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**Innovation in Care:  
Stories of Intergenerational Action**



Monday, 12th February 2018

**SESSION 3- 13:15 PM– 15:15 PM**



# 'THE GIFT'

AT ACTIVATE LEARNING



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# THE GIFT

## BRINGING TOGETHER THREE GENERATIONS

Activate Learning is embracing the 'United for All Ages' ethos of bringing older and young people together, by offering not only fully equipped meeting places within our Thames Valley College campuses, for intergenerational activities to take place; but also developing the next generation of adult and child carers.

Both health and child care students are working hand-in-hand to provide inspiring and engaging activities, for both the older and younger participants. As the conduit for delivering stimulating activities, students will ultimately gain a deeper understanding of the needs of both generations, as well as they themselves becoming part of the social integration with different members of their own community. The bringing together of three generations can only serve to enrich the intergenerational focus of the project as a whole, beyond that of the pre-school child age group and the older generation to incorporate both teens and young adults, as well.'



To help them with this ambitious project, named 'The Gift', early years and health and social care students and staff from Activate Learning, have joined together with local care homes and nurseries.

The Gift, is run by students who organise activities for the children and the care home residents to take part in. All activities are supported and closely monitored by the college's experienced teaching staff.

“ It has been great to see children who are not so confident meeting and interacting with people they don't know. They have been making connections with the care home residents by drawing them a picture or inviting them to take part in an activity, which has been lovely to watch. ”

Claire Hermitage, Director of Childcare,  
at Berkeley Gardens Day Nursery



The benefits of this project are numerous for all parties involved.

Early Years students have challenged themselves to think about developing activities that are appropriate for both the elderly and the very young. Health care students had to consider the individual needs of each elderly person and how the environment could be adapted to ensure that they could fully join in and 'play' with the children. As well as activities, all students have considered the health and safety implications of mixing the two generations, which proved challenging when considering the college environments and their specific design for young adults.

Finn, a Health and Social Care student said:

“

It's been a great opportunity to interact with both age groups and a new way to learn.

”

April, currently studying a Childcare Level 2 programme, said:

“

It has been an eye-opening experience. At first everyone was quite cautious and not sure what to do but by the end lots of the children had gathered around one of the care home residents, Joyce, looking at a book together. It was lovely to see them bonding.

”

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One lady said that 'she loved singing songs with the children and doing all the actions as it reminded her of when her daughter was little' while another said that 'being able to talk to the children was the best thing, and I definitely want to go again!'"



One of the children said:

“ I've made a new friend' and another child didn't want to leave. ”

# QUOTES FROM THE SESSIONS

“ I really liked making the faces and having the biscuits. ”  
Juliette aged 3

“ I met a new friend and we played. ”  
Louis aged 3

“ I loved the children. One little girl wanted to come back with me, bless her. ”  
Kathleen aged 96

“ The children were really happy with us there. I loved it. I'd go everyday if I got the chance. ”  
Stella aged 87



# MOVING FORWARD

- Monthly sessions will be held at each of the Activate Learning campus'
- The project will be rolled out to more care home providers and nurseries through-out Oxfordshire and Berkshire
- Wider range of activities developed by students for 'The Gift' project.
- Students from other vocational areas within Activate Learning to offer activities, such as hair and beauty, woodwork, cooking, engineering, gaming and IT, photography, drama, creative writing, sport
- A session to include parents and family of the residents.

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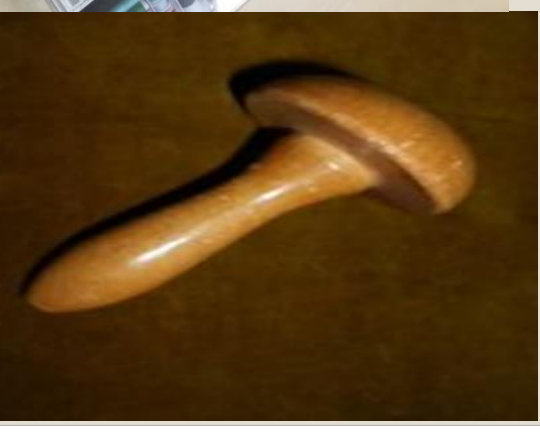


# **THE POSITIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE BENEFITS OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING THROUGH A SUSTAINABLE SKILL CAFÉ PROJECT IN A CHILDREN AND FAMILY CENTRE.**

**Diane Boyd and Catherine McNeill LJMU**

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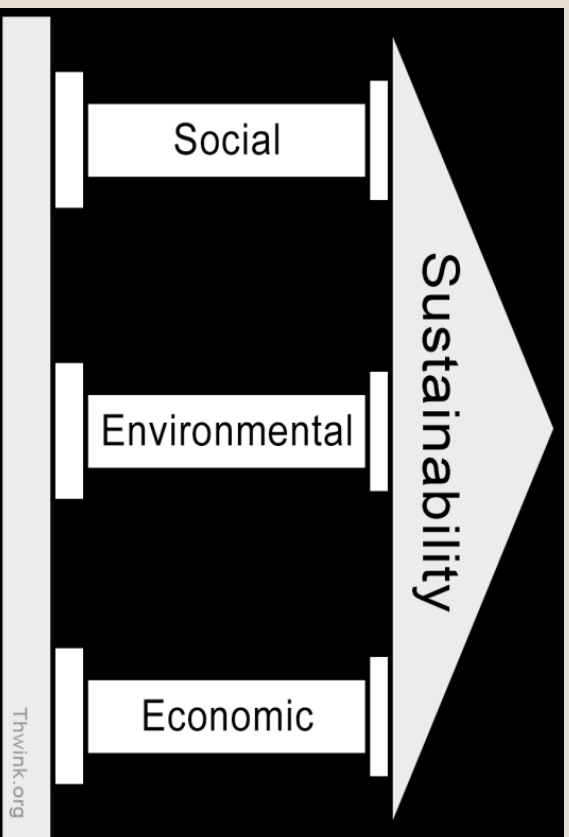
# The provocations ...



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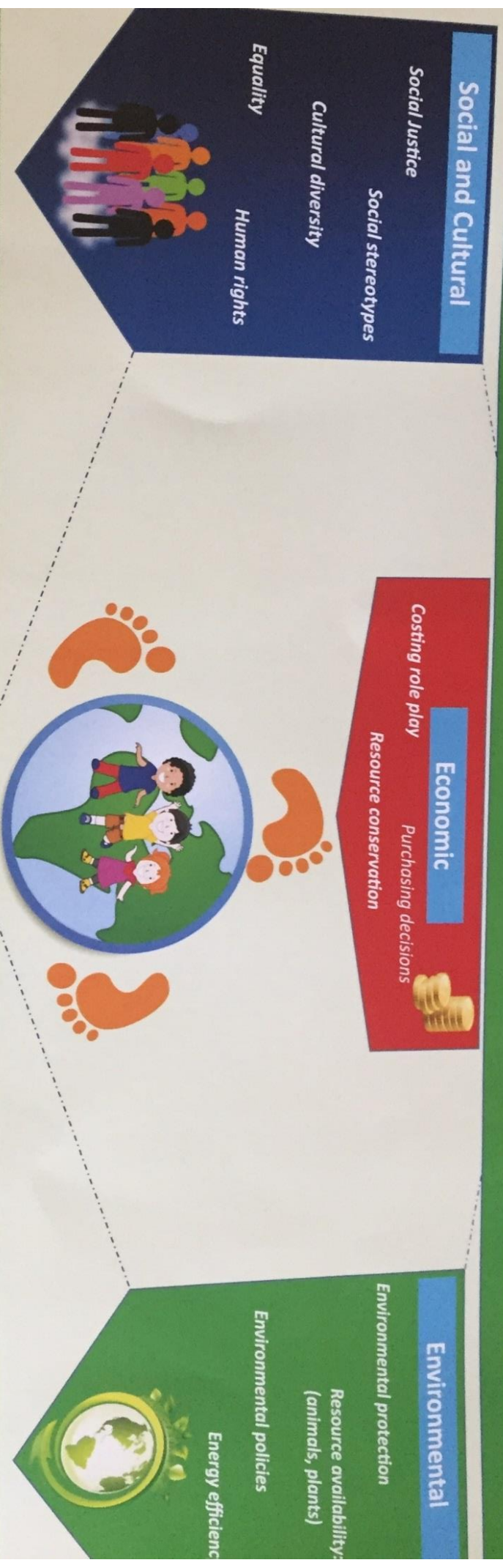
# Early Childhood Education for Sustainability

- Early childhood is seen as a transformative period where children's attitudes and foundations for life are laid. The principles of education for sustainability reflect a holistic and interconnected approach, similar to the ecological context of early childhood.
- There are three pillars of sustainability, which are economic, environmental and socio/cultural, and they are all interrelated (Brundtland, 1987)



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# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY



**SPECIFIC AREAS** LITERACY \* NUMERACY \* UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD \* EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN \* INTERCONNECTING ECO—THEMES

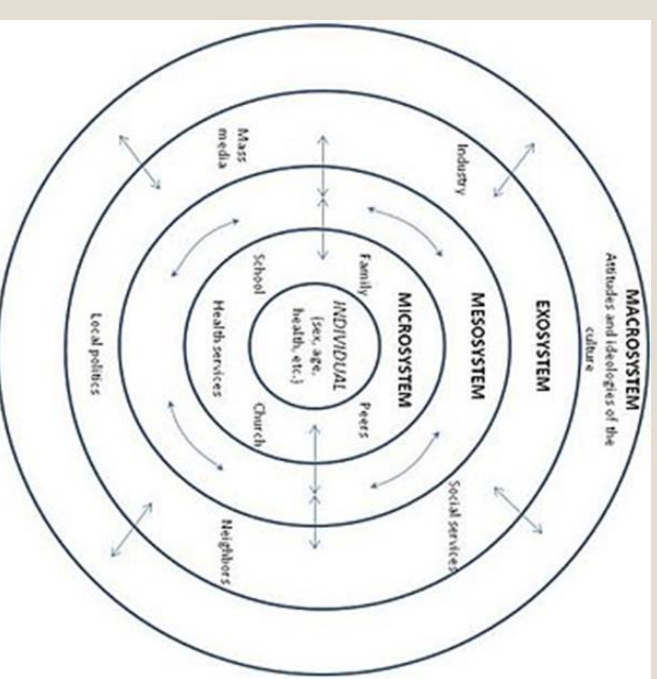
Living	Biodiversity	Global	Energy	Litter	Waste	Transport	School
		Citizenship					Grounds

- \* Eg Nature Trails
- \* Going on a Bear Hunt
- \* Eg Earth Day
- \* Big Earth, Little Me
- \* Eg Kites and Windsocks
- \* Solar Story time
- \* Eg Litter Stories
- \* Litter Patrol
- \* Eg Birdfeeders
- \* Loose Part/OEP
- \* Eg Bike Explorers
- \* Wildlife Walk
- \* Eg Campfire
- \* Green fingers

LEARNING PLACE BASED LEARNING PLACE BASED LEARNING PLACE BASED LEARNING PLACE BASED LEARNING PLACE BASED LEARNING PLACE  
THE BEACH WOODLAND MOORLAND PARKS ZOO FARM MUSEUM

# Social – Cultural integrated model

- The café implements a social-cultural integrated model of early childhood, bringing generations within communities together, to work towards a more sustainable society in England recognising the ecological systems theory.
- Our culture is more fragmented now with fewer families living near by to each other or sharing experiences together .
- Children do not necessarily live near their grandparents and more elderly people now live in care or residential homes, rather than within the family context.



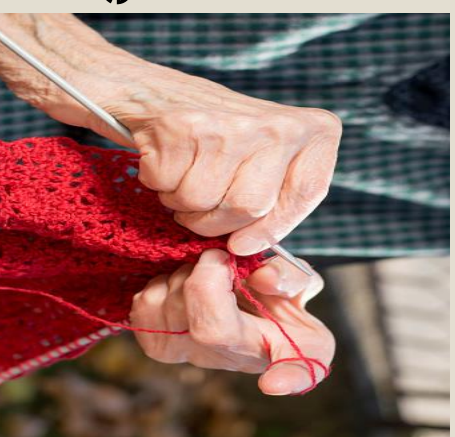
## The host setting of the café - Everton Children and Nursery School and Family centre

- The Ecological context in practice- represents a true community cohesive unit with a diverse range of participants.
- These included – Dr Lesley Curtis Head of Everton, Governors of the centre , parents, Grandparents, residents of the Liverpool L 6 Sheltered accommodation, children from the nursery at Everton , toddlers from Dukes and Duchess at Everton with practitioners, the Children's Centre Team and Liverpool John Moores University student intern Catherine McNeill.



# Traditional skills ...

- At the café the elderly willingly demonstrated for the families and children particular cultural traditions and mentored them in these disappearing or lost skills.
- January café – Scouse and Sewing a button on
- February café – Flap jacks and sewing /recycling old bears
- March café – Corn Beef Hash and introduction to Knitting Easter chicks
- April café- Short bread biscuits and Bicycle repair class
- May café- Healthy pizza and salad with hemming and under web class
- June café – Fish pie and knitting for a purpose (scarf a gift for Christmas)



Scouse Recipe for 4 people	
<b>Ingredients</b>	
500g Stewing beef	
1 Onion	
4-5 Carrots	
2kg Potatoes	
2 beef stock cubes	
1 tablespoon oil	
Salt and Pepper	
1 tablespoon Worcester sauce (optional)	
<b>Method</b>	
Cut beef into cubes. Chop onions and carrots. Peel the potatoes and cut some into cubes and some into quarters. Fry the beef in the oil until brown all over. Add the onion, carrots and potatoes and cover with cold water. Break up the stock cubes and add to the pan along with salt and pepper. At this point you can add the Worcester sauce. Bring to the boil stirring occasionally, then reduce the heat and simmer until the meat is tender.	

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# Community Stakeholder involvement

- Each café offered participants different opportunities to engage in learning or refreshing new skills that would be sustainability beneficial to their community.
- Local stakeholders voluntarily provided resources , for example, free sewing and knitting kits, the stuffing needed for old teddy bears that the children and families could mend together and even free bicycle repair workshops that the retired elderly residents are able to support.



# Key themes emerged from the café research ..

- Health and well being through shared experiences and making new friends
- Learning new skills to be more sustainable
- Breaking down stereotypes
- Celebrating our successes

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# Health and well being through shared experiences and making new friends

- Research by Hannon and Gueldner (2008) also demonstrated that sharing activities together with young children promoted positive emotional benefits to elderly people's wellbeing.
- Weckstrom et al (2017) further highlighted that the elderly felt the children's presence in their lives was a welcome addition, especially when in society today many families are fractured and separated.

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# Shared experiences



# Observations

- One particular little boy at Dukes and Duchess at Everton is Spanish and speaks little English. But he sat and made flap jacks with Mary one of our elderly friends .
- The practitioner said – *“I was just saying how fab it is . Enzo is not usually confident but working with Mary he has really come out of his shell”* .
- *“He is Spanish and his understanding is not the best! But he has stayed with her the whole time! ”*

# Making new friends



# Observations

- The practitioner from Dukes and Duchess at Everton –  
*“This is really good! They don’t usually mix with older generations. They are in the nursery all day , every day , so this is really good.”*  
*“They have never sat for so long”*
- Julie (Early Educator Everton) *“It has been a great experience coming down here to the café, baking with her mum and seeing Grandparents. They really enjoyed it “.*
- Jamie (aged 3 ) *“I am making flap jacks with my mummy ! I love flap jacks!”*

# Learning New Skills to be more sustainable

- Langlands (2018) likens this loss of traditional knowledge, to a 'divorce' from our identity or cultural heritage.
- These shared crafts or skills at the café included cooking traditional recipes such as scouse, learning how to sew a button on a shirt and simple knitting, whilst bridging the inter-generational divide at the same time.



# Observations

- Elderly residents from L6 – “the young can’t be bothered to sew now. They just throw stuff away and get a new one.”
- “We used to knit jumpers for them to wear at school, but now it’s sweats shirts so knitting jumpers went out of fashion.”

- Mums – “I came to the café because I want to learn to make my own clothes, design them and I have come here to learn new skills”.

- “I have a sewing machine at home but I do not know how to use it. I will bring it next time as Ann said she will show me!”

*“I am old fashioned I suppose. I used to do it at school and I want Jamie to grow up doing these old fashioned things. I sew buttons on but I don’t think other mums do that anymore do they?”*

*“It has been really good as I have learnt how to thread a needle using a needle threader!”*

*Gerard Vice Chair of Governors of Everton – “I even learnt how to sew a button.”*

# Becoming sustainable



# Breaking down stereotypes

- Education for sustainability reflects an inclusive fair and equal society . We need to challenge stereotyping and any barriers to bias. Early childhood is seen as a transformative period where attitudes and foundations for life are laid.
- The café offers opportunities for boys and girls to do traditional skills without attaching gender bias. By encouraging and inviting both male and female elderly residents also helps to change fixed perceptions, attitudes and categories of roles.
- *“Children learn how to become adults by participating through socialisation (observation, imitation and participation) in family and related occupational activities.” Mbebeb (2009:24)*
- A priority for the March café is to engage more male role models to participate .

# Breaking down stereotypes



# Observations

- 4 year old girl from Everton Nursery – “Look at all the Grandmas sewing! Grandpas don’t sew but Grandmas do. Daddy’s don’t sew either .”

*Mums at Everton – “I will mend my own clothes but I wont mend my sons who is 3 because people look down on you if you do.”*

- *“I buy a new shirt if the button comes off . Round here everything has to be new.”*
- *“You can’t be seen going near a charity shop . You are seen as poor even if you are giving stuff .”*
- *Julie Early Educator Everton- “They cook in the centre but they never see anyone sewing.”*

# Celebrating our success !

- Julie Early Educator Everton – *“They have made flap jacks and they cant stop eating them! “*
- Ann Elderly resident L6 – *“I taught her how to hem and do back stitch”*
- Mum – *“Its my first time and Ann has taught me a new technique to sew !”*
- Mum – *“Did nt realise making scouse was so easy and this meat is so soft !”*

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# Celebrating our success !



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Monday, 12th February 2018

**Joanna James & Dr Lottie Lance**

# Exploring 'Intergenerational' Impact

Dr Ali Somers, FRSA

Nightingale Hammerson

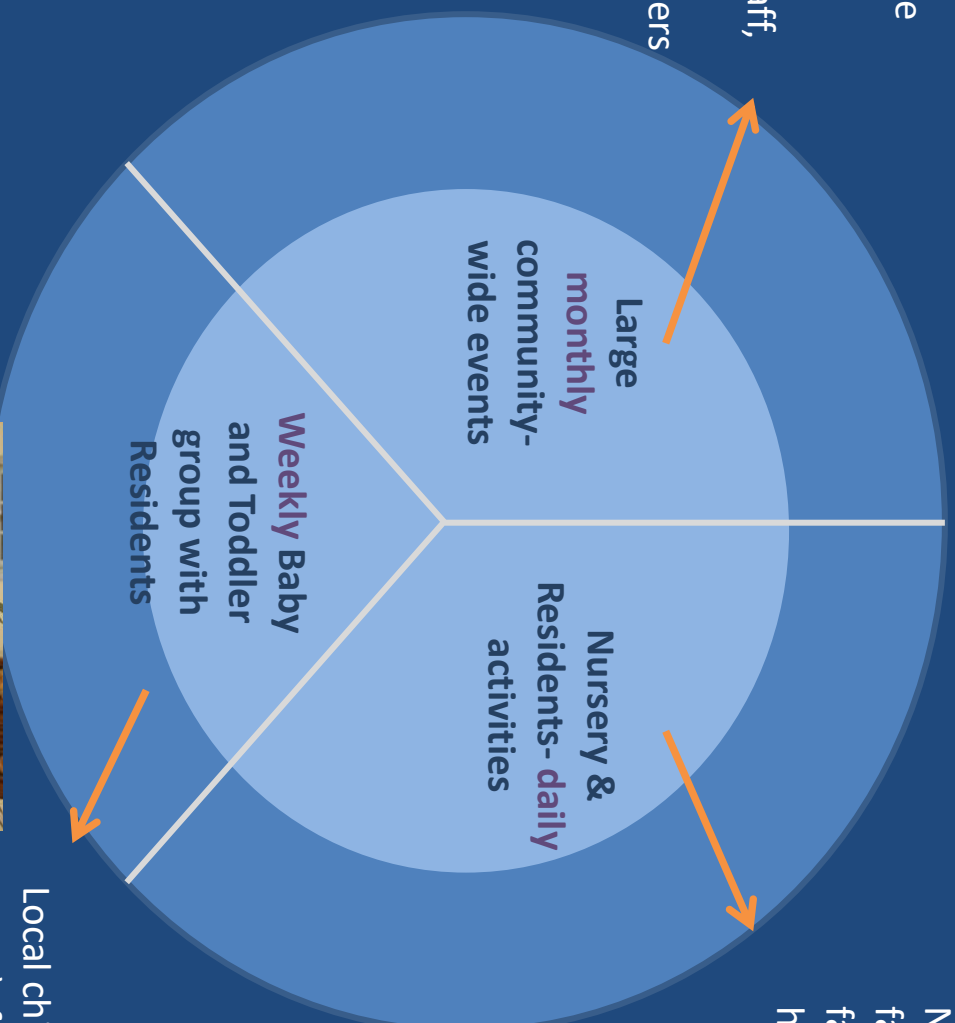
& Apples and Honey Nightingale CIC

@AliSomersAHN

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# Creating a framework for measuring impact

Local children (broadest age range) and their families, nursery children, nursery families, carers, nursery staff, care home staff, residents, residents' families, volunteers



Nursery children, nursery families, residents, residents' families, nursery and care home staff



Local children (0 months to 3 years), families, carers, childminders, residents, residents' families, volunteers



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# How do we begin?

- **Question 1:** What is it that we are running? (Why did we plan to run our intervention in this way? What were our hypotheses? Is what we are actually delivering the same as what we planned on delivering?)
- **Question 2:** Who is affected by our work, directly and indirectly? Have we mapped our stakeholders?
- **Question 3:** After some period of time has gone by, have we checked back in with our first assumptions? Have any new observations been made which mean we need to make changes to what we are running and how?
- **Question 4:** Can we establish a baseline, so that we can capture changes that take place over time (positive and negative, as well as over the short-term, medium-term, and long-term)?
- **Question 5:** What data do we have to collect regularly anyway? How can this be adapted to suit the purposes of capturing our intergenerational work? (Care home data on residents, early years data on developmental milestones)
- **Question 6:** What have we learned so far?

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# Baby and Toddler Group: Example



Group begins January 2017, we run it the way we would our other baby and toddler groups that are not intergenerational (semi-structured play and singing), emphasis on supporting parents, **add new participants: residents**

**Furniture is an obstacle**, we re-think how to lay out the room physically to accommodate wheelchairs and toddlers (play area in the centre, tables on the side) **Need volunteers to serve as extensions (hands, ears)**, Ratios need to increase (based on observations and reflection)  
\*Best early years practice has reflection as a core component, and observation skills

We get to know the needs of the families who attend, and the residents, we make sure to include and encourage everyone, activities are lessened- become a backdrop- **we become helpers/facilitators, not teachers**

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# Observations (over 12 months):

- Children appear more settled
- Parents seem to 'need' the group- what need is this intervention filling?
- Longer-term observations, after months of regular contact- residents appear to suddenly increase their participation in sessions, and their communication and language skills increase (verbal and nonverbal), as does memory
- The majority of the families who come are not Jewish, but they sing with us in Hebrew- is there an interfaith element to our work? (an unintended consequence)



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# Challenges

- We are so busy doing, it's hard to take stock
- Are we 'imagining or exaggerating' these perceived benefits? How can we find out? Need to triangulate data...(verify from multiple sources)
- Our population over 12 months keeps changing!
- In September, 9 months' in- new cohort of children
- In one session, 9 children are new, all are 14 months' old, all born within 2 weeks of each other, all from the local area- dynamic completely shifts, and early years teachers have to adapt
- While our children are developing at a rapid rate (6 months, then 12 months, then 18 month olds- significant changes in communication skills, language acquisition and mobility), some of our 'regular' residents are declining
- New residents are joining the group
- We move (is it because of our confidence?) from working with the more independent residents, to those with little communication, memory and mobility- here we see the most significant improvements

# Time to ask questions of our stakeholders

- To our nursery families we ask- why did you send your children here? What was your previous experience of care homes? What did you think before your child began nursery? What do you think now?
- To our residents we ask- what do you think of having children in the home? Are there benefits? Are there not so good bits?
- To our baby and toddler families we ask- why do you come? What do you get out of it?
- To the nursery staff we ask- what do you think about our interactions with the residents?
- To the care home staff we ask- what do you think about having children in the home?
- To our volunteers we ask- why do you come? What's in it for you?

Then, we sit back and listen, to EVERYONE

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# Stakeholder responses... Volunteer

- A volunteer says... “I come each week to the baby and toddler group because it makes me smile...I love seeing first-hand the joy that it brings, and witnessing the special bonds that are being made between some of the residents and the children. I marvel at the fact that **even those residents with memory problems can join in so enthusiastically... No one is self-conscious**. That is probably what surprised me the most. Oh and the impeccable behaviour of the children when they attend...Even though I am not Jewish, I love the fact that all the Jewish customs and traditions are so proudly recognised and celebrated by all. **I love how inclusive everyone is**. It's a fabulous experience for everyone.”

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# Stakeholder responses...Resident

- A male resident shares, “It is the highlight of my week. I never had children of my own and I enjoy watching the children play and playing with them. **It is such a joyful experience.** I forget everything else going on and I share in their joy with them. **I also see the effect it has on other residents.** One gentleman who comes never speaks to anyone else at all when he is upstairs. He doesn’t speak at all. He is silent. But when he comes down here, he lights up and he does speak. He becomes himself and it makes me very happy to watch this.”

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# Stakeholder responses...Parents

- A parent from the on-site nursery was asked if being located within the grounds of a care home was a motivation for sending his daughter to our setting. He replied, “Absolutely. From spending time in care and nursing homes, we observed how lonely they can be. The pressure of modern life on close families is enormous and we have witnessed what a strain this can cause for people. **We strongly believe that old and young should be at ease with each other.**”

# Initial observations gathered, what's next?

## Pre-work to formal research:

- We had our own hypotheses when we designed our interventions
- After time, we **made observations**, and **began to adapt** what we did
- Then, we **gathered the views of everyone involved**, and adapted some more (including respecting the wishes of residents who did not want to be involved)
- We took notice of new impacts we had not anticipated (interfaith, importance of activities on middle-aggers, sudden dramatic effect on those with less verbal communication and more advanced dementia after months of regular contact)

# Next stage: formal research

Measurement is an iterative process, but it must also move forward to more concrete evidence

- Planning a programme of more formal observation that is multi-disciplinary
- Will look for funding to have one year of regular observations carried out on three client groups; children, and residents, with focus groups for parents of baby and toddler and nursery at fixed intervals throughout the year
- All the while, we will continue to collect the easy data (low hanging fruit) - how many participate in our range of intergenerational sessions, their demographics, how long participation lasts, where do they go next? What did they do beforehand?

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# Beginnings of an inter-disciplinary methodology

- Will identify a group of residents to follow; to understand what they are doing when they are not with the children (what does the rest of their day/week look like? Will find a cohort of nursery children to compare against those who are of similar age and background to see how each group responds to elderly residents over time
- Will seek the input of both early years specialists alongside geriatric specialists (including but not limited to dementia)

## Developing our research questions:

- Does intergenerational interaction keep more independent residents fit and active for longer (cognitive, emotional, and physical)
- Do moments of memory and increased verbal communication carry on during the day after a session with the children? How long do impacts last?
- Is a one off experience 'enough' for residents and children (might be for some), can we identify the amounts of time needed to achieve certain benefits?
- To what extent does interaction with children instigate memory or communication for people at various stages of memory and communication loss?
- To what extent does contact with residents impact on pre-school aged children?

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“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”

Zora Neale Hurston

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