

Future of Aging Colorado Statewide Conference 2024



World Cafe Live Session: 12:15-1:45pm



Age-Friendly Communities: Building Connections Across Ages

Creating age-friendly communities is not just about ensuring accessibility and services for older adults; it's about fostering vibrant, inclusive spaces where people of all ages can grow up and grow older together. In today's society, where age segregation can often lead to isolation and missed opportunities for connection, the importance of intergenerational interaction cannot be overstated. When communities actively facilitate connections across ages, they create a rich tapestry of experiences, perspectives, and support networks. Whether it's through shared neighborhood spaces or engaging community programs, these interactions not only enhance individual well-being but also strengthen the fabric of the entire community. By recognizing and valuing the contributions of people of all ages, age-friendly communities pave the way for mutual learning, understanding, and collaboration, ultimately fostering a more resilient and cohesive society.



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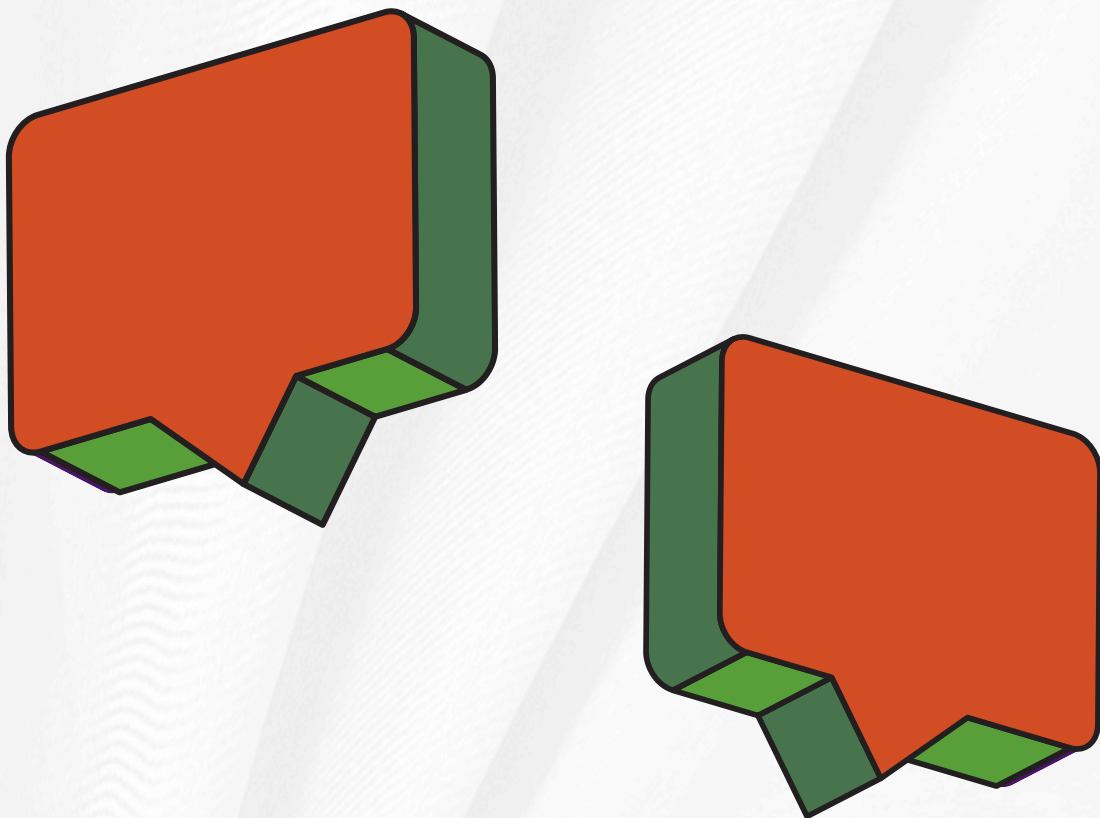
Introductions (15 minutes)

Go around the table and introduce yourself **briefly** by sharing your name, organization if you are representing one, and the community where you live.

Go around again and share brief responses for each of the following questions.

In what ways does your community encourage social connections across different age groups?

What challenges or barriers exist in your community that discourage social connections between different age groups? How do these obstacles impact the community as a whole?



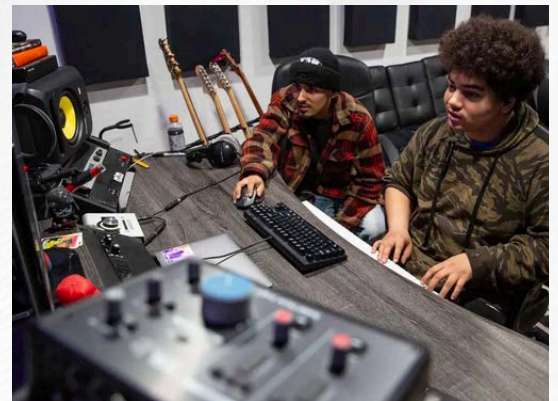
Neighborhood and Community Places (25 minutes)

To inspire your discussions here are some examples:



Panorama Park, Colorado Springs: Designed through an age and culturally inclusive process led to the integration of universal design principles with recreational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. The park offers a youth area with a hammock garden, skating and biking spaces, all age fitness zone from AARP, sports fields, public art and critical components including shade and all-year bathrooms.

The Village on San Juan: Intergenerational Supportive Housing, Montrose, Colorado: The Montrose Area Agency on Aging and Court Appointed Special Advocates of the 7th Judicial District are collaborating on Colorado's first intergenerational supportive housing project. The development will feature 45 homes, community center, and walking paths. It aims to house young adults aged 18-24 from foster care and older adults without stable housing, providing support to enhance skills, build connections, and reduce loneliness.



Centennial Center of Generations: Multigenerational YMCA, Centennial, Colorado: A partnership between the City of Centennial YMCA of Metro Denver bringing youth and older adults together in a multi-generational recreation center. Classes offered will appeal separately to youth and older adults as well as joint intergenerational programming. It creates a community space to connect around shared interests such as fitness, wellbeing, culture, arts, and education.

Places

01

How do the physical spaces in your community, such as parks, plazas, and community centers, support connections between people of different ages? Can you provide specific examples where these spaces have been successful in fostering intergenerational interactions?

02

What challenges or barriers in the design and maintenance of public spaces (e.g., lighting, accessible bathrooms, smooth trails) do you think prevent people of different ages from connecting? How could these be addressed?

03

Reflecting on other communities you have visited or heard about, what specific design elements or amenities have you seen that effectively foster intergenerational interactions? How might we implement similar features in our own communities?

Community Programming

(25 minutes)

Partnership for Age-Friendly Communities, Fort Collins, Colorado

Conducting a Mobility Assessment : A collaboration between North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization, various community organizations,, municipal boards, and local residents to assess and address mobility using an online tool developed for the community that can be used to mark areas

3. The lack of pedestrian refuge islands in the Midtown corridor makes it difficult for people of all ages and abilities to safely cross streets.

This includes College Ave, Foothills Parkway, and Monroe Drive.



that are not accessible for instance without curb cuts, a short crosswalk time, lack of lighting or more. The tool allows city officials to know exactly where problems are and address them with the community. It also allows the users of the public spaces to

have a voice in assessing and identifying issues and solutions.

Together At Play and Song Toolkit

Intergenerational Program

PREPARED BY
LinkAGES



Together at Play and Song: Intergenerational music program designed by Shalom Park Nursing Home in Parker, Colorado brings together preschool aged children, their primary caregiver, and nursing home residents to build connections through engaging in creating music and song. The program can be offered in person, both in person and virtual or fully virtual. A toolkit for the program is available at www.LinkAGESconnects.org including a song book.

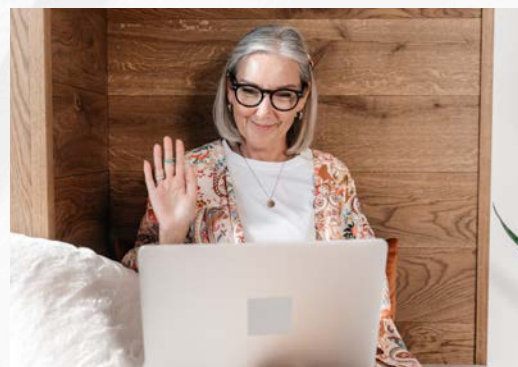
Community Programs (continued)

Age-Friendly Universities

University of Colorado Denver, Change Makers: In line with the University of Colorado Denver's goals of being an equity-serving institution and "university for life," the university developed an innovative program to enrich the development of adults in the second half of life and prepare them for longer, engaged lives. The CU Denver Change Makers program offers an immersive experience to help participants explore possibilities, retool, and renew their purpose. It's called Change Makers to reflect both the transition within the participants and the impact on their communities. Change Makers are ages 50+ creating both an intergenerational classroom experience and also offering the opportunity to audit classes and attend events across campus learning alongside and forming connections with students ages 18+. For information, contact Anne Button: anne.button@cudenver.org



University of Colorado School of Medicine: Multidisciplinary Center on Aging, COAST-IT program: This program connects students from the schools of medicine, pharmacy, nursing and dental medicine programs with community older adults for regular social phone calls building connection and creating mentoring opportunities. The program creates an opportunity for health profession students to practice their communication skills and for both participants to break the cycle of isolation. For information, contact: Joanna Fitzgibbons: Joanna.Fitzgibbons@cuanschutz.edu.



Programs

01

Can you share examples of programs in your area that successfully bring together people of different ages and encourage creating meaningful connections? What elements make these programs effective in fostering intergenerational connections?

02

What barriers or challenges have you observed that prevent programs from being more inclusive and engaging for people of multiple generations? How might these challenges be addressed to enhance participation across generations?

03

Thinking about successful programs you've experienced or heard about, what specific features or approaches did they use to encourage interaction, discovering interests or ideas people share, and forming meaningful connections?

Taking Action (25 minutes)

01

What specific actions can you personally take to help create or promote programs and places in your community that encourage connections between people of different ages? Consider steps you can take as a community member, volunteer, or professional.

02

What recommendations would you make to the Colorado Commission on Aging to support the development of more intergenerational programs and spaces? What policies, initiatives, or partnerships could they pursue to support the creation and sustaining of age-friendly communities across Colorado?