

# Stay Active Through Intergenerational Connections



**Intergenerational connections** are relationships or experiences that bring together individuals of different generations usually babies, children or youth and older adults. Combining the experience, wisdom, and fresh perspectives of people from all ages can improve lives and strengthen communities. In fact, older adults who participate in intergenerational programs report:

- Enhanced life satisfaction
- Improved health and greater well-being
- Expanded learning and skills
- Larger social networks
- Better memories

## GETTING STARTED

There are many ways to connect with young people in your community, in your neighborhood and even in your own family—volunteering at a school, with a youth organization or starting your own intergenerational community service project are just a few ways. You may also strengthen your social connections using these additional ideas:

- Support a community kitchen or deliver meals to homebound older adults.
- Beautify your neighborhood by picking up litter, clearing paths, or weeding a park.
- Help at an animal shelter or visit a nursing home or children's hospital with a pet.
- Participate in an intergenerational orchestra or theatre group.
- Start an All-Ages Book Club or read with a child.
- Offer cooking lessons at a community center.
- Host an intergenerational neighborhood street fair to celebrate different cultures.
- Celebrate **Grandparents Day**, which takes place on the Sunday after Labor Day.

## SUCCESS STORY - ELI BOTKIN\*

Eli Botkin may be 92-years-old, but he hasn't stopped honing his math skills. After all, he's got middle schoolers expecting his mathematical insight at the Rashi School, a private school just steps from his home at NewBridge on the Charles, a residential community for older adults in Dedham, Massachusetts. A retired aerospace engineer, Botkin's school routine includes an hour every Thursday in a seventh-grade math class and every Tuesday explaining mathematical principles to eighth graders. Occasionally, he helps with sixth grade math. "I guess what's keeping me going is the exercise of the body and the mind," he said.

Eighth grader Kate Cutler, 14, said Botkin's math lesson gives students "a different perspective on math that we wouldn't learn." Teddy Sunshine, 14, said he was inspired to study astrophysics and attend a three-week summer program in New York. And, as for Botkin, the aerospace engineer-turned-sometime math teacher, "It's been delightful," he said. "I love it."

## RESOURCES FOR INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

To find opportunities visit the intergenerational program database at [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org) or connect with organizations in your community. These are national programs that offer intergenerational volunteer opportunities.

- AARP Experience Corps: <http://www.aarp.org/experience-corps/>
- Foster Grandparent Program [www.seniorcorps.gov](http://www.seniorcorps.gov)
- Gen2Gen: <https://generationtogeneration.org/>
- Jumpstart Community Corps: <https://www.jstart.org/our-work/corps-members/community-corps-member/>
- OASIS Intergenerational Tutoring: <https://www.oasisnet.org/National-Programs/Intergenerational-Tutoring>
- Intergenerational Group Activities: <http://extension.psu.edu/youth/intergenerational/curricula-and-activities>
- Grandparents Day Take Action Guide: [www.grandparentsday.org](http://www.grandparentsday.org)
- Great Questions: [www.storycorps.org/great-questions](http://www.storycorps.org/great-questions)
- Virtual Family Tree: [www.pbs.org/americanfamily/tree](http://www.pbs.org/americanfamily/tree)
- Intergenerational Travel: [www.roadscholar.org](http://www.roadscholar.org)

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