Minutes from 20.4.22

Apologies from: Kirsty Cartin sends apologies & Megan Beattie

18 booked on, 9 attendees

Lorraine George GWT

Bellann O'Brien Volunteer Centre Western Isles

Kim Casselden and Terri Bones Chase view Romford

Lyn and Angie from Braehill lodge Care Home in Carnoustie

Caroline from Northlands Care Home, Blairgowrie

Alison Milroy EY Centre South Ayrshire

Pam Maxwell Scottish Community Development Network

Amy& Louise Balhousie Forthview

Lorraine explained that the GWT Care Home Network was about supporting intergenerational (IG) practice and its development within Care homes through training & sharing intergenerational ideas and good practice. In 2020 GWT was funded by the Scottish Govt. to support care homes in trying to continue and develop IG practice during and after the pandemic.

Everyone introduced themselves and shared their name and setting and type of IG work they had been involved in or were trying to restart.

Some were running distanced projects such as pen pal programmes or exchanging pictures and cards. Others undertook window visits and played noughts & crosses with the residents. Some visits were recorded and then shared at a later date with adults and children to try and involve people. One setting had ‘interviewed’ adults with regard to a World War 2 project, although they advised caution in case the session brought back negative memories as well as positive. Everyone agreed that having photos of the other participants helped in connecting people and focusing on the activity and continuing the relationship. Others videoed events within their settings and shared them with their intergenerational partner. We discussed the challenges and benefits in connecting virtually particularly when working with adults with cognitive difficulties and acknowledged that even if the contact wasn’t of great quality, it was still meaningful to the participants.

Staff from care homes shared the difficulties that they faced in supporting residents, particularly when residents passed away from Covid.

We spoke about the benefits of IG work that extend beyond the participants and how this impacts positively amongst staff and into the community.

Moving forward – some of the care homes are planning open days and community sessions to encourage people back into care homes as some people were anxious about visiting especially with children.

We discussed the range of potential IG partners in our communities such as: Early years, schools – primary & secondary, extra-curricula groups eg Scouts, youth groups, before & after school clubs, parent groups eg toddler stay & plays, church groups, Young Carers, Foster Carers, Care Homes, assisted living, Nursing Homes.

The challenges in reconnecting were discussed, this included the following:

* Scheduling in time when everyone is still so busy, so using this time to start to plan for reconnecting in the summer or autumn.
* A reduction in volunteers as many of them were older adults
* A loss of care home staff who were knowledgeable about IG work
* New activity providers in post who needed IG training, because it’s important to have an understanding of the IG principles that underlie good IG practice

We discussed the practical steps for reconnecting such as:

* Reflect on existing intergenerational practice - how can it be improved?
* Training
* Finding a community partner
* Involve all the stakeholders in the planning
* Set out risk assessment & visiting processes
* Plan interactions based on interests & skills
* Decide: days/ time /venue/ numbers/ activities
* Monitoring & evaluation is very important and Lorraine highlighted and recommended the free online module on the GWT website, under training, that can be accessed by GWT members called ‘Measuring the impact of intergenerational projects’.
* Every care home will have their own ‘rules’ around reconnecting (on top of national guidance) and this can be challenging so it is important to have clear guidelines for people to follow

Potential reconnecting projects could include:

* Distanced – post, pen pals
* Window visits
* Virtual- this could include parallel play with both ages engaged in the same activity in their own setting but shared online at the same time
* Outside but distanced
* Inside but distanced
* Inside altogether

Some care homes have resumed their IG sessions and everyone is back together inside, others have not resumed at all – there is a real range with regard to engagement and how comfortable and confident people are in returning to pre-pandemic activities.

We also talked about the importance of understanding what good intergenerational practice looked like and for practitioners to access training from GWT so that they can talk knowledgeably about the practice behind the activities. The free introductory modules can be accessed by GWT members (membership is free for those in Scotland). Lorraine also recommended the resources section which is full of intergenerational case studies, activities and tool kits that can be used.

The IG one day training is available across Scotland- [dates](https://generationsworkingtogether.org/training/intergenerational-training) are on the GWT website

For anyone wanting to learn more about IG practice, quality standards and monitoring & evaluation the International Certificate in Intergenerational Practice( ICIP) starts 17th May.

Dates for your diary:

Global Intergenerational Week starts next week 2th April. Events can be found [here](https://generationsworkingtogether.org/global-intergenerational-week/country-leads).

One of the online events in England is called Rebuilding Bridges with Music – which is about an intergenerational distanced care home project that Lorraine has been involved in in Torbay. Everyone is welcome to attend on the 27th April at 6.30pm to hear about it. To get a zoom link to the session email Hugh on e.h.nankivell@gmail.com

Next Care Home Network Meetings:

Tuesday 6th Sept : This session will be face to face in Fife

Focus: Intergenerational activities; getting the right balance

&

Tuesday 22nd November: This session will be online

Measuring & evaluating intergenerational work; where do you start?

Attendees were asked what they wanted form the Care Home Network sessions. Their replies included; supporting each other, feedback, activity suggestions, sharing emails.