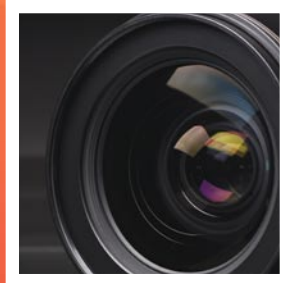


Resource Pack

Adult Social Services Department
Children and Younger Adults Department
Derbyshire County Council







Derbyshire Intergenerational Strategy

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Introduction

Intergenerational work has never had a higher profile. Organisations such as the Police, the Health Service and local councils, to name a few, are beginning to realise the value of encouraging older and younger generations to work together.

Intergenerational projects result in greater respect for other people, recognition of the value of the individual, whatever their age, utilise and validate the experiences of younger and older people and encourage citizenship.

From an individual perspective, members of intergenerational groups enjoy the opportunity to meet with people from their own age group, along with those from another. Through a better understanding of the lives of the people in the group, they learn to value the differences and similarities of those people, develop respect for people from different generations and find a

common voice. Invariably this leads to an increase in levels of self-confidence and self-esteem for all participants.

The Intergenerational Resource Pack is intended to help teachers and members of the community to set up their own projects. Over the past eighteen months Derbyshire County Council has been promoting intergenerational projects throughout the county through the Derbyshire Intergenerational Strategy Project (DIgS). The primary aim of DIgS has been to span the generation gap through meaningful, enjoyable activities, creating positive outcomes. For the purpose of the project older people are defined as over fifty years of age.

Four book groups have run in residential homes for older people, sheltered accommodation and in a community venue. The young people involved are in the thirteen to sixteen years age group whilst the older

people are between the ages of fifty and eighty-five years of age.

Four gardening projects, involving children as young as five and as old as sixteen years, have produced two sensory gardens, a wildlife garden and an allotment.

An ongoing digital photography project will result in a high quality pictorial book showing a village from past and present perspectives.

A writing and drama project engaged younger and older people in writing their own drama which concentrated on issues they found important. Interestingly, those issues were similar across the generations. The drama was performed, to an audience, by another intergenerational group. The performance was filmed for DVD, a copy of which is included in the Resource Pack, as inspiration and a teaching resource.

These were the initial projects devised by DlgS. However, some of the book groups and gardening groups have continued to meet

after the life of the project. Involvement in the projects has also resulted in a proposed oral history project and a further writing/drama project. Encouraged by the success of the projects, the Swadlincote 50+ Forum has set up a further book group and an IT group, with more planned for the future.

These projects have informed the material contained within the Resource Pack. The pack provides a step-by-step guide which includes an evaluation of each project, what was learned during the process, a project plan, an organisational outline and a timetable. Also included are sample letters, flyers, permission forms, ideas for other intergenerational projects and useful contacts.

The Resource Pack, which will be distributed to every school in Derbyshire, will enable teachers, who would like students in their school, to have the opportunity to be involved in intergenerational work, to set up and run projects.



By basing it on what has been learned from the DIgS projects, it is intended to make the process of planning and running intergenerational projects easier and more effective than starting from scratch.

Not included in the Resource Pack are intergenerational projects that will be organised and run following further funding being made available through DIgS and the County Council's Community Safety Unit. These projects have an additional emphasis on reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. They will include two intergenerational groups learning to ballroom dance and two groups producing a booklet on how to stay safe and 'Live Strong'. Two rock group projects and two herbal remedy projects are planned for autumn 2007 and spring 2008.

Of particular interest to teachers, in terms of meeting the aims of Every Child Matters and the Derbyshire Children and Young People's Plan, participation in the projects



has contributed to many of these, particularly those aims relating to enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, citizenship and being healthy. Projects have promoted a positive image of children and young people, developed their life and social skills and enabled them to make a positive contribution. It has provided an opportunity for greater community involvement and encouraged the development of a more flexible approach to the school day and the curriculum. Some projects have promoted a healthy lifestyle, accessible for any child, not only those with sporting ability.

Children and young people have been able to identify their own priorities, some of which are: being allowed to express their own views more frequently; more emphasis being placed on a person achieving their potential rather than their ability to pass exams; having fun at the same time as learning.

Changing the perceptions of other people regarding younger people was of particular importance. Rather than being seen as a threat younger people wanted to be viewed as part of the present but also important to the future of our communities. From comments made by older participants, there is no doubt that this was achieved.

The value and impact of intergenerational projects is the same whether it is a gardening project or an art group, a book project or a bowls club. Large or small, complicated or simple, the projects result in members of different generations getting to know each other, learning to respect people whatever their age and, in tandem with the outcomes mentioned, helping to move towards more cohesive societies.

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June 2007



DlgS

Derbyshire Intergenerational Strategy