



# Bridges Together

## The ABCs of Intergenerational Activities

### A is for Art Show

Have older adults and children work together on art projects. Then display the final pieces in a shared space, community gallery location, or at a senior center or school. Have a gala opening. Give people name tags with "My name is... Ask me about..." Post discussion questions on the artwork.

### B is for Bridges

The Bridges Program Curricula Suite uses a flexible structure and multiple intelligences theory to bring the generations together for a multi-week program. Find out more at [BridgesTogether.org](http://BridgesTogether.org).

### C is for Career Day

Ask older adults to present in classrooms about their career experiences. The students ask questions during the presentation, and afterwards to individuals.

### D is for Dance Troupe

Start an IG dance troupe that brings styles of dances together. Learn line dances from different eras or different types of ballroom dances.

### E is for Engineering

Introduce youth interested in science and engineering to older adults with physical limitations. Hold a competition where the youth work together to come up with new inventions to benefit the older adults.



### F is for Food

IG cooking classes are great for older adults and children to teach them how to make nutritious meals and snacks. Enjoy the food together after you make it.

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## **G is for Garden**

Plant an IG community garden and take care of it together. Consider a specialized garden like a flower garden, vegetable garden, herb garden or butterfly garden.

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## **H is for Helping**

Bring older adults and young people together for service projects. Make food to donate to a soup kitchen. Hold fundraisers for local charities. Raise awareness for causes that are important to both generations.

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## **I is for Ice Cream Social**

Have an ice cream sundae bar where individuals can make their own treats and then sit together at tables to talk about their favorite ice cream-related memories. Use Bridges Together Grand Conversation Cards to facilitate meaningful discussion.

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## **J is for Join Seniors 4 Kids**

Seniors 4 Kids is an organization that brings older adults together to advocate for youth-related policy issues. Go to [GU.org](http://GU.org) to learn more.

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## **K is for Kayak**

Kayaking is an activity that can be done even with limited mobility, or in pairs. Look for opportunities to rent kayaks near lakes and beaches.

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## **L is for Lunchtime Alternative**

Bring older adults into elementary schools and provide an alternative to recess once a week. The adults can tutor the students in various subjects, play board games, or teach craft skills.

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## **M is for Music and Memory Classes**

Youth are trained to volunteer with memory-impaired adults and their families to create specialized playlists that have therapeutic benefits. Find out more at [MusicandMemory.org](http://MusicandMemory.org).

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## **N is for Nature Walk**

Organize an IG nature walk in a local park or at the beach. Make it a scavenger hunt by having the older adults and children together look for different items.

## O is for Occasions to Recognize Veterans

Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Flag Day are all special days on the calendar to recognize those who have served the country in the armed forces. Bring generations together to learn about historical events.

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## P is for Puzzles

Every age can enjoy a jigsaw puzzle, word puzzle, or math puzzle. Have a special IG event for solving puzzles in groups, or put a community puzzle in a place where many generations come together, such as a library or community center. Encourage older adults and children to work together.

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## Q is for Quilt

Children can decorate squares of a quilt using fabric pens or puff paint. Older adults can introduce them to the skill of sewing and together they can put the quilt together. Hang the quilt for display at a community location. As an alternative, consider making a quilt out of paper and decorative tape.

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## R is for Retired Professionals Tutoring Students

Have retired adults in specialized fields tutor students in those subjects. For example, individuals whose career involved writing or editing can help high school students edit their papers or older adults whose career involved math or science can help students in those areas.

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## S is for Storybook Walk

Take apart a picture book, laminate each page and attach it to a stake or pole. Place the pages along a path and have older adults and children walk together to read the book. They can talk about the story during the walking time between the pages. Or invite musicians to accompany the walkers.

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## T is for Trunk or Treat

A great alternative for Trick-or-Treating on Halloween: Have older adults decorate their cars or trucks, and ask them to gather in an open parking lot along with municipal vehicles like fire trucks or police cars to distribute treats from their trunks. Children and parents can walk from car to car to collect candy and meet the older adults.

## U is for Updating Wikipedia Pages

Pair older adults and students together and pick a subject the older adult has personal knowledge about. Have them read a Wikipedia page about the topic together and add any information the older adult can share.

## V is for Vocational Technical School Partnering

Students volunteer their skills at senior centers and assisted living facilities. For example, cosmetology students can give make overs, healthcare students can offer wellness services, and fire protection students can check smoke detectors in older adults' homes.



## W is for Walk/Bike to School Day

National Walk or Bike to School Day occurs each October. Older adults can volunteer as crossing guards and safety monitors to help students get to school safely while meeting young people in their community.

## X is for eXercise Class

Classes where chairs and alternative movements are used provide an opportunity for older adults with limited mobility and small children to engage in the activity together. Think about line dancing, Zumba, chair volleyball or adapted badminton.

## Y is for Yard games

Games like horseshoes, croquet, bocce ball, ring toss, or bean bag tosses are fun for all ages. You can also adapt games like tic-tac-toe, scrabble, or checkers to be played in large format outside. Have a block party where the generations team up together to play different games in a tournament. Hand out prizes to the top teams.

## Z is for Zoo field trip

Go to the zoo or aquarium in an IG group. Encourage the generations to mix together and share stories about their favorite animals, memories, or hypothetical questions like, "If you could have any animal for a pet, which would you have and why?"