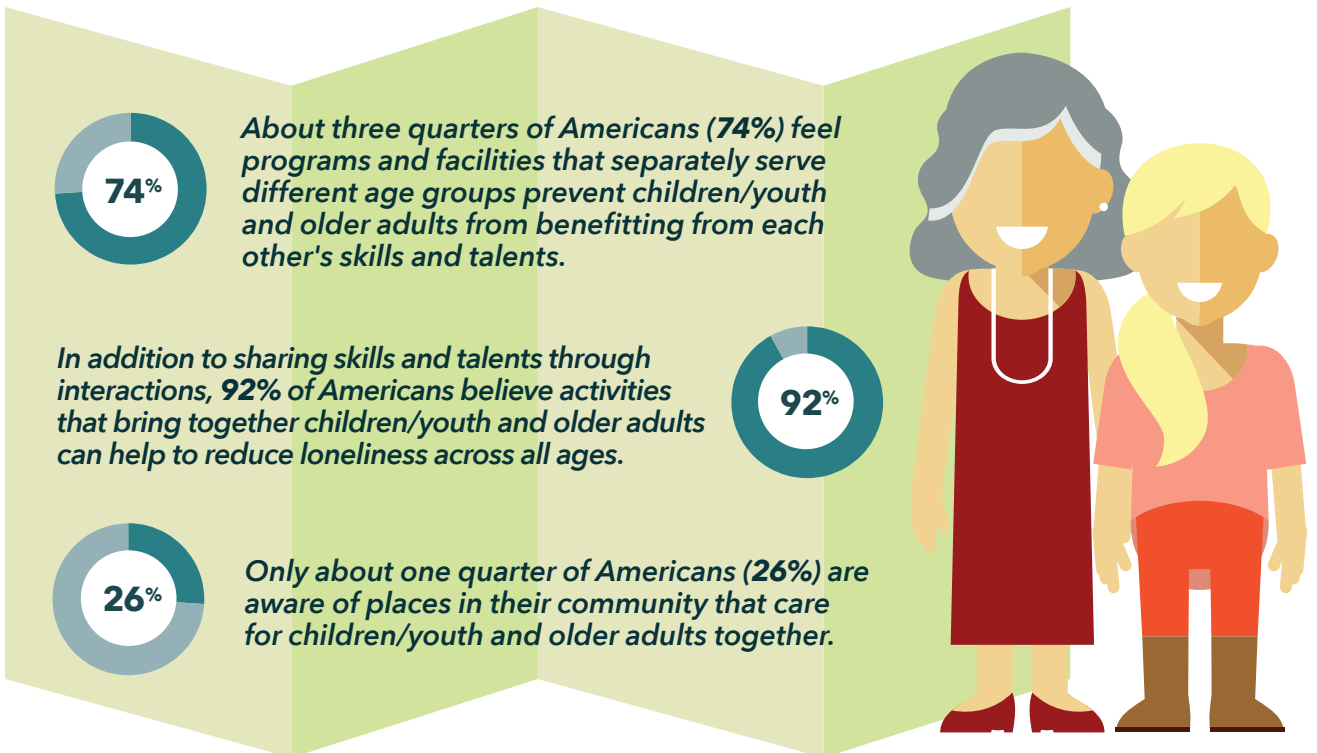
OLDER ADULTS IN SHARED SITES EXPERIENCE BETTER PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND LESS ISOLATION AND LONELINESS ⁹⁸

- For older adults, regular interaction with children result in an atmosphere that is more “family/home-like” and promotes social enrichment and a renewed interest in others.
- Older adults in intergenerational programs experience improved health and well-being and become less isolated and feel less lonely
- Older adults with dementia or other cognitive impairments experienced more positive affects, reduced agitation and increased levels of engagement during interactions with children than they did during non-intergenerational activities.
- Ninety percent of family caregivers indicated that their family member benefitted from the intergenerational program.
- Finally, the majority (97%) of adult participants in a shared site indicated that they benefitted from the intergenerational program and reported feeling happy, interested, loved, younger and needed.

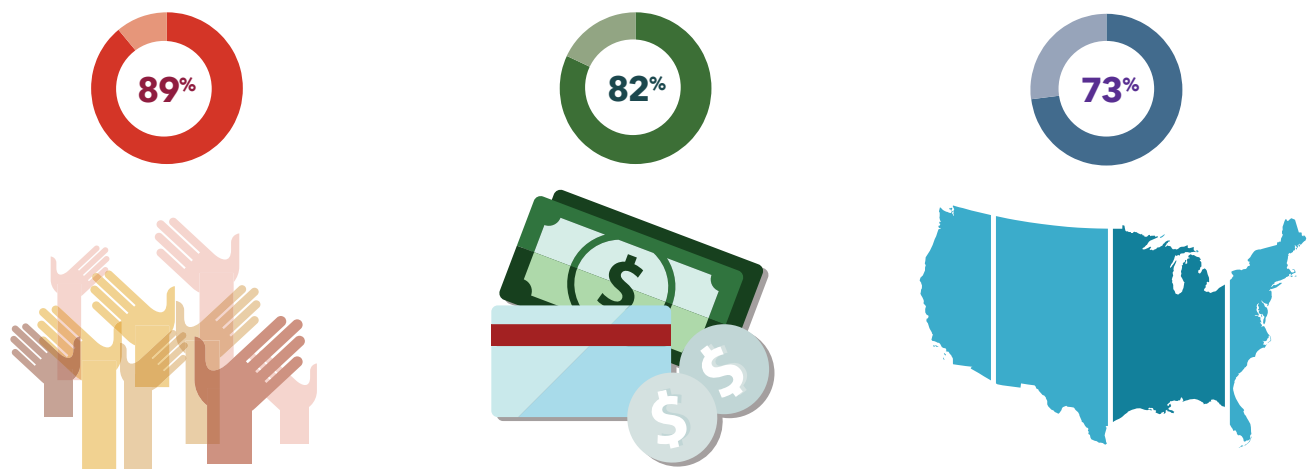
Shared Sites are just the tip of the Iceberg



People are interested in shared sites, but they don't know where to find them.



It makes sense to invest in shared sites.

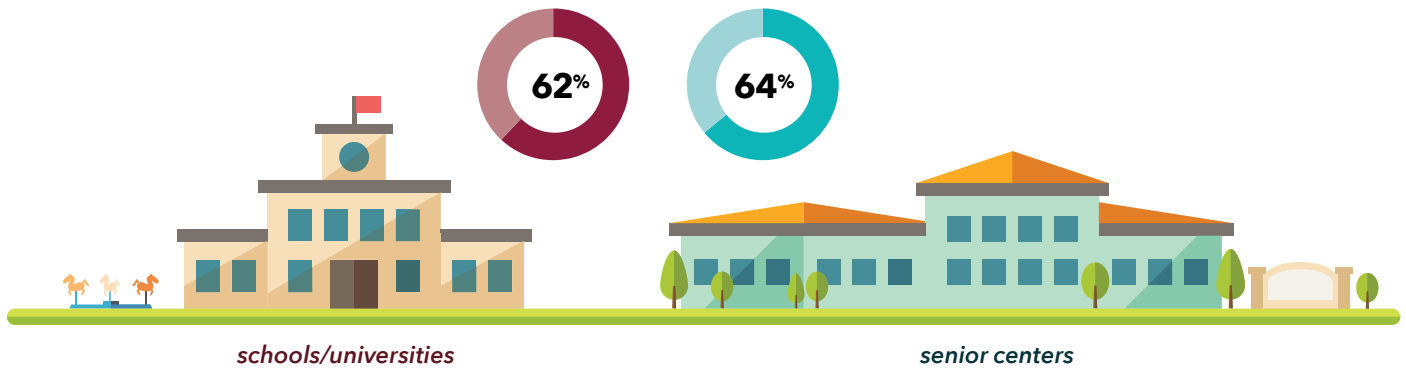


Nearly 9 in 10 (89%) Americans think that serving both children/youth and older adults at the same location is a good use of resources.

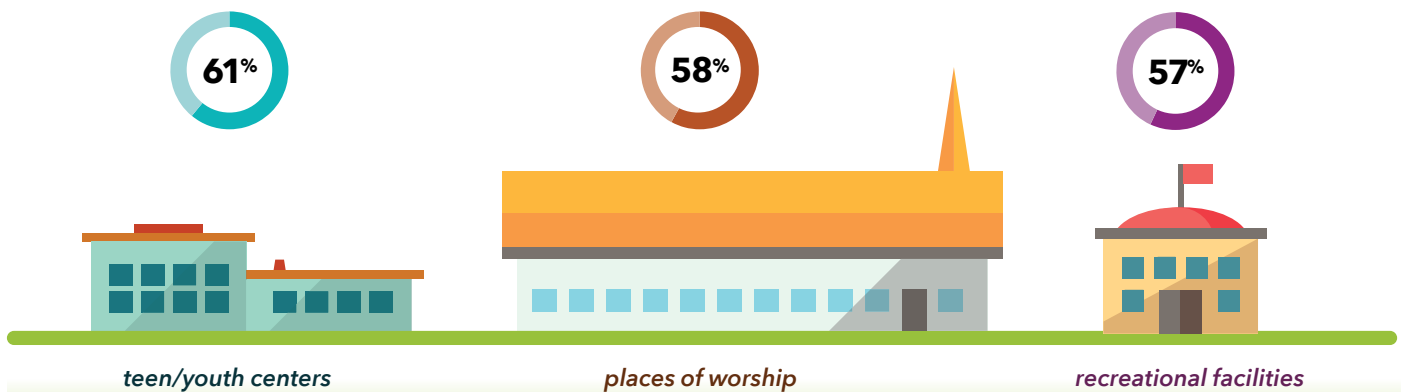
A majority (82%) of Americans would support their tax dollars going towards the creation of a facility that serves both children/youth and older adults in their community.

About three quarters of Americans (73%) think the government should appoint a person/group of people specifically responsible for creating opportunities (e.g., facilities, programs) for children/youth and older adults to come together.

Shared site programs should exist in common community places, especially senior centers and schools.



When it comes to which community institutions should be creating opportunities for children/youth and older adults to interact, schools/universities (62%) and senior centers (64%) are the top choices according to Americans.



Following those, about 3 in 5 cited teen/youth centers (61%), places of worship (58%) and recreational facilities (57%).

People prefer intergenerational care settings to those with just a single age group.

When it comes to personal preferences, more than 4 in 5 Americans say if they (85%) or a loved one (86%) needed care services, they would prefer a care setting where there are opportunities to interact with people of different age groups over one with just a single age group.



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Acknowledgments

About Generations United

The mission of Generations United is to improve the lives of children, youth and older adults through intergenerational collaboration, public policies and programs for the enduring benefit of all. For over three decades, Generations United has catalyzed cooperation and collaboration among generations, evoking the vibrancy, energy and sheer productivity that result when people of all ages come together. We believe that we can only be successful in the face of our complex future if age diversity is regarded as a national asset and fully leveraged.

To learn more about Generations United, please visit www.gu.org.

About The Eisner Foundation

The Eisner Foundation identifies, advocates for and invests in high-quality and innovative programs that unite multiple generations for the betterment of our communities. The Eisner Foundation was started in 1996 by Michael D. Eisner, then Chairman and CEO of The Walt Disney Company and his wife, Jane, to focus their family's philanthropic activities. The Eisner Foundation gives an estimated \$7 million per year to nonprofit organizations based in Los Angeles County. In 2015, The Eisner Foundation became the only U.S. funder investing exclusively in intergenerational solutions.

To learn more about The Eisner Foundation, please visit www.eisnerfoundation.org.

About The Surveys And Report

The Generations United/Eisner Foundation survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll between February 27 - March 1, 2018 among 2,041 adults ages 18+. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in online surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in our panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, please contact Sheri Steinig at Generations United at ssteinig@gu.org.

Generations United and The Ohio State University conducted a national survey of organizations delivering and interested in intergenerational shared sites. The survey was distributed electronically between February 16-April 6, 2018. Respondents were also given the opportunity to complete the survey in print form or as a phone interview. This survey is the first of its kind in more than twenty years and provides critical and timely insight on programs and services for people of all ages. Full details from the survey findings will be published by lead-investigator Shannon Jarrott at a later date. For questions on the survey, please contact Sheri Steinig at Generations United at ssteinig@gu.org.

For details on all other sources, please see endnotes.

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