



Linking Generations NI

All Ages April 2025

Report

Kindly Funded and Supported by the Public Health Agency NI



Public Health
Agency

Introduction

With continued funding support from the **Public Health Agency NI** Linking Generations NI were delighted again to be able to award 30 small grants, of £125 each, in early 2025, to enable intergenerational events across NI in the month of April and to promote the grants scheme as part of **Global Intergenerational Week 2025**.

This All Ages April 2025 grants scheme saw so many new connections being made right across NI with a significant increase in group leaders, stating that it was their first time delivering an intergenerational activity. Their enthusiasm and commitment to ensuring their participants reaped the benefits of these interactions, gives confidence to the notion that there continues to be a growing appetite for organisations to take an intergenerational approach with their regular activities.

LGNI staff were delighted to attend many of the events delivered across April and were thoroughly impressed with the innovative and varying activities that groups and settings had planned.

Over **1,043 participants** from pre-nursery age to 80+ took part in these activities and the benefits and knock on effects have been significant for both the people who took part and the community leaders who developed the activities.

Impact of Grants - 60 groups involved

These grants continue to act as a catalyst to create sustainable connections, bringing older and younger people together. The impact of these connections is detailed below but as well as creating new opportunities, it also builds confidence and expertise to develop and implement intergenerational projects.



The benefits for those involved can be seen across the board and it has been hugely encouraging to see how one small idea and connection with another group/organisation/setting can provide positive outcomes for the participants.

The opportunity also provides vital learning for the organisations/leaders and in most cases, sustained links between people and organisations who go on to work intergenerationally as a result.

This short evaluation report gives some feedback and statistics from this wonderful programme – **(195 participants and 28 group leaders were surveyed)**



Some Vital Stats!

Our evaluation responses show that through developing connections with people of another generation in their community and taking part in All Ages April intergenerational activity, participants felt more connected to their community, welcome and respected and were keen to engage in further intergenerational activity!

- **91%** stated that as a result of their involvement they now felt more connected to their community.
- **96%** said they would like to take part in more intergenerational activity.
- **100%** said they felt welcomed and well-treated.
- **96%** said they had the chance to chat to someone of a different age.
- **43%** said that they had no previous experience of intergenerational involvement



The Headline Findings for Groups & Participants

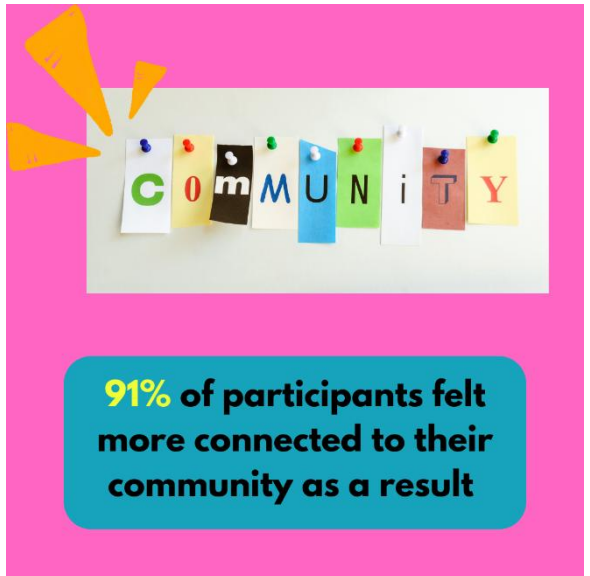
They told us about the practical benefits of taking part in the project.

- “The collaboration between Rathmore Primary School and Oakmont Care Home helps both young and old learn from one another while building meaningful relationships that benefit everyone involved”.
- *“The project brought a boost in confidence, friendship, a boost in self-esteem, team building skills, shared skills, building new community links, laughter and an increased understanding of other age groups.”*
- *“The whole experience was a benefit. What would normally have been a sleepy day room on a Wednesday afternoon became a room full of laughter and fun and a week later the residents are still talking about the children and showing me very proudly what they made and did together during the party event. They are looking forward to the next visit and seeing their wee friends again.”*



Intergenerational benefits reported included:

- *“Our residents were able to socialise with new people and young people, it gave them a sense of independence being able to direct conversation and the activity with the young people. An opportunity they may not have - this also may be the same for some of the young people. The children had opportunity to meet the elderly, they shown empathy and patience towards our residents. The residents and young people genuinely had fun - we know by all the lovely big smiles they had..”*
- *“The social side of interacting with people from all ages playing fun board games. The cards were a stimuli and encouraged conversations happening getting to know each other better. The benefits were definitely the school community spirit and the enjoyment expressed by all. It was a great opportunity for the older generation to connect with the younger generation. They all learnt something from each other. The benefits of intergenerational relationships for all age groups are many; friendships, love and increased self-esteem. Improved health and a reduction in feelings of practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older have to offer to each other and those around them..”*
- *“These sessions are so beneficial from our children and residents they have developed language skills , listening, patience's, confidence, interactive qualities. It develops kindness and empathy and develops imagination through conversations and stories they hear..”*



We loved the feedback from the All Ages April participants!

Comments from participants that took part, who were asked what they enjoyed about the event included:

- *“It was a sunny day and we planted seeds together.”*
- *“Interacting with different people and generations.”*
- *“Being with them and everything was so good. I enjoyed everything.”*
- *“It was lovely to spend time engaging with lots of different people of different ages.”*
- *“Nice talking to people with a big age gap. It was fun working together.”*
- *“Working on crafts with the younger generation. I had a great conversation while working with a 3 year old..”*
- *“Meeting up with different age groups in a relaxed way.”*



Feedback from the Community Leaders

The projects funded not only provided great learning for the young and old people taking part but also for those who planned, organised and delivered the initiatives. We have highlighted their feedback under each of the 8 core principles that our intergenerational work adheres to (Pinto et al, 2009).

1. Mutually and reciprocally beneficial - each generation participating learns with and from each other. Project leaders told us:

- I learnt that children are amazingly adaptive and are able to communicate and interact so sensitively with our residents who at times may struggle to hear or see or may be confused, these were accepted and negotiated without fuss and both parties quickly enjoyed finding ways to interact together whether that be through talk or a joint activity or simply sharing time together.

2. Participatory - based on the aspirations and needs of those participating. Project leaders told us:

- The sheer importance of offering activities like this to our residents. Each resident that participated thoroughly enjoyed the event and spoke so positively about it - they had mentioned in the feedback forms they would love to do it again. It gave them opportunity to feel and act young again, to interact with young people and understand life from a different perspective - a perspective they once had. Some of our residents don't have any young family relatives and it is such a wonderful opportunity for them.



3. Assets based - working with the generations to help them to discover their strengths. Project leaders told us:

- Yes, some had never been in to their granddaughter or grandson's school before so being allowed that opportunity to explore their learning environment. Many of the parents who did not know each other exchanged phone numbers for a group outside of support re school. many of the grandparents who have not met other grandparents within the school setting bonded over a cup of tea.

4. Well planned - project leaders told us:

- We hope to take both classes of children down to the local Fold before the end of the year for the morning.
- We hope to organize more creative and inclusive events like the dot painting session to bring people of all ages together. Our aim is to strengthen community connections, encourage intergenerational interaction, and create a welcoming space where everyone feels involved and valued.

- We already do a lot with P.S/Secondary schools & youth clubs on one-to-one basis this is our 1st time engaging as 3 way project, as voluntary led the project was very successful, it was hard work keeping on top of it but the benefits outweighs the process.

5. *Culturally grounded - tailored to the individual needs, context and attitudes of those participating. Project leaders told us:*

- The younger people were surprised at how much fun they could have with board games, indoor bowls etc and also how much fun older people can be. The older people were surprised at how keen the younger people were to learn and how much fun they all had.

6. *Strengthening community bonds - promote active citizenship. Project leaders told us:*

- Our group gained several valuable links and supports as a result of the project. Through our ongoing partnership with Nightingale Nursing Home, we strengthened relationships with the care home staff, who were incredibly supportive and accommodating throughout the project. Their insight into the residents' needs and daily routines was invaluable and will continue to inform how we plan future visits. Additionally, we established a useful contact with a local artist who supported the preparation of materials for the project. This connection may be developed further to support future collaborative art-based or creative initiatives.
- It was nice to link in with the school governors in such an informal project
- We hope to build on the relationship with Men's Shed Lurgan and continue to develop Intergenerational links. In the future, we would hope to plan more woodwork sessions at the Men's Shed and devise an ICT based programme for the men to engage in at our centre.

7. *Challenges ageism - Project leaders told us:*

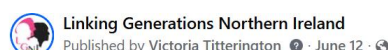
- How important the link is between each generation. Grandparents are so valuable to a family, children I feel are more settled around this age group and you can see a definite caring side that shines through when a child interacts with their granny or grandfather. Children can learn so much and I feel grandparents can guide and support families and be there as the constant figure who will help out whenever they can.
- We have learnt that the children really value interaction with the residents. The residents love to chat and play with the children. The relationship between both the children and adults is loving and heartwarming to watch.
- Resilience - despite the heavy rain, our volunteers continued working outdoors. Teamwork - children were encouraged to get stuck into the work by our older community.

8. *Cross-disciplinary -providing a vehicle for broadening the experience of professionals and encourage more inclusive working. Project leaders told us:*

- The linking generations site is very helpful with resource materials I will definitely use in the future. I also found it interesting to hear what other people are doing and to get to share ideas.
- We have been able to meet up with Busy Bees again due to the positive interactions we had on our Global Intergenerational Day. The parents of the children are also keen for them to do so.
- Through the project we built new connections with artist, and volunteers who are interested in supporting future events. We also gained useful resources and ideas for creative activities, which we can use to plan and improve future projects.

- We were delighted to welcome Elaine Brownlee from Linking Generations NI, who attended one of the sessions alongside Raisa Donnelly, representative from Mid Ulster District Council. Their visit highlighted the value of the intergenerational work taking place and provided an opportunity to showcase the positive impact the project had on both the pupils and the residents of Nightingale Nursing Home. Their presence not only demonstrated external support but also opened the door to potential future collaborations and funding opportunities. The interest shown by Linking Generations NI and the Council representative reaffirmed the importance of building community connections and provided encouragement for the school to continue and expand its intergenerational work. Their involvement has further strengthened our network of support and helped raise the profile of the project within the wider community.

All Ages April leaders filled local & social media with intergenerational positivity!



Great to see this positive good news story showcasing the [#intergenerational](#) efforts of [Dunluce Healthcare's](#) Gortacharn Care Home, [St Ronans PS Lisnaskea](#), @The Moat Pri... See more



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Fermanagh care home teams up with schools to bridge age gap

A Fermanagh care home has teamed up with three primary schools to bridge the age gap.



Before our Easter break, P7 had a wonderful time planting with the residents from Oakmont! 🌸 It was a meaningful and enjoyable session filled with teamwork, laughter, a... See more



Another day another fantastic All Age Aprils [#intergenerational](#) activity 🥰 Thanks to [Olderfleet Primary School](#) for sharing these wonderful snaps 📸 of connections between... See more





Foundations of Wellbeing

All Ages April always showcases fantastic work and gives evidence to support the impact of intergenerational approaches to address health and wellbeing, social isolation, loneliness and improve **Community Connections**. **100 %** of participating groups and individuals practiced at least one foundation for wellbeing:

Give:

- All projects involved an element of mutual volunteering: older people share with younger people and younger people with older.

Be Active:

- Many projects involved physical movement - dancing, nature walks, moving about, displays and making things.

Take Notice:

- Participants may have taken more notice of the world because the event was out of the ordinary for them.

Keep Learning:

- Across the projects older people explained things like typewriters and old games to young people who discovered these 'new' things and in return helped older people learn about IT and re-discover the enthusiasm of youth.

Connect:

- Participants connected with new people of different ages and expressed huge desire to keep connecting.

The evidenced outcomes of **All Ages April** activities and alignment with the Foundations of Wellbeing also contributes to the building an **Age-friendly Northern Ireland** particularly the themes of respect and social inclusion and participation. Considering the number of schools and education settings involved, this makes a considerable contribution to the **Department for Education's Every School a Good School Policy** by supporting the establishment of school links with the community. The high numbers of Care Home settings involved, aligns All Ages April outcomes with the achievement of The **Department of Health Care Home Standards** relating to Contact with Family, Friends and the Local Community.

The All Ages April Activities!

Rathmore Primary School



We, in Rathmore Primary School, enjoy a strong and meaningful connection with Oakmont Care Home, fostering a positive and enriching relationship between students and the residents. Our school frequently organises visits where the children interact with residents through various activities such as arts and crafts, planting sessions and singing. These visits not only brighten the day for the residents but also provide valuable learning experiences for our children, teaching them about empathy, respect, and the importance of community. The collaboration between Rathmore and Oakmont extends beyond occasional visits, with the

residents joining us at school events held throughout the year, like holiday celebrations and Community Afternoons. These shared activities create a sense of togetherness, bridging the generation gap enabling everyone to form lasting friendships. The partnership is also a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about the past, as many Oakmont residents share fascinating life stories. The collaboration between Rathmore Primary School and Oakmont Care Home highlights the power of community engagement, helping both young and old learn from one another while building meaningful relationships that benefit everyone involved. This ongoing connection reinforces the values of kindness, understanding, and inclusivity within the school and the broader community.

The Benefits: The collaboration between Rathmore Primary School and Oakmont Care Home helps both young and old learn from one another while building meaningful relationships that benefit everyone involved.

Participants: 26 younger and 21 older people took part.

Woodgreen Healthcare/ Willow Tree Lodge

Our theme was 'Picture This' and we connected with the children from The Rock Club and residents at Willow Tree Lodge taking photo's of each other using a Polaroid camera that we purchased with our grant money. It was great fun watching the children and residents taking photo's, learning how to use the camera and then patiently waiting on the photo's to develop. We made the event more fun dressing up and using a big pop up picture frame for some of our photo's and we then created a lovely collage with all our photo's which will be displayed for all to see at our home. After taking the photo's we had a little celebration and dance off with children and residents and exchanged Easter gifts and treats. Everyone who participated said how much they had enjoyed the event and it was made even better freezing each second on film and letting it live forever.

The Benefits: The whole experience was a benefit.

Participants: 6 younger and 16 older people took part



Meadow Bridge Primary School

The school council from Meadow Bridge Primary decided that they would like to make Easter crafts with the residents of Lisadian House. We contacted Lisadian House and were able to visit on Thursday 3rd April from 11 - 12pm. We brought with us a range of craft materials which we were able to find in school or purchase with our grant. Each school council member worked alongside one or two residents. They made an Easter card together either colouring together or sticking craft items onto a blank card. The children were so excited about visiting Lisadian, one boy even decided he would rather go to Lisadian House than go swimming! They were also a little anxious but once they got crafting this soon disappeared.



Everyone was busy and involved and because there was a purpose to our activity this helped to ease our conversations. The children could ask specifics like, what colour of card would you like? or what sticker do you want? This led to good conversations about football, the master (principal), knitting, birthdays. There was a lot of laughter and fun. I feel that everyone got something out of it. The creativity broke down barriers. The children got to find out about the older generation, it built up their confidence, it filled the residents with laughter and fun, it helped the residents to be busy and meet new faces. We are planning to go back to Lisadian House before the Summer!

The Benefits: A boost in confidence, friendship, a boost in self-esteem, team building skills, shared skills, building new community links, laughter and an increased understanding of other age groups.

Participants: 10 younger and 19 older people took part.

Walker Memorial Parent Support Group

We invited the Open Door Club, a club for retired/elderly people in the local community, to come and join us at our school for tea and treats whilst watching the children perform a short variety show. The children from the senior part of the school sang, recited poems, danced and played instruments to entertain the ladies of the Open Door club.

The Benefits: They had a fun and enjoyable afternoon; Change of scenery for the club ladies. Their hall usually isn't available this week so otherwise wouldn't have met this week. Chatted to people they wouldn't usually speak to and learned things about how the other generation live and things they enjoy. They learned things about the school from years ago (some club ladies worked in the school). Reminiscing about the past and good times.

Participants: 18 younger and 15 older people took part



Spa Nursing Home

We held a spring daffodil themed tea party with 10 children from our local primary schools well-being warrior committee joining the residents (16) of Spa nursing home. During the course of the afternoon the children and elderly residents chatted to each other, they made and decorated daffodil and spring decorations and played a couple of party games and shared afternoon tea and refreshments together. We also had a number of the residents families join us and they also became part of the afternoons interactions.



This was the 3rd occasion these children have visited us in recent months. It was noted how comfortable now they each were with each other and were keen to rekindle the friendships which are established. The children naturally migrated to the residents they had met and chatted with previously and both residents and children instantly appeared totally relaxed and comfortable chatting together. The room was full of activity and laughter and conversation with everyone interacting well and enjoying doing the joint activities on offer. This felt like a lovely celebration of friendship and several of us watching on commented on how special it was to see the generations engaging so beautifully together.

We are fortunate that this will be an ongoing partnership with our local primary school, as they have adopted this as part of their well-being warrior programme.

The Benefits: The whole experience was a benefit. What would normally have been a sleepy day room on a Wednesday afternoon became a room full of laughter and fun and a week later the residents are still talking about the children and showing me very proudly what they made and did together during the party event. They are looking forward to the next visit and seeing their wee friends again.

Participants: 10 younger and 16 older people took part.

Ladybird Lane

We planned a wonderful event. We took our preschool setting of 22 children to Iveagh nursing home for a fun filled interactive magic show. This was a great opportunity for residents and children to take part in the activities, talk, interact, laugh and communicate over a fun light-hearted activity. the laughter of the children light up the room and the interaction engagement and smiles were priceless. it was such a wonderful morning, and it allowed two generation to mix that wouldn't normally meet. We have an ongoing monthly visit to Iveagh house and have been working in partnership all year taking over our preschool session to their setting. it is so beneficial for all ages, through developing communication skill, confidence, interaction, mental health and well-being. We will continue with our monthly programme working with Iveagh house.

The Benefits: These sessions are so beneficial from our children and residents they have developed language skills, listening, patience, confidence, interactive qualities. It develops kindness and empathy and develops imagination through conversations and stories they hear.

Participants: 22 younger and 25 older people took part



Sunnymead Residential Home

After we had received the linking generations grant, we went ahead and planned a teddy bears picnic. We included a local school that we have previously have not linked in with before - we thought this was a good opportunity for the residents to meet and interact with new children between the ages of 4-5. We were able to buy bird houses and acrylic paint pens and stickers for the residents and young people to decorate. This created a talking point and the children interacted well amongst each resident. Afterwards the children got a lovely snack and the residents and teachers were able to have tea and treats. The weather was beautiful so we then went outside to our sensory garden. Overall the children and residents had a lovely time - the teacher and classroom assistant was so impressed and hopes to engage with us again.



The Benefits: Our residents were able to socialise with new people and young people, it gave them a sense of independence being able to direct conversation and the activity with the young people. An opportunity they may not have - this also may be the same for some of the young people. The children had opportunity to meet the elderly, they shown empathy and patience towards our residents. The residents and young people genuinely had fun - we know by all the lovely big smiles they had.

Participants: 12 younger and 7 older people took part

Polish Sisterhood

We organized a dot painting session that brought together people of all ages in a fun, creative, and family-like atmosphere. It was amazing to see different generations working side by side, building relationships and sharing stories through art.

The event helped strengthen community bonds and showed the value of spending time together in a relaxed, inclusive setting. We're looking forward to hosting more events like this to bring even more people together.

The Benefits: Participants benefited by connecting with others in a relaxed, welcoming environment. They enjoyed expressing their creativity, making new friends, and spending quality time with people of different ages. The event also helped boost confidence and encouraged a strong sense of community belonging.

Participants: 3 younger and 9 older people took part



Bangor Central Integrated Primary School

All ages Activity - We hosted an afternoon on Thursday 1st May 2025 when the Year 3 children invited their grown-up (parents/careers and grandparents) to school for an afternoon of getting to know you - participating in board games, activities, iPads etc. They all played Twister, Draughts, Guess Who, Tiddlywinks and many more fun games which involved social interaction with each other. All participants learnt from each other how to play the games. We hosted this event in our school Assembly hall 2-3pm serving tea/coffee/juice to all. Our hope is to continue to run this several times before the end of the academic year. Moving forward looking after this event we would like to Progress on to an older KS2 class visiting a local church senior ladies knitting club for some 'knit and natter' sessions. Progressing on to making links with a local nursing home and regular activities with all age ranges. It is important to bring generations together as spending time with other generations has a wider impact for all on mental health. From participating in these projects we can strengthen and regenerate our communities by promoting inclusion and understanding. In turn it will help us to make our community a happier and more vibrant place to live and work. Intergenerational collaboration has numerous benefits for individual and a society as a whole, including enhanced productivity, improved decision-making, increase creativity, enhance learning, and development and improve cohesion.



We enjoyed a tea party together and had a few play stations around the room such as books, jigsaws, sensory play. The children enjoyed having free time with the adults to chat, play and engage with them. We than all sat together and enjoyed tea, juice, buns and cake. There was lots of socialising, laughter and stories being told.

The Benefits: The social side of interacting with people from all ages playing fun board games. The cards were a stimuli and encouraged conversations happening getting to know each other better. The benefits were definitely the school community spirit and the enjoyment expressed by all. It was a great opportunity for the older generation to connect with the younger generation. They all learnt something from each other. The benefits of intergenerational relationships for all age groups are many; friendships, love and increased self-esteem. Improved health and a reduction in feelings of practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older have to offer to each other and those around them.

Participants: 41 younger and 59 older people took part

NI Hospice

On Wednesday 16th April a group of art students from St Malachy's College Belfast joined us in the Northern Ireland Hospice for an afternoon of Easter crafts. We set up tables at one end of the ward with crafts. Patients were brought out of their rooms to join the group. Some patients were able to walk, others attended in their hospital beds or wheelchairs. Participants were provided with various sizes of terracotta pots, stencils, acrylic paint and paint pens. The students helped the patients design their pots and decorate them. Some patients had family visiting at the time so they also joined in.

During the session, we provided snacks and refreshments. There was a lot of chatting and laughter too. The students stayed for around 1 ½ hours and were presented with Easter eggs as a thank you. Some patients enjoyed it so much that they didn't want to go back to their rooms and stayed out for another while chatting to each other.

In NI Hospice, all the patients have their own private rooms so they do not always get the chance to chat to each other. This event provided that opportunity. Almost all of the patients commented on how much they benefited from chatting with other people who are in similar situations as they are. They also were surprised at how much they had in common with the students. They enjoyed talking about their favourite artists and types of music they listen to. It was a successful afternoon and we look forward to arranging something similar again.

The Benefits: It brought joy to their day, smiles on their faces, created good memories, and gave them something to talk to their friends and families about.

Participants: 6 younger and 5 older people took part



Larne Care Centre

We are a care home and we invited the nearest primary school to take part in Easter activities. The school provided 7 Year 7 pupils to team up with the care home residents. They made an Easter wreath with meet & greet. Wore name badges so we knew everyone's names.

The pupils took part in an Easter egg treasure hunt wearing rabbit ears. They finished with another Easter craft. To end the day we had drinks, treats, goodie bag & Easter egg for the pupils. We took photos and they got published in the Carrick & Larne Times. The residents & pupils thoroughly enjoyed the day, chatting together and making friendships. The pupils had not met anyone 100 years before and thought old people just sleep.

Great afternoon, looking forward to next month when different pupils are coming over for activities.

The Benefits: Everyone enjoyed their day and learnt a lot about each other.

Participants: 7 younger and 7 older people took part



Engage Group (Hope Church)

During our Intergenerational Event we invited our Local Pre-School along to partake, as well as Lisadian, our local care home. We wanted a unique experience for all our participants, so we asked C&J's Animal Zoo to join us. C&J's brought along a Chinchilla, an African Bull Frog, snakes, stick insects, an African land snail, a Tarantula, a tortoise plus much more.

We had a smaller number of seniors this particular morning due to holidays and a sickness going around, Lisadian were also unable to make it that morning. We had planned to have equal numbers of adults to children but had to improvise and give adults a larger group of children to sit beside.

This event was thoroughly enjoyable for all ages. Some of the children became quite attached to the seniors, holding their hands and chatting the entire time. This was a highlight for the adults involved, one adult wouldn't get a photo taken with the Mayor without their new pre-school friend beside them.

We promoted the event as best we could, inviting the Mayor of Lisburn and Castlereagh along. He proceeded to make a video promoting Global Intergenerational Week, which was viewed on the council's Facebook page for thousands to see. We also shared the details on the Busy Bees Facebook page, with the parents, with the church we were situated in, and the Engage Facebook page. This event was a success. We had a number of additional men with us who didn't seem to want to engage directly, but they viewed the event from afar and enjoyed observing.



The Benefits: The enjoyment in seeing the little children learn about the animals/reptiles, the conversations and funny comments from the children, as well as excitement from them.

Participants: 34 younger and 13 older people took part

St Bride's Primary School

We used our intergenerational fund to host a fun quiz morning with sandwiches, treats, tea and coffee and invited in the parents and grandparents. I got the sandwiches from a local cafe and created a Blooket quiz, the rounds were questions from each decade since 1960. The children performed a song and did a dance.

The Benefits: A morning well spent developing links between the school and wider community.

Participants: 28 younger and 30 older people took part



Portglenone Primary School



We organised a morning for the P1 and P6 children to work together with some guests who had been invited from the local fold and local churches. They decorated a plant pot each and then planted a flower to take home and remind them of the event. Everyone then decorated a cupcake and enjoyed spending some time chatting together while they ate their cupcake and had other buns and a drink. Finally, the P1 children had brought some of their favourite table top toys down to the hall and they brought these to the tables for everyone to join in with. This included duplo and Lego bricks, colouring and painting, the princess castle and tea party and lacing boards and whiteboards. At first, our older guest simply sat back and watched the children play but very soon were joining too.

Unfortunately, we had a number of people who had been invited and were keen to come but had taken ill or were not feeling great that morning. This included the residents of the Fold and some of the men from the church who had joined us at the last event. We do plan to meet again if possible next year and P1 and 6 are planning a trip down to the Fold before the end of the school term this year.

The Benefits: So many benefits from just spending time together and especially with people of different ages. The P1 children will still look out for their special P6 friend when they are outside and it means the P6 children are given a more caring role and responsibilities as they can do things for the younger children instead of them always looking for the teacher. Hopefully this caring role will be something they will remember and continue to develop as they get older.

Participants: 38 younger and 8 older people took part

Whitehead Nursing Home

We held an Easter party with our local nursery school, involving an egg hunt, a craft, rhyme time and party food. The benefits were incredible for everyone involved. Smiles, laughter, fun and great memories. We also printed the photos and have them displayed in a large frame to help our dementia patients continue to remember.

We have met with the nursery twice since then and will continue this on a fortnightly basis throughout the school year. Very worthwhile event for everyone and the children are always excited to come back.

We hosted a grandparents games morning in our school. We invited grandparents, older relatives and neighbours to come into KS1 and have a social time with the pupils in Y3 and Y4.



The Benefits:

Friendship. Mental health. Positivity.

Participants: 25 younger and 19 older people took part.

Windmill Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit

Every Wednesday, throughout the month of April, pupils from Windmill Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit participated in a meaningful intergenerational art project with the residents of Nightingale Care Home. Over the course of several weeks, 48 pupils were involved 24 from P1 and P2 and 24 from P3 to P7. Each day, the younger group walked to the care home and worked from 2:00–3:00 pm before being collected by parents. The older group followed, engaging with residents to complete a collaborative Easter-themed artwork. At the end of the project, each resident received a completed Easter picture to hang in their room, bringing colour, warmth and a strong sense of connection between generations.



This project provided countless benefits for both pupils and residents. For the children, it was an opportunity to develop empathy, communication skills and an appreciation for older generations. For the residents, it brought joy, stimulation and a welcome break in routine through meaningful engagement. So much so, that they didn't want the project to end.

We are keen to build on the success of this initiative and plan to introduce new activities, including board games and musical sessions, to further strengthen the bond between our school and Nightingale Care home. In future visits, we will liaise closely with staff to avoid scheduling conflicts, such as overlapping church services, to ensure pupils have maximum time to engage meaningfully with residents.

The Benefits: The benefits of this intergenerational project were wide-ranging and meaningful for both the pupils and the residents of Nightingale Nursing Home.

For the pupils, the experience helped develop empathy, patience, and respectful communication. It gave them a unique opportunity to connect with older people, learn about their lives and understand the importance of kindness, inclusion and community spirit. Working collaboratively on the art project boosted their confidence, creativity and sense of responsibility. It also gave them a sense of pride in contributing to something that brought joy to others.

For the residents, the visits brought energy, companionship and a welcome change to their routine. Many enjoyed the chance to interact with young children, share stories and take part in a creative activity that gave them a sense of purpose and belonging. The presence of the children lifted spirits, sparked memories and helped reduce feelings of loneliness or isolation that some residents may experience.

Overall, the project fostered mutual respect and understanding across generations, strengthened community bonds, and created lasting positive memories for everyone involved.

Participants: 48 younger and 23 older people took part

Appleblossom Playgroup

We held our inter-generational Easter Breakfast event on Sunday 6th April 2025 at the playgroup premises in Annaghmore. Thank you for giving our group the opportunity to attain some much needed funds whilst bringing all ages in our community together to forge relationships and tackle social isolation in our area whilst celebrating the Easter event. We are a rural community with limited events so we value community events which bring all ages in our community together to help for age friendships through effective engagement.

We had a super turnout on the day! Over 126 through the doors. We had a wide range of food including hot food and beverages - cooked sausage/ bacon baps, pancakes, pastries tea/coffee, local apple juice and a selection of sweet treats and Easter Eggs for the children. We encouraged social interaction by providing a relaxed environment for people of all ages to connect, chat and bond over shared interests of promoting our local area. We believe we helped break down barriers as we facilitated conversations between people who might not normally interact (Age Gaps). The event lasted for 2 hours and we received such positive feedback on the day and indeed in the weeks after! We believe we improved the wellbeing of all who came along and we have been asked to make it a more regular event so we are already planning a Christmas event with Collaboration opportunities emerging on the day! Regular social engagement reduces stress, anxiety and feelings of loneliness and people feel more connected and valued when included in Community oriented events.

We agree all our goals for the event were surpassed and a very successful morning was had by young and old.



The Benefits: Share feedback/ Ideas from Other successful events

Participants: 55 younger and 67 older people took part.

Southern Regional College



For a number of years SRC have recognised the opportunity that intergenerational practice and connections provides for their Health & Social Care Students. As part of All Ages April they invited community groups to a craft/coffee morning with their Level 3 Health and Social Care students providing action based learning and a positive experience for all involved.

The Benefits: Really good for our students to exchange interesting stories with people - it develops good communication skills.

Participants: 25 younger and 40 older people took part

Drumgath Ladies Group

Over the last number of years Drumgath ladies group have been involved with all the local schools in relation to our local ancient burial ground project, and also our spaces and places project through the National Lottery.

The linking generations NI project gave us another opportunity to work with a fantastic bunch of eco-warriors, staff and school governors. The added bonus was that the young people had a special project that they wanted to work on, that after a new outdoor classroom, and we were only too delighted to be involved in decorating the classroom, With lighting, decorations etc and the outcomes were brilliant.

This was a really enjoyable morning, the young people definitely had their own ideas, and were very enthusiastic and knowledgeable, and we would love to be involved again in other project work



The Benefits: It was nice to link in with the school governors in such an informal project

Participants: 8 younger and 8 older people took part.

Richmount Rural Community Association

Some members of our Richmount Elders grouped up with Scotch Street Youth Club. We worked together to plant summer flowering bulbs and both older people and younger people took part. Each took at least one pot with bulb home.

We had a discussion on the benefits of flowers for the environment and how they could be a source of pollen and nectar for bees and butterflies. We had a mini party with tea and buns and a great exchange of information between the older and younger people.

We painted flowers on canvases for participants to take home. Freehand and stencils were used.

Overall a great evening of fun for all involved.



The Benefits: They had fun and developed mutual respect for each other.

Participants: 8 younger and 12 older people took part

Kinawley Girl's Friendly Society

The All Ages April Easter Craft event was a delightful intergenerational celebration that successfully bridged the gap between past and present members of the Girls' Friendly Society. This event brought together current GFS girls and leaders with former members, creating a wonderful opportunity for shared creativity and connection.



The hall was filled with laughter and conversation as young hands worked alongside experienced ones, crafting special Easter mementos. The older ladies shared stories of their own GFS days and enjoyed seeing how the GFS has developed whilst teaching long-developed techniques, as the girls brought fresh enthusiasm. This exchange of knowledge and experiences was greatly enjoyed by all. The crafting activities were perfectly pitched for all ages, ensuring everyone could participate meaningfully whatever their experience.

The event's success lay not just in the lovely crafts produced, but in the relationships forged and memories created. Former GFS members reconnected with their heritage whilst current members loved seeing the former members showing them how to use things like a sewing machine! The event was a great celebration of the Girls' Friendly Society and the power of bringing different generations together through shared purpose and creativity as the All Ages April initiative intended to do.

The Benefits: For many it was a social element particularly those aged over 65. It gave them a sense of purpose and importance within their community.

Participants: 12 younger and 15 older people took part.

St John the Baptist's College

Our Year 9 students have been involved with Rosemount Care Home. Every month we meet with residents and complete various arts, crafts and beauty tasks. With the AAA grant we were able to buy flowers for flowerbeds, pots and gardening tools. All the residents participated and the Care home is looking great. Residents have to look after the plants

each day. We have plans for a Summer Tea Party before school finishes in June. This will involve tea, cake and buns with live music, singing and dancing. Residents will be invited to our school and will participate in it.

The Benefits: Children learned communication skills, care, generosity, patience, understanding, maturity. Our children continue to look forward to our monthly meetings each month



Participants: 10 younger and 23 older people took part

Ozanam Menshed

The Growing Together project was born when Beeches Nursing Home reached out to Ozanam Men's Shed for help in revitalising their outdoor garden and greenhouse space. In response, a collaborative, intergenerational initiative emerged between Ozanam Men's Shed, EOTAS (Education Other Than at School), and the Beeches Nursing Home. Over a period of weeks, older men from the Shed, young people from EOTAS, and care home residents came together to transform the garden into a welcoming, sensory-rich space. Activities included planting flowers and herbs, painting fences and planters, minor construction, and greenhouse clean-up.



EOTAS students also participated in woodwork sessions at the Men's Shed, where they helped to design and build planters and flower boxes for the care home.

This hands-on work allowed the young people to gain practical skills while contributing something meaningful and lasting to the project. The colourful planters are now a much-loved feature of the garden, bringing pride to the young people and joy to the residents. The project created a warm, inclusive space where stories, skills, and laughter were shared across generations. Its success has sparked interest in future seasonal planting and craft-based collaborations that continue to strengthen intergenerational relationships and community spirit.

The Benefits: Participants experienced a wide range of benefits, both emotional and practical. For the residents of Beeches Nursing Home, the project brought joy, stimulation, and companionship. Having visitors actively involved in improving their garden created a sense of care, inclusion, and pride in their surroundings.

For the young people from EOTAS, it offered an opportunity to build confidence, develop practical skills, and take part in something with real purpose outside of a school setting. They gained new respect for older generations and experienced the reward of giving back.

Men's Shed members benefited from sharing their skills and stories, helping others, and feeling valued in a mentoring role. For many, it reinforced their sense of purpose and belonging. Across the board, participants reported feeling more connected, appreciated, and proud of what was achieved together.

Participants: 12 younger and 18 older people took part.

EOTAS - Lough Road learning Centre

Planting Knowledge - Woodwork and gardening project.

- There were 10 men who participated from the men's shed each week age rang 50-80
- There were 4 young people who participated from Lough Road Learning Centre age 14-16.

Young people attended Men's shed and engaged in a woodwork programme. They built planters with the men with the idea to plant flowers in them for a garden area at EOTAS - KS4.

There have been numerous benefits including the great working relationship that we have established with the men attending the shed. We have explored stereotypes and friendships have blossomed. Those involved have benefited from sharing experiences and skills.

Overall it has been a worthwhile and valuable experience that we will hope to continue over the next school year.

The Benefits: Our young people improved their confidence and increased their skills in communication, Listening, Practical woodwork skills, working in a team and feeling a sense of belonging. They spoke about enjoying visiting the Men's Shed and talking to them. It has become a weekly slot in our centre programme and all young people will have the opportunity to avail of Intergenerational activities.

Participants: 4 younger and 10 older people took part.

The Tuesday Club Group -Dromore

The Tuesday Club group and the Dromore playgroup planned a seed planting activity for spring. The children and the staff walked up to the sports complex. We had a gazebo outside to plant all our seeds. The seeds were vegetables such as cress, tomatoes', peppers and peas. The children and the over 65's worked together to plant the seeds in the containers with soil and water the seeds and mark up each planter/seed tray to advise what each container had which vegetable. The children and the adults discuss the prices together and worked together to learn new skills and develop existing skills. The Tuesday Club gave the containers to the children to look after at the nursery. The children will update the group.

The Benefits:

The connections of working with different age groups. Working together and learning new skills. Sharing skills and working with all ages.

Participants: 19 younger and 32 older people took part



Eiire OG GAC - Golden Years Club

We organised an intergenerational games morning with the Golden Years Group and P4 children from the local primary school. Games included some traditional games like dominoes, drafts, ludo and jacks and the Golden Years members helped the younger participants to learn and play the games.

Both groups had a very enjoyable morning learning and interacting with each other. The feedback from both groups was very positive with the groups enjoying the experience of interacting with a different generation and learning from them. We finished the morning with lunch for everyone from 2 local establishments.

We would very much hope to carry on having regular intergeneration days in the future as both groups of participants seemed to have a very enjoyable morning and gained a lot from the experience. It is hoped to have the other local primary school come on board to enjoy these types of days in the future.



The Benefits: The younger people were surprised at how much fun they could have with board games, indoor bowls etc and also how much fun older people can be. The older people were surprised at how keen the younger people were to learn and how much fun they all had.

Participants: 24 younger and 22 older people took part.

Dunluce, Gortacharn Nursing and Residential Care Home Lisnaskea

We had invited two school groups to participate in a linking generations session - the first group was with the Local Irish School in Lisnaskea. We had an Easter Theme, and the residents and Kids did some crafting together, played Easter Bingo, Question Reminiscence Time and also some Games.

Our session was with the Local Primary School - St. Ronans. In this session we had our group gardening day, planting our wheel chair accessible planters with bright coloured plants, whereby the kids and kids interacted together. We also played some garden games and traditional games too. there was an arts table and it was a very enjoyable day.

This was mutually beneficial to both youth and the residents at the care home. it was lovely for the integration and spending times together.



The Benefits: Intergenerational social interaction. both residents and pupils felt at age and most freely asked questions and conversations flowed very well. There was a great buzz about and this uplifted both the residents and the pupils too.

Participants: 24 younger and 17 older people took part.

Collegeland Nursing Home

This year we decided to focus on dance. Our project would involve 2 local primary schools with whom we have established a really positive relationship. During each of our sessions a number of primary pupils were encouraged to join in with dance movements with our residents.

Session 1 was with a dance / ballet teacher and the movements very gentle. Sonya also chose ABBA and similar music which our residents really enjoyed.

Sessions 2 & 3 were Rumba based and a lot more high energy, but again, with encouragement from the pupils our residents joined in. Not only did our residents join in movements and exercise, so increasing mobility, but the pupils encouraging and helping them was a tremendous help.

As the pupils visit us regularly, positive relationships have been built and these are further developed during the school year with numerous other visits. We finished the school year off with dance day and all pupils involved in the previous sessions came along and danced during the day.

We hope to continue with a wide range of activities during the next academic year 2025 – 2026.

Benefits: The grant has helped us develop ongoing relationships with the schools and pupils. The bond between the residents and pupils are heartwarming.

Participants: 40 younger and 20 older people took part.



Little Stars Pre School

Little Stars Preschool in Killyleagh have an ongoing relationship with their friends at Beechvale Nursing Home in Killinchy. They used their All Ages April grant to host a fun visit from the exotic creatures of Jurassic Ark! The residents and children thoroughly enjoyed meeting and greeting the many amazing creatures from snakes and spiders to a massive tortoise and lizard. Vicki visited the morning held in Beechvale Nursing Home filled with lots of laughs and smiles!

Participants: Approx 20 younger and 20 older people took part.



Summary

All 30 grant recipients did an amazing job in making the most of the relatively small seed grant given to them. Great imagination and dedication shone through in abundance in every case and we are hugely grateful to every group/setting/organisation leader who worked so hard to plan, deliver and evaluate their activities. Despite the vagaries of the weather, no events were rained off and the feedback showed a huge amount of commitment to getting the job done.

We continue to be encouraged at the number of newcomers each year who experience their first encounter with delivering intergenerational activities through our small grants campaign. This year was no different, with 43% of group leaders stating that this was their first time in organising such an event. The increased engagement with [Global Intergenerational Week 2025](#) from settings and individuals from across NI, has further evidenced that intergenerational practice is a rapidly growing movement. As wide ranges of settings and organisations learn of its benefits and ability to aide community cohesion, reduce loneliness and social isolation and create opportunities for all generations to feel valued and part of their community, we are reminded of the importance and criticality of these small grant schemes.

A big thanks to our funders Public Health Agency and our Age-friendly Council Colleagues who recognise the importance of intergenerational connections and help us promote this approach to creating a truly Age-friendly Northern Ireland!

Congratulations and well done to all involved! Check out our [#GIW25 highlights video](#) just click this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tk_Q4K6elo4



**Thank you to all involved from us at
Linking Generations Northern Ireland!**

***'Together we can make NI a truly Age-friendly place where all generations are
connected, respected and engaged together in their communities!'***