A Short Guide to Running a

Intergenerational Playgroup



An intergenerational playgroup brings children and older adults together in a shared space to connect through play, conversation and everyday interaction.

While all playgroups are intergenerational by nature, some groups have a specific focus on welcoming a range of ages, designed to welcome people from the community, bringing together multiple generations to support children 0-5 years, as well as supporting older people, such as those in retirement villages.

Playgroup Space

- Create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all ages.
- Ensure the space is accessible for mobility aids, prams and different physical needs.
- Provide comfortable seating for adults and open floor space for children.
- Set up areas for both active play and quiet conversation.
- Ensure good lighting and clear visibility to support interaction and supervision.
- Keep the layout simple and easy to navigate.

Partnerships and Promotion

- Partner with aged care services, retirement living communities and neighbourhood houses.
- Connect with schools, kindergartens and early years services.
- Engage local seniors and community groups such as Rotary, CWA, Lions, Probus and U3A.
- Work with local councils and community organisations to promote the program.

Toys, Resources and Activities

- Encourage shared play with blocks, puzzles, dolls, cars and simple construction toys.
- Include storytelling- read books together and share memories or life experiences as activities.
- Set up simple craft activities such as drawing, collage, playdough or incorporate natural elements such as fresh flowers.
- Organise music, singing and movement activities that invite participation across generations.
- If your playgroup has an outside area, include gardening, planting or nature exploration.
- Establish cooperative games that support turn-taking, conversation and shared problem-solving.

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An Important Note

Intergenerational playgroups bring together people with different life experiences, abilities and ways of participating.

Some intergenerational playgroups encourage interaction between children and older people who are not related. This can be a wonderful opportunity for older people who do not have grandchildren, or whose grandchildren do not visit regularly. It can also benefit children who do not have grandparents in their lives, whose grandparents live far away or who have limited opportunities to connect with older generations. But it does raise an additional issue around child safety and consent.

Because of this, it is important to set clear expectations that all interactions should be safe, respectful and appropriate. For example, any person who is not related to a child should ask permission before touching that child or engaging in close physical contact.

Open communication is key and it is beneficial to have a facilitator or leader to assist with the running of the playgroup session.



More Information

Playgroup Victoria is here to provide guidance and support. The playgroup team can help with things such as the set-up of the playgroup, the design of the space, possible partnerships and practical considerations to create a sustainable playgroup in your community.

View our **Intergenerational Playgroup Support Services Guide** or contact us for more information.

For more advice and resources, register your playgroup!

