Building Social Inclusion an Respect Through Intergenerational Programming in the City of London

Prepared for: Health Science 4711A and the Age-Friendly Network Respect and Social Inclusion Group

Prepared by: Adam Ly, Claire Pilon-Robertson, Emma Scotchmer, and Gina Uppal

December 2, 2013
Gerontology in Practice Team 6 Report: Building Social Inclusion and Respect through Intergenerational Programming in the City of London

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Introduction. The London’s Age Friendly Task Force was established in 2011. Since its inception, the Social Inclusion and Respect working group has been meeting on a monthly basis to develop a vision and strategy to improve the quality of life for older adults in London. This report was commissioned to research the role of intergenerational (IG) programs in fostering this goal through three key strategies identified in the Age-Friendly Action Plan:

1. Increase the number of intergenerational programs.
2. Change the stereotype of seniors and stop ageism.
3. Improve recognition and acknowledgement of older adults in the community.

This research used local, national, and international literature, as well as in-field interviews in the community, to propose recommendations for developing IG relationships in London.

Literature Review. A literature review conducted by MacCallum et al. (2006) looked at the IG program literature in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. The authors found no standard definition for IG programs due to a diversity of programs that have different purposes, outcomes, and target populations. However, some common characteristics emerged. For example, IG programs have a purposeful and ongoing mutual exchange between two generations in the form of knowledge, skills, resources, ideas, and/or experiences. Additionally, definitions emphasized bringing together young people under the age of 18 and older adults over the age of 55. Some intended outcomes of IG programs include fostering attitudinal change for both generations, enhancing one another’s experiences, and promoting community development and cohesion.

IG programs are mutually beneficial to both groups, but also provide generation specific dividends. IG programming leads to an increased understanding of the other generation and consequently breaks down stereotypes, encourages friendship and social interaction, and provides the opportunity to leverage strengths from each generation for reciprocated learning. For young people, older adults can act as positive role models and boost self-esteem and help young people develop communication and social skills. For older adults, IG programming can reduce isolation, encourage active participation, renew their sense of worth, and provide practical assistance with activities. Ultimately, these intended outcomes and benefits can lead to social inclusion and respect for older adults and create a more inclusive society (Springate, Atkinson, & Martin, 2008; MacCallum et al., 2006).

MacCallum et al. (2006) identified three major challenges for IG programs to overcome: ingrained stereotyping, language differences, and operational problems. First, ageist views of the other generation can hinder the development of strong connections or recruitment of
participants since generations cannot see the value-add of IG interactions in their lives. Second, language differences between different cultures can be a challenge for communicating during activities. Additionally, young people and older adults have their own language such as references to pop-culture, which can lead to communication difficulties. Lastly, operational problems can be specific to a program or shaped by the local environment. These can include recruiting appropriate participants and maintaining involvement, securing an accessible location, securing long-term funding, and acquiring skilled and competent staff and volunteers.

The following are some of the best practices of IG programming:

- **Provide opportunities for relationship development** - Ongoing contact between two groups over a sufficient period is vital to strong relationship development; the groups will become more comfortable with each other and break down stereotypical views. A simple and fun activity should be used as a vehicle to develop a substantial relationship.

- **Ensuring mutuality and reciprocity** – Both groups must benefit from IG programming.

- **Tailor activities** – Activities must recognize varying needs and interests of both groups.

- **Accommodate various levels of participation** – Participants, especially older adults, may have physical limitations, cognitive limitations, or different preferences for participation. For example, an individual may have mobility issues due to arthritis and prefer observing interactions rather than actively participating. Activities should accommodate these situations (Cox, Croxford, & Edmonds, 2006; MacCallum et al., 2006; Springate, Atkinson, & Martin, 2008).

This report addresses the substantive gap in the literature regarding engaging university-aged youth and older adults in IG initiatives. London is the ideal location to pilot IG programs with this age group as it is home to a campus of 27,000 full-time students. Additionally, our team is part of this target population and can leverage our own peer networks on campus to allow rich data collection. For further information and resources regarding the literature, refer to Appendix H.

**Methods.** Our in-field research used a cross-sectional design to investigate:

1. The successes and challenges of current IG programs in London.
2. The experiences of older adults (aged 55+) and students engaged in IG programs.
3. The perceptions of older adults and students who do not engage in IG programming.

To recruit participants for our study, we used both snowball and convenience sampling. Program managers from two intergenerational programs, Kiwanis Seniors’ Centre Chess (KSCC) and Healthy Living, were recruited through our community supervisors. Additionally, contacts from Seniors in Information Technology (IT) were recruited through our team’s
personal network (See Appendix G). Older adults in the London community, whether participating in other programs or not, were approached in Cherryhill Village Mall, a known community hub for older adults in London. Western University students were approached on campus at random.

Using semi-structured interviews, we gained qualitative data by individually interviewing program managers (n=3), older adult participants (n=2), student participants (n=3), and both older adult (n=9) and student (n=5) non-participants. Additionally, a focus group was conducted with non-participant older adults who were enrolled in the English Second Language class at the Kiwanis Senior Centre (n=4). See Appendix F for interview guides used for each population. A total of 3 program managers, 15 older adults, and 8 youth were interviewed for this report.

Depending on the interviewees’ preferences, the interviews were recorded on a computer, recorded through hand-written notes, or videotaped. Some interviews were transcribed. We analyzed the data by identifying themes. Then, we compared our findings from each program to identify similarities and differences, examined the perceptions of older adults and students on each other, and explored both generations’ interests in IG programming. Furthermore, we used a deductive approach to compare our findings with the existing literature.

**Results & Discussion.** We used four case studies: three case studies examined successful IG programs that already exist in the London area (champions), and one case study examined individuals who do not engage in IG programs (non-participants). See Appendix E.

**Case Studies: Champions**

1) **Seniors in IT.** This IG program, started by Western University students, focused on helping older adults use technology such as computers and mobile phones. Students taught older adults how to use applications such as Google, YouTube, and Skype. The program partnered with the organization *Society for Learning in Retirement*. On rotating schedules once a week for an hour, Western students and older adults gathered at four separate locations near Western’s campus. This flexible structure and close proximity made involvement easy for both generations. Mira Daljeet, the program manager, commented that the success of the program was largely attributed to the demand on both sides. Seniors were always interested in getting help for technology because sometimes they do not have anyone around them with the knowledge or that their children or grandchildren would not help them. On the other side, Western students are always looking for opportunities to volunteer.
2) **Kiwanis Senior’ Centre Chess Program.** Every Thursday evening from 7-10pm, participants from ages 8-80 gathered at the centre for fierce chess competitions with another player. Chess materials were either brought by the participants or provided by the centre. The program attracted adults from all ethnic communities, many with poor English skills, because the game does not require talking. The program has been running for 8 years because of the simplistic and universal nature of chess. The older adults claimed it was great to “watch the kids grow up and get better and better at chess” (Matthew Morabita, personal communication, November 7, 2013). One youth said that it allowed him to “get better viewpoints of what is going on and understand life events” (Brian Morgan, personal communication, November 7, 2013). Undoubtedly, chess broke down the barrier of ageism, since there was no judgment.

3) **Healthy Living by the Southwest Community Care Access Center.** In Spring 2013, this free IG exercise program ran for 8 weeks in Tillsonburg, Ontario to teach adults how to self-manage chronic diseases. 5 students facilitated the program and led 16 seniors through 12 exercises from the Canadian Diabetes Physical Activity Guidelines. Students also helped older adults create and maintain health-related action plans based off the Stanford University Healthy Living Program. Classes were held once a week, and the seniors were advised to do two exercise sessions at home. Equipment requirements were minimal and could be improvised with chairs, walls, and resistance bands at home. This program’s success can be attributed to the mutual benefit to both generations involved. The students learned practical skills and the older adults had an opportunity to socially interact while learning how to exercise. Additionally, both parties were required to take ownership throughout the program; students were directly involved in facilitating the program for the seniors on a weekly basis and older adults were managing their chronic condition. The success of this program was shown through consistent high attendance rates, especially since older adults made no monetary commitments.

**Conclusion for Champions.** Some shared characteristics that made each IG program successful included free membership, mutual learning for older adults and young people, social engagement, accessible locations, and simple and enjoyable activities (See Appendix D). The KSCC program manager, Michelle Kerr, believed participating in IG programs “gives older adults a sense of purpose, a reason to get up in the morning and something to do. These activities tap into the many dimensions of wellness so they have the whole umbrella to enjoy retirement.” Research supports these views; older adults who are socially involved in their communities have increased health and well-being (Findlay, 2003). Conversations during our in-
field research further supported this statement. A chess program participant shared how chess taught children and older adults cognitive and tactical skills. Additionally, older adults and students from Seniors in IT experienced personal fulfillment from the mutual learning that occurred. One student volunteer from Seniors in IT stated that this program allowed her to learn about the senior while she was helping. Moreover, Healthy Living provided mutual social satisfaction because it allowed seniors to re-establish a sense of ownership over their health.

These programs’ ability to balance goals of promoting the social inclusion of older adults, while ensuring interactions between generations were fun and engaging, was vital to their success (Lui, Everingham, Warburton, Cuthill, & Bartlett, 2009). In addition to logistical aspects that facilitated involvement in IG programs, participation from both generations benefitted from the intended outcomes we reviewed in the literature. Michelle Kerr said “[This IG chess program] is good for young learning minds and good for older adults since they still continue to have that intellectual stimulation and social engagement.” Mira Daljeet said that the “older adults that are involved in this program love the personal relationships they form with the students because they otherwise do not have a connection to this young population in their community.”

Another individual we interviewed was Rick McGhie, an older adult who is a London resident. Since 1975, Rick has been playing acoustic music for a campus pub full of students every Wednesday night. Complete with actions, callbacks, and cheers, Rick has transgressed several decades to interact and gain the respect of students, despite being 30 years the students’ senior. This showcases IG programming can be engaging and beneficial for both parties, without feeling like a chore.

**Case Study: Non-Participants.** Older adults at Cherry Hill Mall and Western University students not participating in IG activities were interviewed to research the barriers limiting their involvement in existing IG programs. Non-participating seniors approached at the mall were referred to as “stoic” seniors in the literature; they interacted with a close circle of family and friends, so social participation was not one of their priorities (Menac, Means, Keating, Parkhurst, & Eales, 2011). Stoic seniors were observed in multiple interviews with many stating they would rather spend time with familial younger generations (children and grandchildren). Another common finding among older adults was resistance to changing established routines. Stereotypes were also prevalent between the two generations, creating an additional barrier to involvement. For example, an older adult commented on the Fanshawe College St. Patrick’s Day riot from 2012, which tarnished her perceptions of students. Similarly, university students saw older adults as boring and “traditional;” they were unable to find common ground for
interaction. Additionally, time and transportation acted as barriers for involvement. For example, students cited a heavy school workload, which limited their availability for daytime programs that were most convenient for older adults. While students were limited by locations on bus routes, some older adults avoided public transportation or did not drive due to medical conditions.

Non-traditionally aged students (60+) were an untapped point of IG connection at Western and ideal champions for the London community. We connected with the director of the Society for Mature Students (SAGE), Donna Moore, and discovered that this group routinely meets for social events, but has never formally interacted with a group of traditionally aged students. Therefore, this is a model group to use in pilot IG initiatives with students since they are already on campus. Furthermore, older adults learners are more likely to engage and try new things since they recently stepped out of their comfort-zone to take courses after retirement.

**Conclusion for Non-Participants.** Discussions with non-participants made it clear that beyond addressing logistical barriers to participating in IG programs, a larger cultural change must occur for London to truly become a socially inclusive community. London presents a unique challenge as a few isolated incidents have given the students in this collage-town a rowdy and disrespectful reputation. However, we believe the large population of students in London is a huge value-add to fostering IG relationships and must be capitalized. Given these circumstances, rebranding both the student and older adult populations in London and highlighting the mutual benefit of IG interactions is vital. This culture change begins with discrediting stereotypes between the generations by using champions as catalysts for change. The video prepared by our group communicates this message and is aimed at both older adults and students to showcase the mutual benefits of IG programs. Furthermore, simple, day-to-day exchanges that organically connect the generations must also be promoted as valuable IG interactions with the goal of these exchanges becoming commonplace in the community.

**Feasibility.** Plouffe and Kalache (2010) stated that feasible programs require demand, accessibility, common interests, and inclusiveness between both generations. Demand is achieved when two generations are engaged in an activity that they see as being mutually beneficial. An accessible program must reduce transportation costs and time, language, and financial barriers before demand can truly be realized. Therefore, these programs’ successes were influenced by their free cost, easy accessibility for both generations, and emphasis on activities for mutual learning. Our research could not obtain the numeric costs of these programs due to lack of information availability. However, potential costs may include renting of the facility, activity resources such as personnel and materials, and advertising. In our case
studies, volunteers supervised by employees led all three of case programs for the participants. This suggests a low cost for hiring personnel. Additionally, the chess program had chessboards in stock and participants themselves provided the remaining chessboards. According Michelle Kerr, advertising was almost non-existent because the program relied on word-of-mouth promotions. Thus, IG programs were sustainable and used simple activities, volunteers, and low cost advertising to keep costs minimal.

**Recommendations and Next Steps.** To ensure successful intergenerational programming in London, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. Programs should take place where older adults normally congregate to reduce transportation barriers. Youth are generally more mobile, so they need to be incentivized on campus to reach out into the community and connect with older adults.
   - Western University must be recognized as a center of congregation for youth and be leveraged as a place to “spark the interest” for young people. Pitch findings and generate interest in the second-year health science aging class (HS2711) to gather a group of interested students as “youth champions” on campus.
   - Connect older adult learners from the Society for Mature Students (SAGE) and students from the HS2711 class at a networking event in the Winter 2014 semester.

2. For young-old adults, choose more complex, cultural, community activities. Keep in mind that they are more mobile and are willing to engage actively with younger generations.
   - Motivate students from HS2711 to prepare an intergenerational intramural team in Fall 2014 semester with connections made at networking event.

3. For old-old adults, choose more simple, low activity, unstructured activities. Keep in mind that successful programs must come to them at community hubs like malls or centers.
   - Once students see the mutual benefits from intergenerational relationships on campus, motivate groups to plan off-campus gatherings at Cherry Hill Mall or the Kiwanis Senior Center.
   - Similar initiatives, once piloted at Western (a controlled and potentially more receptive environment), could be taken to high schools in London.

4. Any initiative must be marketed and communicated as mutually beneficial. Language used must be inclusive and mindful of stereotypes and stigma that may exist.
   - Having leaders or representatives from both groups should be included in the decision-making process to make sure the needs and concerns are equally addressed.
5. Champions must be identified and leveraged in both groups to promote a cultural shift towards greater social inclusion and respect for older adults in the population. IG programs must be framed as tools for building social cohesion and respect.
   ✓ Champions may include older adults from existing intergenerational relationships (see Appendix for contacts) or youth from the HS2711 class interested in building connections with older adults.
   ✓ Recruitment and outreach must focus on discrediting existing stereotypes and stigma using IG champions and the prepared awareness video.
   ✓ Increase awareness of the ease and simplicity of intergenerational relationships to achieve “bottom-up” ownership of building social cohesion and respect.

**Limitations.** There are a few limitations to the results presented in this report. First, when gaining the perceptions of non-participants, we only interviewed a few individuals from each group producing potentially unrepresentative conclusions. Therefore, additional interviews must be conducted in other community congregation areas before generalizing these findings. Secondly, due to a short time frame of 3 months, we only conducted one interview with each stakeholder. Therefore, interviews should be facilitated over several sessions to help saturate the themes found and provide stronger conclusions. Lastly, we only interviewed IG programs that were connected through our network; we could have missed other IG programs in London.

**Conclusion.** Simultaneously catering to two distinct audiences is no easy task, but when their commonalities are highlighted and two generations are brought together, the dividends are priceless. The capabilities, needs, and interests of both groups must be identified and incorporated into accessible, fun, and simple IG initiatives. Outreach must focus on highlighting the mutual benefit of IG interactions, while rebranding existing stereotypes, consequently building momentum for increased community ownership of IG initiatives. IG programs are vital to building social inclusivity and respect in London, but must be seen as facilitators of a larger cultural shift rather than as an end product.

**Team Statement.** Through this research, our team witnessed the mutually beneficial impacts of these interactions first-hand because we developed strong connections to the older adults we met on our journey. We learned how to engage with various stakeholders around a central vision of IG relationships in London. By coming together as a team and acting as champions of this idea, we experienced the power of young people to generate momentum and build bridges between community partners to create change.
References List


Appendix A

This progress report outlines our goals, accomplishments, commitments, next steps, and timeline. The diagram below shows a conceptual overview of our project. The green boxes show the steps we have already accomplished.

So far, we have completed a literature review on current intergenerational programs at a local, national, and international level. We identified that most programs were focused on youth below the age of 18. There was a substantial gap in the literature regarding university-aged students interacting with older adults. Therefore, we narrowed the scope of our project to focus on Western University students and older adults in the London community. Since our team is part of this target group, we can leverage our own peer groups and campus community to allow rich data collection. Additionally, we defined “intergenerational programs” and how these might foster social inclusion. We also considered the challenges in achieving this goal, such as youth stereotypes of seniors (and vice versa), and lack of awareness of programs.

Our in-field research to examine the intergenerational programs that exist in London will be completed by October 30, 2013. We will be speaking with two groups: the Kiwanis Senior Centre and the “Seniors in Informational Technology” student club on campus. We will ask program managers, participants, and older adults what makes the program successful, their experience, and the challenges they face. These conversations will evolve into a video, which highlights the merits of intergenerational relationships in London and ultimately break down stereotypes using the voices of each generation. Our goal is to finish filming by November 4, 2013 and the editing by November 11, 2013.

Our final step is to reflect on what is happening globally and integrate our findings to make local recommendations for London’s Age Friendly Network. These recommendations will be useful for the development of intergenerational programming in a London context. Finally, on November 14, 2013, we will present these recommendations to our community partners, laying the foundation for future intergenerational programs between university students and older adults. Our final presentation will be on November 18, 2013 and the report will be finished by December 2, 2013.
Appendix B

Letter of Information

Project Title: London’s Age Friendly Network - Respect and Social Inclusion
Study Investigator

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School of Health Studies Students
University of Western Ontario

Dear participant,

You are invited to participate in a City of London Project, facilitated by students attending the School of Health Studies at Western University, that requires in-field research. The purpose of this project aims to:

• Capture information about intergenerational programming practices in London.
• Understand the experiences of older adults and university students engaged in intergenerational programming.
• Increase awareness, education, and participation in intergenerational programs.
• Investigate the interest level of older adults and university students for future events and programming.

Individuals who are 55 years of age or older, or between the ages of 18-23 are eligible to participate.

The team of students will be asking you to answer questions through a survey, or interview. Questions will investigate your attitude towards the younger or older generation, and whether you would consider interacting with them through planned programming around the London community. The interview may take between 15 – 30 minutes. Participation is voluntary; you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer or request to stop the survey or interview at any point.

The findings from this study may be used in a video, final report, and a presentation to the London Community (including the London Age Friendly Network) and Western University’s Gerontology in Practice Class. Please feel free to contact any of the researchers should any further questions arise. We would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The School of Health Studies Students and The London’s Age Friendly Network
Appendix C

Photograph/Video Sign-Off

This form must be completed when submitting a photograph or video that has a person’s face clearly showing. Each individual that can be identified must approve the photograph/video’s use by signing this form in the designated area. If more than one individual is identifiable, each person should sign a separate form.

Subject description (for example, person’s name, activity, location, etc.)
Name of participant: ______________________
Location: ________________________________
Activity Type: ____________________________

More information in Letter of Information Handout. Did the person receive it (circle)? Yes/No

Name of person submitting photograph/video

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By signing this form, I hereby authorize the City of London to use any photographs/videos taken for reproduction on the City of London’s website, corporate screensaver, or any City of London publications, and do not expect compensation in return.

Signature of person submitting photograph/video

Date

If applicable, Signature of photograph/video subject

Date

If applicable, Signature of photograph/video subject

Date

If applicable, Signature of photograph/video subject

Date

If a subject(s) in the photograph/video is under the age of 18, please complete the following:

Parental / Legal Guardian Consent

I, ________________________________, the parent or legal guardian

of ________________________________,

after having read, understood and completed the above, hereby give my permission to the City of London to use this photograph/video as outlined above.

Signature

Date

1. Fax completed and signed form to Corporate Communications at 519 661-1077; or
2. Forward by internal mail or e-mail (scanned) to Corporate Communications, City Hall, Room 305.
Appendix D

Figure 1: Common Successful Factors of Case Study Intergenerational Programs

- Free
- Social Engagement
- Mutual learning and benefits
- Overall wellbeing
- Fun and simple activities
Appendix E

Chess Program Summary

Who: ages 8-80, children, students, middle-aged individuals, older adults
When: It has been around for 8 years and it’s on Thursday nights from about 7-10
Where: Kiwanis Seniors Center in the gym
What: This chess program is for all ages and is all about breaking down the barriers between generations by playing a simple game of chess. It is free so that anyone can come in and play chess without any barriers. The games are a fierce timed competition of chess with a different partner each week. Chess materials are either brought by the participants or provided by the centre. Steve, a committed volunteer who loves chess, organizes the games and facilitates the program. There is no language barrier since communication is through eye contact. This successful program has been going on for 8 years and is very busy during the winter months, which means that there is a desire for it to be continued.

Healthy Living Summary

Who: 16 people living with various chronic conditions (the participants) and 5 high school seniors (the facilitators).
What: A free 8-week intergenerational exercise program designed for adults who want become active or maintain their balance, strength and flexibility. Using resistance bands, participants are led through 12 easy exercises and coached on creating weekly health-related action plans. Developed by the South West CCAC’s Self-Management Program the workshop is instructed by high school students. Students instructors are taught how to facilitate, interact with older adults and lead an hour-long exercise class. Workshop exercises are based on the Canadian Diabetes physical activity and exercise guidelines and the action planning is based on the Stanford University Healthy Living Program.
When: The program ran for 8 weeks in the Spring of 2013 and will again in the spring of 2014. Students facilitated a class once a week and the seniors had to do 2 of their own exercise sessions at home.
Equipment Used: Chairs, walls, and resistance bands
Where: Tillsonburg, Ontario
Why: This program was successful because it was mutually beneficial for the students and the adults. The students learned practical skills, how to facilitate a program and received volunteer
hours. The older adults had an opportunity to have social interaction at the same time as learning how to exercise. Another component that made it so beneficial was that both parties were required to take ownership in some way while the program occurred. The students took ownership of facilitating the program for the seniors on a weekly basis. The older adults made action plans and created their own goals so that they were in charge of their own progress and future. This program had a great social aspect, where the seniors and students got to interact and realize that they aren’t so different. Although their motivation may be different both parties are concerned with being healthy. The high attendance rates show that it was successful for the older adults considering they felt the desire to return each week even though there was no money commitment.

Seniors in IT Program Summary

**Who:** Western student volunteers and older adults from the organization, Society for Learning in Retirement

**What:** An intergenerational program that has students teaching older adults about technology. They help them with presentations on the computer, Google, YouTube and Skype.

**When:** This program happens once a week for the duration of the school year.

**Where:** We have about 4 locations and about 2 sessions per location. The locations are Seniors Learning in Retirement at Grosvenor Lodge, the Boys and Girls Club of London, Mapleview Terrace (a retirement home), and one session on campus.

**Why:** This program is great for mutual learning and sharing knowledge between the generations. Seniors need help with technology and students get to engage with older adults that have worldly knowledge.
Appendix F
The following were the general questions that were asked to program managers, program participants, and non-user older adults and Western students. Probing questions were not included.

Questions for Cherry Hill Mall
Target population: Male and female older adults aged 55+
1. Do you participate in any community programming in London? Why/why not?
2. If yes, how did you hear of the program?
3. What other programs would you like to see?
4. Would you participate in programs that integrate students and older adults?
5. What are the barriers to participating in intergenerational activities?
6. What type of activities do you like to do for leisure?
7. Do you feel disconnected with youth aged 18-24? (or older adults aged 65+?) Why/why not?
8. Do you want to spend more time with younger generations? (or older)
9. Do you feel loved and respected by students aged 18-23?
10. Overall, what would you say your interpretation of students is in London?
11. What do you think students think of older adults?

Questions for Seniors in IT President – Mire Daljeet
1. How did the program get started?
2. How often do seniors and students interact?
3. What are the locations that you service?
4. How many students participate in the program?
5. How many seniors do you on average help out?
6. So, what would you say the most you have seen?
7. Can you tell the purpose of your program and what you do in it?
8. What kind of things do you help with in terms of technology?
9. What is your role in the club and the whole program?
10. What are some of your methods for recruiting volunteers?
11. What makes this program successful in your opinion?
12. What are some of the challenges for the program?
13. What are some of the strategies you used to overcome those challenges?
14. Do you provide training for the students?
15. Why do you engage in this activity and what benefits does it bring to you?
16. How do you manage transportation?

Questions for Seniors in IT Program Participants

To older adult users:

1. How often do you participate in this program?
2. Do you feel included in society?
3. Do you feel loved and respected by younger generations (or older)?
4. Would you participate in other intergenerational programs around London?
5. What activities do you like to do in your spare time?
6. What other programs involving students would you like to see?
7. Do you feel comfortable hanging out with students?
8. Do you feel that intergenerational activities benefit your well-being?

To student volunteers:

1. What is your program, year and name?
2. How did you hear about seniors in IT?
3. How often do you participate and is it at this location?
4. Why did you decide to participate in this program? Why do you find it interesting?
5. From your experience as a volunteer, what things have you learned from older adults, what have you benefited from this program?
6. Do you think that a stigma exists or barriers exist between older adults and students?
7. If the City of London was to make an IG program between older adults and students, what type of activities would you be interested in? (cooking, art classes, dancing)
8. If you could say something to students who wish to get involved or are afraid of interacting with older adults because of certain attitudes or stereotypes they have, what would you say?

Questions for Students on Campus

1. Have you ever participated in any intergenerational programs? Why or why not?
2. Do you feel comfortable interacting with older adults (adults over 55)?
3. Do you feel respected by older adults?
4. What type of activities do you do in your spare time?
5. What type of programs would you consider doing with older adults?
6. Do you think interacting with older adults would affect your well-being?
Questions for Supervisor of the Kiwanis Seniors’ Centre – Michelle Kerr
1. What is your role at the Kiwanis Seniors’ Centre?
2. What is the importance of the community centre for seniors?
3. Do you have any intergenerational programs here?
4. How do you advertise and recruit?
5. What resources do you need for this program to run?
7. What makes this program successful?
8. What makes this program sustainable?
9. What are the challenges that the program faces?
10. What are the benefits of intergenerational programs?

Questions for English-Second Language Focus Group at Kiwanis Seniors’ Centre
1. What do you think older adults think of students?
2. What do you think students think of older adults?
3. Would you like to spend more time with students or youth?
4. What are your favourite activities to do in your spare time?
5. If there was a program that had older adults and youth interacting, would you be willing to participate?
6. What do you think are the benefits of interacting with younger generations?

Questions for Chess Program Participants
1. Why do you come every week to this program?
2. What are your interests?
3. What are the barriers to intergenerational programming?
4. What are the benefits to intergenerational programming?
5. What is your perception of students?
6. What do you think students think of older adults?
7. Do you have any relationships at this program?

Questions for Healthy Living Program – Darren Robbins
1. Please tell us about your organization.
2. What is the name of the program?
3. Tell us about the logistics of the healthy living program.
4. Why do you believe it was so successful?
5. Did you work alongside the Local Health Integration Network or any other organization?

Questions for Society for Mature Students at Western University Coordinator – Donna Moore

1. Tell us about your role at the Student Success Centre.
2. Tell us about older adult learners on campus and the Society for Mature Students. What are the motivations of these learners when applying to take courses at Western?
3. What are their concerns?
4. What do they think of younger students on campus?
5. How strong is their network and do they come together for any events?
# Appendix G

**Table 1: Contact Information for Key Stakeholders in the Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Organization</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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Appendix H

See link (http://bit.ly/1cT5OQz) for full .pdf articles saved by author's last name and date. Feel free to add to this database as your research progresses.


- This article states that the purpose of intergenerational programs is to address generational gaps and to increase positive interactions.
- Not one definition of intergenerational programs but the article discusses some common characteristics of intergenerational programs that do exist.
- Classification of intergenerational programs exist:
  - Programs where older adults support youth
  - Youth supporting older people
  - Elderly and youth supporting their community together
  - Elderly and youth learning together and participating in social activities together
- The gaps that exist in intergenerational programs are a lack of awareness of the programs running and a need to have a more diverse range of programs and settings of programs.
- The barriers to participants attending the programs are mostly transportation to and from activity, the timing of the programs (seniors available during the day while youth are in school), and language barriers.


- This article was about an intergenerational program called *Learning and Growing Together* in Indiana that brought public school children and older adults together through different activities.
- The second grade class was about World War II and the children would be matched with an older adult pen pal and they eventually interacted together.
- The fifth grade class had a little less interaction with older adults as they only had a couple of career sessions where older adults would come in and give a lecture on different career choices.
- The fourth grade class was an intergenerational chorus. They started off as pen pals, and then met each other at a dance and singing activity for a couple of months.
- The fourth grade class developed the most meaningful relationships with their older adults compared to their peers in other grades because they had a much more interactive activity.

BC Care Providers Association, 2009, *Creating Caring Communities*

- A resource that provides information on how to create and coordinate intergenerational programs.
- It provides examples of IG programs that are small, medium and large in British Columbia.
- Helps with the implementation of programs in a local community.

- This article discusses the definition, benefits and challenges of intergenerational programming
- Addresses how to find support, connections and stakeholders for starting a new program
- Has a list of best practices for successful IG programs
- Lists the process of implementing one of these new programs

Generations United, 2012, *America’s Best Intergenerational Communities*

- A list of the 5 best intergenerational communities in America and the key components to the programs in their communities and the impact on successful aging
- Some main IG activities in these communities include:
  - Tutoring, mentoring, annual spelling bees, choirs, community projects to help the poor or local families, gardening


- This article analyzed the construction and impact of intergenerational programs in three different groups of older adults: frail, community living and Alzheimer’s.
- For frail older adults, activities that were simple, short-term and gross motor were the most successful when they interacted with younger children (music, games or blowing bubbles, simple crafts and playing with animals)
- Community-living older adults, who were a bit more active in their communities loved cultural, cognitive, active and long term activities since it kept them busy and allowed them to help plan the activities.
- For Alzheimer patients, long term activities and simple gross motor tasks were the most successful such as incubating eggs, watching electric trains and listening to music.
- This article shows great heterogeneity between the same demographic.

Kaplan, M., 2001, *School-based Intergenerational Programs*, UNESCO Institute for Education

- This review focuses on the different types of school-based programs that have been implemented
- It looks at the positive impacts of IG programs on youth/seniors, curriculum and surrounding communities
- It has some great definitions
- Discusses many different programs on a global scale that focus on cultural interactions between generations
  - Technological, environmental, educational, historical, musical programs are a few of the examples
  - Distinguishes the difference between seniors helping youth and vice versa
Kolodinsky, J., Cranwell, M. & Rowe, E., 2002, *Bridging the Generation Gap across the Digital Divide: Teens Teaching Internet Skills to Senior Citizens*

- This article described a program, Teens Teaching Internet Skills (TTIS) Pilot Project in the United States that had the youth teach seniors how to work computers.
- It recognized that seniors that have access to the internet are able to experience socialization (by keeping in touch with friends/family, and make new connections), and can stay informed of the current events. This is especially true for those who are homebound.
- This article is important because it shows how beneficial intergenerational programs for all involved.


- LINKages Society of Alberta is a community-based registered charity that is dedicated to implementing intergenerational programs, as well as providing information and conducting research.
- This document is useful for this project because it takes in account the Canadian context. It provides an overview of the best practices including infrastructure support, administration, partnerships, and evaluations.


- This comprehensive report conducted by researchers in Australia looks at 4 different intergenerational programs in Australia and identified definitions, benefits, difficulties, gender and cultural factors, best practice models, and the relationship between intergenerational programs and individual and community building.
- The literature review looks at sources from Australia, United States, and United Kingdom.


- This article discusses the importance of bridging the gap between the generations to improve seniors’ health and well-being.
- The article notes that both teenagers and seniors are at-risk populations so why not involve both of them in activities in their community to increase their supports for life stresses.
- It provides current examples in Canada that have been successfully implemented such as:
  - Older adults mentoring students to operate a radio station in PEI
  - Students helping seniors clean their yards and homes in Ontario
  - Volunteer grandparents in British Columbia that develop relationships with youth that do not have an older adult connection.

- This article examines IG programs in Canada, Sweden, South Africa, Japan, United States, Australia and Spain and has a chart with the benefits, reciprocity and empowerment of the programs
- Discusses the reasoning behind fostering intergenerational learning between generations and the characteristics of intergenerational exchange
- Addresses the role of universities in IG learning and how they help engage the community with older adults
- Gives a global perspective on intergenerational learning


- This report reviews the literature of intergenerational practice in the United Kingdom and looks at a variety of aspects including the definitions, characteristics, examples, outcomes, and key aspects for success.


- A program that was started at York University that had student dance teachers teaching dance to older adults.
- The purpose of this program was to have the two generations interacting and to change the perceptions of younger people about older adults.
- The older adults had a wide range of ethnicities and were encouraged to bring their own music for the dance lessons. This multicultural program brought many cultures together and increased sensitivity.
- Overall, the students and older adults learned from each other, had a great time, changed their perceptions of the other generation and helped build confidence and increased their physical and mental health.
- This would be a great program to start in the London community with dance clubs at Western University.


- An interesting article that discusses refugee and immigrants aging in a different land from their own
- It tries to understand the barriers of successful aging for immigrants and the intergenerational relationships for different cultural groups
- Intergenerational exchange within a different culture is investigated and the factors that affect health aging for immigrant older adults
  The challenges for both youth and older adults from different cultures to engage on an intergenerational level
Gerontology in Practice Team 6 Report Transcripts and Interview Notes:
Building Social Inclusion and Respect through Intergenerational Programming in the City of London
Interview 1: Cherry Hill Mall – Cherryhill Mom and Daughter [Young-Old and Old-Old]

Mom – 84
Daughter - 66

Gina: Do you participate in any programs in the London Community?

Mom: No, not really.

Gina: Is there a specific reason why you don't?

Mom: Not really I don't drive, unless I'm with her. She says I'm spoiled. don't take the bus.

Gina: In terms of having programs that would let you engage with students in London, would you be interested in any of those?

Daughter: It's not that I'm not interested; I just work 6 afternoons week. Friday is my only day off and that's the day mum and I shop, doctor's visits, and all those things. It's really tough for me. I just don't have a lot of time. We'll talk about that. I don't know what you have in mind.

Mom: Certainly when you retire, you'll have more time.

Gina: When you combine students with older adults, do you see any barriers? Why?

Mom: No. I wouldn't engage in students. I like my peace and quiet. I've been on my own so long and I like my peace and quiet. After I leave early, I go home and that's it. I am happy just going to Cherryhill and going back home.

Daughter: I don't see any barriers. My son is a young person and older than you guys and I think I'm young at heart and the business I'm in…I get people into homes after they graduated. [She's a real estate agent].

Daughter: My son has Facebook. The pictures from the party were all over Facebook.

Gina: Why did you choose to settle in London?

When my son graduated, that brought me here.

Gina: Do you feel at all disconnected with the students of London?

Daughter: Western puts on a lot of things throughout the year and I drive through the university to get to the centre. Signage on concerts and theatre. Friends and neighbours who have students in their home. Hear things about what goes on at the university through them.

Gina: What kind of stuff that Western put on here? [Cherryhill Mall]


Gina: Overall, what would you say your interpretation of students are in London?
Daughter: Amused when I’m driving through campus and people are painted purple. Mom thought that was fun. Shinerama. I would have taken mom but I work Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Gina: What do you think that students think of older adults?

Daughter: I hope we don’t look like that down the road [laughs]. I’ve always found students pretty polite holding the door. I haven’t had a lot of reason to interact simply because of what I do.

Mom: I have a few students live in my building. What do you think of them? They’re not chatty. Mostly Asian. It doesn’t bother me.

Daughter: I try to talk with anybody, it’s just who I am. I haven’t gone to functions at the university in a very long time. It’s not wanting to, it’s just a question of time. I’m always interested in what young people are doing. I think it’s really sad that we have bright people that graduate and they don’t stay here. That’s the one thing that really bothers me. There’s a huge disconnect there. I was lucky that my son stayed here. I don’t think he would have if he didn’t start his business. We probably would have gone elsewhere.

Themes
- Big difference between young old and old-old
- Young-old are interested in connecting, but still work and do not have time. Potential for programs once they retire. They are still independent mostly.
- Young-old are familiar with Facebook.
- Old-old – routine, cannot get around, not so independent. Not as interested in interacting with students.

Interview 2: Cherryhill Mall
Audrey (Blue)
Jean (Beige)

Gina: What are your interests?

Jean: I like to read very much.

Gina: Do you feel disconnected with youth?

Jean: I don’t! I had a young man knocking at my door and he asked for a couple of eggs. I was like, “Sure! You’re a handsome young fella. A couple of days later, he was sitting on the bench at my building and he said, “You wouldn’t mind ironing my shirts would you?” And I said, “Bo I wouldn’t! I’ve done enough of that.” I see him all the time. I like young people.

Audrey: They’re very helpful. I’m always dropping things and they’re picking them up. They help whenever they can.

Gina: Do you want to spend more time with younger generations? Do you find that there isn’t enough time to spend?

Audrey: I have grandchildren. So, I spend time with them.
Jean: I have great grandchildren. They’re family.

Gina: Do you feel respected by students?
Jean: Oh yeah.

Gina: Do you participate or would you participate in intergenerational programs?
Audrey: I do not participate because I’m not in the position to. I am not always well. Transportation is an issue.
Jean: Me neither, I don’t drive.

Gina: What are the barriers do you find to participate in these intergenerational activities?
Jean: Getting there. I used to drive, but I got a heart condition so I can’t. I gave it up. If I could stand on my feet, I could volunteer. I’m older than 80.
Audrey: Right in here, there’s a bus service that takes us to all the malls. I just walk around with my walker and have coffee.

Gina: Do you find the malls a meeting spot?
Jean: Yes, definitely here!

Gina: Do you think if students had programs here, would you participate in them?
Audrey: Sure! My granddaughter is a wonderful cook.

Gina: What other programs would you like to see in the future between older adults and young people?
Audrey: We kind of like the slots. We have birthday cakes every Saturday.
Jean: We like to painting classes. Portraits.
Audrey: I took a painting class and I looked down and my sky was brown and everyone elses’ was blue. I realized that I’ve been dipping my brush in coffee the whole time.
Jean: My portrait turned out to look like ET’s Grandmother (7:22 freeze frame)

Themes: Show casing personalities

Cherryhill Interview 3: Old Couple - Movie 6087
Age: 90+, married for 72 years

What do you like to do I your spare time?
Wife: Our time is all spare time. We like to travel and go places. We travelled all over the world. *just like students* He was in love with the war service.
Do you feel disconnected with youth aged 18-24 (students)?
No we don’t spend time with them.

Do you want to spend time with younger generations?
Wife: Yes that would be nice.

Do you feel respected by students?
Wife: yes. They’re very handy when I need to get into the store. They're always a student that helps.

What do you think students think of you?
Wife: They stand in awe of us because we’ve lived so long. (1:54)

Would you participate in programs that integrate students and older adults together?
Wife: No we wouldn’t be interested. We’ve passed the stage of that.

What would you find the barriers for that?
Wife: We’ve gone away from them. We’re

Do you participate in any community programming?
Wife: Not anymore. I guess we are just too old.

Is there a program between youth and older adults, would you participate?
Wife: I’m not sure if I would. I’m very quiet and I stay at home now. I cannot read.

Cherryhill Mall Interview #4: Margaret – Movie 6219

- I think students are great…the ones that I’ve met
- They’ve all been very friendly, open, and nice
- It’s a great University

Have you ever spend time with younger students and enjoy it?
- Even talking to you guys. To me, it’s great! Some of these older people just sit and stare straight ahead.
- Not talking to everyone and I cannot do that. I like being with younger people. (1:04)
- It keeps you open to interacting with people [when interacting with younger people]

What do you like to do in your free time?
- I went to dearness program
- Today is a quiet day, but I just went shopping, got groceries, and took money out of the bank. And tomorrow, I’m off again! (Here’s Margaret, she’s just as busy just like students)
- I don’t like sitting at home…I know a lot of them do. [Does not see herself as an older person – young at heart]
What do you think of students think of older adults?
- Some of them ignore you. They will just walk by.
- Some of them are very good.
- They think of us as grandparents.

Cherryhill Mall Interview - Movie 6220
Margareen

What do you like to do in your spare time?
- Exercise, read, volunteer, watch TV
- [She’s just as busy as us. She’s got plans. I don’t think I can come.]

What do ou think of older adults think of students?
- That’s hard to answer.
- Horrible thing with the Fanshawe and all that trouble you know. They do their thing and they leave.

What do you think students think of older adults?
- God, are you still alive?
- It’s their best bet to volunteer and go health older adults in their homes.
- Students must think we’re living forever. (0:43)

Would you want to spend time with our generation?
- If there was a program that we’re interested in, yeah.

Western University Student Interviews
October 29, 2013

Rachel:
- Believes seniors think youth have no values and easily distracted
  - Always partying and having sex
  - Her grandparents think she is studying a lot
  - Seniors have knowledge to share
    - Have a lot of experience
    - Been through what we are going through
  - Her hobby is dragon boat
    - Enjoys it because common goal and activity
  - When she personally hung out with her grandparents
    - Language barrier
    - Chinese not her first language
    - They usually eat together
  - Would be interested in participating in programs but busy

Catherine Interview
- 21 years old
- Believes our generation would be seen as wasting it, not mature
- Our generation is not respectful, swearing all the time
- Sees older adults as having a lot of wisdom
  - Older adults not comfortable with technology
- For fun she likes to help others (ASB), musical theater
• Has not been exposed to older adults, hasn’t seen her grandpa in 10 years and didn’t volunteer with elderly

Sarah interview
• Perception depends on demographic
  o Middle Eastern Older adults- not as open as young in matters such as sexuality, and gender identity
• Thinks if student is interested in the same thing as older adult, they could interact
  o Although thinks students may look down on less educated adults
• Thinks older adults believe the young generation might be like peter pan in the way that we never want to grow up
  o Young doesn’t have the same work ethic
  o ‘we dont know what to do”
• In her spare time, although she doenst have alot because of school, she like to learn new languages, and to play the guitar
• She has interacted with seniors through volunteering and mentor programs at uni
• She feels life skills such as professionalism and empathy can be learnt
• She is middle Eastern so very respectful of seniors from growing up in that culture
• Gave an example that a student complained about a cafeteria staffs performance and blamed her poor performance on her older age

Ben Interview
• Thinks older adults think they can’t relate to us
• Think students find older adults annoying
  o Old school views
  o Young underestimate older peoples intelligence
• His hobbies include drama and music
• Not comfortable with older people because he doesn’t think the interests are the same and thinks there is a big knowledge gap

Taro Interview
• Believes students are aware that people are in need
  o Doesn’t see older people as a burden
  o Thinks young people want to help
• Believes seniors see us as obnoxious
  o Seniors have advice for us
• His hobbies are listening to music
  o Sports
  o Drawing
  o Crafts
• Volunteers with Seniors in IT
  o Gained a friend and was able to be that friend the older woman needed

Chess Program Transcript

C: Why do you come every week to this program?
Brian:
“I love the atmosphere and competition and it’s a friendly place to play chess”

**What are your interests?**
“I love chess and I play online as well. I also love sports. I love competition and anything that keeps my mind going.”

**What are the barriers to intergenerational programming?**
“I don’t see a barrier. Younger people tend to be a bit nervous at first, but once they see how accepting everyone is then people begin to get comfortable.”

**What are the benefits to intergenerational programming?**
“It keeps the mind stimulated and allows you to focus, be tactical and have better organizational skills. As a young person, interacting with older adults allows me to get better view points of what is going on, understand life events and can get help from anyone here if I need to.”

**American Older Man:**
**What are your interests?**
“I love college football and watching sports. I love competition, playing basketball. Younger people don’t want to play it as often so I get mad at younger instructors.”

**What are your perceptions of students?**
“Students your age are very smart and a lot of them are serious and have self-discipline. Some are useless, but that is because they were spoiled by their parents. Some are serious and I feel sorry because there aren’t jobs out there for these types of people. Young people are strict, have a good work ethic, work really hard and want to get a good job.”

**What do you think students think of older adults?**
“I get a lot of respect, I can’t believe it, they hold the door for me even when I am far away. There is lot of politeness from them. Sometimes they say sir and I have never heard that before and I think the world is becoming a better place.”

**What are the benefits of intergenerational relationships?**
“We can help the younger ones. Someone was having trouble with their house payment so I picked it up for them as just a one-time thing. They are young and starting out and it is hard to have money. Better to help people whenever you can. I help them decide what to go into. I like to discuss sports and job opportunities with people and tell them-you can do the math class, who cares if its hard. You can do it. Take it. Its ok to fail, get back up and do it again, and when you succeed you will feel better for it.”

**Do you have any relationships at this program?**
“Yeah I know lots of kids here. You get to watch them grow up and you watch them play chess better and better. And some you hate because they are beating you all the times you play them and you used to beat them. They are good and Tony and Brian came up through the ranks and he is just so good. You watch them grow and it’s kind of fun and chess makes them smarter all around. It makes you think and helps your critical thinking skills. Young people will want to learn chess-they will open up a chess book and learn the whole thing instead of doing other activities.”

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**Michelle Interview**

*What is your role?*
“I supervise the Kiwanis and Hamilton road senior community center and help organize the recreational programs, guest speakers, instructional programs and daily activities for people with memberships”

**What is the importance of the community centre for seniors?**

“Wellness and social participation. People need a place to go to be with people. As we get older the world becomes smaller and we tend to isolate ourselves. The centre plays a bigger part in their lives as their kids or family has moved away but now they have new extended family with their friends at the centre. It gives them a sense of purpose, a reason to get up in the morning and something to do. We create a relaxing and fun, social environment here and we offer programs to keep them stimulated. Activities like cognitive training, exercise, tapping into spiritual emotional and intellectual wellness. By tapping into dimensions of wellness they have whole umbrella to enjoy retirement”

**What intergenerational programs are at this centre?**

“The chess program is a large program been here for last 8 years every Thursday, and ranges from 8-80 years old. It’s great because there is no language barrier, if you can’t speak English its OK. Communication is thru eye contact and the game. It gets away from ageism as the kids and older adults don’t care how old you are. It’s all about the game of chess. Also, we have brought dances and flash mobs with kids before. Older adults love it as it reminds them of their youth. Its fun and play. People assume that once you are older, you lose spontaneity. We offer programs that try to keep spontaneity instilled in them. We want them to come in with that wild abandonment and be silly and bring kids to do it with them”

**What makes it successful and sustainable?**

“First of all, there is no fee so the cost barrier is gone. Second of all, chess is a game that is worldwide. It doesn’t matter what country you are from, you can play it. If you can’t speak English you can still play game. Also, the fact that there is no judgement is huge. It doesn’t matter what age, height, size you are, it is all about the game. The meeting of the minds and its intellectual; that is what makes it so extraordinary. It’s also about social participation they all know each other and many are regulars. They recognize each other, nod and acknowledge each other since they have played against each other at some point in time. Even though they are not saying much in the game, there is that engagement with the game and with the opponent. It’s good for the kids to be a part of the program since sometimes they beat the older adults and vice versa and they are learning from each other at the same time through the game of chess”

**How do you advertise and recruit?**

“We don’t, they just come. It is word of mouth. We have found here thru community centres, you can advertise through catalogues, posters, community papers, but with program like this its word of mouth. In the winter, that room is packed with all ages. I like that and it is interesting to see mutual respect between players, a redeeming quality for all involved”

**What are the resources you need for this program to run?**

“Not a lot, Steve is the facilitator and he is a volunteer. His best quality is that he is very passionate about the game of chess and he loves the fact that he is involving all ages. He is very organized and makes sure they all have a partner, and he sets up the games. A lot of them bring their own chess boards; we have some here but the majority bring their own. It is unique, as there is not a huge cost factor. We have one gentleman who has his own chess board and pieces that he has made himself and the kids love to talk to him about this. What I love about this program is that things you don’t expect: happen. The social engagement that you don’t expect=happens, the relationships between people that builds amongst all of them even with them having language barrier=happens. It’s something so simple and cost effective.”

**What are the challenges to this program?**

“Space. Winter time is busy especially when everyone comes all at once and I have to spread them throughout the centre. It affects the game unfortunately because there is something about
being in whole room together. Sometimes when they finish they go and watch another game so it breaks up the atmosphere. But really I would say this program doesn’t have many challenges. The rules are set out at beginning all about fair play and respect and everyone abides by it so no challenges with this one really.”

What are the benefits of intergenerational programs?

“For older adults it is important that youth lose that stereotype of older adults no longer able being able to engage and that they are old and they don’t know and can’t play great. The benefit of wisdom being shared is key. If you watch game when played, some share why they made a move and there’s no judgement, it’s all about the game. It is good for young learning minds and good for older adults since they still continue to have that intellectual piece and social engagement. They are thinking and concentrating, and it keeps them stimulated as they think about their next move. No matter the age—it rolls out so smoothly. The volunteers are cost effective and everyone is there to enjoy the game. There is no arguing or fighting, it is all about out manoeuvring each other and who is most mindful and played a good game. Depending who the player is, older adults get the intellectual social engagement and participation and to some extent spiritual component. They feel included and they have a place to go and that affects you spiritually. There is a sense of acceptance, a place to go where they feel respected, no judgement. You are who you are because you are playing the game you are playing. Kids get the social participation and intellectual learning, but most importantly they get to know older adults over a chess board, building relationships. It is not as much spiritual.

Interview with Darren Robbins: Wednesday Nov. 6th, 2013

- Mentioned the website: Thehealthline.ca
- Southwest CCAC (Community Care Access Center)
  - caring for people in home
  - Self management – more responsible for their own health
  - Manage chronic conditions better
- Healthy Living Program
  - Spring 2013, 8 week long program
  - Participates and facilitators met once a week, participates were expected to do exercises twice a week at home
  - Wanted to older adults how to exercise
  - Taught high school students about exercises, showed them how to facilitate a group, promoted the program to seniors to make positive changes
  - Volunteered hours for students (keener students)
  - Seniors enjoyed experience
    - Could tell this through high attendance levels
  - 16 older adults registered
    - Getting out, interacting with students and seniors
  - Trained 5 students
    - Each week: 1 to facilitate the class, 1 to help folks
  - Pilot project, received funds from the LHIN
  - Equipment: walls, chairs, resistance bands
- Students:
  - Walked away from the experience with practical skills
• Had to learn to facilitate, and lead a group
  ▪ Gained experience interacting with older generation
    ▪ Received volunteer hours
  ○ Seniors:
    ▪ Learnt exercises
    ▪ Social interaction
    ▪ Action planning
    ▪ Self-management of diabetes
• CCAC
  ○ Works with partnerships, the diabetes education center (helps new people with diabetes)
• Functional mobility – the ability to interact with your environment
• Action plan:
  ○ Plan to make changes in your life, setting goals
  ○ Something that you want to do

Seniors in IT – Transcription Notes - November 6, 2013

Adam: How did the program get started?

Mira: My sister and one of her roommates noticed that there weren’t really any clubs in the USC that dealt with seniors. And so, they just thought it would be a good idea to start one. Both of them were really involved with my grandparents. We have close connections with seniors in our lives. They also noticed that London is a very senior heavy city. So they decided to start the club and they contacted various community centres and youth centres around London and asked them if they would be interested. The response was good and decided to go ahead.

Adam: How do you often do seniors and students interact?

Mira: One individual would go once a week for one hour. We have about 4 locations and about 2 sessions per location. Each person goes once a week.

Adam: What are the locations?

Mira: There’s this (Seniors Learning in Retirement) and The Boys and Girls Club of London, and Mapleview Terrace (retirement home), and one session on campus with them.

Adam: Is this occurring all simultaneously?

Mira: It depends on the palace. Each place has a different time. These people are Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3-4pm; Boys and Girls is Mondays and Wednesdays 10-11 and 11-12 Mapleview is Tuesdays 3-4; On-campus is Tuesdays 11-12.

Adam: Is it for the school year or how long?
Mira: It’s for the school year, but we change sections per semester. For example, if a volunteer doesn’t fit with any of these times, they can go next semester and see if their schedule changes or if these times changes.

Adam: It’s the centres that create the schedule?

Mire: Well yes, they give us time slots that work for them. We see what works for most volunteers based on what they signed up for. And some times are more popular. It’s sometimes a pain to sort it all out. For the most part, it works out because some people are available at the time they list.

Adam: Do the centres ask the seniors when they are most available?

Mira: That probably factors into it and also if they have the space available. I know it’s the case for here for sure. And also when there is a supervisor available.

Adam: How many students participate in this program?

Mira: We have about 40-50 members, but the students are not all active at once – some can’t make it so they are deferred to next semester. It’s our biggest in a while.

Adam: How many seniors do you help out (if you can put a number to it)?

Mira: It’s usually about 1-1 ratio. I would say it’s about 40 in total. It also depends on the centre because some centres have the same seniors coming in every week. Some centres have different seniors coming in every week. I can’t really judge that. It really depends.

Adam: So, what would you say the most that you have seen?

Mira: In total, over a course of the year? The regulars about 30. Those who come and drop-in, probably another 30 per semester, so 60 in total.

Adam: Can you tell the purpose of your program and what you do in it?

Mira: It really is to help seniors with their technological problems. It’s so innate in us and for them it’s completely new territory. It’s hard to learn something when you’re older. That goes for anything, especially when something is a problem. It is very important in this day and age to be caught up in this sort of thing because there are so many things that helps you with technology. It opens up your world. It would be just so useful if you know all that. I think that is pretty much what the best part is that you’re helping someone learn so much in a small amount of time. If you teach the basics, you can pretty much do anything. Learning how to use google, then you can do anything from there. Also, making connections with people because it’s really nice to talk to people…we’re just starting our lives and they’ve already been through so much…and you’re just sitting there and talking to them and they’re showing pictures of their grandkids. Things come up that you can talk about and it’s just really nice to bond.

Adam: What kind of things do you help with in terms of the technology?
Mira: I’ve helped people to learn how to use Google, how people use their email and attach photos to send to family members. I’ve taught someone how to use Skype. We’ve helped them use word documents, PowerPoint, and even general things with the actual computer such as transferring files from computer to computer, listening to music on YouTube, or playing videos on YouTube, or searching things and finding them online. It opens up all of these options. With some people, it’s just the basics like operating a mouse. People from all different levels. It’s open to anyone who needs some sort of help. We never say you’re too basic.

Adam: What is your role in the club and the whole program?

Mira: As president, I organize it all. I have to contact all the centres at the beginning of the year if they are available and still interested. I have to organize with them the times they would prefer and transfer that to volunteers. During club weeks, recruit people and advertise efficiently and make sure they understand what they are getting involved with. It is a commitment and need to be here every week, with certain exceptions. I coordinate when volunteers are available and when centres are available. Hold meeting and keep everyone updated on a weekly basis with who’s volunteering where and when and stuff. I have my exec too and they’re great (about 4–5). They send out reminds as well. Keep in touch with each supervisor to make sure they’re happy. It’s an ongoing thing every week.

Adam: What are some of your methods for recruiting volunteers?

Mira: It is a very small club and a lot of people don’t know about us or what we do. Word of mouth is a big thing for me – telling people my friends and everyone I know and they tell their friends. Once people hear about, they become interested in it. It is a simple thing and it is really enjoyable. In terms of club weeks, if people walk by us and see something that they don’t exactly know what something is, we just tell them about it and what we do. It is a commitment and they need to be committed and it’s enjoyable. We never push people to do it. We do not need a huge group of people. If it’s a small group, it’s a small group. That’s fine with us.

Adam: What makes this program successful in your opinion?

Mira: Demand on both sides. Seniors are always very interested in something like this because I personally know that their kids don’t help them and I can transfer that in my life because I get very frustrated when my parents. These guys it’s never a problem because it’s someone else. They often can’t get help from their kids or they don’t have people around them who can help or who are knowledgeable enough to help them. There is a lot of demand on their end. As for students, many students love seniors (grandparents and parents even), used to interacting with. You don’t have to supervise them. It’s a friendship kind of thing. A lot of students are interested in volunteering and it’s only 1 hour commitment and it’s close by so it’s very accessible.

Adam: What are some of the challenges for the program?

Mira: It has to a lot with volunteers taking it as seriously as they should. We’ve had that problem in the past. We’ve lost senior centres because we have seniors who show up and volunteers who don’t. And they’re just like, “They’re wasting my time. “ And the supervisor is like, “My seniors are getting frustrated. They can’t be doing this every week,” which is totally fair. On the flip side, they’re old and sometimes forget to come. The students come and they feel their time is wasted and that their time is more valuable because they’re in school. So, a lot of times there’s conflict there because my senior wasn’t there last week and so why should I show up this week. It is a problem because you don’t come, there’s somebody here waiting for you when
they need help. If you do come and they're not here, then it's like, what am I supposed to do for an hour? With the on-campus thing it's better because if they're not there, then you can just go to the library. But when you travel, it's different too because it takes time out of your schedule. I think that would be our main problem because when people can't come. So, in the past we've had volunteers ask seniors for their emails. I will contact you directly if I can't come and you do the same. Problem with that is that we don't have the same seniors coming in every week. Also, not all of them know how to use their email or call. Main problems: coordinating everyone schedules and making sure everyone shows up and takes it seriously.

**Adam: What are some of the strategies you used to overcome those challenges?**

Mira: This year, especially, we’ve done bi-weekly sessions. So volunteers go bi-weekly: section A and section B. That way, if you can't make it one week, try to make it the week that is your week off. That seems to be helping because people are going every week. In terms of seniors, we ask the supervisors to have a sign-up sheet and have a contact sheet. Gina is really good about that because she contacts them beforehand and reminds me them that they signed up for this day and if you can't come, let me know now. Then she tells my exec how many people are signed up and he accordingly says these volunteers can go and etc. There is communication on both sides. Making sure contacting seniors is important to remind them to come. Boys and Girls is really good with that as well. Mapleviev Terrace as a retirement home is more if they feel up to it and stuff like that. That’s kind of last minute stuff so that’s a little bit unfortunate so we’re trying to figure out a way to best deal with that. So 2 main things: alternating weeks and having the supervisors let us know how many seniors are coming every week so we can send the right amount of volunteers. Communication, reminds, making sure people are accountable. Every reminder we try to send every single week we do it 2 days before and if they can't, we ask them to give us 24 hours beforehand to cancel. But sometimes that doesn't happen because it's not a perfect world. We talk to supervisors every single week.

**Adam: Before the program starts, do you provide training for the students?**

Mira: In the past, senior centres have had issues with that because we do not even ask for police checks. I thought about whether that seems necessary because we’ve been going for 8 years now and we’ve never had a problem with any sort of liabilities. I think that because it’s such a basic thing and because the questions can ask anything, it would be hard to put them through training sessions like, “what to expect.” I guarantee them that it’s not beyond their basic knowledge. If certain senior centres need a police check, we simply ask the volunteer to get a police check and we've never had a problem with that.

**Adam: Why do you engage in this activity and what benefits does it bring to you?**

Mira: Truthfully I got into it because my brother told me that it was something I should do. I realized that after my first year volunteering that I actually do enjoy it. I am very close with my grandparents on both sides and for me; it reminds me of that a lot when I go every week because I often don't get to see my grandparents. And I do genuinely love hearing their stories and hearing what they have to say and helping them with things because you get such a personal satisfaction by helping others. It seems like a paradox because it's selfish for you that being your reason. It is true I really do enjoy it. In my second year of volunteering, I helped a lady Skype her cousin in Greece that she hasn't seen in 20 years. So, I got to see the moment when they saw each other and she was just bawling her eyes out. It was the best feelings. I helped that happen you know? It's not awllways that big. Even sending emails to your grandkids
like, if I can teach my grandparents how to do this, then that would be great for me. I always genuinely helping and I love old people.

Adam: How do seniors benefits from the program?

Mira: They don't get to see kids our age very often. So they do enjoy having those personal contacts with us. In terms of just technology, they learn how to do so many things…paying bills online, ordering prescriptions, so you don't have to go out and do things. It just makes things easier. Instead of taking out a map, they can just use map quest. I've heard great things. It makes me feel better because it makes me feel like we’re doing a good job.

Adam: How do you manage transportation?

Mira: It's public transportation. If they can drive, then we say they can. Leave time to get there and back.