



HOW TO GROW ROOTS

WHAT IS “HOW TO GROW ROOTS”?

This is a tool to help you make intergenerational work part of your organization’s culture. It’s very exciting to start on an ambitious project like this, but what happens once you have staff turnover? How can you make sure the work you’ve invested so much in continues and is embedded in the culture of the organization? How do you make intergenerational work part of your organization’s DNA?

WHO SHOULD USE THE TOOL?

This tool is for staff and leadership who have completed some intergenerational work at their community center.



THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO EMBED INTERGENERATIONAL WORK INTO YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE:

HELP STAFF SEE IT AS PART OF THEIR JOBS

- Address intergenerational work in all onboarding
- Include intergenerational work in job descriptions
- Conduct staff trainings on intergenerational work
- Create guides for staff on how to conduct intergenerational work at your organization
- What else? _____

MAKE IT A REGULAR THING

- Have at least one person from each department be responsible for intergenerational work
- Have this inter-departmental team meet regularly to intentionally plan intergenerational work
- Create regular intergenerational programming rather than one-offs
- Add intergenerational programming to the annual plans of program departments
- What else? _____

MAKE IT AN EXPLICIT ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL

- Add it to your mission statement
- Put it in your strategic plan
- Highlight, discuss and celebrate InterGen programming in organizational staff meetings
- What else? _____

GIVE VISUAL CUES IN YOUR SPACE

- Put up images highlighting intergenerational work
- Make your space comfortable for people of all ages
- What else? _____

KEEP IT FUNDED

- Connect it to grants and government contracts you already get
- Write it into new grants as a way to meet your deliverables
- What else? _____

PRIORITIZE PARTICIPANT-DRIVEN WORK

- Train staff in community organizing approaches
- Use focus groups and community meetings to get programming ideas and identify participant leaders
- Empower participants to come up with ideas, make programming decisions, and facilitate programming; celebrate their achievements.
- What else? _____
- Who else could think of ideas?

PUBLICIZE IT

- Standardize how you talk about intergenerational work
- Brand your intergenerational work and intergenerational center
- Find opportunities to highlight the work in your communications
- What else? _____

WHO ELSE MIGHT KNOW A LOT ABOUT THESE THINGS AND HAVE MORE IDEAS? WHO HAS CONTROL OVER SOME OF THESE DECISIONS? USE THIS TOOL WITH THEM NEXT!

- _____
- _____
- _____

TAKE ACTION TO EMBED INTERGENERATIONAL INTO YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE:

1. WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP YOU WILL TAKE? (CHOOSE A BOX TO FOCUS ON)

2. WHO DO YOU NEED TO BRING IN TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING IT HAPPEN, AND BY WHEN?

Generations Connect is an initiative of United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) dedicated to helping settlement houses establish intergenerational program approaches as a core practice.

This is part of a series of tools to support organizations embarking on the multi-year and iterative process of developing an intergenerational community center. Browse them all here: unhny.org/intergenhub

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