



Bridges Together

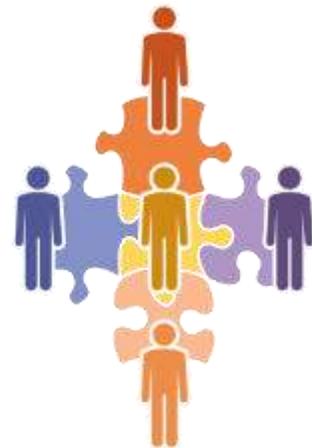
Helping Hands

There are so many people in our world effecting change by their volunteer efforts. And there are so many great needs in our communities. If we put on an intergenerational lens, we will realize that we can join forces, multiplying the benefit of our work while increasing understanding and friendship between generations.

Leadership Team

Begin by forming an Intergenerational Leadership Team or by identifying a societal need. On your Leadership team, have members from different organizations and generations. Ideally, at least two organizations will be represented with at least 5 members in total.

- If you know what societal issue you want to tackle, reach out to another organization that is addressing that. For example, if you work at a senior center and decide that you would like to beautify a traffic island nearby, reach out to the garden clubs in town as well as the schools to see if they have a nature club.
- If you want to address a community need – but are not sure which one – reach out to groups that represent different ages.
 - For youth: schools (public, independent/private, charter, vocational/technical, college), homeschool groups, Scouts (especially Eagle Scout candidates and Silver/Gold Award candidates), afterschool programs, religious organizations (especially youth who are going through a rite of passage like bat mitzvah or confirmation), community organizations like YMCA or Boys & Girls Club, park & rec programs, libraries
 - For older adults: Councils on Aging/senior centers, senior housing, assisted living, skilled nursing, places of worship – especially those that have a senior group – community organizations such as Kiwanis, Rotary, historical society, garden club
- Tip: Read the local newspaper and check out local websites/social media pages to get ideas



As an Intergenerational Leadership Team, Identify the Following:

1. What issue you will address
2. How you will recruit people to assist you
3. How you will ensure engagement and increase interactions between the generations. Some ideas include:
 - Start your gathering with an [ice breaker](#)
 - Make sure teams doing the activity are intergenerational
 - Have each team find a quote about service
4. When and where you will do your volunteering
5. What resources you need (monetary and items)
6. How to publicize the event
7. How you will let people know about the issue, root causes, possible solutions – for example, if you are collecting cans for a food pantry, invite someone from the food pantry to come and share about the organization, who the typical recipient is and what reasons lead them to need donated food and how people are working to help this person get back on her or his feet
8. How you will evaluate the effort, i.e. numbers of people involved, number of hours donated, number of items touched (i.e. “50 daffodil bulbs and 5 bushes were planted.”) and lives impacted (i.e. “25 children received backpacks.”)

To supplement your activity: There are many wonderful quotes about helping others, especially at [BrainyQuote](#) and [Goodreads](#). Invite Leadership Team members or groups to find one that speaks to them and share about it.

Ideas for Intergenerational Community Service



- **Collection Time:** Plan and conduct a collection/drive for any of the following: food, clothing, school backpacks, pet supplies, eye glasses, new/gently used toys for family shelters, toiletries for prisons, goody “love” bags for homebound elders. This project includes making signs, putting out bins, collecting and sorting as well as delivering the items.
- **In the Kitchen:** Cook a meal for a soup kitchen, bake dog biscuits for a pet shelter, hold a bake sale to benefit an organization. (Think about selling the baked goods at weekend youth sports games.) Make sure you are cooking in intergenerational groups!
- **Get Moving:** Hold a walk, carwash, softball game or volleyball tournament to raise awareness and funds for a cause of your choice – for a local family in need, cancer, suicide, veterans, etc. Offer prizes for teams that are intergenerational!
- **Blankets:** Crochet, knit, quilt, or make no-sew fleece blankets to donate. Recipients could include NICU hospital units, veterans, nursing homes. Can elders or youth teach each other how

to do some of these crafts? Can you start a weekly group? Another options delivering patterns and yarn to homebound elders – along with a cup of cheer and conversation!

- **Beautifying Our World:** Plant a garden, clean up a park or river, launch a campaign to change behavior – like turning off water while brushing teeth, shred paper or recycle electronic devices charging fees for their removal then donating the proceeds
- **Lifelong Learning:** Establish a Books-on-Wheels program where volunteers deliver books to homebound elders, collect gently used books to donate, hold a spelling bee or Scrabble tournament to raise funds for an organization
- **Musically Yours:** Form an intergenerational music group to perform at low-income schools or for nursing homes
- **Get Techy:** Collect old iPods to donate to [Music & Memory](#), offer drop-in tech classes at the library or community center, create a blog to keep people up to date on how to get involved with any of the projects you undertake!



***This Recipe for Intergenerational
Success is sponsored by the
Massachusetts Association of
Councils on Aging***