

# APPENDIX 4: DEVELOPING AN INTERGENERATIONAL APPROACH

Here are some ideas which may help you to adapt or augment the holiday club material with an intergenerational group. Some of the five-to-11s material may need adjusting to fit a wider age range without excluding anyone.

## Introduction

'Intergenerational' is a growing way of approaching all areas of church life, including ministry and mission. Intergenerational, or IG for short, is more than all ages being together in the same place and doing the same thing (great though that can be!). IG is about fostering interaction between the generations, enabling relationships to blossom that enrich everyone. Building friendships with people of different ages and at different stages to ourselves helps us to see the world from some very different perspectives. Sharing experiences, interests, skills and stories helps us grow each other up as we grow closer to each other. Being together binds us together. And having fun is one of the easiest places to start this habit!

'As a church community we must learn to do only those things in separate age groups which we cannot in all conscience do together', according to the URC Charter for Children in the Church, 1990.

People are now used to the idea of a household bubble, a support bubble (for childcare or those living on their own), and joining bubbles together. You could draw on this idea. However, some people have spent too much time with their own household, and will want to be with others. Think about how to create diverse and safe groups for everyone, within the bounds of current restrictions for your locality, as necessary.

It is OK to have some time in age/peer groups, but make this the exception rather than the norm.

Expect more chaos, and embrace the randomness of who chooses to do what with whom. Expect things to take longer, as people have to translate across the generations and negotiate more with each other. The benefit is the relationships being developed and the co-learning and forming of community.

## An Intergenerational Holiday Club

This could be offered as a 'fun day', a weekly get together (early evening – bring your picnic tea) or a holiday club over a few days.

## Principles

The aim is to enable people to build relationships with those of other ages and generations. To do this they need opportunities to spend time together doing things together and talking together.

**Groups:** organise into small groups that mix up the generations! Difference is an asset. You give groups things that not everyone in that group can do, but they can share out the tasks between them – like reading instructions, running to find things, drawing on previous knowledge, accessing new information, creating things from junk. Help them be a team – give points for how many different things each person contributes to.

Include things that draw on everyone's knowledge – eg a quiz that includes current culture, kids TV shows, history, Bible knowledge, local information, your church etc. Picture rounds are good, too.

Give specific tasks to the oldest, youngest, tallest, shortest, sportiest, most stylish, silliest, wisest member.

**Pairs** – challenge people to find a partner at least 15 years older or younger for a listening exercise, or to each share something about themselves (eg favourite thing to eat/place



to go/person to travel with/thing to wear/  
way to be brave etc – link to the story)

**Response styles** – organise people by their preferred activity (rather than age) – construction, art/craft, discussion, drama – and ask each multi-generational group to prepare something to share with everyone else linked to the character/story. When you get to the sharing time, encourage people of all ages to share/present their group's work, and to give feedback on the other groups.

**Immerse in the story** – grill the character. Invite people of different ages to play the character, and sit in the hot seat and be asked three questions about themselves, ensuring questions come from different ages. Don't worry about biblical accuracy in the answers – the aim is for people to experience the stories from the inside imaginatively, to play with being the characters. Swap around to give a few people ago for each story, or even different characters in the same story.

**Crafts** – encourage different ages to work together and help each other, sharing skills.

**Games/songs** – invite different ages to choose, and say briefly why they like their choice.

**Prayers** – invite different ages to work together to create and lead prayers.

**Things to do together** – telling the stories, watching videos etc; eating and drinking; playing games (keeping score or being the referee are key roles for less mobile); collective art projects; singing and dancing.

**Team time topic talks** – these may be particularly useful for stimulating conversation among the adults and young people while the children are engaging in something more suitable for younger ones alone.

