

Intergenerational Programs: Leverage for Elders and Children by Eyes of their Communities

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Abstract

Intergenerational program is aimed to maintain elders in social integration with children and involvement within their communities. Intergenerational programs are bringing together different generations' age group as children and elders which help communities to be more inclusive and cohesively. Intergenerational program is aimed to maintain elders in social integration with children and involvement within their communities. Intergenerational programs are bringing together different generations' age group as children and elders which help communities to be more inclusive and cohesively. Intergenerational programs have different communities approaches prospective differ from developed and developing countries from their communities' eyes.

Keywords: *Intergenerational Programming; Elders; Children*

Intergenerational programming promotes different surplus advantages for elders, children and communities through enhancing social interactions and bridging the generation relations gap. Intergenerational programs are bringing together different generations' age group as children and elders which help communities to be more inclusive and cohesively. Intergenerational program offers mutual respect, love and appreciation between all participants which improve sense of communities' engagement, belonging, and involvement and it turn on advantages to allover society's member. Intergenerational programs can help communities in reducing formal caregivers and replacing it with informal caregivers which have positive significant effect on physical, mental social health and wellness of elders. When one of intergenerational program approach includes meaning of informal caregivers, it will enhance family member bonding, reduce economic and finical burden on families and communities, decrease number of elders admitted to geriatric homes or hospital, reduce number of morbidity and mortality rate among elder persons which improve image of communities in national and international levels.

Developed countries have structured intergenerational programs with different strategies to bring elders and child in specific pre planned activities to enhance life satisfaction and meaningful life among elders and enforce regular contact with child. For example, the policy makers' annual plan is to conduct numbers of regular visiting between geriatric homes and different affiliation settings as nursery and schools. Others put in considerations that the infrastructure of geriatric homes included in or beside child nursery or toddler schools to improve integrations relations in natural approaches. School based approach intergenerational program improved knowledge, experiences exchange between elders and children, help to learn new skills or acquired new knowledge and built mutual relationships between elders and children.

Developing countries, low and middle income countries situation is different as almost of them still consider the meaning of extended families. Family home may include first generation (Elders and adults child) or second generations (Elders, adults' child and their grandchildren), multiple generations or even skip generations as (Elders and grandchildren living together without adults). Extended families help elders and children in regular contact in doing their activities of daily living as eating together and instrumental of activities of daily living in such as shopping, cooking and doing laundry or even children help their grandparents in taking prescribed medications which enhance their health conditions and improve quality of life.

There are many intergenerational programs activities which can be applied in both developed and developing countries which enhance meaningful and enjoyable time connections between different generations. One of these activities is Family projects as planned, designed, innovate and implement family tree with brief history of family individuals and photos of each of them. Also, storytelling as almost of kids and children enjoy their bedtime as grandpa or grandma tells stories to them. Moreover, cooking and baking together is considering as meaningful activities especially in personal events as for birthday cake or even preparations of meals or sweets for religious and national celebrations.

Furthermore, volunteering activities for communities improvement sponsored by individuals, governmental agencies or by non-governmental organizations in helping people in needed which bring together elders and different age groups for working together in introduce different charities works. One of modern approaches for intergenerational programs is community awareness projects related to different communities issues in such as community based awareness program in eradicating social ageism phenomena and increase community mental health awareness. Therefore, intergenerational programs has leverage for elders and children by eyes of their communities.

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